

FM 115 Practice of Christian Ministry

FM 115 is the basic unit of Theological Field Education in Western Theological Seminary's curriculum. There are three components.

1. A Teaching Church
2. A Learning Covenant
3. A Peer Group Commitment

1. The *Teaching Church* is a supervised ministry setting. More often than not it is a congregational setting. Depending on your needs it could also be a variety of other settings including hospitals, nursing homes, prisons, etc. Each, however, will provide mentoring by an experienced person in ministry. 100 hours of supervised ministry is required to complete one unit of FM 115.
2. The *Learning Covenant* is a learning tool that is self-designed. It is tailored to your learning needs and is appropriate to the ministry context. A Learning Covenant is designed to explore one of seven ministerial themes. During your seminary experience you will register for FM 115 four times and FM 125 once which will provide opportunities to complete five learning covenants.

- Education and faith formation
- Pastoral care
- Preaching and worship
- Leadership and administration
- Social justice
- Evangelism
- Cross-cultural competency

A successfully completed Learning Covenant has three components. The *planning* component is completed in designing the Learning Covenant with the guidance of a mentor. The *theological reflection* component is completed in the recording of insights and reflections in the Teaching Church "Log" (see below – these can also be shared in regular meetings with your mentor and peer group) and adding an Addendum* to your spiritual autobiography. The third component, *evaluation*, is conducted by you, your mentor and a site-team member after the execution of a Learning Covenant's plan using the Learning Covenant Evaluation forms provided.

3. The weekly Peer Group commitment, in addition to being a confidential space for personal support and prayer, is a neutral place for debriefing during the execution of the Learning Covenant and sharing your theological reflections and learning. It is also a place for you to provide feedback to peers as they share the fruit of their Learning Covenant experiences. The Peer Group will be facilitated by a ministry professional who will also be glad to share judiciously from their experiences.

Evidence for the successful completion of FM 115 will include:

- 1) **The Learning Covenant design signed off by you, your mentor, your site-team chair and formation for ministry faculty**
- 2) **A Teaching Church “log” in the form of your *Letterman Top Ten*, consisting of insights into who you are and are becoming as a called person-in-ministry and into the nature and practice of ministry. This reflection will be e-mailed to either to matt.floding@westernsem.edu; glenn.swier@westernsem.edu; Stephanie@westernsem.edu; and if you are RCA, CRC, PCUSA, or ELCA, you will e-mail a copy at the same time to your student care committee chairperson or clerk of classis.**
- 3) **A completed addendum to the spiritual autobiography*.**
- 4) **Evaluations of the Learning Covenant execution by you, your mentor and a member of the site-team.**

*Choose one of the conversation partners below with whom to dialog in order to add an addendum to your spiritual autobiography each time you register either for FM 115 or FM 125.

Jean Vanier, *From Brokenness to Community*

Mother Teresa, *No Greater Love*

Donald Miller, *Blue Like Jazz*

Maya Angelou, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*

John Calvin, *Institutes, Book 3, chapters 1-10*

Anne Lamott, *Traveling Mercies*

Langdon Gilkey, *Shantung Compound*

Frederic Buechner, *Godric*

Oscar Romero, *The Violence of Love*; and view the video: *Romero*

Michelle Wildon, *I Closed My Eyes*