ST ANDREW’S THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE (SATC)

COURSE NAME: PRACTICAL THEOLOGY
COURSE CODE: PT200
COURSE CREDIT: 3

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Practical Theology is a way of doing theology. It begins with a practical concern that comes out of experience, engages that concern in dialogue with the religious tradition and culture, and through that dialogue discerns wisdom that leads to transformative action. It is a mutually interpretive, critical and transforming conversation between the Christian tradition and contemporary experience. Historical, hermeneutical, and socio-cultural analyses are integral to this method of theology.

Practical theology takes place in a community of faith. It implies a spirituality that is both personal and liturgical, and is directed towards individual and social transformation in Christ.

AIM:
• To help students to engage in a method of theological reflection involving discernment and action.
• To help students to engage in a conversation in which faith and daily life meet.
• To help students create a model for understanding the contexts that shape our ministries.
• To encourage students to reflect critically on ministerial experiences and on the ideas and social forces that influence our spiritualities and interpretations.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
Students will be able to:
• Develop an initial understanding of practical theology
• Formulate a working description of their ministry praxis
• Develop an appreciation of the dynamic, hermeneutical, critical and transformative character of practical theology
• Formulate a method for engaging in practical theology

COURSE CONTENT:
Foundations of Practical Theology

Contexts of Ministry Praxis
• Introductions, syllabus review; overview of practical theology
• What aspects of practical theology appeal to you or concern you?
• Have you experienced a personal call to ministry or recognize through experience another’s call to ministry? How would you describe this call? How has it influenced you?
Spirituality of Ministry
- What affirms or expands your sense of spirituality for ministry?
- Using the Stone and Duke framework for “thinking theologically”, identify a personal experience that has shifted a key aspect of your embedded theology to a process of deliberative theology.

Conversations and Dialogue in Practical Theology
- As an adult learner, what motivates you to engage in ministry/religious education studies? What kind of learning do you find effective?
- Think of a time when you encountered a situation of “pluralism” of views or opinions different than your own. How did you respond?

Hermeneutics and Theological Reflection
- Recall a moment of conversion in your life. What influenced your movement toward that conversion?

Exploring the contexts of Praxis
Socio-cultural considerations
- Consider a symbol in your life that is highly significant or meaningful to you. What are its cultural roots? (When or how did that symbol originate?) How does it function for you as a “model of reality”?

Personal experience and Social Location
- What have you found to be most valuable in helping you grow in self-awareness? What do you think would be most helpful to you in the future for learning about your gifts and areas needing personal growth for ministry?
- What language would you use to express your own uniqueness? How does your own uniqueness contribute to your ministry praxis?
- Engaging the Christian Tradition

Mediating structures and the Institutional context of Ministry
- What implication do you find for understanding the organizational influences on your ministry?
- How would you describe the networks and community connections that benefit your practice of ministry? What might a diagram of these community relationships look like?

The actual practice of Practical Theology
- What value do you see in putting your understandings of the Christian tradition in dialogue with what we learn about our socio-cultural contexts, personal experiences, and institutional constraints and support?
- Role Play – e.g. Holy Communion & Baptism Services
COURSE TEXTS:

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES:
Lectures
Class Discussion
Individual presentations
Group projects
Role Play

COURSE ASSESSMENT:
Class Participation  10%
Essay  40%
Final Exam (written)  50%

TOTAL  100%

10% Class participation, including leading some class discussions, and presenting praxis-related projects as assigned.

40% Reflective essay: Practical Theology and its meaning for your own life. (4-6 pages). The central questions to address in this essay are: Drawing from your readings for this course and other resources, how would you describe the major facets of practical theology, and what does engagement in practical theology mean for your own life?

50% Written Final Examination.