



## **Distance Learning Courses for Commissioned Pastor Training**

Western Theological Seminary, in partnership with the Commissioned Pastor Advisory Team of the Reformed Church in America, is pleased to announce a new series of distance-learning courses, designed to support the equipping of commissioned pastors for their work in the Reformed Church in America. These are high-quality courses which carry Master's level academic credit, and are designed specifically for the needs of those who are preparing to become commissioned pastors in the RCA. They are offered in a distance-learning format, and can be completed entirely in one's own setting, with no residency requirement on the campus of the seminary. Computer access to the Internet with a broadband connection is required for participation.

Each course will include 13 weeks on instruction. In consultation with leaders of commissioned pastor training in the RCA regional synods and classes, commissioned pastor candidates may elect to take any or all of the courses that may seem appropriate to their needs. Each course will be offered in a dual format. Students can take the course for two academic credits, which means that the workload for the course will be such that an average student will need to put in about 6 hours per week in the course. Or, the courses can be taken for three academic credits, which means that more topics will be covered at a deeper level, and the average workload will be about nine hours per week.

Each course is taught by an experienced instructor with an established and fruitful teaching ministry. The courses also include experienced pastors who serve as mentors and small group facilitators for group interaction. Each course will be structured in weekly modules, and each module will include audio or video lectures, reading assignments, online assignments, brief papers, and message board interaction with other students. Students are free to work on the course on their own schedule during each week, but each week's assignments must be completed at some point during that week, so that the class as a whole stays on track, and so that student interaction can be enriched.

Courses completed in this program are recorded on a Western Seminary academic transcript, and may be transferred into an M.Div. or M.A. degree program at a later date. As such, the classes presuppose that most students have already received an undergraduate college/university degree, or are able to document their ability to do work which presupposes a basic liberal arts background at the undergraduate level. Whether the courses transfer as electives or as core courses will depend on the transfer policies and curriculum of the seminary receiving the transfer credit. Students who complete all six courses in this program will receive a certificate from Western Theological Seminary. This certificate is a recognition of completed work, but it does not indicate, in itself, that a candidate is fully prepared to become a commissioned pastor. That judgment rests with the classis alone, and will often include additional requirements in supervised ministry and in the ten areas of training specified in the RCA *Book of Church Order*, section 1.II.14.3.

Those applying to be students in this program must fill out an application form, and obtain a letter of endorsement from their classis, certifying that the applicant is an approved candidate in the process of preparation to become a commissioned pastor. The application form is found at the end of this document. In order to receive credit for these courses, students without an undergraduate degree must also submit with their application an academic paper in some subject area of the liberal arts, as evidence of their ability to work at the Master's level. However, a limited number of students who cannot document the equivalence of a college degree, but who still would like to take these courses, may be admitted on a non-credit basis. These students will be expected to complete all assignments, and will

receive a signed statement from the professor certifying their completion of all assignments. Students admitted in this way will not receive academic credit for the courses.

Tuition for the courses is \$376.00 per credit hour, meaning that a two-credit version of each course costs \$752, and a three-credit version costs \$1128. Those taking classes without academic credit pay tuition at the two-credit rate. Payment is due at the beginning of each course.

If you have further questions, you may contact Dr. Jim Brownson at Western Seminary. His email address is [jim.brownson@westernsem.edu](mailto:jim.brownson@westernsem.edu).

Calendar of courses:

Fall Session: September 7, 2008 – December 13, 2009 (Thanksgiving week off).

- New Testament survey
- [Dr. James Brownson, James and Jean Cook Professor of New Testament](#)

Winter Session: January 11, 2009 – April 18, 2009 (Easter April 12 week off)

- Church History
- [Dr. Dennis Voskuil, Marvin and Jerene DeWitt Professor of Church History](#)

Summer Session: May 24, 2009 – August 22, 2009

- Old Testament survey
- [Dr. Jim Mead, Associate Professor of Religion, Northwestern College](#)

Fall Session: September 6, 2009 – December 12, 2009 (Thanksgiving week off)

- Pastoral Care / Discipleship
- Pastoral care: Rev. Dan Gilette; Discipleship: Dr. Burt Braunius

Winter Session: January 10, 2010 – April 17, 2010 (Easter April 4 week off)

- Theology
- [Dr. Leanne Van Dyk, Academic Dean and Professor of Reformed Theology](#)

Summer Session: May 25, 2010 – August 21, 2010

- Worship and Preaching
- [Dr. Timothy L. Brown, President and Henry Bast Professor of Preaching](#)



Office of Admissions  
 101 E.13<sup>th</sup> Street  
 Holland, MI 49423

800.392.8554 ~ [www.westernsem.edu](http://www.westernsem.edu) ~ 616.392.7717 FAX ~ [admissions@westernsem.edu](mailto:admissions@westernsem.edu)

## APPLICATION FOR NON-DEGREE ADMISSION

Complete this application to apply for Commissioned Pastor Distance Learning courses as a non-degree student.

<b>Personal Information</b>	
Anticipated Date of Entrance: _____ Applying For: <input type="checkbox"/> Commissioned Pastor DL Training <input type="checkbox"/> Non-credit Commissioned Pastor DL training	
Have you previously applied for admission to WTS? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes, when? _____	
Legal Name Last First Middle <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	Social Security Number: Canadian SIN#: Driver's License Number: State/Province of Issuance:
Preferred First Name: Other names used (maiden, nickname, alias):	E-Mail Address: Home Telephone: Cell Phone: Office Telephone:
Address to which correspondence should be sent:  Valid dates: From _____ to _____	FAX:
Permanent Address (If different from mailing address)	
Place of Birth	Birth Date ____/____/____ Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
How did you hear about Western Theological Seminary? <input type="checkbox"/> Admissions Counselor <input type="checkbox"/> Friend/Family Member <input type="checkbox"/> Pastor <input type="checkbox"/> Website Search <input type="checkbox"/> Magazine Ad/Article <input type="checkbox"/> Conference or College Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	Ethnic Survey (Optional) <input type="checkbox"/> Am Indian/Alaskan Native <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Black non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> African-American <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian
Country of Citizenship: <input type="checkbox"/> U.S.A. <input type="checkbox"/> Canada <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	If not U.S.A., Passport Number
<b>Technology requirements:</b> <b>Candidates must have regular access to the Internet via a broadband connection, in order to take distance learning training for commissioned pastors. Microsoft Windows XP or Vista, or Macintosh operating system, and Microsoft Word (on either PCs or Macs) is required. Computers more than 6 years old may not be fast enough to support the system requirements.</b>	For Office Use Only – Do not Complete <input type="checkbox"/> Application Received: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Application Fee

<b>Academic Record</b> List all colleges/universities attended in chronological order. The applicant is responsible for securing official academic transcripts from all colleges, universities and graduate schools.				
College/University/Other	Years Attended	Major Field(s)	Degree Earned	Year Received
Undergraduate Awards/Honors:				
Do you believe your academic transcripts reflect your academic ability? If no, please explain in an attached statement.		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
<b>Ecclesiastical Information</b>				
Baptism		Confession of Faith/Confirmation		
Church	Location	Date	Church	Location
				Date
Present Church Membership:	Name of Church	Denomination	From: Date	To: Date
Church Address		Present Minister (If you are the minister, leave blank)		
Minister's Address		Home Phone ( ) Office ( )		
My Health <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor				
List major illnesses and/or surgery (and dates):				
Previous residences (City, State/Province, Dates)				
I want to take commissioned pastor training classes for <input type="checkbox"/> Two academic credits <input type="checkbox"/> Three academic credits <input type="checkbox"/> Not for academic credit (You may change your selection in future courses if you wish.)				
<b>**Please attach a one-page double-spaced description of how you hope theological education will enhance and/or empower your ministry.</b>				

**SIGNATURE (Application cannot be processed without signature)**

I certify that information submitted on this application is accurate to the best of my knowledge. By signing this form, I recognize the Christian commitment and mission of Western Theological Seminary and agree to follow the policies defined in the seminary handbook and the conditions stated on this form.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

***The vision of Western Theological Seminary is to prepare Christians called by God to lead the church in mission. If you have questions about this application, the admissions procedure or this program, please contact us.***

**Rev. Mark G. Poppen, Director of Admissions**  
**Jill English, Admissions Assistant**  
[admissions@westernsem.edu](mailto:admissions@westernsem.edu)  
**800.392.8554**

<b>SEND TO:</b>	<b>Please include:</b>	<b>Please request and send:</b>
Office of Admissions	<input type="checkbox"/> Application	<input type="checkbox"/> Official transcripts
Western Theological Seminary	<input type="checkbox"/> One page written description (see above)**	from all colleges and
101 East 13 <sup>th</sup> Street	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Application Fee	graduate institutions
Holland MI 49423	<input type="checkbox"/> Classis letter certifying you are a commissioned pastor candidate	
<input type="checkbox"/> If you do not have the BA degree and still seek academic credit, submit a paper of 4 or more pages, showing your ability to work at the level of a college graduate.		
		08/2007