

**Leading Ministry With Older Adults
MN 567 60**

Course Description

**University of Dubuque Theological Seminary
Summer 2022**

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3 credits, Letter Grade Only

No Prerequisites

Course Description

The majority of congregations have a significant number of senior members. But this growing group is far from a homogeneous demographic. Seniors range in age, interest and need, with a wide variety of skills, gifts, and experience. This course will examine our senior populations with a focus on theology, care and practice, while exploring strategies for ministering to the needs of our older members in a Christian context.

Course Objectives

- Gain a critical and integrative understanding of the needs and interests of senior members and participants in the congregational setting.
- Examine the diverse demographic of seniors within a congregation and analyze how we can best minister to each.
- Learn how to plan, develop, and implement new ministry opportunities and programs for seniors within the church context.
- Analyze issues of ethics and care involved in the aging process.

M.Div. Curricular Goals

- Nurture habits and disciplines of study, prayer and reflection that increase their love of God and neighbor and shape their personal and professional lives.
- Engage contemporary theological and ethical issues with insight and humility.
- Educate and equip individuals and congregations to live and minister joyfully and faithfully as part of their own denomination and the ecumenical church.
- Integrate theology and practice in all areas of life and ministry.

MAMD Curricular Goals

- Develop, implement, and assess strategies for missional living in a specific cultural context.
- Develop skills and capacities for faithful and competent Christian witness.

Course Requirements

1. Need Analysis Paper – An examination of the social, cultural and congregational needs of a particular senior demographic (5 to 7 pages).
2. Senior Program Proposal – A detailed proposal for a new ministry to senior members of a particular congregation, with an analysis of the theological and social goals of the program (10 pages).
3. Weekly participation in the online class discussion questions.
4. Keep up to date with posted lectures, assigned readings, and class discussions.

Required Texts

Carlson, Dosia. *Engaging in Ministry with Older Adults*. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1997. ISBN-13: 978-1566991865.

Gallagher, David P. *Senior Adult Ministry in the 21st Century: Step by Step Strategies for Reaching People Over 50*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2006. ISBN-13: 978-1597526630.

Gawande, Atul. *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End*. Picador, 2017. ISBN-13: 978-1250076226 (or hardcover edition, Metropolitan Books, 2014, ISBN-13: 978-0805095159.)

Gentzler, Richard H. *An Age of Opportunity: Intentional Ministry By, With, and For Older Adults*. Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2018. ISBN-13: 978-0881779035.

Willimon, Will. *Aging: Growing Old in Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020. ISBN-13: 978-1540960818.

Assorted Journal Articles and Digital Resources assigned during course.

Feel free to contact the instructor regarding the use of Kindle or other e-book formats.