



MB BIBLICAL
SEMINARY

Christian Leadership Practices LDR 510

The mission of MB Seminary is to educate and equip men and women to help lead the church in reaching Canada and beyond with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

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Email: randywolff@mbseminary.ca
Credit Hours: 3
Prerequisites: None
Course Term: February 20 – April 29, 2023
Instruction: Feb. 24 (6:30 pm - 9:30 pm), Feb. 25 (8:30 am - 4:30 pm) at SunWest

Course Description

How do churches develop leaders who are growing in their love for Jesus and their ability to serve with excellence? This course will help learners grow as Christian leaders and give them practical tools for helping others in their leadership development. Learners will explore how to strengthen six key Christian leadership practices: 1) cultivating a growing relationship with God, 2) developing godly character, 3) discerning and living out personal calling, 4) growing deep community, 5) building healthy teams, and 6) strengthening key leadership skills.

Objectives

This course will help you:

- Formulate a theology of leadership that undergirds your approach to missional leadership and serves as a grid for assessing the appropriateness of leadership practices.
- Appraise your personal strengths and growth areas particularly related to your ability to lead.
- Design and begin implementing a robust personal growth plan that will encourage long-term sustainable growth.
- Assess your own style of leadership and gain an appreciation for other styles of leadership.

Course Textbooks

Blackaby, Henry and Richard Blackaby. *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People unto God's Agenda*. Revised and Expanded. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2011. 373 pages

Comer, John Mark. *Garden City. Work, Rest, and the Art of Being Human*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015. 288 pages.

McNeal, Reggie. *A Work of Heart: Understanding How God Shapes Spiritual Leaders*. Updated Edition. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2011. 192 pages.

Nouwen, Henri. *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership*. New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1989. 101 pages.

Total pages = 954

Required Inventories

Note: With the *Emotional Intelligence 2.0* book, some students have found that it's hard to get the inventory access code with the Kindle version of the book. At this point, getting a hard copy is advisable.

Bradberry, Travis and Jean Greaves. *Emotional Intelligence 2.0*. San Diego, CA: TalentSmart, 2009.

Frazer, Randy. *The Christian Life Profile Assessment Tool: Workbook*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan, 2015.

CliftonStrengths (formerly called StrengthsFinder). You can get the student rate for the Top 5 assessment here: <https://store.gallup.com/p/en-ca/10265/cliftonstrengths-for-students-top-5>.

Ministry Match at <https://theministrymatch.com/cceindex.php>. After you register on the site, go ahead and purchase the Lay Version of the test.

Note: If you have done any of the required inventories for this course within the past two years, you do not need to redo them. However, I will still expect you to reflect on the results of past inventories and use them to inform your personal leadership development plan.

Intensive Schedule

Teaching Weekend (at SunWest)	
Friday, Feb. 24, 2023	6:30 pm - 9:30 pm
Session 1	Course Introduction Biblical Leadership
Session 2	Christian Leadership Practice #1 – Grow a Deep Relationship with God
Saturday, Feb. 25, 2023	8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Session 3	Christian Leadership Practice #2 – Develop Godly Character
Session 4	Christian Leadership Practice #3 – Discern Personal Calling
Session 5	Christian Leadership Practices #4 and #5 – Grow Deep Communities and Build Healthy Teams
Session 6	Christian Leadership Practice #6 – Strengthen Skills

Course Assignments

The assignments for this course include a personal assessment, reading reflections, mentoring and the mentoring analysis paper, personal leadership development plan, theology of leadership, and the course evaluation. If you ever have an idea for an alternative assignment that you believe would have greater personal value and would still meet the objectives of the course, feel free to talk with me about it. In addition, feel free to use other formats (e.g. PowerPoints, Prezi, storyboards, videos) for your assignments. Please double-space all written assignments and use the Turabian writing style guide.

Assignments are due by midnight (your time) on the day they are due. I would ask that you submit your assignments in Populi. Once I have marked your assignment, I will put it in your grade book in Populi where you can check your grade and review the comments I made on the assignment (you will receive an automatic notification whenever I put a graded assignment in your grade book). Please note that I will typically deduct 5% of an assignment's total possible value for each day that it is late. Having said that, if you find that you are unable to complete an assignment on time, I will grant one extension of up to one week for one assignment during the course (without penalty) when you inform me of your need for an extension before the due

date for that particular assignment. I will also consider extensions in exceptional circumstances such as a medical emergency (when a doctor’s note accompanies the request). For the times when I allow a student to rewrite an assignment, I will generally take off 20% of the assignment’s value before assigning a grade to the rewritten assignment.

Here is an overview of all the assignments followed by a detailed description of them:

Overview of Assignments

Week	Due Date	Assignments	Percentage of Final Grade	Cumulative Percentage
Week 1	Feb. 23	Personal Assessment	10%	10%
Week 2	Mar. 4	Reflection paper on Week 2 instructional videos and <i>In the Name of Jesus</i>	5%	15%
Week 3	Mar. 6-11	Mentor Conversation #1		
Week 3	Mar. 11	Personal Leadership Development Plan	25%	40%
Week 4	Mar. 18	Reflection paper on Week 4 instructional videos and <i>A Work of Heart and Garden City</i>	5%	45%
Week 5	Mar. 20-25	Mentor Conversation #2		
Week 6	Apr. 1	Reflection paper on Week 6 instructional videos and <i>Spiritual Leadership</i>	5%	50%
Week 7	Apr. 3-8	Mentor Conversation #3		
Week 8	Apr. 15	Mentoring Analysis Paper	10%	60%
Week 10	Apr. 29	Theology of Leadership	40%	100%

Personal Assessment (10% of the final grade)

There are three parts to this pre-course assignment:

Part One – Four Inventories

For this part, do the four inventories for this class:

1. CliftonsStrengths (formerly called StrengthsFinder) – As mentioned above, you can get the student rate for this assessment here: <https://store.gallup.com/p/en-ca/10265/cliftonstrengths-for-students-top-5>.
2. Ministry Match Lay Leader version at <https://theministrymatch.com/cceindex.php> (you will need to register on the site before you can purchase the assessment)
3. Christian Life Profile – The assessment is in the *Christian Life Profile* course text. Make sure that you do the self-assessment and have others complete the three “other-assessments.”
4. Emotional Intelligence 2.0 – The online access code for this assessment is in the book with the same title.

After doing the four inventories, fill out the inventory template posted in Populi (the template helps you to organize your results for comparison purposes) and submit the filled-in template as part of this assignment. At this point, you do not have to comment on the results (this analysis will come later in the Personal Leadership Development Plan assignment).

Note: As mentioned previously, if you have done any of these assessments within the last two years, you do not have to redo them. However, you should still enter the results from the assessment(s) you did previously into the template for this assignment.

Part Two – *Understanding Your Personal Calling* Workbook

For this part of the assignment, prayerfully work through the *Understanding Your Personal Calling* workbook posted in Populi. I would encourage you to spread out this exercise over several days or longer to give yourself a chance to reflect on the questions and ideas that emerge.

Part Three – Read the Book of Nehemiah

One of our teaching weekend sessions will focus on Nehemiah, so it will be important to have the story fresh in your mind.

This assignment is due by 6:00 pm on February 23.

Reflection Papers (15% of the final grade)

During three weeks of the course (Weeks 2, 4 and 6), you will have an opportunity to write a three-page reflection paper in response to instructional content and the required readings. Your

reflection paper should answer the questions assigned in each of the three weeks (see below). The week after your reflection paper is due, you will meet with your mentor to discuss your responses to the questions and to explore other related topics. The maximum length for each reflection paper is three pages.

Week 2 Reflection Paper – Grow a Deep Relationship with God

Required Reading - *In the Name of Jesus*

Reflection Questions

What Can Nehemiah Teach Us about Leadership

Reflection Questions: Based on your reading of the book of Nehemiah for the Personal Assessment assignment and the instructional content, what stands out to you about Nehemiah's leadership? Which of the six practices of Christian leadership are stronger for you? Which are weaker?

Cultivating a Growing Relationship with God

Reflection Questions: What is your response to Henri Nouwen's reflections on Christian leadership in his book, *In the Name of Jesus*? What would need to change in your leadership approach to better reflect what Nouwen describes in the book?

Sabbath, Play, and Recreation

Reflection Questions: Thinking about the instructional content on *Practicing Life-giving Sabbath and Taking Time for Play and Recreation*, what gives you life? What refreshes your body, mind, and spirit? To what extent do you think that you have enough life-giving activities (or perhaps too many)? What are some of the things that hinder your practice of "re-creational" activities (or having balance in this area)? How might you overcome these barriers?

The Week 2 Reflection Paper is a maximum of three pages and is due March 4.

Week 4 Reflection Paper – Develop Godly Character and Discern Personal Calling

Required Reading - *A Work of Heart* and *Garden City*

Reflection Questions

Developing Godly Character: Ten Essential Character Qualities

Reflection Questions: Thinking about what you read in *A Work of Heart*, the list of 10 essential character qualities necessary for long-term leadership effectiveness in the learning intensive, and your own experience leading and watching others lead, what do you think are the top three character qualities necessary in God-honoring and effective

Christian leadership? Why do you think these character qualities are so important (use Scripture, logic, personal experiences, and other sources to support your answer)?

Growing Character Qualities

Reflection Questions: Thinking about the virtues assessment part of the Christian Life Profile, what were some of your stronger and weaker virtues? What is one character quality that you would like to grow over the next three months (it could be one of the ten virtues from the Christian Life Profile, a character quality from the previous Developing Godly Character forum discussion, or a different character quality)? Describe specific ways that you could partner with the Holy Spirit to grow that character quality. How might insights from *A Work of Heart* and the *Growing Character Qualities* session in the learning intensive inform the character-building process in your life?

Discerning Your God-Given Calling

Reflection Questions: Based on the personal calling instructional content and the *Garden City* book, why is understanding one's personal calling important? How does *Garden City* add to your understanding of work and calling? What are some cautions we need to keep in mind as we try to discern and live out our calling (and help others do the same)?

The Week 4 Reflection Paper is a maximum of three pages and is due March 18.

Week 6 Reflection Paper – Grow Deep Communities, Build Healthy Teams, and Strengthen Skills

Required Reading – *Spiritual Leadership*

Reflection Questions

Grow Deep Community

Reflection Questions: Discuss five strategies (three from your *Emotional Intelligence 2.0* results and two from the *Growing Deep Community* instructional content) that you believe will help you grow more emotionally intelligent. Thinking about what Bradberry says in the *Emotional Intelligence 2.0* book and the instructional content, how do you think growth in Emotional Intelligence will impact your ability to relate to and serve others more effectively (or feel free to push back and discuss how you don't think Emotional Intelligence makes all that much difference)?

Building Healthy Teams

Reflection Questions: Share about a time when you were part of a leadership team that had to make a major decision. What went well? What were some of the challenges and how did the group attempt to address them (or not)? What did you learn from the experience? How does your experience align with what you've read and heard about healthy teams in the instructional content and *Spiritual Leadership*? Thinking about your top five strengths (based on the assessments you did for this course, previous

assessments, and other inputs), how did your strengths contribute (or could have contributed) to the effectiveness of this team?

Leadership Pitfalls

Reflection Questions: In this course, we have looked at six essential leadership practices for Christian leaders. Yet, as Henry and Richard Blackaby assert, pitfalls can hinder us from living as godly and effective Christian leaders. For this part of your reflection paper, rank the 10 leader's pitfalls in chapter 12 of *Spiritual Leadership* according to which is most likely to cause problems for you (1 = most likely, 10 = least likely). Share your top three pitfalls, why each of them is a problem (or potential problem), and how you plan to address them with God's help.

The Week 6 Reflection Paper is a maximum of three pages and is due April 1.

Mentoring and the Mentoring Analysis Paper (10% of the final grade)

During Weeks 2, 4 and 6, you will meet with a mentor and any other students in the class from your church in a church-based mentoring group for 60 minutes to discuss the questions you addressed in the previous week's reflection paper, explore other related topics, and contextualize ideas to your ministry setting. The mentor should be a leader in your church (e.g. pastor, elder, ministry leader) who can speak meaningfully into the course ideas and how they could apply within the church. In addition, you should consider the following criteria when selecting a mentor:

- Mentor and you must be one in Christ
- The mentor is considerably more experienced in leadership
- You respect the mentor (i.e. if you turned out just like your mentor, you would be happy with that outcome)
- The mentor is willing to invest meaningful time into your life

For the mentoring analysis paper, include the name of your mentor, your mentor's role in the church, the dates you met, and the length of each session. Please also state if others from your church attended the sessions. The bulk of the paper should focus on your analysis of the mentoring conversations. How did the discussions with your mentor support, challenge and/or add to the key principles that emerged in the instructional content and through the readings for the course (be specific about these connections and include citations that clearly show the sources of the ideas)? What are some of the blessings and challenges you experienced during your time with your mentor? How did you grow? You will want at least half of your paper to be a rigorous interaction with specific ideas from Scripture and the course (with citations).

The maximum length of the mentoring analysis paper is 1,500 words and is due April 15.

Note: It is your responsibility to make sure that you and your mentor meet the required number of times. If, for some reason, this is not likely to happen, please contact me to discuss alternative strategies.

Personal Leadership Development Plan (worth 30% of your final grade)

The results from the assessment tools showed you some of your strengths, practices and tendencies that will help you live out your calling. Yet, all of us are in process. We have strengths that we can develop even more. We have weaker areas that may require our attention. The key is to understand what God desires of us (our personal calling) and then, in His strength, take the necessary steps to be the kind of leader He wants us to be and to do the tasks He wants us to do. This is a lifelong process.

This assignment has five parts:

Part One - Your Personal Calling Statement (600 words – worth 10% of the assignment's value)

For this part, restate your biblical purpose, core values and vision statement from the *Understanding Your Personal Calling* workbook that you did for the Personal Assessment Assignment (I am not looking for a summary of these three Personal Calling elements, but a simple restatement of them). Include at least one visual image (e.g. a jpeg-type picture) that captures the heart of your personal calling. Give a brief explanation of how the image connects with your personal calling. In addition, show how your core values are embedded in both your biblical purpose and vision. One way to do this would be to designate a font color for each of your core values and then use those font colors to show how parts of your purpose and vision align with your core values. If you do not see some of your core values represented enough in your purpose and vision, you may want to adjust those parts of your calling.

Part Two - Rule of Life (600 words – worth 15% of the assignment's value)

In the teaching weekend, you discussed the Rule of Life. This part of the Personal Leadership Development Plan gives you an opportunity to describe what you are already doing in each of the 12 areas of the Rule of Life and what you could add or change that would strengthen your leadership foundations and better position you to live out your personal calling. If you are not doing something in a particular area and don't think you should, that's fine. In addition, feel free to add other areas that you have found helpful. To help you identify which areas should be a top priority for you right now, include a short statement at the end of this part where you identify 2-3 Rule of Life elements that will receive extra attention for the next few months. Include a rationale for why you believe these are especially important for you right now. The approximate length of this part is 600 words (point form is fine for this section).

Part Three - Inventory Reflection (600 words – 40% of the assignment's value)

For this part, take up to 600 words to reflect on the results of the assessment tools you completed for this course: Ministry Match, Emotional Intelligence 2.0, CliftonsStrengths, and the Christian Life Profile. Here are some specific questions I would like you to tackle in the reflection process:

1. What are some common themes that seem to emerge from the results?
2. How do some of the results from the inventories build upon each other? For example, how might your top spiritual gifts in the Ministry Match assessment add to your

understanding of your top five signature strengths from the CliftonStrengths assessment (and vice versa)?

3. Where do the inventory results seem to contradict each other (or your own view of yourself)? How might you explain these apparent contradictions?
4. What opportunities for living out your calling more effectively do you see coming out of these results? For this question, I expect to see a detailed integration of your personal calling into the discussion.

Part Four - Strategic Plan (600 words – 35% of the assignment’s value)

After you have reflected on the results of each inventory, establish three strategic objectives that will promote your development as a Christian leader over the next three months. Indicate the rationale for selecting each objective (why is the objective important in light of your calling as articulated in this class and your inventory results). In addition, identify at least three key action steps for each objective, which will help you take steps toward achieving the objective over the next four months (this means that you will have at least nine action steps in total). Make sure that all the action steps are **SMART**:

- **Specific** (i.e. focused on one clearly defined area)
- **Measurable** (i.e. you should be able to chart your progress and know when you have achieved the action step)
- **Achievable** (i.e. you should be able to achieve the action step within the stated time frame)
- **Relevant** (i.e. the action step should actually help you achieve your overall objective)
- **Time-framed** (i.e. you should include a completion date so that you have a clear target for completing the action step)

Here are two examples of SMART action steps:

- I will memorize one verse per day, starting today, for the next three months.
- I will develop my teaching gift by attending the Teaching Adults Effectively conference next month

At the end of this section, include a one-page summary of your prioritized objectives and action steps that you and your mentor can use as a quick reference guide. Recognizing that it is difficult to work on three major objectives at the same time, I have asked you to prioritize them in your one-page summary. Make the first one your top priority. You can move on to another objective once you feel you have made reasonable progress on the previous one.

Part Five - Setting up Supportive Accountability

For this part, give the entire assignment to someone who will provide some supportive accountability as you implement the plan (e.g. a mentor, friend, family member, pastor). Include a note at the end of your assignment saying who received a copy of this assignment.

The maximum length of this assignment is 2,400 words. Due date: March 11.

Theology of Leadership (worth 40% of your final grade)

Based on one or more of the Gospels (and other Scriptures), course instructional content, course textbooks, discussion group conversations, and other resources, develop a biblically sound and personally relevant theology of Christian leadership. Your theology of leadership should include what you consider are the non-negotiable aspects of leadership. Some of the questions you may want to cover are: what is Christian leadership, what kind of character should a Christian leader have, how does a Christian leader lead, and what can we learn from Jesus and other biblical characters about Christian leadership? You're welcome to use these questions as sectional headings, although for some, it may work better to create a seamless theology that answers these questions and others in a more integrative way.

The maximum length is 2,100 words. Due date: April 29.

Note: I'm open to other creative ways of doing this assignment like developing a podcast, creating an in-person or virtual training session, storyboards, dramatic monologues, musical compositions, blog series, raps, website, animations, poetry, etc. If you would like to express your theology of leadership in one or more of these ways (or other ways), let me know so that we can figure out what the final gradable product will look like. I'm also open to students doing this as a group project. However, I would expect that the length (or other appropriate metric) would double for a two-person group project, triple for a three-person group project, etc.

Course Evaluation

Because your feedback is very important to me (I will often change future offerings of a course based on the feedback I receive from students), I have made the course evaluation a required part of the course. You will find the course evaluation in the online classroom. Once you have completed it, you will be able to submit your final assignment.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description	Grade Point	Meaning in Graduate Work
A+	97-100	Superior	4.30	Exceptionally well-reasoned, compelling development of position. Outstanding incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Strikingly appropriate examples. Extraordinary insight, critical analytical and evaluative ability, and creativity. Superlative style and language usage. Makes an original contribution and is potentially publishable.
A	93-96.99	Excellent	4.00	Well-argued and convincing development of position. Insightful incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Notably appropriate examples. Excellent insight, critical analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Impressive style and language use.
A-	90-92.99	Very Good	3.70	Thorough and plausible development of position. Skilful incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Very good examples. Very good insight, analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Commendable and fluent style and language usage.

B+	87-89.99	Proficient	3.30	Proficient development of position. Appropriate incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Relevant examples. Good quality insight, analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Clear and correct style and language usage.
B	83-86.99	Good	3.00	Competent development of position, but possibly with some gaps and/or limitations. Good incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Good examples. Reasonable insight, analytic and evaluative ability. Little creativity. Generally good style and language usage, but possibly with some minor flaws.
B-	80-82.99	Average	2.70	Average development of position, but with obvious gaps and/or limitations. Satisfactory incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Satisfactory examples. Reasonable insight, analytic and evaluative ability. Little creativity. Generally satisfactory style and language usage, but possibly with some minor flaws.
C+	77-79.99	Adequate	2.30	Adequate development of position with significant gaps and/or limitations. Some incorporation of personal vision as well as references and resources. Adequate use of examples. Very little creativity. Considerable number of issues related to coherence and style.
C	73-76.99	Acceptable	2.00	Limited development of position with a noticeable lack of consistency with personal vision or references. Limited integration with external sources. Acceptable analytic and evaluative ability. Numerous weaknesses in terms of clarity, coherence, and grammar.
C-	70-72.99	Needs Work	1.70	Passable but unimpressive development of position. Position not completely consistent with personal vision <i>or</i> references and resources not taken fully into account <i>or</i> examples are basic or not completely convincing <i>or</i> barely acceptable insight and analytic and evaluative ability. Adequate style and language usage, but with weaknesses in some respects (e.g., clarity, coherence, grammar). Overall quality shows noticeable deficiencies.
F	Below 70	Below Standard	0.00	Unacceptable work at graduate level. Shows lack of understanding and/or competence in several of the criteria described above. This grade is a failing grade at the graduate level.

Assignment Assessment

When I assess written assignments and presentations, I tend to look for the following:

- Appropriateness – The content matches the requirements of the assignments.
- Substantiveness – The content reveals deeper level thinking. This may take the form of critiquing existing ideas and proposing new ones. It may involve applying ideas from the readings and class discussions in deeply personal ways. It could also include a novel integration of ideas from various sources. As you think about substantiveness, I would also ask you to go beyond “left brain” thinking that focuses on systematic and logical thinking. Add “right brain” analysis that views concepts in intuitive and more holistic ways. This may involve viewing assignment topics from creative vantage points by using word pictures, analogies, metaphors, pictures, diagrams, drama, poetry, music, and other creative devices that can often enrich conceptual meaning and make it more personal. In order to get an A on an assignment, **you really need to present your ideas in an integrative and creative way.** Go beyond the stated expectations of an assignment (not in terms of length ☺). Surprise me with a novel combination and/or expression of ideas.
- Coherence – The content flows in a consistent and meaningful way.

- Engaging – The writing style does not distract from the content (e.g. grammatical mistakes), but rather engages the reader’s attention. By the way, I love creative title pages that introduce a theme or multiple themes from your assignment in an engaging way.

Assignment Grade Appeals

Students can appeal their grade to me by stating in writing their reasons for contesting the grade. Deadline for such appeals is one week after the student has receipt of grade. Formal course grade appeals can be made with Dr. Brian Cooper, the MB Seminary Registrar.