



**Abilene Christian University**  
**Graduate School of Theology**  
**Course Syllabus**

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**LOCATION OF COURSE**

Plymouth Park Church of Christ  
1710 West Airport Freeway (183)  
Irving, TX 75062  
972-259-2631

**DATES**

**14 - 16 September**  
**12 - 14 October**  
Thursday 1 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.  
Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
Saturday 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

**MISSION OF ACU**

To educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.

**MISSION OF THE COLLEGE OF BIBLICAL STUDIES**

To provide leadership preparation and resources for effective worldwide ministry in the cause of Christ.

**MISSION OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

To equip men and women for effective missional leadership in ministry in all its forms, and to provide strong academic foundations for theological inquiry.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is an analysis of the theoretical principles and practical components of effective ministry to youth and families. The content is an exploration of the theological, philosophical, cultural, educational, and administrative foundations of youth ministry in the church. This course is designed to equip professionals to be relevant theorists and reflective practitioners of youth ministry. The course is 3 credit hours and has no prerequisites.

**TEACHING METHODS**

The collaborative learning environment of this course is assisted through the use of lecture, discussion, cooperative learning, and student presentations.

**LEARNING EVALUATION**

Students' grades will reflect evaluation based on quality and completion of assignments (80%), and active classroom participation (20%). Students are expected to participate in discussions by sharing questions and thoughtful comments that contribute to collaborative learning. The follow scale will be used for student grades: A = 100-91, B = 90-81, C = 80-71, D = 70-61, F = 60-0.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

COMPETENCIES	MEASUREMENT
1. Learners will explain a biblical rationale and theology for youth and family ministry that occurs in the context of the church.	1. Create a two to three page typed, double-spaced personal theology of youth ministry. The document should explain the mission and purpose for youth ministry. Describe the mission and goals relevant to youth ministry from a biblical perspective.
2. Learners will compose a book review based on a youth ministry text.	2. Write an 800 to 1,000 word review of Kenda Creasy Dean's, <i>Practicing Passion</i> , based on guidelines for reviews submitted to the Journal of Youth Ministry (see below).
3. Learners will design a one-year curriculum scope and sequence for youth and family ministry that reflects biblical integrity and age-appropriate content.	3. Create a curriculum overview for one year (52 Sunday morning lessons and 52 Wednesday night lessons) that balances the Biblical text with issues relevant to either Junior High or High School adolescents. Create both unit titles and titles for individual lessons. Include references to Scriptures that support each lesson.
4. Learners will evaluate the quality of various resources available for youth and family ministry.	4. Compile a list of helpful youth ministry resources with web site urls or address and phone numbers. Find three to five quality resources in the following areas: youth ministry journals and periodicals, youth ministry conferences, curriculum for youth ministry, popular music lyrics, movie reviews from a Christian perspective, retreat centers and Christian counselors in your area.
5. Learners will present material on an area of personal interest related to youth and family ministry.	5. Prepare and present a 7 to 10 minute overview of your research topic. This presentation should include a reference list of resources compiled for the research paper.
6. Learners will identify a current issue relevant to youth and family ministry and propose solutions based on research.	6. Write a 12 to 15 page research paper on an area of personal interest pertaining to youth ministry. Interact with what others have said, discuss strengths and weaknesses of perspectives, and propose solutions. Papers should include at least 15 sources in the reference list.

7. Learners will integrate ministry theory with current practices through the synthesis of ideas.	7. Participate in classroom discussions by sharing thoughtful comments and questions that contribute to collaborative learning.
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### ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES

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|---|---------------|
| 1. Personal Theology of Youth Ministry (2 to 3 pages) – 10%         | Due: 09/14/06 |
| 2. Book Review of <i>Practicing Passion</i> (800-1,000 words) – 10% | Due: 09/16/06 |
| 3. One Year Curriculum Scope & Sequence – 10%                       | Due: 09/25/06 |
| 4. Resources for Youth Ministry – 10%                               | Due: 10/02/06 |
| 5. Individual Presentation – 15%                                    | Due: 10/14/06 |
| 6. Research Paper (12 to 15 pages) – 25%                            | Due: 11/20/06 |
| 7. Classroom Participation – 20%                                    |               |

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. The **Personal Theology of Youth Ministry** (due **9/14/06**) is a two to three page explanation of youth ministry’s fit with the mission of the church. This should include any biblical precedents or theological principles that are applicable to the practice of youth ministry, as well as an explanation of the role of family in youth ministry. **Purpose of Project:** To express youth ministry’s purpose and describe what a youth and family ministry should accomplish.

2. The **Book Review** (due **9/16/06**) is an 800 to 1,000 word review of Kenda Creasy Dean’s book, *Practicing Passion*. This review should follow the guidelines established for reviews in the Journal of Youth Ministry: “An excellent book review ... is more than a mere summary of the contents of a book. The review should set forth fairly the relative strengths and weaknesses of the book. Note the specific contributions it makes to its field of study ... and assess the value of the book. The following points are offered to assist you in writing:

- Summarize and critique key chapters/sections of the book
- Describe the purpose of the text and intended audience
- Explain how the author attempts to accomplish his/her purpose. Is the author successful?
- Make your review purposeful; get right to the point and conduct your review with decorum.”

**Purpose of Project:** To reflect critically on a youth ministry text and practice writing for publication.

3. The **One Year Curriculum Scope & Sequence** (due **09/25/06**) should reflect intentional planning of the content a student would encounter over one year in youth ministry. List unit titles, lesson titles, and Scripture references. Balance both the biblical text and topics relevant to adolescence. **Purpose of Project:** To create a curriculum plan for the youth ministry of a church and to encourage long term planning of educational content for adolescents.

4. The **Resources for Youth Ministry** assignment (due **10/02/06**) is a compilation of useful tools for ministry. List the name of the resource, a brief description, and a web site or address and phone number. Be prepared to share these resources with fellow students in class and provide a copy of your resources for fellow students. **Purpose of Project:** To collect resources available for ministry and share these with others.

5. The **Individual Presentation** (due **10/14/06**) is a 7 to 10 minute opportunity to share information and resources found on a research topic. Presentations should include an overview of the topic as well as other aspects such as why you are interested in this subject, the types of resources you found, your initial reaction to the information, and how you've seen the church address this issue. Each presenter should share a reference list of resources compiled for their research paper with fellow students. **Purpose of Project:** To practice communication in a classroom setting, facilitate writing the research paper, and share resources with other students.

6. The **Research Paper** (due **11/20/06**) should represent scholarly research on a topic relevant to youth ministry. Topics must be selected by 10/02/06 and be approved by the instructor. **Purpose of Project:** To investigate and gain valuable insights into an area of youth ministry.

7. **Classroom Participation** is an ongoing responsibility of each student. It is defined as timely attendance, attentiveness, coming prepared for each meeting, and verbal participation in discussions. Coming prepared includes reading the assigned texts before each class. **Purpose:** To enhance the learning experience for all students and create an environment of community.

## **REQUIRED READINGS**

There are five required texts. Dean, Reid, and Thompson should be read before the first weekend. Clark and Higgs should be read before the second weekend.

Clark, Chap. 2004. *Hurt: Inside the world of today's teenagers*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker.

Dean, Kenda Creasy. 2004. *Practicing passion: Youth and the quest for a passionate church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Higgs, Mike. 2003. *Youth ministry from the inside out: How who you are shapes what you do*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Reid, Alvin L. 2004. *Raising the bar: Ministry to youth in the new millennium*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel.

Thompson, Marjorie J. 1996. *Family the forming center: A vision of the role of family in spiritual formation*. Nashville, TN: Upper Room Books.

## **COURSE PROTOCOLS**

### ***Assignments***

Assignments for the course are to be completed on time. Those turned in late without prior discussion with the instructor will result in a significant deduction in grade. Assignments that are due on days we meet should be submitted hard copy. Assignments due on days we do not meet should be submitted electronically. The following format and style matters apply to the development of course assignments:

#### Electronic:

1. Assignments may be submitted as a Word, Excel, or PDF file that is attached to an email.
2. The subject line for assignments submitted by email should be: "BIBM 646" followed by your last name.

#### Hard Copy:

1. Include a cover page with assignment name, course title & number, your name, and date.
2. Use Times New Roman 12 point font or its equivalent.
3. Paragraphs should be double-spaced and margins should be set to 1 inch on all sides.
4. Use parenthetical references and a reference list.
5. Use correct spelling and grammar.
6. Staple assignment pages together.
7. Pages should be numbered bottom center beginning with the first page of text.

### ***Attendance***

Attendance is required at all scheduled meetings. Unexcused absences will result in a reduced classroom participation grade. Students who must be absent for a brief period of time due to an important commitment should notify the instructor in advance.

### ***Classroom Etiquette***

Cell phones and pagers must be set to silent while in the classroom. Accepting phone calls inside the classroom is disruptive to the instructor and fellow students. If a call must be answered please step outside the classroom before answering.

### ***Respect for Divergent Viewpoints***

Students are expected to respect other individuals as created in the image of God. This means students will value each other in spite of differing viewpoints. In an academic environment where multiple perspectives are encouraged it is important to respect people when disagreeing with positions.

### ***Plagiarism and Cheating***

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Students found to be involved in either activity will receive a 0 on the assignment and risk additional consequences.

### ***Special Needs***

Students with special needs should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course.



## Course Schedule

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### **INTRODUCTORY MATTERS**

**Thursday 14 Sep.  
1 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.**

Introduction of the Course, Participants, and Syllabus

### **THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS**

The Purpose of the Church: Mission, Vision, Strategies, Goals, Success, & Evaluation

A Definition and Theology of Youth Ministry

### **PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS**

Models & Philosophies of Youth Ministry

Ministry Structure

The History of North American Youth Ministry

### **FAMILY FOUNDATIONS**

**Friday 15 Sep.  
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.**

Family in Youth Ministry

Family in the Bible

### **CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS**

Adolescence and Youth Culture

Adolescent Development

Adolescent Religion & Spirituality

Young People in the Bible

**LEADERSHIP FOUNDATIONS**

**Saturday 16 Sep.  
8 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

Ministerial Ethics, Integrity, and Character

Spiritual Health and Longevity in Ministry

Roles of the Youth Minister

**EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS**

**Thursday 12 Oct.  
1 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.**

Educational Resources for Ministry

Curriculum Design, Scope, and Sequence

Teaching and Motivation

Learning Theories and Evaluation

**Friday 13 Oct.  
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.**

Discipleship in Youth Ministry

Internships and Ministry Supervision

**ADMINISTRATIVE FOUNDATIONS**

Programming & Communication

Recruiting and Training Adult Volunteers

**STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**

**Saturday 14 Oct.  
8 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

**CLOSING SESSION**

Course Evaluation



## Reference List

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- Bisset, Tom. 1992. *Why Christian kids leave the faith*. Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House Publishers.
- Borgman, Dean. 1997. *When Kumbaya is not enough: A practical theology for youth ministry*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers.
- Bubeck, Mark I. 1997. *Raising lambs among wolves*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press.
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- Jones, Tony. 2001. *Postmodern youth ministry*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan/Youth Specialties.
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- Lambert, Dan. 1999. Determining research needs in North American Christian youth ministry: A Delphi study. Ed.D. Dissertation. University of Cincinnati.
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## **Courseware and Copyright**

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### **COURSEWARE**

This course syllabus is intended to accurately reflect the learning objectives, course format, assignments, assessments, course protocols, grading scale, policies on assignments, course schedule, and reference list that allow students to appraise the course. However, the instructor reserves the right to modify any part of this syllabus as may be necessary at any point due to circumstances that occur.

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