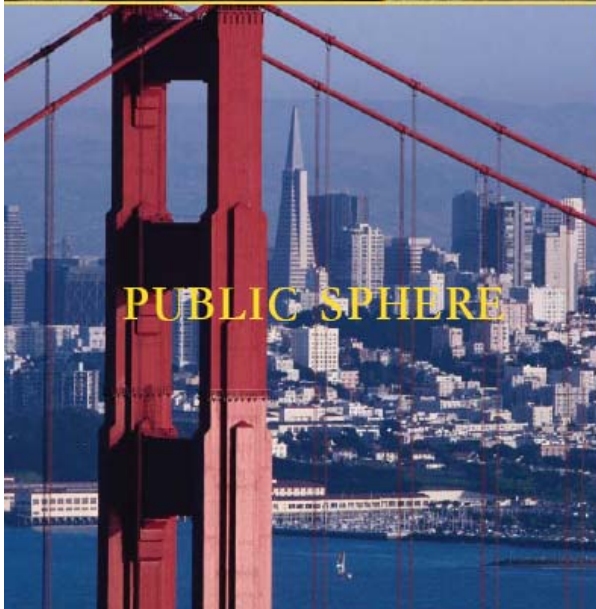
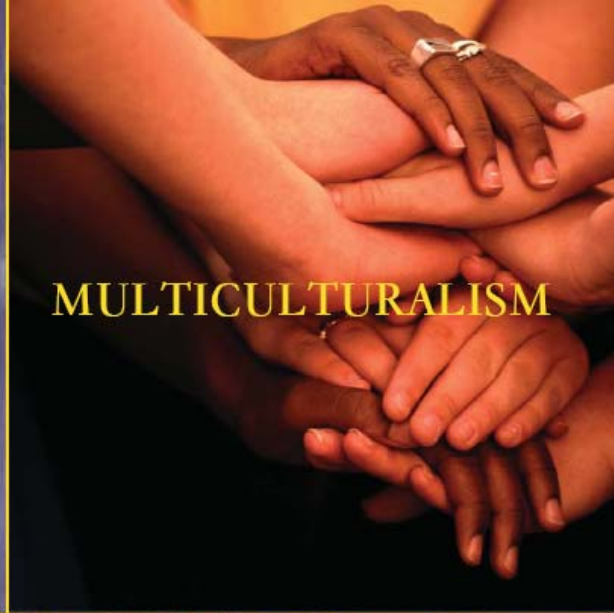
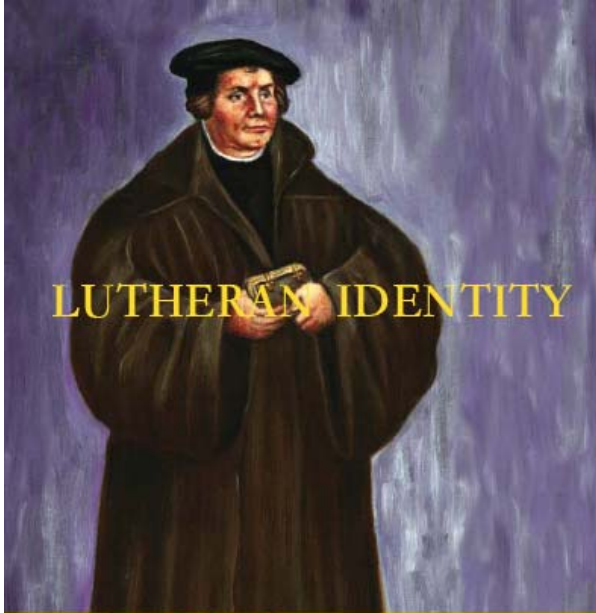


Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary



Lay Internship Committee Handbook Fall 2010

Dear Members of the Lay Internship Committee:

Thank you! We appreciate your service to the church and value the important work you do for the development of an intern's pastoral formation. The beginning of the year is a crucial time for getting the experience off to a good start. The student's year of hands-on, day-to-day life in a full-time ministry setting is a major change from previous years of academic work at the seminary. It is both thrilling and daunting to shift to this new style of learning. And this is where the Internship Committee can uniquely be a help and support to the intern.

Welcome the intern and the intern's family. It is the Internship Committee's specific task to find a variety of ways to help the intern begin to integrate into your congregation as well as into the new role of intern pastor. Our hope is that you will "show them the ropes" of your community and the congregation. Introduce them to key people or places they should know. Invite them to lunch, dinner or coffee. Relationships are key to successful ministry practices. As a committee member you are in a perfect setting to build a trustworthy relationship with the intern.

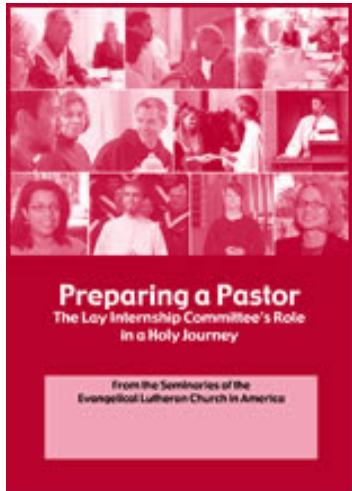
Much of your role is to be support and encouragement to the intern. A goal of internship is for the intern to experience as many new and different aspects of ministry as possible. The Committee is the support base for the intern to debrief how these experiences are going and to talk openly about the highs and lows of this new opportunity. The Committee can also offer encouragement and feedback so the intern continues to learn about their gifts and passion for serving God.

The internship year is a quarter of a student's seminary experience; many students report internship as being a fundamental and foundational year of their preparation for pastoral ministry. You are not in this venture alone. We are ready to assist you and the intern in any way we can. Please contact us if you need clarification or suggestions. Thank you for accompanying your intern on this significant journey.

Sincerely,

Alicia Vargas,
Associate Professor of Multicultural and Contextual Studies
and Director of Contextual Education

This handbook has been created for you as a reference for the ministry you have so graciously agreed to be a part of. We suggest looking over the entire handbook in order to get a more detailed overview of our expectations and the various areas the committee supports and advises the intern. Besides this handbook, lay committees have an excellent tool in the DVD, ***Preparing a Pastor: The Lay Internship Committee's Role in a Holy Journey***.



We hope you and the supervisor watch this DVD and set some goals for how you would like to enhance your intern's amazing year with you.

If you need a copy contact Elba Selby at contexted@plts.edu or 510-559-2713.

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The Lay Internship Committee

Selection of the Lay Internship Committee Members

The lay internship committee is appointed by the supervising pastor. The supervisor should choose 5-8 people who are able to meet monthly with the intern to give fair and open-minded consideration to the intern's experiences. It should be composed of a broad cross section of the congregation. Some supervisors allow the intern to choose one or two members of the committee after they have arrived.

Purpose of the Lay Internship Committee

The committee is charged with supervisory responsibility on behalf of the whole congregation. The committee is closely involved in the preparation of the intern for ordained ministry. Committee members develop a special relationship with the intern as they learn, grow and struggle to help each other develop a unique ministry. The committee also sends evaluations to the intern's seminary twice a year.

Expectations of the Lay Internship Committee Members

Prior to Intern's Arrival

Meet with the pastor to organize, study lay committee materials and select the person who will serve as chair. Exchange telephone numbers and addresses with the intern to establish contact before the intern arrives.

Check on the physical arrangements for the intern. Is the housing adequate, clean and ready? Does the intern need help unloading? Are there family members that need to be included in these arrangements?

Send information to the intern about the home, community, and congregation.

Inform the congregation of the intern's pending arrival. Plan a "Service of Beginning".

Insure a good start for the intern/family by planning a Welcome Celebration. First impressions are important.

After the Intern's Arrival

In regular monthly meetings the committee members and the intern become mentors and teachers to each other. The members are expected to be available to give constructive feedback to the intern regarding the many different areas of ministry. At these meetings members can tell the intern about congregational life and how well he or she is equipping the members for ministry. With loving concern, tell the intern about his or her rough edges or weaknesses. We don't always perceive ourselves as others do; someone who honestly reflects our behavior can be invaluable. Share your story of faith and your style of ministry. Take time to ask the intern what he/she needs from the members of the committee. Similarly the committee can help the intern learn what the expectations of the congregation are and bring constructive comments to the meetings from congregation members who may not be a part of the committee.

Roles Committee Members Play

1. Supporter
You provide counsel and encouragement for the intern and his/her family. You provide support and honest feedback - something that everyone needs.
2. Sponsor
You acquaint the intern with the members of the congregation and the issues and concerns of the people and community.
3. Consultant
You provide information about the congregation, teach, guide, and introduce the intern to your community. You help make sure the intern knows the audience on Sunday morning and something of the history of your church and community.
4. Faith Sharer
You share your own religious background, experiences and beliefs. Tell the intern how God has called you and what that has meant.
5. Partner in Ministry
You assist the intern in developing a style of ministry that is a partnership. Pastors need to work in partnership with others. The intern must learn how the roles of a pastor and a lay person complement each other, and how he/she can effectively function in partnership with others.
6. Evaluator
You are a mirror, reflecting your perception of the intern's ministry. You will offer your impressions of sermons, personal presence, teaching skills, etc. Don't gloss over things; be honest as you speak the truth in love.

The entire committee is expected to participate in the evaluation process by giving their opinions on the evaluation questions. The committee chair is responsible for compiling these opinions for the evaluation forms and providing the final drafts of the forms to the other members. The evaluations are required twice a year.

The Committee Chairperson

The committee chairperson is responsible to:

1. Convene all committee meetings.
2. notify everyone as to the time and place of meetings and chair them
3. Discuss the agenda with the intern.
4. Keep the supervising pastor informed about any difficulties with convening regular lay committee meetings or any dysfunction of the committee
5. Fill in the two consensus evaluations.

Committee Member Term Limits

We suggest committee members serve three-year terms, with one-third of the committee in rotation each year.

Responsibilities of the Lay Internship Committee

Our experience with lay committees has given us the opportunity to make some observations about how an effective committee functions. Here are some key points to remember:

1. The purpose of an internship is to enable students to learn from supervised experience and reflection. The needs of the congregation must be recognized, but interns are placed with the objective of learning. The committee should always ask first, "What will the intern learn in this situation?"
2. Confidentiality is vital. No one will be frank if the committee members or the intern tell everything that happens at the committee meeting. However, committee members/intern may at any time consult with the supervising pastor.
3. Be concerned about the whole life of the intern. How is the family doing? Is the apartment or home adequate? Does the intern have time for personal needs? Who will introduce the intern to congregation members? What feelings are coming to the surface in the intern?
4. Be honest. It doesn't help to compliment a poor sermon or an inept presentation. Interns want the lay committee to give them honest feedback. Speak the truth in love. Holding back vital information to spare the intern's feelings is not helpful. At times uncomfortable subjects may need to be discussed.
5. Respect differences. Your intern will be unique, not at all like the last intern or the present pastor.
6. Affirm your lay ministry. Your views are important and the intern can use your impressions to learn about effective ministry from you.
7. Be concerned about an ongoing internship program. Insure the future health of the program with some good long-range plans. Be an advocate for the internship program in your congregation and in the church.
8. The committee chairperson needs to work closely with the intern to set meeting times. Preferably, set a fixed day of the month for regular meetings. Clarify how members will be informed about meeting times and places.
9. Remember that the intern is a student not an experienced pastor.
10. Your relationship with the supervising pastor should be marked by cooperation, shared concerns and complement the pastor's supervision. The committee should be supportive of the pastor and the intern.
11. Avoid
 - a) one person dominating the discussion
 - b) talking about someone not present
 - c) criticizing the pastor, staff or congregation members
 - d) bemoaning a situation in the parish
 - e) complaining about things the intern or committee can't change
 - f) sidetracking the agenda and discussing unrelated concerns
 - g) relating only on a superficial level

Monthly Meetings

Give your monthly meetings high priority. The intern and the committee should function as a team; when a team member is not available or fails to participate, the whole effort suffers.

The committee should participate in developing and reviewing the learning service agreement and filling out evaluation forms mid-year and at the end of the year. The committee meetings should include discussion helpful to the intern's development and learning.



Suggested Meeting Agendas

The committee/intern may choose different topics of discussion that may be more appropriate to the setting.

Month One

1. Welcome the intern, help him/her get settled and acquainted. Perhaps arrange for a guided tour of the parish and community. Include the intern's family.
2. Schedule the first committee meeting at which you begin introducing the committee members, asking each to share their story of faith; discuss learning experiences available and the needs of the congregation and student. Remember to consider the needs of the family.
3. Narrow down the areas to be mentioned in the learning service agreement.
4. A time for sharing joys and concerns. This should become a monthly routine.

Month Two

1. Check on housing and personal needs, including family's concerns.
2. Discuss the transition from seminary to church institution.
3. Review and formalize with the pastor and intern the learning service agreement. Interns are to send a copy to the seminary. The internship project can also be discussed at this time.
4. Talk about the agenda for the rest of the year.

Month Three

1. Develop a process for evaluating the intern's preaching and public scripture reading. Agree on when to use it and how.
2. Allow time for committee members to discuss what they gain from sermons, what is helpful to them.
3. Begin looking at each of the areas of the midterm evaluation and discuss what/how the intern is doing and feeling in each of them.

Month Four

1. Evaluate the intern's sermon and worship leadership.
2. Discuss ways of evaluating the intern's teaching. Will you talk to students or participate in a class? The group should discuss the teaching role and the importance of the teaching ministry. Plan an evaluation for the next meeting.
3. You may be in the holiday season now. Will the intern be alone for Thanksgiving and Christmas? That's normally a lonely time for families who are accustomed to gathering.
4. Discuss progress with project plan.
5. Continue looking at the areas of the midterm evaluation.

Month Five

1. Evaluate the teaching ministry.
2. Review final Project Plan.
3. Finish reviewing the midyear forms and offer explanations in preparation for completing the forms.

Month Six

1. Fill out the midyear evaluation forms.
2. Check the learning service agreement. Does it need to be updated?
3. Discuss, reflect and evaluate your relationship to the other congregations in your area and your response to social concerns of the community, the country and the world.
4. Plan an evaluation of the pastoral visitation activity of the intern. Why is it important? How can both lay and clergy minister to the shut-in, the sick, and the troubled? Plan to evaluate this aspect of ministry at your next meeting.

Month Seven

1. Discuss the feedback from the midyear evaluation forms.
2. Evaluate pastoral visitation, ministry to the elderly, the sick, etc.
3. Plan ways to explore the role of office manager. Become acquainted with day-to-day office administration.
4. Make any necessary adjustments to the learning service agreement.

Month Eight

1. Discuss the role of the clergy in the broader Christian community. What is your congregation's relationship to the other churches in the community? How does your congregation relate to the Synod and Region? Examine social ministry opportunities in your community. What is the congregation doing in terms of justice, advocacy, community involvement, etc.

Month Nine

1. Discuss, reflect and evaluate your relationship to the other congregations in your area and your response to social concerns.
2. Review the past months. Summer plans are likely being made and the pastor may schedule vacation. Will the intern have additional responsibilities when the pastor is on vacation? Will there be retreats? Will you cover the full range of ministry areas by the end of the year?
3. By now the intern will be fairly free to organize work and to operate independently. Discuss how one plans work, sets priorities, and operates under great freedom.
4. Review a sermon or discuss the ministry of lay people as it relates to the ordained minister.

Month Ten

1. If the intern is married/partnered, discuss how congregational members relate to the pastor's spouse/partner.
2. Discuss how the presence of the intern has impacted the congregation.
3. Make plans for next month.
4. Look at the final evaluation forms.

Month Eleven

1. Plan a "Service of Ending" for the intern. Talk about "going away" issues.
2. You may want to give each member a copy of the final evaluation form to fill in so you can combine comments for the copy sent to the seminary.

Month Twelve

1. Discuss the final evaluation forms with the intern and draft a committee "consensus report".
2. Evaluate the committee. How did the committee respond to the presence of the intern? What could be improved? Were any issues not addressed? Do you have advice for the next internship committee or advice for the contextual education staff of the seminary? Overall, how well did the committee function?
3. Say goodbye in a personal way and participate in the "Service of Ending".
4. You may want to suggest/coordinate a farewell event for the intern and family.

Sermon Response Forms

As part of the evaluation process, the lay internship committee is asked to comment on the intern's preaching ability, style and delivery for the benefit of the intern. The committee may want to give input to the intern after each of her/his sermons and discuss them in supervisory sessions. The committee may also want to include congregation members who do not serve on the committee to be involved in this process. Some interns have had many opportunities to preach in a public setting while others have very little. The intent of these Sermon Response Forms, over the course of the year, is to compare responses in order to note improvement and greater confidence in the intern's ability in the area of preaching. These forms are NOT to be sent to the seminary. These response forms are merely some recommended instruments to aid in the committee's ability to provide feedback to the intern on her/his preaching.

Students go on internship hoping to improve their preaching and they look forward to suggestions from the members of their congregations. How can you help? Listen carefully to their sermons, with the following questions in mind:

1. What insights did I gain from the biblical text?
2. How did the message from the Bible relate to the world, the community, my family, my life?
3. Are there ways the intern could improve his or her speaking style?
4. These are just starters. You can add to the list.

Below are suggested forms for offering feedback. You are welcome to copy these forms and use them to organize your thoughts, and give them to the intern in response to their sermon. Thank you for your commitment to help your intern become a better preacher!

Form # 1:

Preacher: _____ Date: _____

Hearer: _____

1. Summarize the content of the sermon as you heard it. (If the content was not clear, please say so.)

2. What good news did you hear in the sermon? (Please make it clear why it is good news to you – what was or what might be the result of the sermon in your feeling and/or action?)

3. In what ways did the preacher's delivery – demeanor, language, style, illustrations, etc. – help or hinder communicating the message?

4. What, generally, would you like to tell the preacher about his/her communicating the gospel?

Form # 3:

Preacher: _____ Date _____

Hearer: _____

PULPIT PRESENCE

- Was the preacher caught up in the message? Speaking from genuine feelings and conviction?

- Was the preacher speaking to you, eye-to-eye, person-to-person?

DELIVERY

- Rate: (varied, effective use of pause, rushed, monotonous, hesitant?)

- Volume: (strong, well directed, varied, monotonous, too soft, too loud?)

- Inflection: (varied pitch, monotonous pitch, enthusiastic, overly somber?)

- Articulation: (distinct, slurred, mumbled, affected precision, endings dropped?)

- Voice Quality: (clear, muffled, nasal, breathy, not enough breath, stained glass tone?)

- Eye Contact: (direct, sustained, varied, lacking, eyes glued to notes?)

- Posture: (relaxed, tense, swaying, leaning, distracting foot movement?)

- Gestures: (smooth, full, rigid, awkward, distracting, limited, nonexistent?)

Internship Evaluation Forms:

Lay Internship Committees are required to submit an evaluation to the seminary twice a year. The evaluation includes an assessment of skills for pastoral leadership and personal characteristics for pastoral ministry. It is the responsibility of the committee chair to collate the group's responses, share the final draft with the committee members and the intern. The intern is responsible to send a signed copy to the seminary.

The questions are the same on both the Mid-year and the Final evaluation forms. However, the final evaluation form has a two-point rating system, "not yet competent" and "competent". "Competent" refers to the level of performance expected of a first call pastor. Keep in mind that the description/comment portion of the answer is a better indicator of an intern's development and improvement than simply "not yet competent" or "competent". The form should reflect the observations of the entire committee, not just of the committee chair.

The final evaluation has one additional part, that of a summary recommendation and paragraph. There are 3 options for recommendations for pastoral ministry in the ELCA; unconditional, conditional and not recommended. The summary paragraph should support the recommendation. The summary paragraph for a conditional recommendation should include suggestions for the student's development/growth. The summary paragraph will be shared with appropriate synodical/church-wide personnel as part of the approval and assignment process.

The summary paragraph is more helpful to the seminary and synodical staff members when pastoral and theological competence, commitment to gospel justice issues, teaching abilities and personal characteristics suited for ministry are included as they pertain to the candidate. Try to provide as much substantive detail as possible noting strengths, weaknesses and growth edges. A statement affirming only strengths is not as helpful.

The ELCA requires the summary paragraph be limited to 500 characters including spaces! This is quite a challenge so it is important to be concise yet thorough when drafting the summary paragraph.

Below are examples of summary paragraphs:

The intern shows a distinct desire to serve God's people as an ordained pastor in the ELCA as evidenced in preaching, teaching, leading worship, etc. Her ministry is shaped by a clear understanding & application of basic Lutheran theology. Some areas of growth include: challenging people beyond their comfort level, develop a personal conflict management style & increase familiarity with OT. Strengths include a positive & energetic personality & she's very welcoming & inviting of strangers

The intern is a person of deep faith and clear call. She has great skills in listening and being present with people. Her preaching has become more engaging and gospel centered. She has developed confidence in worship leadership. She works well on a team. Growth areas: stewardship and evangelism.

We highly recommend the intern for pastoral ministry. His sermons are excellent; speaking style clear, relates well with congregation members of all ages, he has good listening skills, and has the discipline necessary to multi-task. We found no weaknesses in him and would be happy to have him return.

Links to the Six-Month and Final Evaluations:

http://www.plts.edu/docs/ConEd_CommitteeSixMonth.doc

http://www.plts.edu/docs/ConEd_CommitteeFinal.doc

