

**ACTS Seminaries**

**OF TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY**

## **CPL 605 Church Planting Practicum**

### **Directed Study Syllabus**

#### **ACTS Seminaries**

Sept 2, 2008

Director of Practicum: Denominational Church Planting Director

Two (2) Credit Hours

Mentor: Church Planter

ACTS Church Planting Prof of Record: Ron Toews D.Min.

Prerequisite: concurrent to, or upon completion of, CPL track

#### **A. Overview of ACTS' Practicum for Church Planters**

The church and seminary are partners in developing effective church planters, and each plays a unique role. The role of the seminary is to expose students to the theology and theory of church planting. The role of the church is both to call out church planters and give church planting students "hands on" opportunities in church planting as they work alongside seasoned planters. This vital partnership results in qualified and effective church planters.

ACTS' Church Planting Practicum is a two-credit course, which requires students to be placed in a bonafede church plant for four to six months, concurrent to ACTS church-planting track. The practicum is administered by the student's denomination.

#### **B. Objectives**

The practicum provides the student with opportunity to:

1. gain crucial experience in the practice of church planting;
2. benefit from the intentional guidance of an experienced planter;
3. build a philosophy of church planting that grows out of reflection upon their experience;
4. apply the lessons learned in the classroom in real-time church planting settings;
5. experience the challenges of church planting first hand;
6. bless others by providing meaningful service to people;
7. determine his or her suitability for church planting.

#### **C. The Practicum Setting**

In consultation with the student's denomination's church planting director, the student is required to secure a placement (voluntary or paid) in a significant church planting setting for four to six months. Ideally the setting should provide the student with exposure to all aspects of church planting. If the student is not a member of one of the six ACTS-partner denominations, ACTS will facilitate a suitable practicum with the student's denomination.

The student should plan on committing at least eleven (11) hours per week to serving in the church plant. This placement should afford the student opportunity to fully explore her or his church planting calling and gifting under the direction of an experienced church-planting mentor who will commit to investing the time and energy necessary to interact in significant ways with the student.

#### **D. The Church Planting Mentor**

The student is required to meet with her or his church planting mentor weekly for at least one hour per meeting for the duration of the practicum. It is expected that these meetings will include discussion of the student's personal and leadership development as a church planter and not solely conversation surrounding ministry details. Prayer should be prominent. The student should view these meetings as opportunities to benefit from his or her mentor's experience and guidance. The student and mentor will establish a contract (**see pages 3-6 of this syllabus**) at the first meeting outlining their weekly mentoring goals and how these will be accomplished; both will sign the contract, which will be submitted to the student's church planting director and the ACTS Church Planting Prof of Record.

After the 2<sup>nd</sup> last mentoring session, the student will write a 1,000-word analysis of the practicum and church planting experience to the church planting mentor for discussion in the final session. The mentor will read the analysis, making substantive comments in the margins, and return the paper to the student, who will then submit the same copy to his or her denomination's church planting director and the ACTS Church Planting Prof of Record.

#### **E. Journal**

At least four days per week, the student will write a 100-word (maximum) daily journal; these entries can be anecdotal, idea-catchers, evaluative, prayers, etc. Once per week (in one of the three remaining days), the student will write a 250-word (maximum) journal entry; this longer entry is intended to answer questions such as:

- What is God doing in my heart during this practicum?
- What spiritual gifts and personality strengths are being confirmed?
- What personal growth edges are being revealed?

The longer journal entries will be submitted to the denominational church-planting director on the final day of the practicum. The director will read the journal, and follow up the reading of the journal with a significant discussion with the student.

#### **F. Grading**

The denominational church planting director, in consultation with the ACTS Church Planting Prof of Record, will determine the student's practicum grade, on a Pass/Fail basis.

**Church Planting Mentoring Contract**  
**To Be Filled Out by the Student and Mentor**  
**In The Church Planting Setting**

**1. Church Planting Mentor**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Ministry setting: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Denominational affiliation, if any: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. ACTS Student**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Denominational Affiliation, if any: \_\_\_\_\_

ACTS Seminary: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. General Mentoring Objectives

Underscoring a principle that is surely as true for women as it is for men, Howard and William Hendricks, in their book *As Iron Sharpens Iron: Building Character in a Mentoring Relationship* (78), write:

Every man should seek to have three individuals in his life. You need a Paul. You need a Barnabas. And you need a Timothy. These three kinds of mentoring relationships a man desperately needs to pursue: a Paul, an older man who can build into his life; a Barnabas, a peer, a soul brother to whom he can be accountable; and a Timothy, a younger man into whose life he is building.

Bobb Biehl, in *Confidence in Finding a Mentor and Becoming One*, says, “mentoring is a lifelong relationship in which a mentor helps a protégé reach her or his God-given potential” (19). He goes on to say that

Mentoring is like having an ideal aunt or uncle whom you respect deeply, who loves you at a family level, cares for you at a close friend level, supports you at a sacrificial level, and offers wisdom at a modern Solomon level. Having a mentor is not like having another mother or father. Mentoring is more “how can I help you?” than “what should I teach you?”

Mentoring is often thought of as an exchange between an older person and a younger person. And it certainly can be structured in that way. But mentoring can also be a mutual exchange between peers under the guidance of a facilitator. The Bible contains many fine examples of various kinds of mentoring, without actually ever using the word mentor.

### 4. Responsibilities of the Mentor

Our ability to prepare people for Christian leadership in the classroom is limited. It is therefore crucial that students gain significant “hands on” opportunities to experience Christian leadership prior to graduation. Students need to be able to apply their classroom learning in the laboratory of life.

We at ACTS express deep gratitude to individuals in the Christian community who make themselves willing to serve as mentors, guides, and friends to our students. We suspect that mentor-leaders are already busy. Yet their contribution to an ACTS student represents an investment in his or her growth as a servant of Jesus, and to the increase in the number of effective leaders in the church and world. Thank you!

The practicum provides the student with opportunity to:

- a. gain crucial experience in the practice of church planting;
- b. benefit from the intentional guidance of an experienced planter;
- c. satisfy the conditions set out in CPL 603;
- d. build a philosophy of church planting that grows out of reflection upon their experience;
- e. apply the lessons learned in the classroom in real-time church planting settings;
- f. experience the challenges of church planting first hand;
- g. bless others by providing meaningful service to people;
- h. determine his or her suitability for church planting.

The mentoring role entails the following:

- a. The creation of an avenue for service in the mentor's church planting setting for the student for four to six months. The student is expected to devote eleven (11) hours per week serving in the church plant.
- b. Meeting with the church planting student weekly for at least one hour per meeting. It is expected that these meetings will also feature discussion of the student's personal development as a leader rather than solely for the discussion of ministry details. Prayer should be prominent. The student views these meetings as opportunities to benefit from the mentor's experience and guidance.
- c. The mentor and the student will establish a mentoring contract at the first meeting outlining mutual goals and how these will be accomplished; both will sign the contract (keep a copy), which the student will submit to the ACTS Church Planting Prof of Record.
- d. After the 2<sup>nd</sup> last mentoring session is complete, the student will write a 1,000-word analysis of the placement and mentoring experience and submit it to the leadership mentor in the final session. The mentor will read the analysis, making substantive comments in the margins, discuss it in the final session, before returning to the paper to the student, who will then submit the same copy to the ACTS Church Planting Prof of Record.

**Due Date: One month after end of practicum**

