

Church Planting (ML 464/664), 3 credits

Term and Year Offered: Summer Session 2, 2022

Learning Environment: One week intensive; in-person synchronous and hyflex options

Meeting Dates/Times/Place: July 5-July 29

Zoom sessions for ALL students:

Tuesday, July 12 at 3:00-4:30pm Central

Tuesday, July 19 at 3:00-4:30pm Central

Tuesday, August 16 at 12:00-1:30 Central (optional; update on final project progress)

On-campus meetings for in-person students:

Monday, July 25 at 8:15am - Friday, July 29 at 12:00 noon

Synchronous sessions for ALL students, hosted online during the week intensive:

Monday, July 25 at 3:30-5:00 Central (Clifton Strengths)

Tuesday, July 26 at 3:00-5:00 Central (Debrief community exercise/demographic data)

Wednesday, July 27 at 9:00-11:00 Central (Community presentations)

Thursday, July 28 at 2:00-4:00 Central (Missional design game)

Synchronous Canvas reflection/discussion times

Plan about 15 minutes at each of these times to post your reflections and to respond to posts by your fellow students:

Monday, July 25 at 11:30am (share your reflections on the 2-loops model of living systems)

Wednesday, July 27 at 4:30pm (share your reflections on church site visit 1)

Thursday, July 28 at 1:00pm (share your reflections on church site visit 2)

About Your Instructor(s): Katie Nakamura Rengers (she/her/hers)

Contact Information: krengers@bexleyseabury.edu

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Office Hours: Use my calendar link to schedule a conversation, and send me a quick email to let me know what you'd like to talk about: <https://go.oncehub.com/KatieRengers>

Course Description: This course is an introduction to the ecclesiology, spiritual postures, models and leadership practices of church planting, particularly in the Episcopal Church and other mainline denominations. We will look at church planting as part of the larger shift that is taking place in our culture and church around community, institutions, religion and race. The course will be primarily experiential, including neighborhood exegesis, visits to local church plant sites, and exercises in collaborative leadership.

Course Goals and Outcomes:

Goal 1: Students who successfully complete this course will be able to identify the theologies, ecclesiologies, assumptions and practices that have driven church planting in The Episcopal Church in the post-war era, and how they may help or hinder current efforts to start new faith communities.

- **Course Learning Outcome(s):** You will be able to reflect on ministries, narratives and organizational systems in your home diocese and across the wider Episcopal Church that might hinder, or be used to nurture, future church plants. You will learn tools for hosting conversations around change. (MDiv 1.3, 3.3, 3.4 DMin 1.1, 3.2)

- **Assessment:** This outcome will be assessed by your participation in the July 19th Zoom session, participation in and reflection on a design theory game, and (if you choose this option) the final project option to present a church planting history of your diocese.

Goal 2: You will emerge with an understanding of the missional postures and practices that are vital for church planting in today's world.

- **Course Learning Outcome(s):** You will read and discuss perspectives on neighborhood-driven mission; you will practice community exegesis and one-to-one conversations, and learn how to seek demographic data for your community and understand how this data can be used to expand your understanding of a mission field. (MDiv 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 5.3, DMin 1.2, 2.2)
- **Assessment:** You will demonstrate an awareness of and curiosity about a new neighborhood through the Community Presentation exercise

Goal 3: You will gain knowledge of different models of new faith communities, including non-dominant culture church plants, multicultural communities, and communities that worship in traditional and non traditional styles.

- **Course Learning Outcome(s):** You will demonstrate creativity and strategy around the work of planning a new church plant, including rhythms of life and worship, nurturing new leadership and finding social and financial sustainability. (MDiv 5.2, DMin 1.1, 2.1)
- **Assessment:** You will bring this learning to the design theory game that we play together and (if you choose this option) to your final project of developing a draft ministry plan for a New Episcopal Community in your diocese.

Goal 4: You will learn about practices for collaborative and shared leadership around developing vision, shared commitment, and a ministry plan

- **Course Learning Outcome(s):** Deeper knowledge of how you yourself might use your gifts on a future church planting team, and a variety of tools including the Clifton Strengths Finder, design theory, and Art of Hosting resources to help you engage a team in planning for mission. (MDiv 5.1, 5.3, 5.5, DMin 2.1, 2.3)
- **Assessment:** You will emerge with tangible tools that you feel competent to use with church planting teams/vestries/dioceses

A Word About Assessment: From Course Outcome Assessment to Program Assessment

Bexley Seabury Seminary regularly evaluates the quality of our programs using a variety of data, including documents that are deposited into student portfolios. These portfolios consist of designated student work (artifacts) from each course. Each artifact is graded and accompanied by a scored rubric that assesses the work in light of desired curricular outcomes. The designated assessment artifact for this course is the final assignment, described in detail under "Requirements and Assignments" below.

We use your portfolio to assess student learning (in the aggregate) and the effectiveness of our curricula in reaching desired goals and objectives. This process does not involve any further evaluation of your work for grading purposes. No identifying information will be included in any evaluation or report provided to our accreditors or other outside parties. For further information, see the Student Handbook. You may also talk with your instructor, your advisor, the Assessment Coordinator (Lelia Fry, lfry@bexleyseabury.edu), or the Academic Dean, (Jason Fout, jfout@bexleyseabury.edu).

Learning Methodology:

This course begins with a look at the cultural and religious conditions and assumptions that drove church planting and congregational development in post-war America. We will read two texts that describe and critique these efforts (the first parts of Roxburgh and Warnes) and come together for a Zoom conversation about them before our week-long intensive. This session will be on July 19 from 3:00-4:30pm Central. We will ask how you see these approaches showing up in the narrative and practices of your home church context.

Before the week-intensive, you will also be asked to read Emily Scott's story of planting a dinner church in Brooklyn, NY and to finish Roxburgh and Warnes. You will listen to two episodes of The Genesis Podcast that describe church planting perspectives in non-dominant cultures and be asked to respond to them by creating a short audio recording.

When we come together for the week-long intensive, our emphasis will shift to what Warnes calls a paradigm of "pneumatological witness." Students will be asked to lead us in conversations on Part 2 of Roxburgh's book, which describes

practices of deep community listening, discernment and decision making. From Tuesday on, the week will be primarily experiential. We will engage in a group community exegesis exercise (culminating in presentations about the community you explored) and visit two church plant sites. Hyflex students will choose a neighborhood in their home city for the community exegesis exercise, and will find two church plants (or restarts) to visit near where they live.

During the week-long intensive, in-person students will be exposed to a variety of different collaborative leadership techniques including the 2-loops Model of Living Systems, the World Cafe and frequent reflection on how their Clifton Strengths themes show up in each of our exercises. We will explore how these can be helpful tools for a church planting team and its supporting diocesan leaders. Per the schedule below, hyflex students will join onsite students for a 1.5-2 hour synchronous session each day, Monday through Thursday.

Course Required and Recommended Resources:

Books to be purchased or borrowed:

Roxburgh, Alan J. *Joining God, Remaking Church, Changing the World*. New York: Morehouse Publishing; 2015.

Warnes, Nicholas. *Deconstructing Church Planting*. Los Angeles: Cyclical Publishing; 2021

Scott, Emily M.D. *For all who Hunger*. New York: Convergent Books; 2020.

Additional materials and resources on Canvas

“What to Expect When You’re Starting a New Episcopal Community” - developed by the Office of Church Planting and Redevelopment, 2020

The Genesis Podcast Episodes:

- The Gathering (an interview with the Rev. Peter Huang)
- A Conversion Story (an interview with the Rev. David Perkins)
- Re-peopling The Episcopal Church (an interview with the Rev. Fred Vergara)

Video Introduction to the Clifton StrengthsFinder, developed by the Office of Church Planting and Redevelopment

Recommended Resources

Roxburgh, *Joining God in the Great Unraveling: Where We Are & What I’ve Learned*. Cascade Books; 2021.

- This is essentially a follow-up to *Joining God, Remaking Church, Changing the World*. He discusses the challenge of churches repeatedly defaulting to “ecclesiocentrism” and expands on many of his ideas in the earlier book about how churches are responding to the “great unraveling” taking place.

Rendle, Gil. *Doing the Math of Mission*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield; 2014.

- Though ASA and budgets aren’t necessarily the best tools for assessing success of a new faith community, there are ways to reflect on whether a church plant is making the difference intended to make in God’s world. Rendle’s book encourages leaders to find ways to measure (rather than count) their progress toward specified goals and outcomes. I recommend this book highly as a conversation starter between a church planter and their diocesan supporters/funders.

Steigerwald, Daniel. *10 Pitfalls in Starting New Churches: Avoiding Hazards on the Way to Health*. Los Angeles: Cyclical Resources; 2020.

- I often ask church planters, “what do you wish you had known before you started?” This book is a good (and brief) overview of some of the things that are most likely to trip up a first-time church planter. Dan is a long time church

planting coach and mentor of innovative leaders, and he and his wife Ann are frequent consultants to the Episcopal Church.

Marcuson, Margaret J. Money and your Ministry. Portland: Marcus Leadership Circle; 2014.

- Money is one of the top 2-3 biggest challenges for church planters, but fundraising for our vision isn't often among our greatest strengths. I recommend Marcuson's book because, rather than fill her pages with practical how-to's, she gets to the heart of why it can be so hard for church leaders to talk with our communities about money - and how we can work through this reluctance to invite people to share financially in the ministry.

Mather, Michael. Having Nothing, Possessing Everything. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; 2018.

- Mather's book is a wonderful reflection on missional posture. He tells stories of his urban congregation, how they actively engaged the neighbors around them, and how they learned to see an abundance of gifts in the community.

Snook, Susan. God Gave the Growth. Morehouse Publishing; 2015

- Bishop Susan Snook (San Diego) tells the story of her church plant in Scottsdale, AZ and discusses themes that arise in specifically Episcopal church planting contexts. She talks about the practices needed to raise up and nurture future leaders of new faith communities.

Students are expected to access the "Tech Help" resources via the button at the bottom of the Canvas home page for a description of technology requirements.

Requirements and Assignments

1. Take the Clifton StrengthsFinder Top 5 Online Assessment and respond to your reports

- A link to the StrengthsFinder is in Canvas.
- Take the StrengthsFinder and read through your Signature Theme and Strength Insight reports. Watch the introductory video from the Office of Church Planting and Redevelopment and respond to your reports using the "Best of Me" worksheet.
- All students: upload your reports and "Best of Me" worksheet through Canvas.
- DMin: Also reflect using the "How I show up" questions on Canvas, and submit.
- Point Value: 10% of final grade
- Evaluation Criteria: Evaluation is based on your ability to use your Clifton Strengths reports for deeper self-knowledge of your leadership gifts and challenge areas; also on your ability to reflect on your Strengths throughout the other exercises in this class (like community exegesis, design game, shared leadership exercises, etc.)
- Due Date: July 21 (for submission of worksheets on Canvas)

2. Respond to church planting in non-dominant cultures podcast

- Listen to both of these episodes of The Genesis Podcast: "The Gathering" and "Re-peopling of The Episcopal Church". Choose one episode to respond to, or you can choose to respond to both.
- Your response should be a 4-5 minute audio recording
- Include the following in your response: How do you see themes from the podcast playing out in your home diocese/context? What was a moment where you felt dissent with a claim the podcast was making? What are the leadership challenges you imagine will arise for the Episcopal Church, based on the stories in these podcast episodes? What do you think is the role of church planting in Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's broader initiative to "become a Church that looks and acts like Jesus?"
- Submit your audio response via Canvas.
- Point Value: 15% of final grade
- Evaluation Criteria: Evaluation is based on evidence of your willingness to engage the content of the podcast, and responding deeply but briefly to each question asked
- Due Date: July 22

3. Community Exegesis Presentation

- Spend 2-3 hours in a neighborhood that is less well known to you. Explore the neighborhood using the Community Exegesis Guide (on Canvas). Later, see what you can find about the demographics and history of the neighborhood online or at the library. Prepare a 10 minute presentation for the rest of the class using mediums of your choice (narration, slideshow, video, pictures, etc) that introduces us to the community members you talked to, what you discovered about the neighborhood, and the questions you would have if you were assigned to plant a church there.
- Community Presentations will be made in a synchronous, online session on Wednesday, July 27 from 9:00-11:00am Central
- Point Value: 20% of final grade
- Evaluation Criteria: Evaluation is based on you showing evidence (through your presentation) that you spent significant time in your neighborhood, engaged with real people on the ground; you will also be evaluated based on the depth of your reflection regarding how you felt trying on this kind of ministry and how your Clifton Strengths showed up in the exercise. You are expected to offer feedback and questions to others following their presentations and will be evaluated on this mode of participation.
- Due Date: July 27

4. Church Plant visits

- Visit two church plants (or restarts) in your vicinity. In-person students will make these visits during the in-house week; hyflex students may make them any time between July 5-July 29. If hyflex students do not know how to locate a church plant in their area, I can offer suggestions.
- All students will reflect on their site visits using discussion prompts on Canvas.
- Point Value: 10% of final grade
- Evaluation Criteria: You will be evaluated based on evidence that you completed the assignment, and on your participation in reflection (in person or on Canvas) afterward
- Due Date: July 29

5. Collaborative Leadership exercises

- These include: "Who is Jesus?", a church planting design game, and the World Cafe.
- Master's and doctoral level students will participate in the exercises and reflect using discussion prompts on Canvas.
- Doctoral students: Create a plan for how you will lead your existing community in one of these collaborative leadership exercises. Execute the plan, if time allows. Reflect on the current culture of your church community, where you would like to see more collaborative leadership, and what it would look like to invite them into an exercise like this. Share your reflections in a discussion board on Canvas.
- Point Value: 15% of final grade
- Evaluation Criteria: Evaluation based on reflective participation in the exercises; for D.Min, how well are you able to reflect on how you would use this activity in your home community, anticipate and nurture shared leadership in your context
- Due Date: Master's level students complete this during the residency week; doctoral students should submit their reflection by August 26

6. Final Assignment

- Point Value: 30% of final grade
- You will choose one of the following two options for a final project. With either option, your "artifact" should help us see and enter into your context. Use at least two different mediums in your project; these might include: written text (5-10 pages), pictures, video (no more than 15 minutes), audio recording.

1. Create a church planting ministry plan: Select a community that is meaningful or exciting to you. Conduct a community exegesis, including conversations with at least three local people. Research the demographics of the neighborhood, and draft a ministry plan for how you would go about starting a new faith community there that includes: A vision for who you hope to reach, a statement about the difference you hope this community will make in God's world, goals for the first two years of ministry, a budget, and measures of success.

2. Discover the history of church planting in your home diocese. What church planting efforts have taken place over the last 50 years? What theologies, attitudes, cultural conditions, and definitions of "success" went into those initiatives? Interview at least three people who were involved in those planting efforts, including both clergy and lay leaders. How might this history help, and/or hinder, future church planting in your diocese?

- Evaluation Criteria: Evaluation based on evidence that you have engaged heartily with your specific context, including one to one conversations with people on the ground, community exploration and exegesis, research into your diocesan history and policies, etc.; evidence that you are using themes and prompts from this class to create the questions you use in your final project; your use of several different mediums to build your artifact.
- Due Date: August 26

Penalty for late work

Any work not turned in on time (by the date on the syllabus) may be subject to a reduction in grade. Please contact me if you need an extension on any of the assignments, as this is a matter I am happy to work with you on.

This course is designed to give you time to reflect deeply on the readings and podcasts, community excursions, church plant site visits and other exercises. For that reason, our assignments are spaced out in such a way as to give you the opportunity to synthesize the material to an extent that you can actually bring your learning back to your home context; you will not, therefore, want to save all the assignments until the end.

Expectations for CEU and Auditors

CEU and Auditors are expected to attend and participate in in-person and Canvas discussions; they are not expected to complete and submit reflections and assignments (but you may do this and receive feedback).

Instructor Feedback

You can generally expect to hear back from me regarding assignments within one week of submission. I will typically give feedback by commenting directly on your submission and sending it back to you as a document or pdf.

Final projects will receive feedback within 2 weeks; however, if you want to submit a rough draft within one week of the deadline, you can expect to hear back within 3 days.

Worship

Participation in worship, while not required, is an integral part of students' formation.

Course Evaluations

Church Planting is a new course from Bexley-Seabury, and this is my first time teaching such a course to MDiv and DMin students. Your feedback, via the course evaluation, is crucial in helping us improve upon the course and ensure that it is relevant to students' contexts and need in the future.

Students taking the course for credit are expected to complete the evaluation as part of their participation in the learning experience. Auditors are encouraged to complete the evaluation as well. Evaluations will be available in Populi near the end of the course and will remain open until the grade deadline for each term. Evaluations should be completed based on your experience of the course and should not be based on your final grade. For this reason, during the grading period, you will not be able to see your grade in Populi until you have completed the evaluation. After the grade deadline, you will be able to see your grade in Populi, but you will no longer be able to share your voice through the course evaluation.

Good Practices for Hyflex students

- Even though you will not be physically with us from July 25-29, use other mediums to engage. Respond and engage actively through Canvas, and check in with the instructor through email, setting up Zoom appointments, etc.

- Engage thoroughly with *your* setting and context. Worry less about doing the assignments “correctly” and spend your time practicing curiosity, talking with as many people as possible, and learning through experience. Use our group times and any meetings with your instructor to reflect on your experiential learning.

Better Practices for Zoom Sessions

Zoom works best when certain criteria are met:

- The latest version of Zoom is installed. Periodically check for updates and download the latest version.
- One computer:one user. Everyone should have their own device (including camera and mic) and zoom link. This helps everyone come to the space equally. (or something along these lines)
- If you are in a shared or noisy space, use headphones/earbuds. In general, it is normally best to keep your mic muted unless you are speaking. This helps minimize background noise.
- Minimize distractions around you (try to be in the same location for the duration of the session). If you must be in transit, mute your mic.
- Plan ahead to ensure you have a stable internet connection for the duration of the session. If your connection becomes unstable, it may be helpful to turn off your video when you speak.
- Otherwise, cameras should generally be on, unless you need to step away to take care of something. This contributes toward demonstrating your presence and participation in class during the session.

Course Grading

- DMin students will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis. The equivalent of a C is the minimum passing grade.
- MDiv students will receive a letter grade. Please see the grading scale below.

Please be aware that the Canvas gradebook reflects cumulative grades for assignments for your course, but the final official grade for the course will be recorded manually by the instructor in Populi.

Bexley Seabury requires a minimum grade of C to pass a course.		
Grade	Points	Description
A (4.00)	96-100	Superior/Mastery
A- (3.67)	90-95	Excellent
B+ (3.33)	87-89	Very Good
B (3.00)	84-86	Good (high)
B- (2.67)	80-83	Good (low)
C+ (2.33)	75-79	Acceptable (high)
C (2.00)	70-74	Acceptable/Adequate
F (0)	< 70	Unacceptable (Fail)
A grade of “P” in a Pass/Fail course is equivalent to a grade of C or above.		

Course Calendar:

Tuesday, July 12th at 3:00 Central (for 90 minutes)

Topic: Setting the stage, how we gather as church planters and as a class

Includes: All students

Format: Zoom

- Introductions and explanation of the class schedule
- What are you hoping to emerge with, as a result of our time together?
- Assign worship leaders; assign leaders for the Roxburgh Pt. 2 conversation

Tuesday, July 19th at 3:00 Central (for 90 minutes)

Topic: How we got to where we are

Includes: All students

Format: Zoom

Pre-work: Read Roxburgh Part 1 and Warnes Part 1

Monday, July 25 - Beginning of week long intensive in Chicago

A final version of the week intensive will be sent at least one week before the start of arrival on-campus. Synchronous session times will not change.

8:15 Gather, opening worship, community practices

9:30 Leadership in swiftly changing church
Collaborative leadership exercise: The 2-loops model of living systems
Hyflex students: On your own time (but before 11:30 central today), view the 2-loops video, posted on Canvas

11:30-11:45 **All students** Reflect on the *process* of the 2-loops exercise, in the discussion board on Canvas. Keep your posts brief, and try to use your observations, questions and “a-ha!” moments to engage your fellow students in back and forth conversation.

12:00 Lunch

1:30 Missional Theology and posture

Pre-work: Read Roxburgh, Part 2 and plan how you will lead your assigned portion of the conversation

Hyflex students: Plan a time when you will have this conversation among yourselves. Record the zoom meeting and send me the recording by July 29.

3:30 Using StrengthsFinder as a tool for missional leadership

This is an online, synchronous session.

Guest: Gallup certified Strengths coach

Pre-work: Take the Clifton StrengthsFinder Top 5 assessment, watch the introductory video on Canvas, submit required reflection sheets. Pre-work is due by July 21.

4:45 Evening prayer (online)

5:15 Dinner

Tuesday, July 26

8:15 Gather, Morning worship

9:00 Introduction to Community Exegesis

- Assuming a posture of curiosity and humility
- Exegesis Exercise and Community Presentations instructions

10:30 Community Exegesis Exercise

Hyflex students: Do this exercise in a neighborhood in your city, ideally somewhere that's less well-known to you. You will find the instructions posted on Canvas. You may do the exercise on your own time, which might be before or during the intensive week.

- Walk the neighborhood, and explore using the Neighborhood Exegesis guide on Canvas
- Have lunch or coffee out in your community
- Begin to think about how you will present your neighborhood to the rest of the class

2:00 Break

3:00 Debrief Community Exegesis

This is an online, synchronous session.

4:00 Using demographic data to exegete a community - Zoom conversation with FaithX

This is an online, synchronous session.

5:00 Evening prayer

5:30 Dinner

7:00 If you need time to continue planning your Community Presentation, you might choose to take it now.

Wednesday, July 27

8:30 Gather online

Morning worship (online)

9:00 Community Presentations

This is a synchronous, online session.

11:00 "Who is Jesus" exercise

In groups of 3, craft a statement about Jesus without using "insider language"

Hyflex students: you will find instructions for this exercise on Canvas. Please complete the assignment and submit it on Canvas by July 29.

12:00 Lunch

1:00 Introduce Church Plant Site Visit

1:30 Church Plant Site

Hyflex students: Plan to visit a church plant (planted or restarted within the last 12 years) within reasonable driving distance of your own city/context. Have a one to one conversation with the point leader. It does not have to be an Episcopal Church Plant. If you have trouble locating a plant, talk with me to explore ideas.

4:30-4:45 **All students:** Reflect on your church plant site visit using prompts on Canvas. Keep your posts brief, and try to use your observations, questions and “a-ha!” moments to engage your fellow students in back and forth conversation.

5:00 Dinner

Thursday, July 28

8:15 Gather, Morning worship

9:30 Church Plant Site Visit

Hyflex students: Plan to visit a church plant (planted or restarted within the last 12 years) within reasonable driving distance of your own city/context. Have a one to one conversation with the point leader. It does not have to be an Episcopal Church Plant. If you have trouble locating a plant, talk with me to explore ideas.

12:00 Lunch

1:00-1:15 **All students:** Reflect on your church plant site visit using prompts on Canvas. Keep your posts brief, and try to use your observations, questions and “a-ha!” moments to engage your fellow students in back and forth conversation.

2:00 Church plant design game

This is a synchronous session; hyflex students will play together (and debrief) online. You will have an online moderator. In-person students will play in class.

4:00 Debrief Game

In-person students: Discuss different models of church planting

Pre-reading: Read the section titled “What?” (pp. 14-17) in the “What to Expect” guide to New Episcopal Communities (on Canvas)

Hyflex students: On your own time, review the “Models of Church Planting” module on Canvas and respond to discussion prompts in paragraph form.

5:00 Dinner

Friday, July 29

8:15 Collaborative leadership

Core teams for church planting; inviting ownership, commitment and co-creation; tools for collaborative leadership

Hyflex students: This is available to you as a module on Canvas. **All students:** Reflect, in paragraph form and in your own time, using the discussion prompt on Canvas. Due by the end of the day, July 29.

11:00 Closing worship/Eucharist

12:00 Farewell!

Academic Policies

All students in Bexley Seabury courses are expected to be familiar with the following information that is provided on Canvas, in Student Resources:

- Academic policies and forms
- Requests for withdrawals, extensions, and incompletes
- Technological requirements and assistance
- Writing guidelines and assistance
- Course Netiquette
- Prohibition of plagiarism