

## COURSE SYLLABUS

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# ML504: Adult Ministries in the Church

Course Lecturer: Kenneth O. Gangel, PhD

Former Professor of Christian Education at Dallas Theological Seminary

### About This Course

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**This course was originally created through the Institute of Theological Studies in association with the Evangelical Seminary Deans' Council. There are nearly 100 evangelical seminaries of various denominations represented within the council and many continue to use the ITS courses to supplement their curriculum. The lecturers were selected primarily by the Deans' Council as highly recognized scholars in their particular fields of study.**

### Course Description

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How do adults learn? What are the most successful ways to teach them? This course presents principles of adult education and their application to various adult age levels within the church. Learners explore theories in young, middle, and older adult education, and examine successful ministries to singles, single parents, and families. The course promotes Knowles' andragogical model of adult education, emphasizing such important subjects as how adults learn, how to structure the classroom, and how to facilitate learning.

### Course Objectives

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Upon completion of the course, you should be able to do the following:

- Understand a basic biblical theology of adult education.
- Develop a “psychology of adulthood,” especially a grasp of adult learning theories.
- Analyze the characteristics and developmental areas of the three general adult age groups (young, middle, and senior).
- Develop a philosophy of ministering to various sub-groups among the church's adults (e.g., singles, single parents, divorced, ill, and elderly).
- Apply the principles of adult education to church ministry.

## Course Lecturer

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*Kenneth O. Gangel, PhD (1935-2009)*

**Education:**

- Mercy College, LittD
- University of Missouri, PhD
- Concordia Seminary, STM
- Fuller Theological Seminary, MA
- Grace Theological Seminary, MDiv
- Taylor University, BA

**Teaching Career:**

- Scholar in Residence, Toccoa Falls College (2000-2009)
- Director of Graduate Studies, Toccoa Falls College (1997-2000)
- Vice President for Academic Affairs and Academic Dean, Dallas Theological Seminary (1992-1997)
- Chairman and Professor of Christian Education, Dallas Theological Seminary (1982-1992)
- President and Professor, Miami Christian College (1974-1982)
- Professor and Founding Director of the School of Christian Education, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (1970-1974)
- Bible Department Chairman, Registrar, Academic Dean, and Academic Vice President, Calvary Bible College (1960-1969)
- Nearly 50 years of service in higher education

**Other Career Highlights:**

- Lecturer in more than 1,500 churches worldwide
- Lecturer at more than 40 educational institutions
- Member of various regional boards and national councils
- Editor for the leadership publication *The SEAL* (Seeking Excellence in Administrative Leadership)
- Worker for the Kansas City Regional Council for Higher Education in the late 1960s
- Minister, holding various pastorates in the 1950s, 1960s and 1980s
- Voice of “Morning Light,” a daily devotional that aired on more than 100 radio stations across the United States (for over 20 years)

**Publications:**

- Contributor to or editor of 57 books, including *Fathering Like a Father*, *Feeding and Leading*, (a book he co-authored with his son), *Christian Education: Its History and Philosophy*, and *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry: Using Multiple Gifts to Build a Unified Vision* (perhaps his best-known work)
- Publisher of hundreds of articles for various education and theological journals, including numerous submissions to *Bibliotheca Sacra*, while submitting hundreds of reviews on various books

## Course Texts

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**Required:**

Gangel, Kenneth O. and James C. Wilhoit. *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Adult Education*. Wheaton: Victor Books, 1998.

## Basic Reading List:

“Adult Faith Development,” *Religious Education* 84, 4, Fall 1989.

Atkinson, Harley, ed. *Handbook of Young Adult Religious Education*. Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1995.

Brookfield, Stephen D. *The Skillful Teacher*. Second edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Understanding and Facilitating Adult Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991.

*Christian Education Journal*. Autumn 1991 issue.

Cross, K. Patricia. *Adults as Learners*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992.

DeBoy, James J., Jr. *Getting Started in Adult Religious Education*. New York: Paulist Press, 1979.

Edge, Findley B. *Teaching For Results*. rev. ed. Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 1999.

Eison, Jon. *Growing Up While Growing Older*. Palo Alto, CA: Pacific Books, 1991.

Emler, Donald G. *Revisioning the DRE*. Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1989.

Foltz, Nancy T. *Handbook of Religious Education*. Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1986.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Religious Education in the Small Membership Church*. Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1990.

Fowler, J.W. *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian: Adult Development and Christian Faith*. Revised edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999.

Gangel, Kenneth O. and James C. Wilhoit. *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Adult Education*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Spiritual Formation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.

Gangel, Kenneth O. and Betty Gangel. *Your Family*. Gresham, OR: Vision House, 1995.

Gorman, Julie A. *Community That Is Christian: A Handbook on Small Groups*. Second edition. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002.

Kesler, Jay. *Grandparenting*. Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 1993.

Knox, Alan B. *Adult Development and Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1977.

Koons, Carolyn A. and Michael J. Anthony. *Single Adult Passages*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1995.

Kouzes, James M. and Barry Z. Posner. *Credibility*. Revised edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Leadership Challenge*. Third edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003.

Lawson, Michael S. and Robert J. Choun, Jr. *Directing Christian Education*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1992.

LeBar, Lois E. *Education That Is Christian*, rev. ed. Colorado Springs: Cook Communications Ministries, 2006.

McBride, Neal F. *How To Build a Small Groups Ministry*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1995.

Mouton, Jane Srygley and Robert R. Blake. *Synergogy*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1984.

Peters, John M., et. al. *Adult Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991.

Peterson, Gilbert A., ed. *The Christian Education of Adults*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1984.

Sell, Charles M. *Transitions Through Adult Life*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991.

Stubblefield, Jerry, ed. *A Church Ministering to Adults*. Nashville: Broadman, 1986.

Wickett, R.E.Y. *Models of Adult Religious Education Practice*. Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1991.

Wilbert, Warren N. *Strategies for Teaching Christian Adults*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1984.

Williams, Dennis and Kenneth O. Gangel. *Volunteers for Today's Church*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2004.

Wlodkowski, Raymond J. *Enhancing Adult Motivation to Learn*. Revised edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998.

Textbooks can be ordered through our online store at CUGN.org, through your local bookstore, or through your preferred eReader when available.

## Note from Dr. Gangel

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A practical course such as this one should emphasize process as well as content, affective as well as cognitive outcomes. Such goals are rather difficult to achieve through an audio-recorded course, but with your intentional cooperation we can try together.

As I will explain in the first recording, the lectures are only a portion of this course. There will not be the usual questions on lectures and textbook(s), and there will be no final exam. Even though you and I won't interact "face to face," I've built in several course features which can take you beyond the transfer of content to whatever level of participation you choose.

1. Live Lectures. Rather than recording the lectures in a studio, I've chosen to bring you to a functioning graduate class so that the "flavor" of that setting might set a tone for your listening. What we may have lost in recording quality, I hope we make up in dynamics.
2. Practical Assignment. In lieu of the questions mentioned above, I have substituted assignments which you can relate to your present ministry, or at least to the church you regularly attend.
3. Learning Contract. This is your choice. Not only to do it or not, but, should you choose to complete a learning contract, the project you work on will be your decision as well.

**NOTE: This kind of flexibility carries with it much more subjectivity in grading. Rather than**

a set of right and wrong answers to questions, you and your grader will set criteria according to which s/he will determine grades.

## Course Requirements

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1. **Time:** The student must complete the course requirements within a 6-month period unless the particular institution requires the completion of all work within the framework of the semester or quarter. During this time, the student is expected to devote a minimum of 120 hours to the completion of the course.
2. **Recorded Lectures:** The student is required to listen to all 24 audio lectures recorded by Dr. Kenneth O. Gangel.
3. **Reading:** Master the textbook and read two other books from the Basic Reading List. For each of the three, prepare a **one- or two-page** review.

Criteria:

- a. Evidence of awareness and comprehension.
- b. Critique of authors' ability to contribute new insights to the field of adult ministries.
- c. Clarity of student's written communication.

**NOTE: Readings and lectures should be completed before beginning the remaining assignments.**

4. **Church Evaluation:** Select a local church with which you are familiar and evaluate its ministry to adults. How is it strong? Where is it weak? What needs to be done? From the evidence you gather, prepare a **four- to five-page** analysis with appropriate recommendations.

Criteria:

- a. Evidence of thorough evaluation of the church's adult ministry program.
- b. Perception of church's strengths and weaknesses and the ability to candidly point these out.
- c. Demonstrated competence in the recommendations, all of which should be feasible.

5. **Adult Need Project:** Identify a current need which you uncovered in your church evaluation or which surfaced in your reading (or listening to the lectures). The need may focus on an age group or on some other aspect of adult ministry. Or you might zero in on some crucial current issue related to adult ministry such as homosexuality, abuse, divorce, church roles for women, day care, paternal neglect, aging, developing leadership for adult ministries, emerging adult Sunday School patterns, etc.

Criteria:

- a. Comprehension of the basic issues involved in the need, including those which either complicate or facilitate service to the need group.
- b. Application of solid biblical and theological principles to the need; -textual support should be

appropriately used.

c. Identification of solutions, specific ways a congregation can address the need(s) you have identified and explained.

- 6. Learning Contract:** You'll hear more about this in the first lecture, but I need to emphasize that *completion of the Learning Contract is essential for earning an A*. You may choose to receive a B grade or less, and given whatever time constraints you may have, that may be a wise choice. If you decide to complete a learning contract, get it approved by your proctor before proceeding.

The contract should focus on some area of concern close to your present or future ministry. Choose something you really want and need to learn, not just to improve your grade.

Criteria:

- a. Competence in structuring the contract itself with clear goals and adequate evaluation procedures.
- b. Thoroughness in following through to complete the contract, and finding the right resources (human or otherwise) to achieve the goals.
- c. Goal Achievement. This is the litmus test of a learning contract. Did you learn what you said you would and has someone affirmed that you have?

## 7. Spiritual Formation Project

**RATIONALE:** Ministry preparation and the Christian life require more than academic exercises. Learners also need personal, spiritual formation, which involves theological reflection and critical thinking on their current practices and assumptions. This process occurs as learners engage in self-reflection and interaction in a community of learning. With this in mind, CUGN includes in all courses a capstone project addressing these issues and facilitating interaction beyond the formal learning environment (ATS schools, note Standards 3.2.1.3; 4.1.1; 10.3.3.3).

Write a **five-to-six page reflective essay** and **interview a mentor**, discussing the spiritual impact of this course on your life. Identify your mentor early in the course, and submit the essay to your grader when you take the final exam. This last project should not be a summary of course content, but an application of course principles. Complete the following:

**A. Personal Reflection and Evaluation:** Reflect on the course – To integrate your academic studies with your walk of faith, reflect on the content of the course and evaluate your life in light of what you learned.

- i. Follow these steps in your reflection:

Step 1: What one theme, principle, or concept in the course is the most significant to you personally? Why is it significant?

Step 2: What portion(s) of the course brought this theme/principle/concept to light?

Step 3: Think about your past. Why is it vital now for you to deal with and apply this theme/principle/concept?



Step 4: How should this affect your thoughts and actions, and what specific steps should you take to concretely apply what you have learned?

- ii. Write your answers to the above questions in full paragraph form. (Recommended length for this reflection: approximately three pages)
- iii. Give a copy of this reflection to your mentor (see #2).

**B. Community Reflection and Interaction:** Interview a mentor – Since the Holy Spirit uses the input of others to guide and form His people, interview a mentor according to the following guidelines:

- i. Who should you interview? (1-3 are required; 4-6 are recommended)
  1. Someone with whom you have a reasonably close relationship.
  2. Someone who is a mature Christian ministry leader (i.e. a pastor).
  3. Someone who is not your grader or a family member.
  4. Someone who values the spiritual formation process.
  5. Someone who is familiar with and values the subject of the course.
  6. Someone who has experience using the content of the course in ministry.

**NOTE:** Identify your mentor early in the course, and give him/her the page entitled “Guidelines for Mentors.”

- ii. Focus of the interview – Your interview should focus on the issues and questions you raise in your essay. For example:
  - What feedback can your mentor give in response to your essay?
  - In light of the course content, are the conclusions you made appropriate? Why or why not?
  - What additional advice, deeper insights or broader applications might he/she suggest from his/her own life and ministry?

**NOTE:** Conduct this interview either in person (preferred) or over the phone. Do not use electronic communication (i.e. email, instant messenger, etc). Suggested length: 45 minutes.

**C. Synthesis and Application:** Draw your final conclusions – Having reflected on the course and the discussion with your mentor, synthesize what you have learned in these three sections:

- i. Section 1: Begin your essay with the personal reflection from #1 above. This should be exactly what you gave your mentor for the interview.
- ii. Section 2: Comment on your interview, explaining what you discussed and the insights you gained from your mentor. Include the following:
  - What were the mentor’s comments regarding your essay?

- What advice did he/she give?
- How did his/her comments expand or correct your application of the course?
- Include the person's name, occupation, and the length of the interview.

iii. Section 3: Conclude with a synthesis of what you have learned. Answer the following:

- If your mentor corrected any thoughts in your "Personal Reflection and Evaluation", how do you feel about these corrections? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
- Synthesizing your thoughts from section one and your mentor's insight in section two, what final conclusions have you reached? How is this different from section one?
- In light of the interview and further reflection, what additional, specific changes need to occur in your life and what concrete steps will you take to implement them?

**NOTE TO STUDENTS:** Your effort in this assignment will determine its benefit. If by the end of this course you have not yet reflected critically on your life in light of what you have studied, allow this assignment to guide you in that process. The instructor for this course will not score your essay based on the amount of spiritual fruit you describe; so do not exaggerate (or trivialize) what you have learned. The primary grading criteria is that you have thoughtfully considered the principles of the course and realistically sought to apply them to your life. If you have done this and met the minimal requirements (as noted above), you will earn the full points for this assignment.

Note on confidentiality: Perhaps the Holy Spirit is dealing with you in some very personal areas of your life. Because of this, your grader will keep your essay entirely confidential and either return or discard it.

Objective: to stimulate reflection and interaction on course principles in order to enhance personal spiritual formation.

## Course Grading

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Your grade for the course will be determined as follows:

Recorded Lectures (written affirmation)	15% of Course Grade
Reading Reports	20% of Course Grade
Church Evaluation	15% of Course Grade
Adult Ministry Need Paper	15% of Course Grade
<i>Learning Contract (optional)</i>	20% of Course Grade
Spiritual Formation Project	15% of Course Grade
Total	100%



Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Interview  
Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

## Guidelines for Mentors

(Students, give this sheet to your mentor for the Spiritual Formation Project.)

Thank you for your involvement in this student's CUGN coursework. We believe the Christian life is more than an academic exercise, so we encourage students to critically reflect on their life in light of what they learn and then apply those insights to the daily life of faith.

Therefore, students taking CUGN courses are required to complete a final assignment called the "Spiritual Formation Project." This assignment involves two parts: an essay and an interview:

**The ESSAY:** After completing their coursework, students reflect on the content of the course, evaluate their lives, and discuss the one theme, principle or concept that is most significant to them and why. Students are to identify specific ways this theme/principle/concept should apply to their lives and what action steps they plan to take in order to make these changes a reality.

**The INTERVIEW:** After writing this reflection, students give a copy to their mentor and meet with him/her to discuss their thoughts and get feedback. The goal of this interview is to facilitate the student's growth through interaction with a mature believer.

### NOTES ON THE INTERVIEW:

- You do not need to be familiar with the course to participate in this interview. You will primarily respond to the thoughts of the student. (However, general knowledge of the subject matter of the course and/or experience applying it to ministry is valuable.)
- Prior to meeting with the student, read his/her "Personal Reflection and Evaluation" and prepare to discuss the following:
  1. What feedback can you give the student in response to his/her essay?
  2. Are the student's conclusions from the course appropriate? Why or why not?
  3. What additional advice, deeper insights or broader applications would you suggest from your own life and ministry?
- Meet with the student either in person (preferred) or over the phone. Do not use electronic communication (i.e. email, instant messenger, etc.).
- Suggested length of the interview: 45 minutes

Thanks again for participating in this project! You have a real opportunity to guide this student in the application process and to help him/her connect academics to life – *a valuable process for all who wish to grow in Christ.*

**NOTE: If the student's school makes any changes to this assignment, their requirements should replace those described here.**