

THIS IS A DRAFT ONLY!
FURTHER CHANGES WILL BE MADE TO THIS SYLLABUS BEFORE CLASSES BEGIN.
YOU MAY CONTACT THE PROFESSOR FOR UPDATES BEFORE THAT DATE.

Foundations for Christian Ministry, BTS-5330M (3 credit hours)

Canadian Mennonite University: Graduate Course Syllabus
Fall, 2018

Wednesdays (Sept. 5–Nov. 21), 2:30-5:15pm in **TBA**

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Mission statement of Canadian Mennonite University:

*CMU is an innovative Christian university, rooted in the Anabaptist faith tradition,
moved and transformed by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.
Through teaching, research, and service CMU inspires women and men
for lives of service, leadership, and reconciliation in church and society.*

Mission statement of Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary Canada:

*MBBS exists to educate and equip people who help lead the church
in reaching Canada and the world with the good news of Jesus Christ.*

Note: this course will also be delivered with a live-stream option for students who live beyond easy driving distance to CMU. They may participate by attending classes in person on campus, or through interactive online live-streaming of class sessions. For students who attend on campus, the class experience will essentially be like that of any other course. Students who join by live-streaming need to study the detailed guidelines and participation requirements in this syllabus' appendix titled "Live-Streamed Courses." When registering to join the course via live-streaming, note that the registration process and fees for live-streamed courses are slightly different than for in-class courses.

Course Description:

"This course provides students an opportunity to develop ministerial identity, self-understanding and skills. The course explores biblical and theological foundations for Christian ministry in light of God's mission. It fosters self-awareness of gifts and competencies, temperament, limitations, and calling, and it teaches pastoral leadership for congregational rituals and practices"
(www.cmu.ca).

The course will be structured around the following five questions:

1. Who is a pastor?
2. Who am I?
3. For whom am I and for whom is the pastor?
4. How? (Five public ministries will be introduced: leading worship services, officiating marriages and funerals, baptizing, and hosting communion.)
5. What does God desire?

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Objectives of this course:

Students will

- develop biblically-based convictions about the pastoral ministry and pastoral person in the light of God's mission in the world by reflecting on scriptural teachings.
- become more aware of God's callings in scripture and in the student's own temperament, strengths, gifts, history, life and ministry, by relating these various dimensions to each other.
- learn basic skills of conducting five kinds of worship services (i.e. baptism, communion, wedding, funeral) by preparing and reflecting biblically-theologically on these services.
- set goals for their ongoing personal formation as ministering persons by beginning to develop either a personal Rule for Life, and/or a S.M.A.R.T. set of goals, activities, and means of measurement.

Textbooks:

Dawn, Marva and Eugene Peterson. *The Unnecessary Pastor: Rediscovering the Call*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

Nouwen, Henri. *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership*. New York: Crossroad, 1989.

Peterson, Eugene. *Under the Unpredictable Plant: An Exploration in Vocational Holiness*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992.

Rempel, John, ed. *Minister's Manual*. Winnipeg: Faith & Life Press, 1998. *A digital version is also available.* (Students who are not part of a Mennonite congregation may arrange with the professor to read instead an equivalent minister's manual of the student's own congregation, denomination, or Christian tradition.)

Rath, Tom. *StrengthsFinder 2.0*. New York: Gallup, 2007. (You must purchase your own new copy in order to complete the StrengthsFinder inventory.)

Other required readings:

100 pages from Oswald, Roy and Otto Kroeger. *Personality Type and Religious Leadership*. Washington, DC: Alban Institute, 1988. (On reserve in CMU's library. Each student is to choose and read 100 pages that are relevant to their particular Christian ministry and MBTI score.)

Twenty Pastoral Tasks, available online at

www.mennonitechurch.ca/files/leadership/packets/Twenty_Pastoral_Tasks.pdf

Other short readings (e.g. articles and book excerpts) as assigned during the course (incl. the Confession of Faith or similar document from the congregation with which you are associated—cf. www.mennonitebrethren.ca/mb-beliefs/the-mb-confession-of-faith-detailed-edition/ for one example of such a document).

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- Students who have read any of these books for previous courses, should consult with the professor about alternative assigned readings.

Assignments—Summary:

1) Reflection on Self-Inventories	15%	Due: Sept. 19 (scores); Sept. 26 (paper)
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2) Worship Service Project	40%	Due: Oct. 10 (proposal); Oct. 24-Nov. 14 (presentation & paper)
3) Book Review	15%	Due: Oct. 10
4) Integration Paper and appendices	20%	Due: December 5
5) Participation	10%	Due: throughout Peterson: Sept. 12-Oct. 10

Assignments— Details:

1) Reflection on Self-Inventories	15%	Due: Sept. 19 (scores); Sept. 26 (paper)
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Use the two sets of readings (i.e. Roth, and Oswald) and your three sets of results (i.e. Myers-Briggs Temperament Inventory, StrengthsFinder, and Twenty Pastoral Tasks) to write a 6-page (1800 word) reflection that explores the implications of your own temperament and strengths for your particular life and ministry. Include an assessment of how your three sets of results do and/or do not complement each other. Keep in focus the questions “Who am I?” and “For Whom am I?” (In the interests of mutual encouragement and discernment, be prepared to share summaries of your results and explorations with the class.)

As an appendix to your paper, provide a summary (maximum 1 page) of your results from the three inventories.

To help you prepare for writing, take time to ponder these questions: “How has God made me?” and “How does this shape the ways I presently interact with the people and commitments in my life?”

2) Worship Service Project	40%	
Proposal (5%)		Due: Oct. 10
(a) Each student will be assigned one of four worship services to design (i.e. funeral, baptism, wedding, communion) and a presentation date, by Oct. 3. In keeping with the worship service you’ve been assigned, provide a list comprising at least 300 pages from books and articles that you intend to read for this project.		
(b) Write 1 page (300 words) describing a particular question you plan to explore and develop in your project.		

Paper (30%)		Due: Oct. 24-Nov. 14 (TBA)
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Write a 15-page (4500 word) paper that includes the following components:

- (a) Write a 6-page (1800 words) ‘theological position paper’ addressed to the pastors and staff (and/or key lay leaders) of your present congregation. The purpose of this paper is give them a common theological starting point when they help lead this service (i.e. funeral, baptism, wedding or communion). Draw on the key scripture texts which must be considered for this theological perspective. Your paper should not only be theological and researched, but should also address the primary difficulties or controversies that must be faced when thinking about this kind of worship service (i.e. funeral, baptism, wedding or communion).

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- (b) With these theological convictions as a basis, design a worship service (i.e. funeral, baptism, wedding, or communion) that is appropriate for the liturgical traditions and contextual realities of your present congregation. Provide a detailed order of service (6 pages, 1800 words) that includes (i) the scriptures (references only), (ii) the songs (provide the songs' titles in the paper, and their texts as an appendix), and (iii) the officiating minister's specific words and actions throughout the entire service.
- If your congregation and its ministers use a detailed liturgy (i.e. script) provided by the church for this service, provide a copy of that liturgy as an appendix to your paper. In this case, your 6-page assignment will consist of (1) a rationale for why you chose specific readings, prayers and/or scriptures whenever an option was available to you, (2) songs, (3) any modifications (incl. additions or deletions) you've made to the liturgy, and (4) a fully scripted 5-minute (approx. 3 pages) homily you would deliver during the service.
 - If your congregation and its ministers do not use a detailed liturgy (i.e. script) provided by the church for this service, your 6-page assignment will include a ¾-page outline for the sermon you would deliver during this service. No more than 20% of your minister's words service may be copied from liturgies or scripts.

The connections between your theology and your practice (i.e. parts a. and b. of this assignment) should be clear to the reader. If necessary, use footnotes to make these evident. Also, students must properly quote and cite the resources used in this assignment.

- (c) Imagining that you are the officiating minister for the preceding service, write a first-person 3-page (900 word) reflection paper on this two-part question: "in light of the theology and praxis I have just presented, for whom am I and for whom is a pastor?" You might reflect on themes such as your calling or vocation, discernment, the people you serve, your relationships with family and friends, and your unique role as a minister within the service you have designed.

Presentation (5%)

Due: Nov. 1-22 (TBA)

In 10 minutes, give the class a synopsis of your theology and service. Do so in a way that will help the class absorb experientially the most vital discovery(ies) you made during this project (e.g. role play, litany, video, resource-sheet). Also, be prepared to engage in a class discussion about your project, during which your classmates will be asked (a) to highlight at least one especially powerful feature in your presentation, and (b) to propose some additional insight that furthers, challenges, or disagrees with your presentation.

3) Book Review

15%

Due: Oct. 10

Write a 7-page (1800 word) critical book review of *The Unnecessary Pastor*, using the guidelines at the end of this syllabus. Focus especially on the authors' use of the Pastoral Epistles for pastoral ministry.

4) Integration Paper and appendices

20%

Due: December 5

- a. Your neighbour (who religiously is a 'none') has no idea what a pastor is, and therefore asks you, "Is a pastor like a priest? Like in movies?" Write an extended letter of 5 pages (1500 words) to your neighbour that responds to her question. Show

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how the tasks or activities of a pastor reflect God’s purposes (mission) for the world. Keep in focus the course questions “Who is a pastor?” and “What does God desire?”

- b. Conclude the assignment with two appendices (2 pages [600 words] each) that do the following:
 - i. in light of your interaction with your neighbour, respond to Nouwen’s book by identifying those emphases in his book that inspire you for a pastoral ministry, and those emphases that arouse feelings of resistance in you—and give explanations for your responses; and
 - ii. name specific goals that address your needs for ongoing formation as a minister. Use the approach of a Rule of Life, or a set of S.M.A.R.T. goals. Include a brief explanation of why the approach you used is most appropriate for your own formation needs.

In this assignment, draw on various materials from the course (e.g. readings, lectures, and/or assignments) that have helped shaped your convictions about your place in God’s mission for the world. (Be sure to include proper footnoting and a bibliography in all parts of this assignment, including the letter.)

5) Participation 10% Due: throughout Peterson: Sept. 12-Oct. 10

- a. Half of this grade is based on the students’ self-assessment of their in-class engagement. The professor will provide written guidelines for this assessment.

A major part of this in-class engagement will include discussing *Under the Unpredictable Plant*. The class will be divided into five groups. Each group will be assigned one chapter from the book, and given time during class to develop and then present to the class a detailed sentence that presents the main thesis or argument of the chapter. The other groups will then revise, adjust, edit, critique or otherwise improve that sentence. The group presenting the thesis sentence will also be expected to offer the class 2 textbook-based discussion questions that will help the class (a) hear Peterson well, and (b) address “so what?” with respect to the chapter (e.g. implications, applications).

- b. Half is based on attending and discussing in class any two of CMU’s J. J. Thiessen Lectures (Tuesday, October 16 and Wednesday, October). Dr. John Witvliet will speak on a theme concerning congregational worship.

Equivalency chart of letter grades to % (or numerical) grades:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Grade Points</u>	<u>Descriptor</u>
A+	95-100	4.5	Exceptional
A	88-94	4.0	Excellent
B+	81-87	3.5	Very Good
B	74-80	3.0	Good
C+	67-73	2.5	Satisfactory
C	60-66	2.0	Adequate
D	50-59	1.0	Marginal
F	0-49	0.0	Failure

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All grades submitted by CMU's professors are provisional until vetted by the Dean's Council. That process occurs early in January for fall semester grades and early in May for winter semester grades.

Course outline and preliminary reading schedule:

Who is a Pastor?

...in scripture and experience

September 5

September 12

Peterson Intro., 1

Who am I?

...self-awareness, temperament, gifts and weaknesses, staying alive at heart

September 19

Peterson 2

September 26

Peterson 3; Rath; Oswald

For whom am I? For whom is the pastor?

...calling or vocation, discernment, weakness, domestic violence, staying alive at heart, friends and household

October 3

Peterson 4; assigned readings; Manual v-37, 144-179, 217-231; Nouwen or Smith

October 10

Peterson 5; assigned readings; Smith or Nouwen

How?

...worship, funerals, baptisms (and evangelism), weddings, communion

October 16-17

attend (or watch online) at least two of the J. J. Thiessen lectures about worship

October 24

assigned readings; Manual 180-216

October 31

assigned readings; Manual 38-58

November 7

assigned readings; Manual 103-143

November 14

assigned readings; Manual 59-102

What does God desire? And who is a Pastor (reprise)?

...church's role in God's mission

November 21

Nouwen; assigned readings

Academic Policies:

Students are expected to be familiar with CMU's academic policies, as published in the *Academic Calendar—Graduate Studies* (online at www.cmu.ca). Sections of particular relevance include "Extensions and Incompletes," "Email Submission of Assignments," "Multiple Submissions of the Same Work," "Attendance in Classes," "Students with Disabilities," "Academic Misconduct," and "Appeals."

The following comments are supplementary to these policies:

Voluntary Withdrawal:

The last day for voluntary withdrawal from fall courses without academic penalty is November 13.

Academic Writing:

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All written assignments should conform to the *Chicago Manual of Style* (online at www.cmu.ca/library (click on 'MORE' at the bottom of the page, then look under the heading 'Writing Assistance') and summarized in Diana Hacker's *A Pocket Style Manual*, seventh edition, which is available in CMU's bookstore). These resources specify details for formatting (e.g. 1-inch margins, formal fonts in 10- to 12-point font size, double-spacing) and for citing sources.

Excellence in terms of format, spelling, grammar, sentence and paragraph construction, etc. are assumed. Frequent and persistent errors will result in lower assessments. Formal title page, footnotes or endnotes, bibliography, skilled paragraphing, etc. are essential for academic writing. Where the length of an assignment is defined in a range, be aware that 'exceptional' and 'excellent' grades are more likely to be awarded for work that is closer to the maximum length than the minimum (unless the work is especially outstanding).

Attendance:

If a student must miss class due to illness or other extenuating circumstances, it is the student's responsibility to talk with the professor as soon as possible about missing material. Students who miss the equivalent of 2 weeks of classes will be required to complete an additional assignment for the course. Students missing an excessive number of classes without valid reason may be barred from further class attendance.

Extensions:

The professor has full discretion in granting extensions. Extensions must be requested *before* the due date of an assignment—normally at least one week or class period before the assignment's due date.

Submission of assignments:

All assignments submitted after the specified due date and time will be penalized one letter grade for each day late (e.g. from B to C+). No assignments will be accepted or graded if the professor receives them more than five business days after the due date (unless an extension has been granted prior to the due date).

All assignments are to be submitted as paper copies (i.e. not digital documents), unless prior permission has been given by the professor. If such permission is granted, assignments submitted by email must be sent as '.docx' Microsoft Word documents. Other word-processing formats or PDF's are not acceptable. The professor will notify the student by return email of the time and date on which the emailed assignment was received (normally, this will happen within 24 hours of the professor receiving the assignment, not including weekends). It is the student's responsibility to gain confirmation that the professor received his/her assignment.

NOTE: Live-streaming students are to submit assignments by email, as described above. These assignments will be returned to the students by email.

It is my commitment to return graded assignments to the students in a timely manner. Assignments will normally be returned in class.

Communication:

Students are encouraged to engage the professor outside of class hours. His contact details and office number are above. Beyond this, email will be

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considered a standard means of communicating. Students should therefore check their CMU email regularly.

Academic Misconduct:

Plagiarism and cheating will be treated very seriously, as outlined in the *Academic Calendar* (available online). It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with these published expectations.

Students with Disabilities

CMU strives to provide a fair and supportive learning environment for academically qualified students with disabilities. The University will seek ways to develop and provide services that support students with disabilities. The Disability Services office coordinates with the Academic Office to provide academic accommodations to eligible students. If you are eligible for these services or have questions about becoming eligible, please contact Sandra Loeppky, Coordinator of Disability Services at sloepky@cmu.ca or 204-487-3300 ext. 340.

Other Academic Supports

CMU offers its students academic supports at no cost. Academic tutors are available to all students; see Vern Kehler Coordinator of Student Advising (vkehler@cmu.ca), to set up a first appointment with a tutor. Volunteer tutors are available to work on a one-on-one basis with students; see Vern for details.

***Supplementary reading suggestions:**

Who is a Pastor?

Hanson, David. *The Art of Pastoring: Ministry Without All the Answers*. Downers Grove: IVP Books, 1994.

Peterson, Eugene. *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987.

Nouwen, Henri. *The Wounded Healer: Ministry in Contemporary Society*. New York: Doubleday, 1979.

Who am I?

Anderson, Fil. *Running on Empty: Contemplative Spirituality for Overachievers*. Colorado Springs: Waterbrook, 2004.

Baron, Renee and Elizabeth Wagele. *The Enneagram Made Easy: Discover the 9 Types of People*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1994.

Buckingham, Marcus, Donald Clifton, and others. Various books using the *Clifton Strengths-Finder*.

Hirsh, Sandra Krebs and Jane A. G. Kise. *Soul Types: Finding the Spiritual Path That Is Right for You*. New York: Hyperion, 1998.

Keating, Charles J. *Who We Are Is How We Pray: Matching Personality and Spirituality*. Mystic: Twenty-Third Publications, 1991.

Michael, Chester P. and Marie C. Norrissey. *Prayer and Temperament: Different Prayer Forms for Different Personality Types*. Charlottesville: The Open Door, 1991.

Scazzero, Peter. *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: Unleash a Revolution in Your Life in Christ*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006.

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Whitehead, Evelyn Eaton and James D. Whitehead. *Christian Life Patterns: The Psychological Challenges and Religious Invitations of Adult Life*. Rev. ed. New York: Crossroad, 1993.

For whom am I? For whom is the pastor?

Palmer, Parker. *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000.

Smith, Gordon T. *Courage and Calling: Embracing Your God-Given Potential*. Downers Grove, IVP Books, 1999.

How?

Allen, David. *Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity*. New York: Penguin, 2001.

Bratcher, Edward B. *The Walk-on-Water Syndrome: Dealing with Professional Hazards in the Ministry*. Waco: Word, 1984.

Hiebert, Marilyn, editor. *Risk Management: Doing the Right Thing Manual*. Abbotsford: BC Mennonite Brethren Conference, 2011. Available for password-protected download at www.bcmb.org/DoingtheRightThing by using User Name <bcmb_guest> and Password <christ4BC> (case sensitive).

Moon, Gary and David Benner. *Spiritual Direction and the Care of Souls: A Guide to Christian Approaches and Practices*. Downers Grove: IVP Books, 2004.

“Pamphlet Series.” Board of Faith and Life of the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, at www.mennonitebrethren.ca/resource/faith-and-life-pamphlet-series (read all ten pamphlets listed below).

Rendle, Gil and Alice Mann. *Holy Conversations: Strategic Planning as a Spiritual practice for Congregations*. Bethesda: Alban Institute, 2003.

Schulz, Doug and Michael Dick. *Following the Call: A Leadership Manual for Mennonite Brethren Churches*. Winnipeg: Kindred, 1998 (read all four sets of pages listed below).

Thomas, Everett J., editor. *Mennonite Polity for Ministerial Leadership*. Winnipeg: Faith & Life, 1996.

What does God desire?

Guder, Darrell L., editor. *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

Wright, Christopher J. H. *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010.

Wright, Christopher J. H. *The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006.

Memoirs and biographies

Drescher, John. *If I Were Starting My Ministry Again*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1995.

Harder, Gary. *Dancing Through Thistles in Bare Feet: A Pastoral Journey*. Waterloo: Herald Press, 2008.

Jantz, Harold. *Canadian Mennonite Brethren: 1910-2010: Leaders Who Shaped Us*. Winnipeg: Kindred, 2010.

Manning, Brennan. *All Is Grace: A Ragamuffin Memoir*. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2011.

Miller, Calvin. *Life is Mostly Edges: A Memoir*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2010.

Peterson, Eugene. *The Pastor: A Memoir*. New York: HarperOne, 2011.

Taylor, Barbara Brown. *Leaving Church: A Memoir of Faith*. New York: HarperCollins, 2007.

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*This small sampling is in no way exhaustive—books on how to do pastoral ministry are legion—but is intended to help students *begin* finding suitable books from among the many excellent resources available today. CMU's Library offers many more. Also, the books on this list are not authoritative, but are intended to provoke thoughtful reflection.

Appendix A: Live-Streamed Courses

A live-streamed course makes it possible for students at a distance to observe and participate interactively with an on-campus class in real time. Those who attend a class by live-streaming see and hear the professor. They can watch class media presentations (e.g. PowerPoint) on their computer screens. They can follow and participate in class discussions, posing questions and making comments of their own. They can have discussions with other students when the class breaks into smaller groups. Through the internet, students at a distance can share the essential elements of a regular class experience with those who attend class in person.

Unless otherwise stated in the syllabus, live-streaming students will do the same course assignments and follow the same course schedule as on-campus students.

Requirements for Participating in a Live-streamed Course

- Because the number of live-stream participants to a course is limited, ***students must receive faculty permission prior to the beginning of the course*** in order to participate through live-streaming.
- ***Students must participate in classes in real-time***, as they would if they were attending class in person. For example, those who take a live-streamed course that meets on Wednesday evenings will be expected to be in that class virtually, or physically when that class is in-session. (If live-streaming students come to Winnipeg, they are welcome to attend class in person.)
- Participation in a course through live-streaming ***requires the following:***
 - ***a fast and consistent internet connection*** (broadband ADSL or cable; or wireless 3G or 4G/LTE—wired is better than wireless),
 - ***a reasonably up-to-date computer*** system (at least MacOS 10.6.8 or Windows 7; mobile devices may work as well),
 - ***a supported browser*** (e.g. Firefox, Chrome, Safari 5+, IE7+, Opera12+),
 - ***Zoom software*** (provided by CMU),
 - ***a webcam***, and
 - ***a good quality headset with a microphone*** (CMU can suggest some).
- CMU has the capacity to record live-streamed courses for later viewing, but does not do so as a matter of routine. If it is difficult for students to participate in a class session, they may ask the professor for permission to watch recorded versions of the class. This permission will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
- Students may use the Zoom software to meet together via live-streaming between classes (e.g. for group projects or other consultations). The professor can give instructions for this.
- Students must familiarize themselves with the live-streaming software platform (i.e. Zoom) and ensure that their link, webcam, and headset are working properly ***before*** the first class session. Please arrange for a practice run on the system with the professor ***prior*** to class; this is essential, and can be arranged by email.

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- ***Be sure to login for each class session at least 15 minutes before the class begins.*** Remember that any testing of the system or other logistics that requires faculty assistance needs to be done before class starts. The professor will do their best to ensure that everything is in place for the live-stream session; but they cannot allow live-stream setup to significantly delay or interfere with the smooth flow of the class session once class begins. (To avoid distracting the class, it is helpful to mute the mic on your computer when you are not speaking to the class.)
- Arrange a backup plan with your professor in case of a system failure. CMU uses high-caliber, up-to-date equipment and communication platforms for live-streaming, but hardware and internet connections are not infallible and on occasion may fail. Your professor cannot stop class in order to troubleshoot and resolve technical problems in this unlikely event. To minimize possible disruption in the case of a loss of connection:
 - provide the professor with your email, text, or phone contact information before the course begins so that the professor can contact you at the next natural break in the class;
 - discuss with the professor the possibility of a back-up link to the class in case of a system failure (e.g. a Skype or phone link if the Zoom connection fails); and
 - have a plan for follow-up contact with the professor and/or a fellow student to fill any gaps in your interaction with the class (as you would if you had to miss a class for other reasons).
- If you have technical difficulties that you cannot solve with your professor (e.g. with the login process), contact Richard Boyd from CMU's I.T. department (204.451.0980).

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Appendix B: Critical Book Review Guidelines:

The following outline is designed to provide the student with a set of categories and questions to consider when writing a critical book review. In a seven-page critical book review (as outlined below, for instance), the student may not be able to address all of the items below. Therefore, the student is advised to use these guidelines in his/her preparatory work on the critical book review. Then, when writing the review, the student should address those items that are most important for that particular review. An A or A+ student will go beyond completing or answering these individual items by weaving the paper into a coherent and compelling whole.

- Introduction (c. $\frac{3}{4}$ page):
 - A general description of the book: title, author, subject and format. Here you can include details about who the author is, his or her credentials and expertise, how the title and subject matter are linked, etc.
 - A brief summary of the purpose of the book and its general argument or theme. Include a statement indicating for whom the book is intended.
 - Your thesis about the book. (This should include but not be limited to a consideration of whether the book is a suitable/appropriate piece of writing for the audience it has identified).
- Summary of Content (c. $1\frac{1}{2}$ –2 pages):
 - This can be done in the same way that is done for a simple book report (do not spend too many words on this section, as the subsequent analysis and evaluation of content are more important than a simple summary).
- Analysis of Text (c. $3\frac{1}{2}$ –4 pages):
 - What is the writer's style: simple/technical, persuasive/logical?
 - How well does the organizational method (comparison/contrast; cause/effect; analogy; persuasion through example) develop the argument or theme of the book? (Give examples to support your analysis.)
 - What evidence does the book present to support the argument? How convincing is this evidence? (Select pieces of evidence that are weak, or strong, and explain why they are such. As you write, be attentive to ways in which the book has confirmed and/or challenged your biblical-theological understanding of the topic.)
 - Are there facts, perspectives and/or evidence that the author has neglected to consider? (You will normally need to refer to other relevant material, including but not limited to the Bible.)
- Evaluation of the Text (c. $\frac{3}{4}$ page):
 - Give a brief summary of the weakness and strengths you have found in the book (incl. whether the book does what it set out to do).
 - Evaluate the book's overall usefulness to the audience for whom it is intended.
 - Comment on the book's relevance to your life and ministry.