

M316INT
(a and b)

Religious Leadership in a Post-denominational Age

January 6 and 7, 2018 (8:30 AM to 5:00 PM) 1.5 credit

Instructor: Lee Barker

The decades-long decline of mainline denominations also has implications for every faith community, including Unitarian Universalism. It is an age that challenges the future of all faith traditions and, at the same time, presents great opportunities. Liberal ministry and vocational service require us to anticipate these changing trends and to lead through them. In this 1.5 credit course, students will learn to project the future of the religious landscape, engage in a discernment process that will assist in vocational planning for the times, and learn from guest presenters about how they have instituted institutional (and) innovations that address the trends and promote the deepest spiritual and religious values. This is a course for all students whether they are leaning toward vocational service in the parish, community settings, or who have yet to establish a direction for their ministry.

Course Requirements:

Post on Populi, in one or two sentences, what you hope to gain by taking this course (There are no wrong answers!). **Due September 4.**

-Before arriving to class in January, complete all readings as assigned (**see below**)

-Submit a one-page pre-course assignment (**see below**)

-Full attendance

-Participation in class discussions

-Submit two, four-page papers--to be written at the conclusion of the class.

Topics will be assigned during the class sessions and are **due February 28, 2018.**

Pre--Course Assignment:

Within a few weeks of registering for the course, you will receive a link to a website that describes a ministry that is considered by many to be attuned to the post-denominational age. You will be required to post on Populi a one-page paper in which you address the following questions:

1) Describe in a few sentences the mission of the ministry you investigated.

- 2) Why do you think this ministry is considered to be innovative?
- 3) If you could ask three questions of the founder of the ministry, what would they be and why?

Due by December 15, 2017.

Statement Regarding Adaptation or Accommodation:

Meadville Lombard is committed to making reasonable accommodations to assist individuals with disabilities in reaching their academic potential. If a student has a disability that qualifies under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and requires accommodations, he/she should contact the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs Ken McHugh, at kmchugh@meadville.edu or (312) 735 2919 for information on appropriate policies and procedures. Please note that classroom accommodations cannot be provided without an approved Accommodations Form.

Reading List:

Although most reading will be provided during the class, students are asked to read the following short essays in preparation for the course:

Adams, James Luther. "Guiding Principles for a Free Faith." On Being Human Religiously. Ed. Max L. Stackhouse. Beacon Press, c 1976. **Read pages 3-21**

Roberto, John. 2020 Faith Formation: Designing the Future of Faith Formation. Lifelong Faith Associates, c 2010. **Read Chapter One**

"Annotated Bibliography: Ministry in a Post-Denominational Age" by Michelle A. Scheidt. **Posted on Populi**

Other Readings, furnished during the course, will come from the following texts, among others:

Constantine, Mark D., Travelers on the Journey: Pastors Talk about Their Lives and Commitments. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, c 2005.

Mercadante, Linda A., Belief Without Borders: Inside the Minds of the Spiritual but not Religious. Oxford University Press. C 2014.

Putnam, Robert and Campbell, David E. American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us. Simon and Schuster, c 2010.

Robinson, Anthony B. ,Transforming Congregational Culture. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, c 2003.

