

DRAFT
Subject to change. Full syllabus available in Canvas on Wednesday, August 12th.

**Loyola Institute for Ministry
Loyola University New Orleans**

Pastoral Leadership and Organization LIM-G861-Y1G0E

Fall 2026

Important! You will be notified by email to your Loyola Gmail address when your course web site is available (normally the week before class begins). Please reply to the instructor's email when you receive it to confirm that you are ready to begin the course.

Course Description

This course explores the meaning of pastoral leadership in light of the current research in organizational development and ecclesiology. Current leadership literature is surveyed with particular attention to the mission of the church and the ecclesial vision of participants. Special emphasis is placed upon the dynamics of learning organizations, participative strategic planning processes, and organizational development. Participants will analyze an organizational system for its strengths and weaknesses and propose interventions that would strengthen its organizational functioning.

This course, *Pastoral Leadership and Organization*, emphasizes skills development in the areas of leadership, systems thinking, and organizational change. It combines theory and skill-building to empower participants to become effective change agents in the organizations or ministry sites in which they minister. Because of this emphasis, the course draws heavily from the discipline of organizational development and offers students a map for analyzing organizations, discerning leadership styles, and developing effective change strategies, both personally and organizationally.

Key Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- describe some of the key qualities of an excellent pastoral leader and develop a plan for your own continuing leadership development.
- discuss the theological implications of some of the major paradigm shifts that have occurred in organizational leadership theories over the past century and discern how your own style of leadership relates to one or more of those models.

- explain some of the key disciplines of learning organizations and some possible strategies for developing them in organizational settings.
- describe and diagnose some of the major processes that occur in organizational systems.
- identify key elements of change agency that are applicable to various communities and ministry sites.
- reflect theologically on social arrangements and processes found in organizations.

Required Readings

Please purchase the texts for this class as soon as possible from the bookstore of your choice or from the Loyola Bookstore.

Fleischer, Barbara and Dan Gast. *Pastoral Leadership and Organization*. Loyola Institute for Ministry, 2016. (All chapters required are available in Canvas).

Ebener, Dan R. *Pastoral Leadership: Best Practices for Church Leaders*. Paulist Press, 2018. ISBN-13: 978-0-8091-5378-7 **Note:** This book is available in Canvas as an ebook whose pages you may download.

Hawkins, Thomas. *The Learning Congregation: A New Vision of Leadership*. Westminster/John Knox Press, 1997. ISBN: 0-664-25699-6 **Note:** This book is available in Canvas as an ebook whose pages you may download.

Wheatley, Margaret. *Leadership and the New Science*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2006. ISBN-13: 978-1-57675-344-6 **Note:** This book is available in Canvas as an ebook whose pages you may download.

Zscheile et al. *Leading Faithful Innovation: Following God into a Hopeful Future*. Fortress Press, 2023. ISBN-13: 978-1506488769 **Note:** This book is available in Canvas as an ebook whose pages you may download.

Additional required and recommended articles found in the Canvas course.

For guidance on citations and referencing styles see the *LIM Guide to Written Theological Reflection* (available in Canvas).

Evaluation and Course Requirements

Sequence of Topics/Calendar of Assignments

Date	Topic	Assignments
Week 1 8/17–8/24	Getting Started	Introduce self, complete readings, video
Week 2 8/25–31	Organizational Life	Complete readings, videos, discussion questions
Week 3 9/1–9/7	Leadership in Organizations (Labor Day Holiday 9/7)	Readings, videos, discussion questions
Week 4 9/8–9/14	Personal Characteristics and Practices of Leaders	Complete readings, videos, discussion question; submit Plan for Leadership Development due 9/14 by 11:59 pm CT
Week 5 9/15–9/21	Systems Thinking and the Learning Organization	Complete readings, videos, discussion questions; submit Description of Your System due 9/24 by 11:59 pm CT
Week 6 9/22–9/28	Personal Mastery in Learning Organizations	Complete readings, audios, discussion questions, journal on your system, research
Week 7 9/29–10/5	Unearthing Mental Models and Building Shared Vision	Complete readings, videos, discussion questions, journal on your system; submit SWOT Analysis due 10/5 by 11:59 pm CT
Week 8 10/6–10/12	Team Learning	Complete readings, videos, discussion questions, research
Week 9 10/13–10/19	Fall Break	
Week 10 10/20–10/26	Information Flow, Strategic Thinking, and Organizational Change	Complete readings, videos, discussion question; submit Initial Understanding of SWOT due 10/26 by 11:59 pm CT

Week 11 10/27–11/2	Sustaining Organizational Change Efforts	Complete readings, videos, discussion question, submit Review of Your Leadership Development due 11/2 by 11:59 pm CT; begin drafting final paper
Week 12 11/3–11/9	Working Break	
Week 13 11/10–11/16	Chaos and Rebirth	Complete readings, videos, discussion question, continue drafting final paper
Week 14 11/17–11/23	Working Break	
Week 15 11/24–30	Thanksgiving Break	
Week 16 12/1–12/4	Final Assignment and Course Evaluation	Reflective Essay due 12/1 by 11:59 pm CT

Dec. 15: Due date for posting grades 11:59 pm CT

Assessment

Each student’s final grade will include the following:

		Percentage Final Grade	
		Graduate	CEU
1	Substantive participation in weekly Canvas discussion and small group discussions	50%	75%
2	Leadership Development Plan	10%	10%
3	Description of Your System	5%	5%
4	SWOT Analysis	10%	10%
5	Final Assignment, 10–12 page paper	25%	NA

1) Participation in Weekly Sessions / Content Assignments and Discussions (50% of graduate student assessment; 75% of CEU evaluation)

The modules of this course include assignments for reading, video segments, and discussion questions. These are provided in the weekly modules in our Canvas course. In addition to reading all the materials assigned and watching assigned videos, all students will also be expected to participate in the class discussions online.

You will also be asked to participate in two virtual small group sessions that you will initiate and assess. That is included as part of this participation grading.

Specific details regarding the schedule for posting, length requirements, discussion leaders, and small group meetings will be included in the final syllabus posted in Canvas the week of August 12th.

2) Leadership Development Plan (10% of graduate student assessment; 10% of CEU evaluation)

In Week 4, you are asked to identify 3-5 goals for your ongoing leadership skill development, as well as specific ways you will approach those goals and assess your progress. In Week 11, you are asked to review your progress toward the goals identified earlier, and modify them as you see fit, using the insights gained in the course. Full directions will be included in the final syllabus posted in Canvas the week of August 12th.

3) Description of Your System (5% of graduate student assessment; 5% of CEU evaluation)

In Week 5, you are asked to complete a description of your system. Full directions will be included in the final syllabus posted in Canvas the week of August 12th.

4) SWOT Analysis of Your System (10% of graduate student assessment; 10% of CEU evaluation)

In Week 10, you are asked to complete an analysis of the internal Strengths and Weaknesses and the external Opportunities and Threats currently facing your system. Complete details are located in the weekly modules in Canvas.

4) Final Research Reflection (25% of graduate student assessment; not required for CEU evaluation)

This 10-12 page research reflection is based on the system or organization that you chose in Week Three of the course. You are not being asked to actually implement your research reflection, but rather to use the ideas and skills gained in the course and apply them to an actual organization or system. Full directions will be included in the final syllabus posted in Canvas the week of August 12th.

Grading Scale

A	93-100	B-	80-82.9	D+	67-69.9
A-	90-92.9	C+	77-79.9	D	60-66.9
B+	87-89.9	C	73-76.9	F	0-59.9
B	83-86.9	C-	70-72.9		

Please note that the LIM grading scale uses B as the standard for graduate-quality work. A and B+ indicate graduate work done with distinction, with B- and below signifying levels below graduate standards.

Letter Grade	Quality Points	Characteristics of Student Work
A	4.0	Work done with distinction. An outstanding use of all four evaluation criteria as a catalyst for critical reflection.
A-	3.7	Work done with distinction, with a few minor corrections needed.
B+	3.3	Work of very good quality. The assignment is addressed in an exceptional manner with a good balance of personal insight and academic documentation.
B	3.0	The standard for the master's degree. The assignment is adequately addressed in a clear and concise manner with appropriate documentation. If subsequent work meets this standard of quality, the degree will be awarded.
B-	2.7	The work is slightly below the standard for master's level work. The assignment is addressed, but a number of corrections is needed to address the assignment in a clear and concise manner. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program.
C+	2.3	Substandard graduate work. Evaluation criteria are not adequately met in the assignment. Moderate improvement is needed. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program.
C	2	Less than graduate-level work. Evaluation criteria are not met. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program.
C-	1.7	Below average, grade does not count towards graduation.
D+	1.3	Minimally passing, grade does not count towards graduation.
D	1	Minimally passing, grade does not count towards graduation.
F	0	Assignment not addressed at all, incomplete assignment, or not submitted on time.

Course Policies

Incomplete Grade Policy

Students are subject to the university policy regarding incomplete grades with the following additions to university policy. Grades of Incomplete are given at the instructor's discretion. Students must complete LIM's Incomplete Grade Request Form found in the Resources » Policies, Forms, & Services section of their Canvas course. Students should first inquire of their instructor whether or not they are eligible for an incomplete; this must occur with sufficient time to complete the process explained here. To be eligible, students may not have received an Incomplete in the previous semester, must have completed at least 75% of the course work to date, and must have at least a C or above in the course. After the instructor makes an initial assessment of eligibility, including checking with the LIM Office to ensure there was no Incomplete in the previous semester and finds the student eligible, by the due date of the course's final assignment, a student must complete and obtain all signatures for LIM's Incomplete Grade Request Form found in the Resources section of their Canvas course and submit it

to their instructor, who will forward a copy to the LIM Director. LIM graduate students may not receive Incompletes in LIM courses in consecutive semesters.

Attendance & Participation

Students are subject to the university policy regarding attendance found online in the Bulletin. Students in online courses communicate their presence by active participation in weekly discussions. Each course's instructor sets requirements for how many times students must post on the Discussion Board in Canvas. Failing to post during the first week of class may result in removal from the course. If you foresee that you will be unable to post in a given week, please contact the instructor ahead of time. Extensions for posting are given at the instructor's discretion and for a valid reason may be granted if arranged ahead of time. In extraordinary circumstances, students may arrange with their instructor to post up to two weeks after a deadline, though this may entail a grade reduction. Posts and other assignments submitted more than two weeks late may be subject to a grade of zero. If students do not post in a given week, they are considered absent. Absence for more than one week without contacting the instructor may result in removal from and failure of the course.

University Policies

Please read Part 2 of the syllabus (located in Canvas) for university policies on plagiarism, AI, accessible education, and more.