**Appalachian School of Theology**

**MS – 465 Bachelor’s Program, MS 565 Master’s Program**

**“Formation for Ministry”**

**Course Syllabus**

**Fall 2025**

**I.** **Class Meeting Place, Dates, and Time**

Meeting Place: Dover Baptist Association, 11006 Lakeridge Parkway

Ashland, VA 23005

Dates: Each Thursday evening beginning September 4th and ending December 11th.

Time: 6:30 – 8:30 PM

**II. Course Instructor**

Pastor Jeff Mills; Mobile Phone: 804-338-9615; E-mail: pastormills@gmail.com

**III. Course Description**

This is an introductory course designed to acquaint the student with the Christian ministry as a vocation, to increase the student’s self-knowledge as a minister, and to help the student define his / her role and develop his / her skills in ministry.

**IV. Learner-Center Outcomes / Course Objectives**

The goal of this course is to prepare students for effective ministry in and through the local church. As a result of their involvement students should:

1. Understand the theological, as well as the personal and social, nature of Christian ministry.

2. Articulate a personal call to ministry.

3. Know and understand oneself as a minister (personal temperament, strengths, weaknesses, spiritual gifts, and skills).

4. Embrace, develop, and exercise a personal ministry “style.”

5. Engage in the various areas of personal preparation and growth in Christian ministry.

6. Function intentionally, faithfully, ethically, and effectively as a minister in the local church.

7. Form reasonable belief-positions regarding contemporary issues in ministry and articulate how these may influence and shape his/her ministry in the local church.

8. Help others mature in the areas of bible study, leadership, and ministry.

9. Integrate their learning experiences into the formation of a Christian worldview that honors Jesus Christ and aids in the advancement of His Kingdom.

**V. Required Texts and Materials**

In addition to the Bible you will need two textbooks which are as follows:

1. Willimon, William H., *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry*, Abingdon Press, 2002, ISBN 0-687-04532-0 *which will be referred to as “the Main Text.”*

2. Willimon, William, H., *Pastor: A Reader for Ordained Ministry,* Abingdon Press, 2002, ISBN 0-687-09788-6 *which will be referred to as Text #2*.

**VI. Learning Activities and Evaluation**

1. Attendance –

* Students are expected to attend all class sessions.
* If for any reason it is not possible to attend a class, it is common courtesy to inform the instructor beforehand, or in case of an unavoidable emergency, at the earliest opportunity.

2. Reading & Participation –

* There will be regular reading assignments from the text, the Bible, and other sources in preparation for the class.
* Class participants are expected to do all of the assigned readings prior to each session and come to class prepared to critically discuss the main themes covered in their reading assignments.

3. In Class Projects –

* There will be ***two in-class projects*** that each student will be expected to participate in and be a vital part of. The instructor will be at liberty to ***change these two in-class projects into research papers if he / she so chooses***. These projects will be assigned by the instructor throughout the semester. In addition, there will be ***one reflection paper*** which each student will be expected to prepare and submit to the instructor.

**VII Teaching Methodology**

This course is designed to be an interactive learning experience. As such we will employ lecture, interactive discussion, and intense Bible study. The facilitator will provide a copy of his teaching outline to each participant; however, students are expected to prepare for each session by completing their reading and written assignments in order that they may actively and positively enhance our learning environment by their intense participation.

**VIII Expectations of Students**

* Regular attendance in class is required of all students.
* Students are expected to be on time for class and ready to study.
* **Plagiarism**1. Students are expected to write their own work. While students are encouraged to

study and talk with fellow students and the instructor, each student must write

their own assignments.  
2. If you borrow more than 3 or 4 words in a row from another source, it should

be properly referenced using quotation marks and full bibliography information including page numbers. When you borrow ideas, but not actual

words, you may cite the source at your discretion to help the reader follow up

on your writing.

* **Use of Artificial Intelligence**

In our age of AI (Artificial Intelligence) wherein we, as students of the Word, have the knowledge of the world at our fingertips academic integrity cannot be overstated, over-looked, or over-emphasized.

Our goal at AST (Appalachian School of Theology) is to produce well-trained students of the Word of God who voluntarily embrace a Biblical Worldview that honors Jesus Christ. As such, each student is expected to exhibit and maintain exemplary behavior with moral, ethical, and academic integrity. We believe that self-discipline and mutual respect must be maintained by students and faculty members as well. With these thoughts in mind, students should use extreme caution to avoid plagiarism and indulging in the assistance of AI.

* **Writing Guidelines**

*Book Reviews, Discussion Questions and Research Papers* should be typed, double spaced in Times New Roman 12-point font. Final papers should be submitted electronically via email as a Word document or Google docs attachment (preferably Word document). Margins are to be one inch. You must use page numbers. You do not need a front/title page as title pages and citation pages will not count towards the total number of pages required for an assignment). Simply put your name, course number and assignment (such as “mid-term exam” or “Research Paper) at the top of your paper on the first page. Sources are always to be cited by students using a standard citation style (e.g. Chicago, Turabian, APA, MLA, etc.). Whatever citation style you choose, be consistent. Use quotation marks when quoting a source verbatim, whether ancient or modern. Avoid long citations of ancient texts or modern scholars. Do not make assertions that you cannot support without direct evidence. Aim for a polished writing style (idiomatic, yet semi-formal); avoid contractions, slang or informal expressions, run-on sentences, switching between past and present tenses in the same sentence, passive voice, common verbs (try to use more descriptive, precise verbs), and the pronouns “you,” “we,” and “us.” Write clearly and concisely. Avoid unnecessarily long, complex sentences with numerous subordinate clauses. Clear written expressions are one goal of this course. Please remember to proofread and use your computer’s grammar and spellcheck!

* **Teaching Methodology**This course is designed to be an interactive learning experience. As such we will employ lecture, interactive discussion, and intense Bible study. The facilitator will provide a copy of his/her teaching outline to each participant; however, students are expected to prepare for each session by completing their reading and written assignments in order that they may actively and positively enhance our learning environment by their intense participation.
* **Grading Scale**  
  A+ 98-100 (4.3) The student has demonstrated above average mastery of the

material and its application

A 95-97 (4.0)   
A- 93-94 (3.7)   
B+ 90-92 (3.3) The student has demonstrated average mastery of the  
B 87-91 (3.0) material and its application  
B- 85-86 (2.7)   
C+ 82-84 (2.3) The student has demonstrated the required mastery of the   
C 79-81 (2.0) material and its application  
C- 77-78 (1.7)   
D+ 74-76 (1.3) The student has demonstrated below average mastery of the  
D 71-73 (1.0) material and its application  
D- 69-70 (0.7)   
F 68 – below (0.0) The student has failed to master the material  
P Passing WP Withdrew Passing  
I Incomplete WF Withdrew Failing

* **Library Support**1. Our students are offered the privilege of utilizing the resources of the Regional

Resource Library at First Baptist Church in Nickelsville, but without borrowing privileges.

2. Virginia residents and UVA/Virginia Tech graduates can use and borrow books from

the University of Virginia and Virginia Tech libraries by using a Virginia driver’s

license.  
3. Access to free, full text journals is available at <http://www.doaj.org>.

* **Late & Make-up Assignments**Unless other arrangements are made with the facilitator and faculty all assignments are due as listed.
* **Use of Technological Devices**Students may use laptops, tablets, smart phones, & mini recorders for class.

**IX CLASS SCHEDULE**

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| **Date** | **Readings** | **Topics** |
| 9/4/2025  Week #1 | Main Text, Preface - pg. 26; Text #2, Preface – pg. 45 | **Course Introduction**  **The Nature and Call of Christian Ministry** |
| 9/11/2025  Week #2 | Main Text, pgs. 27-54; Text #2, pgs. 46-69 | **The Call to Ministry: The Meaning & Method of Ordination & The Authority of the Minister** |
| 9/18/2025  Week #3 | Main Text, pgs. 55-89; Text #2, pgs. 70 - 89 | **The Qualities & Images of a Minister** |
| 9/25/2025  Week #4 | Main Text, 90 – 110; Text # 2, pgs. 90-102 | **The Minister as a Worship Leader** |
| 10/2/2025  Week #5 | Main Text, pgs. 111 – 132; Text #2 pgs. 103 - 123 | **The Minister as Pastor** |
| 10/9/2025  Week #6 | Main Text, 133 – 236; Text #2, pgs. 124 - 187 | **The Minister as Interpreter of Scripture** |
| 10/16/2025  Week #7 | **Reading Days: No Class** |  |
| 10/23/2025  Week #8 | Main Text, 237 - 264; Text #2, pgs. 188 - 212 | **The Minister as Preacher** |
| 10/30/2025  Week #9 | Main Text, 237 – 248; Text #2, pgs. 213-236 | **The Minister as Counselor** |
| 11/6/2025  Week #10 | Main Text, 249 - 264; Text #2, pgs. 237 - 246 | **The Minister as Teacher** |
| 11/13/2025  Week #11 | Main Text, 265 – 274; Text #2, pgs. 247 - 278 | **The Minister as Church Leader** |
| 11/20/2025  Week #12 | Main Text, 275 – 336; Text #2, pgs. 279 - 321 | **The Minister as Character: Clergy Ethics** |
| 11/27/2025  Week #13 | **Thanksgiving Day – No Class** |  |
| 12/4/2025  Week #14 | No Reading Assignments | **The Minister’s Rewards & Final Challenge: Striving and Thriving in Ministry for a Lifetime** |
| 12/11/2025  Week #15 | Review and Wrap Up | **Hope you have a great Christmas!** |