

CREATING A LEARNING COVENANT

SM 305 through SM 322 (and SM 401-402)

*Your approved learning covenant is due prior to the start of the SM Course/Ministry.
Upload into your SM Course in Populi.*

A Learning Covenant is a document which will guide you and your Ministry Mentors throughout the internship/mentored ministry experience. This plan is developed collaboratively *with* your ministry mentor after personal reflection, consultation with trusted advisors. As lifelong learners, there are always new areas to grow and learn. Develop 3-5 Ministry Goals for each SM Course. **Instructions and an example are provided below.**

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DRAFTING A LEARNING COVENANT

1. Spend some time contemplating 3 – 4 goals you would like to achieve during Internship. **Goals** are broad statements about your aim and purpose and ask “What do I hope to achieve?” Your goals should also be SMART:

- **S** – Specific (or Significant).
- **M** – Measurable (or Meaningful).
- **A** – Attainable (or Action-Oriented).
- **R** – Relevant (or Rewarding).
- **T** – Time-bound (or Track-able).

For example, instead of having "to teach Sunday School" as a goal, it's more powerful to use the SMART goal "To develop a Sunday School curriculum for adults by October 15."

Your goals should stem from **each** of the following categories:

Goal type	Definition	How many for Learning Covenant
Cognitive	Goals which increase your knowledge of ministry and/or theological application	Create 1 or 2 cognitive goals
Skill	Goals which increase your competency in performing ministry	Create 1 or 2 skill goals
Personal	Goals which that will enable a change in you personally. This should reflect an area self-care, relationships or spiritual growth.	Create 1 personal goal

2. Set up a time to meet with your Ministry Mentor to discuss your goals and ask for their feedback. Alter your goals as needed. After you have your goals written, work with your mentor to create 3 – 4 Activities and 1 – 2 Evaluation Methods to enable the student, Faculty Mentor and Ministry Mentor to properly evaluate the student’s performance.
 - a. **Activities** are more concrete, tangible, specific, and spell out the ways your goals will be achieved. Activities ask, “What has to take place for each goal to be realized?”

- b. **Evaluation Methods** discover and determine the value of the completed work or project. Both qualitative (may be subjective and includes introspection and direct observation) and quantitative (may be objective and looks at how much or how well the goal was accomplished) evaluation methods should be used. To create a strong evaluation method, ask yourself questions such as: How will I know this goal has been achieved? What change should be seen? How will I see the change?
3. Review your Learning Covenant draft with your Ministry Mentor. He/she should also approve of your Learning Covenant and provide helpful feedback on each of your goals, activities, evaluation methods and resources.
4. Turn in your Learning Covenant before the start of your Internship/Ministry experience.

SAMPLE LEARNING COVENANT

1. **Ministry Goal #1:** To learn about teaching methods. (Cognitive goal)
 - a. **Activity One:** Discuss teaching methods with at least two experienced teachers for about one hour each to ask about the variety of methods they use and the strengths and weaknesses of each.
 - i. **Evaluation Method:** Did I gain insights into different teaching methods from these teachers? Did this experience improve my teaching or at least give solid ideas on how to improve?
 - b. **Activity Two:** Observe great teachers and preachers who are recommended by my teaching friends on who would be good to observe in person or on YouTube. I will observe 2-3 teachers.
 - i. **Evaluation Method:** Did I pick great examples of teachers? What have I learned from these other teachers on how I can be a better teacher?
 - c. **Activity Three:** Incorporate at least two new teaching methods into the youth curriculum. I will explore online and implement at least five new techniques each quarter.
 - i. **Evaluation Method:** How are these new techniques enriching my teaching? Am I connecting better with the students because of these techniques?
 - d. **Resources:** My teaching connections- my aunt, friends who teach high school, Ministry Mentor, church members in education, former Northern classmates in youth ministry.
2. **Ministry Goal #2:** To discern if pastoral ministry is my calling through a process of dialogue, reflection, and reading. (Cognitive goal)
 - a. **Activity One:** Spend intentional time in prayer daily regarding my call and to practice Breath Prayer (to pray a simple, intimate prayer of heartfelt desire before God throughout the day.)
 - i. **Evaluation Method:** Is my practice of Breath Prayer helping me seek the Lord daily? Is this practice something that is now naturally part of my daily life? I will determine this by noting when I've practiced Breath Prayer in my calendar and will review my progress weekly.
 - ii. **Evaluation Method:** Am I more peaceful, less stressed and more reliant on God as a result of my increased prayer life? Do others see a change in my demeanor?
 - b. **Activity Two:** Meet with a Spiritual Director who will probe me about my skills and gifts.
 - i. **Evaluation Method:** I will be open to the instruction and process given by the Spiritual Director. We will meet at least once a month. Was I engaged in the process with my Spiritual Director? Did we meet consistently each month? Was I open and honest about my life and growing edges?

- c. **Activity Three:** Dialogue with other clergy about their pastoral ministry experiences and about their call to ministry. Seek insights from them about my call.
 - i. **Evaluation Method:** Did I meet with at least one clergy member per month?
 - ii. **Evaluation Method:** Did I conduct these interviews in a professional manner? Was I prepared with good questions? Did the pastor seem glad to have met with me?
 - d. **Resources:** Spiritual director, clergy relationships, books on calling as suggested by my Ministry Mentor or Professors, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook* by Adele Calhoun.
3. **Ministry Goal #3:** To increase my comfort level in preaching in different settings. (Skill goal)
- a. **Activity One:** Preach at least one times in the Fall and Winter quarters (two times total) in a formal worship service.
 - i. **Evaluation Method:** My Ministry Mentor and several handpicked lay people will be present in the worship service when I preach. They will fill out feedback forms which my Ministry Mentor and I will create. My sermon will be well-researched and well-practiced.
 - ii. **Evaluation Method:** I will record or videotape my sermon and review personally and with my Ministry Mentor. How well did I connect with the congregation? Did my communication style work well?
 - b. **Activity Two:** Preach at least one time in the Fall and Winter quarters (two times total) in a contemporary worship service.
 - i. **Evaluation Method:** My Ministry Mentor and several handpicked lay people will be present in the worship service when I preach. They will fill out feedback forms which my Ministry Mentor and I will create. My sermon will be well-researched and well-practiced. Additionally, my sermon will include personal examples and be engaging to the congregation.
 - ii. **Evaluation Method:** I will record or videotape my sermon and review personally and with my Ministry Mentor. How well did I connect with the congregation? Did my communication style work well?
 - c. **Activity Three:** Be a guest speaker to the Middle School at least one or two times during the year.
 - i. **Evaluation Method:** My Ministry Mentor, Middle School Director and several handpicked middle school students will be present in the youth group when I speak. They will fill out feedback forms which my Ministry Mentor and I will create. My talk will include an engaging activity to illustrate my topic.
 - ii. **Evaluation Method:** I will record or videotape my talk and review personally and with my Ministry Mentor. How well did I connect with the congregation? Did my communication style work well?
 - d. **Resources:** Ministry Mentor, Senior Pastor, Middle School Director, Professor of Preaching, and Preaching courses at the seminary, Books: *Preaching as Worship* by Michael J. Quicke, *360-Degree Preaching* by Michael J. Quicke.
4. **Ministry Goal #4:** Develop a ministry for college students (Skills goal)
- a. **Activity One:** Research and survey area colleges regarding what ministries are currently provided
 - i. **Evaluation Method:** My survey will include at least three area colleges and I will consult with at least two campus ministries at each college (if applicable to the college).

- b. **Activity Two:** Using my survey results, create a curriculum and start a ministry through the church for college students.
 - i. **Evaluation Method:** On a scale of 1 – 10 (1 = not at all; 10 = exceeds all areas), my Ministry Mentor and I will rate if the curriculum is different than what is currently offered on campus and if it engaged college students into the life of the church.
 - ii. **Evaluation Method:** Is the general congregation familiar with the ministry and is supportive of it? I will determine this by surveying a cross-section of the full adult members at the end of the Winter quarter.
 - c. **Activity Three:** Create two service projects (one in the community and one on the area college campuses) over the fall and winter quarters.
 - i. **Evaluation Method:** At least 3 – 5 college students will participate in at least one service project. Were the students engaged and interested in the service project? Did the experience encourage them to want to serve others more?
 - d. **Resources:** Area InterVarsity campus leaders and other campus ministry leaders, Ministry Mentor, books: *College Ministry 101: A Guide to Working with 18-25 Year Olds* by Chuck Bomar and *They Like Jesus But Not The Church* by Dan Kimball
5. **Ministry Goal #5:** Develop a pattern for spiritual growth (Personal Goal)
- a. **Activity One:** Read “Invitation to a Journey” by M. Robert Mulholland Jr. and journal about each chapter.
 - i. **Evaluation Method:** I will read and journal at least one chapter each week. I will share what I’ve learned with my Ministry Mentor during our weekly mentoring meetings.
 - b. **Activity Two:** Develop a Rule for Life and put it into practice
 - i. **Evaluation Method:** Each week I will rate myself on a scale of 1 – 10 regarding how well I’m able to live into my Rule for Life.
 - c. **Activity Three:** Meet with an Accountability Partner (other than my Ministry Mentor) every other week.
 - i. **Evaluation Method:** We will faithfully keep our appointments and commitments to each other.
 - ii. **Evaluation Method:** I will be honest about my struggles and temptations and be open to asking and answering hard questions from my accountability partner.
 - d. **Resources:** Books: *Invitation to a Journey* by M. Robert Mulholland Jr., *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook* by Adele Calhoun for information on the Rule for Life and Accountability Partners.