

Assemblies of God Theological Seminary
Doctor of Ministry
PTH 900 *Trends in Small Group Ministry*
Directed Research, Fall 2002
Lori S. O'Dea, D.Min.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of the development and use of small groups in contemporary ministry, with particular attention to the leadership requirements necessary for effectiveness. The research experience will be enhanced through attendance of Willow Creek's Small Groups conference.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Cognitive Outcomes

The participant should gain an increased understanding of...

1. the biblical foundation and principles for small groups.
2. contemporary models of small group ministry.
3. the small group system's function within the larger ministry organization, leadership development within the system, and group dynamics.

Character/Attitude Outcomes

The participant should...

2. appreciate the value of small groups in meeting the cultural challenges facing today's church.
2. strengthen his/her commitment to the value of community in fulfilling the purposes of the church.

Skill Outcomes

Through this study, the participant should be better equipped to...

1. establish and nurture a small group system.
2. evaluate the development of the growth of the system.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Reading Requirement

- Read a minimum of 2,250 pages from the selected bibliography, including required books, as marked with an asterisk. Reading may extend beyond the selected bibliography, but must deal with the small group ministry topics in a significant way. (NOTE: It is a violation of academic policy to claim credit for books read in prior courses. If you have previously read any book on the list for credit, you must substitute another book.)
- Submit Reading report (final page of syllabus) with final project, by January 15, 2003.

2. Conference Attendance & Reflection

- Attend Willow Creek Small Groups Conference (September 26-28, 2002).
- Write 5-page reflection paper on your overall conference experience, positive and/or negative. Highlight concepts with greatest personal impact, as well as how you foresee using the insight you have gained. The reflection paper is due October 30, 2002.

3. Research Project

Write a 30-page research paper developing an aspect of small group ministry that is applicable to your ministry context. Project should include biblical foundation, leadership applications, and proposed strategy for implementation. Do not attempt to do a generic overview of small groups. For example, if you are proposing the establishment of small groups in a church, deal strictly with start-up issues. If you want to know more about models, limit to a comparative study of models. The project, along with reading report, is due January 15, 2003.

GRADING PROCEDURE

Reading	25%
Conference Attendance	20%
Reflection Paper	10%
Research Project	35%

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

* Must Read: Donahue & Robinson, Icenogle, Frazee.

** Highly recommended, read part or all if possible.

Note: Comiskey is a leading author in the field. His first book deals with the G12 model extensively. Read at least some of one or more of his books. Also, Galloway, Neighbor, and McNeal are all pioneers. Consultation with their works will provide broader insight to various models. Likewise with Hurston. Her first work deals with traditional cell ministry (Cho's church) and latest book covers the free market-type model. Haggard's book (representing probably the nation's leader in this model) also deals with free market cells.

Arnold, Jeffrey. *The Big Book on Small Groups*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1992.

Banks, Robert. *Paul's Idea of Community: The Early House Churches in Their Cultural Setting*, rev. ed. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994.

Barker, Steve, Judy Johnson, Rob Malone, Ron Nicholas, and Doug Whallon. *Good Things Come in Small Groups: The Dynamics of Good Group Life*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1985.

Barna, George. *The Habits of Highly Effective Churches*. Ventura, Calif.: Regal, 1999.

Borthwick, Paul, Carl F. George, Paul A. Kaak, Carol H. Lukens, Gary C. Newton, and Steve R. Sheeley. *New Directions for Small-Group Ministry*. Loveland, Colo.: Vital Ministry Books, 1999.

Coleman, Lyman, ed. *Director's Workbook for Small Groups*. Littleton, Colo.: Serendipity, 1994.

**Comiskey, Joel. *Home Cell Group Explosion*. Houston: Touch Publications, 1998.

_____. *Reap the Harvest: How a Small-Group System Can Grow Your Church*. Houston: Touch Publications, 1999.

_____. *Leadership Explosion*. Houston: Touch Publications, 2000.

- Crabb, Larry. *The Safest Place on Earth: Where People Connect and Are Forever Changed*. Nashville: Word, 1999.
- Davis, Deena, comp. *Discipleship Journal's 101 Best Small Group Ideas*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1996.
- Donahue, Bill P. *The Willow Creek Guide to Leading Life-Changing Small Groups*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.
- *Donahue, Bill, and Russ Robinson. *Building a Church of Small Groups: A Place Where Nobody Stands Alone*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001.
- *Frazee, Randy. *The Connecting Church: Beyond Small Groups to Authentic Community*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001.
- Galloway, Dale, and Kathi Mills. *The Small Group Book: The Practical Guide for Nurturing Christians and Building Churches*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1995.
- **Gorman, Julie A. *Community That Is Christian: A Handbook on Small Groups*. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1993.
- Grenz, Stanley J. *Theology for the Community of God*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994.
- **Haggard, Ted. *Dog Training, Fly Fishing, and Sharing Christ*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2002.
- Hurston, Karen. *Growing the World's Largest Church*. Springfield, MO: Chrism, 1994.
- _____. *Breakthrough Cell Groups: How One American Church Reaches People for Christ through Creative Small Groups*. Houston: Touch Publications, 2001.
- *Icenogle, Gareth W. *Biblical Foundations for Small Group Ministry: An Integrational Approach*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1994.
- Martin, Glen, and Gary McIntosh. *Creating Community: Deeper Fellowship through Small Group Ministry*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1997.
- McBride, Neal F. *How to Lead Small Groups*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1990.
- _____. *How to Build a Small Groups Ministry*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1995.

- Neighbour, Ralph W., Jr. *The Shepherd=s Guidebook*. Houston: Touch Publications, 1992.
- Neighbour, Ralph W., and Lorna Jenkins. *Where Do We Go From Here?: A Guidebook for Cell Group Churches*. Houston: Touch Publications, 1990.
- Nicholas, Ron, Steve Barker, Judy Johnson, Rob Malone, and Doug Whallon. *Good Things Come in Small Groups*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1985.
- Sjogren, Steve. *Conspiracy of Kindness*. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Servant Publications, 1993.
- Stockstill, Larry. *The Cell Church*. Ventura, Calif.: Regal, 1998.
- Williams, Dan. *Seven Myths About Small Groups: How to Keep from Falling into Common Traps*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1991.

READING REPORT
PTH 900 Trends in Small Group Ministry

Name _____

List all resources (part/whole) and the number of pages read for credit in this directed research course:

Resource	Pages Read
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Required Reading

Donahue, Bill, and Russ Robinson. <i>Building a Church of Small Groups: A Place Where Nobody Stands Alone</i> . Grand Rapids: Zondervan 2001.	_____
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Frazee, Randy. <i>The Connecting Church: Beyond Small Groups to Authentic Community</i> . Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001.	_____
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*Icenogle, Gareth W. <i>Biblical Foundations for Small Group Ministry: An Integrational Approach</i> . Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1994.	_____
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Additional Reading

Total Pages Read _____

Signature _____ Date _____