



P351 Ministry Formation

1 credit. Prerequisites: P252

 Directed Study

September 14 – December 18, 2026
Fall Semester
Padlet Conversations: As scheduled

Rev. Cheryl Ritskes, M.T.S.
cheryl.ritskes@mcs.edu

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³ waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.
(Titus 2:11-14, ESV)

*****This course has pre course requirements*****

Course Goals

Course Description

Ministry Formation provides students with the opportunity to serve in a church, parachurch, or other approved ministry under the guidance of a mentor. Typically, students will engage in ministry for 4 to 5 hours a week. Regular meetings with a mentor provide students with a positive growth experience. Further, class discussions provide input, training, and reflection aimed at bridging the shift from the classroom to the field, from the textual to the contextual. Horizon's and MCS's competencies are addressed throughout the six Ministry Formation courses with Spiritual Maturity and Contextual Awareness as the emphases for P351.

Relationship to Horizon and MCS's Missions

The colleges' missions focus on preparing and equipping leaders for ministry. At the core of its leadership training, MCS-Horizon has six competencies (Biblical and Theological Literacy, Spiritual Maturity, Contextual Awareness, Skilled Communication, Leadership and Administration, and Ministry Development) that are addressed throughout the six Ministry Formation courses.

Core Competencies and Learning Outcomes



Spiritual maturity is demonstrated by participating in and modeling a vibrant relationship with the triune God, practicing core spiritual disciplines, exercising spiritual gifts for the benefit of others, and remaining committed to lifelong spiritual formation, resulting in ever-increasing Christ-likeness.

To demonstrate competency in **Spiritual Maturity**, students will:

1. Design a plan for engagement in spiritual disciplines.
 - *Assessment:* Rule of Life for personal and spiritual growth



Contextual awareness is demonstrated by a maturing orthodox Christian worldview, a healthy self-understanding, and engagement of people and cultures with wisdom and discernment.

To demonstrate competency in **Contextual Awareness**, students will:

2. Apply and integrate contextual awareness in the ministry formation setting.
 - *Assessment:* Ministry Formation placement and evaluation
3. Discern, formulate, and articulate key contextual awareness insights gleaned from the mentor.
 - *Assessment:* Interview Assignment
4. Reflect on contextual awareness growth through the ministry formation experience.
 - *Assessment:* LEARN, Labs

Course Work

Required Readings

Titus (any English translation that is *not* a paraphrase)

Pre-Course Requirements

To be enrolled and participate in *P351 Ministry Formation* a student must:

- Make arrangements to be involved in a ministry placement location for a minimum of 4 hours per week from September 14 – December 18, 2026 under the supervision of a mentor. The placement and mentor must be approved by the course instructor.
 - Complete “Ministry Placement Information” under the “Tests” tab on the course page on Populi by **September 3, 2026**.
- Complete a current criminal record check, submitted to the Registrar.
- Provide digital proof (normally a certificate) of some type of safety training such as Plan to Protect, submitted to the Registrar. We can accept this proof from your local church or ministry community as long as the training was completed after May 2026 and is valid for the September 2026 – April 2027 academic year. If a student does not have this certification, you may purchase an access code to complete online training through the Plan to Protect website prior to the 2026 Fall semester. Contact the Registrar to purchase this access code.

Course Assignments and Activities

1. Ministry Formation Placement – 45%

Engage fully and faithfully in a ministry formation placement with **at least 4 hours of involvement per week** from September 14 – December 11, 2026 (excluding Reading Week). Serve under the oversight of a mentor.

- Be sure to:
 - Complete weekly reports on Populi to report on your hours, activities, and learning.

The ministry placement mentor will complete an assessment at the end of the semester, which will contribute to your final grade.

- Related learning outcome: 2
- **Assignment length:** 4-5 hours and approximately 100 words per week
- **Weekly Reports due:** Every Monday from September 21 – December 14, 2026. Specific dates outlined below. (Note: Weekly Report is due Tuesday, October 13 instead of on Thanksgiving, weekly report is due Sunday, October 25 before Reading Week, and no weekly report on Monday, November 2 after Reading Week.) If late, points will be deducted until 2 days after the due date, at which time the report will not receive a grade.

2. Ministry Reflection and Padlet Conversations – 15%

Students are required to **read Titus** at least once during the semester, which will be reported on in the memorization quiz. The course includes the **memorization of Titus 2:11-14** in your choice of English translation as long as it is *not* a paraphrase (ESV provided above).

Record 5 videos responses on Padlet to share your experiences in Ministry Formation and the topics outlined below. Videos should be between 3-4 minutes each. Additionally, **respond meaningfully** (in 3-4 sentences) in the comments to at least 2 Padlet video responses from other students.

The instructor has planned a Zoom class meeting to give you the opportunity to meet and interact with your classmates. This Zoom meeting is not mandatory, but students are encouraged to include it in your schedule. Those who participate in the Zoom meeting will not be required to submit a Padlet video response that week.

- Zoom Meeting – Monday, November 23, 2026 – 7 pm – 8:30 pm
- Related learning outcome(s): 4
- **Assignment length:** 3-4 minutes x 5 videos, as scheduled below.
- **Due date: 5 videos responses** due by 8:00pm ET based on due dates in schedule below.
- Memorization Quiz will be open on Populi (in the “Tests” tab) from 8:00 am – 8 pm ET on Monday, December 7, 2026 for you to complete.

3. Rule of Life: Practices for Personal and Spiritual Growth – 10%

Review and reflect on your current rule of life practices and **make revisions** (additions, deletions, changes) which reflect a realistic plan for your primary spiritual disciplines that will be pursued over the next three to four months. It may be helpful to define a time and a place as to where and when the disciplines will be exercised. For suggestions and parameters, please consult the Populi lesson for this assignment. **Share** your revised rule of life with your mentor.

Towards the end of the semester, **write a brief reflection** (5-6 sentences) on how your rule of life was practiced throughout the semester.

- Be sure to:
 - Follow the Horizon & MCS Format Guide.
 - Complete the related lesson on Populi.
- Related learning outcome: 1
- **Assignment length:** 400 words.
- **Due date:** Thursday, October 1, 2026 (revised Rule of Life)
 - Monday, November 23, 2026 (reflection)

4. *Mentor Conversations and Interview Reflection* – 15%

Set up a **meeting time** with your mentor and interview him/her asking the competency-related questions below (as well as your own), regarding contextual awareness. After the interview, **write a 500-word reflection paper** identifying three or four key insights you learned. The paper is not meant to be a restatement of your mentor's responses, but rather a summary of the top three or four insights for you.

Suggested competency questions are as follows:

1. Contextual awareness begins with awareness of self. In terms of healthy self-awareness and identity, what were one or two key contributing factors to your development as a person?
2. In your estimation, what are one or two key components to a substantive Christian worldview?
3. In your judgment, how should Christians respond to a society that seemingly is becoming less tolerant of Christian perspectives and values?
4. How do you think Christians and the church should or should not engage in current political and social issues in our region and/or country?
5. As you consider various marginalized subgroupings within society, is there one to which you wish you could give added attention? (Possibilities include the poor, the disabled, refugees, indigenous peoples, new immigrants, the unemployed, the sick, the imprisoned, etc.)
6. Do you think that seniors are looked after well in ministry and/or society? Do you think they feel somewhat overlooked by many, not only in society, but perhaps even in the church? Is ageism, directed at seniors, a problem today?
7. Are there one or two community service organizations that your ministry utilizes or supports? (Possibilities include counselling services, pregnancy centres, social assistance offices, food bank; etc.)
8. What is one thing you have observed about new immigrants to Canada that you find admirable?
9. Have you had interactions with people from religious backgrounds other than the Christian faith (which could include Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, New Age, etc.)? What is one significant thing you have learned from them?
10. Those with roots in Catholicism make up about a third of the people in Canada. Many are not active in their faith. Do you have any ideas on how Evangelicals could play a role in encouraging the faith of inactive Catholics?
11. In your estimation, is racism systemic in Canada? How do you think racism can be addressed and overcome in the church?

- Be sure to:
 - Follow the Horizon & MCS Format Guide.
 - Complete the lesson on Populi.
- Related learning outcome: 3
- **Assignment length:** 500 words.
- **Due date:** Wednesday, November 18, 2026

5. LEARN Assignment – 15%

Identify and reflect on an experience from your ministry formation setting, ideally related to spiritual maturity and/or contextual awareness. **Write a 500-word reflection paper** using the five steps of LEARN. Upon completion:

1. Submit a copy on Populi. The assignment will be shared and discussed during the final lab.
 2. Submit a copy to your mentor. Mentors will be asked on the final assessment if it was submitted to them.
- Be sure to:
 - Follow the Horizon & MCS Format Guide.
 - Complete the lesson on Populi.
 - Related learning outcome: 4
 - **Assignment length:** 500 words.
 - **Due date:** Wednesday, December 2, 2026

Estimate of Time Investment (individual time investments may vary)

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Due Dates</i>	<i>Assignment Weighting</i>
1. Ministry Formation Placement -Weekly reports	48-60 hrs 2 hrs	At least 4 hrs/wk 10 minutes/wk (outlined below)	45%
2. Labs -Memorization Quiz	7.5 hrs	5 dates outlined below Dec. 7	15%
3. Rule of Life -Revised Rule of Life -Reflection	3 hrs	Oct. 1 Nov. 23	10%
4. Interview Reflection	2 hrs	Nov. 18	15%
5. LEARN Assignment	2 hrs	Dec. 2	15%
TOTAL =		65-77 hours	100%

All assignments are due at 8 pm **[ET]**, unless otherwise indicated.

Assessment Rubrics

Assignment rubrics can be found on Populi. Click on the name of the assignment to access each rubric.

Class & Reading Schedule

Padlet/ Zoom:	Dates:	Video Topics:	Readings and Assignments Due:
Padlet 1	Mon. Sept. 21	1) Introduce yourself 2) Explain where you are doing your placement 3) Explain your placement ministry involvement 4) Share what you think contributes to a healthy sense of identity in Christ	Begin Ministry Formation placement (Week of Sept. 14)
Padlet 2	Mon. Oct. 5	1) Share a highlight from your placement thus far 2) Share one way you intend to revise and grow in your Rule of Life this semester	Weekly Report Week 1 (Sept. 21) Weekly Report Week 2 (Sept. 28) Revised Rule of Life (Oct. 1) Weekly Report Week 3 (Oct. 5)
Padlet 3	Mon. Nov. 9	1) Share a highlight from your placement since Padlet 2 2) Share a highlight you gleaned from Titus related to contextual awareness	Weekly Report Week 4 (Oct. 13) Weekly Report Week 5 (Oct. 19) Weekly Report Week 6 (Oct. 25) Weekly Report Week 7 (Nov. 9)
Padlet 4 <i>or</i> Zoom Meeting	Mon. Nov. 23	1) Share a highlight from your placement since Padlet 3 2) Share one meaningful thing you learned from your mentor interview	Weekly Report Week 8 (Nov. 16) Interview Reflection (Nov. 18) Weekly Report Week 9 (Nov. 23)
Padlet 5	Mon. Dec. 7	1) Share a highlight from your placement since Padlet 4 2) Share how your understanding of diverse worldviews has grown/deepened since the beginning of the semester 3) Share a highlight from your LEARN assignment	Rule of Life Reflection (Nov. 23) Weekly Report Week 10 (Nov. 30) LEARN Assignment (Dec. 2) Memorization Quiz (Dec. 7) Weekly Report Week 11 (Dec. 7) Weekly Report Week 12 (Dec. 14)

- **No Placement Hours: Reading Week** (October 26 – 30, 2026)
- **Revision Week:** December 14 – 18, 2026. Students are encouraged to submit revisions soon after they receive their marked assignments.
- No assignments will be accepted after the course end date: December 18, 2026.

Academic Policies

General Assignment Guidelines

Please see the [Horizon](#) & [MCS](#) Format Guide for assignment submission, grammar, and formatting guidelines. The length of papers should fall within +/- 10% of the stated length. Papers that fall outside the length guidelines may not be graded. Assignments should be submitted via Populi under *Submissions* (not *Comments*). The resource at this [link](#) explains how to submit assignments on Populi.

Extensions

To submit extension requests, students must submit the *Request Extension Form* on the [MCS](#) or [Horizon](#) website and *before the due date*. Professors reserve the right to deny extensions. Generally, the sooner that a student asks for an extension, the more willing faculty tend to be in granting extensions. Furthermore, no extensions will be granted beyond the final day of a term or semester unless approval is granted by the Associate Academic Dean (MCS) or Assistant Academic Dean (Horizon).

Late Assignments

Students are expected to submit work by the assigned or extended due dates, as part of their development of the Leadership and Administration competency. A late penalty will be assessed for all overdue assignments: 1-3 calendar days late, penalty of 10%; 4-6 calendar days late, penalty of 20%; after 6 calendar days late, an assignment receives a grade of 0 and no opportunity for revision. Any late penalty incurred on a first submission will be applied regardless of if the student chooses to continue learning through the revision process.

Assignment Completion

Professors usually will not accept assignments that have not been completed according to the instructions given in the syllabus. If a professor informs a student that a submitted assignment is incomplete, the student will be given the opportunity to complete and resubmit the assignment quickly. If this is not possible, the assignment will be regarded as submitted late.

Competency Assignment Revisions

After each assignment has been marked, students have the opportunity to continue learning in response to feedback they receive on assignments. Students can submit one revision for each assignment, although a professor may accept more revisions if the professor determines the student is addressing all of the professor's instructions and making significant progress toward demonstrating competency. Revised assignments may be submitted up to the course end date, although students are encouraged to submit them soon after they receive their marked assignments. Assignments submitted later than one week before the course end date are ineligible for revisions.

Horizon and MCS's College Assessment of Student Work

The goal of courses is to help students develop their competency, rather than solely earn letter grades. Assignments are the means by which instructors evaluate development of competency by assessing learning outcomes as outlined in the syllabus and each assignment. Once a student's assignment has met all assignment completion requirements, the professor will assign a grade for

that assignment. The opportunity for revisions exists according to the “Assignment Revisions” policy.

Horizon and MCS Competency Scale		Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point	U of S Equivalency
E	Exceeding expectations	Student demonstrated exceptional achievement of the learning outcomes.	A+	4.0	90-100
		Student demonstrated excellent achievement of the learning outcomes.	A	4.0	85-89
			A-	3.7	80-84
M	Meeting expectations	Student demonstrated good achievement of the learning outcomes.	B+	3.3	77-79
			B	3.0	73-76
			B-	2.7	70-72
BTM	Beginning to meet expectations	Student demonstrated satisfactory progress in achieving the learning outcomes.	C+	2.3	67-69
			C	2.0	63-66
			C-	1.7	60-62
		Student demonstrated minimal progress in achieving the learning outcomes.	D+	1.3	57-59
			D	1.0	53-56
			D-	0.7	50-52
NYM	Not yet meeting expectations	Student made insufficient progress toward meeting learning outcomes.	F	0.0	0-49

Academic Integrity

Students learn best when practicing academic integrity. A lack of integrity is displayed in acts such as deception, abuse of confidentiality, cheating, inappropriate collaboration, or plagiarism. Plagiarism occurs when a student presents the words or ideas of another person or an artificial intelligence (AI) tool in such a way as to give others the impression that it is their own words or ideas. In academic writing, there should be no doubt which words or ideas are the student's and which are drawn from other sources or AI. Students are expected to submit their own original work and give due recognition to sources from which all substantial phrases, sentences, or even ideas are drawn. Note also that you may not submit work done in one course to satisfy the requirements of another course (unless both instructors agree beforehand to accept such work). See [here](#) for examples of plagiarism and further guidelines in the Student Handbook.

Horizon and MCS have a subscription to software that ensures the originality of academic writing, verifies the proper citation of all sources, and detects AI-generated content. When you submit an assignment, you will automatically receive a summary on Populi that includes your submitted files along with an originality score (a high originality score is positive).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage

In keeping with the Academic Integrity policy above, students must disclose on the title page of all assignments whether or not they have used AI and how they have used it. If the assignment has no title page, the student must disclose this to the instructor by some other means, such as in a comment on Populi. Students are expected to follow the policy for acceptable use of AI that is published in the [Horizon](#) and [MCS](#) Student Handbooks.

Accessible Learning Services Information

Horizon and MCS are committed to provide safe and inclusive learning environments which equalize the opportunity for students with disabilities to meet the requirements of the institutions, programs, and courses. The application for Academic Accommodations begins with a student disclosing a medical diagnosis or professionally documented learning disability during the application process. Enrolled students may contact Accessibility services personnel (at MCS, the Director of Academic Success, Wendy Holmes at wendy.holmes@mcs.edu; at Horizon, the Academic Accommodations Coordinator, Richelle Bekkattla at rbekkattla@horizon.edu). All Academic Accommodations will adhere to the Guiding Principles listed in the Student Handbooks. Students with documented accommodations on file pertaining to accessing course readings in alternate formats are encouraged to contact the librarian for assistance with as much advanced notice as possible.

Class Attendance

Students should attend all classes in order to facilitate competency development. Students are expected to be present through the delivery method that they registered for. Students registered to attend on-campus or via livestream must be present for the full duration of a class period to be marked as present for the class. Students registered to attend by VOD must submit their VOD reports on time to be marked as present for class. In the case of illness or other unforeseen circumstances, students may miss up to twenty percent of the total class time (e.g., one day of a module course, two 3-hour classes, etc.) without academic penalty. Students who are absent for more than this will automatically fail the course. Students wishing to be exempted from this policy due to extenuating circumstances may make an academic appeal, where they will need to document and verify those circumstances. Students who miss a class are responsible to get missed notes or handouts from another student, rather than from the professor.

Livestreaming Etiquette

Students taking the course through livestreaming are required to indicate this during their course registration. While livestreaming access is available for on-campus students who are unable to attend class due to illness, on-campus students are expected to attend class in person following the class attendance policy.

If attending class online via livestream, in order to be marked present for class, you must keep your camera on and stay present and attentive throughout the class session, extending the gift of engagement. Access your class with a computer (preferably) or tablet, not a cell phone. Arrive to class on time, and dress as you would if you were attending class on campus. Join the class from a quiet space with minimal background noise and mute your microphone until you wish to speak to the class.

Use of Technology

Horizon and MCS encourage the use of electronic devices in the classroom to enhance learning. Careful consideration must be given to privacy issues, copyrighted materials, and the general care and concern for others. Please respect the following classroom policies:

- Please use online access for course learning only. This is a matter of respect for the instructor's teaching, your own learning, and fellow students who may be distracted by other uses.

- Students should secure permission from the instructor to record any teaching material. This includes PowerPoint slides, white board illustrations, notes, and any form of audio or video.
- Student feedback is a valuable input for course improvements. Please resolve any classroom grievance about the instructor or course with the instructor personally, through the grievance procedures, or the Populi-based course evaluations. It is inappropriate to air classroom grievances on a social media platform.
- When instructors use recording mechanisms in the classroom, recorded materials will be used for the sole purpose of instruction and cannot be released to any social media outlet without the written consent of the students whose images have been recorded.
- In general, it is not acceptable to share photographs or videos of students in the classroom setting without permission from those whose images appear in such media.

Library Support and Research Assistance

Library staff are available to meet with students (online or in person) who need assistance with

- citing sources and identifying credible resources;
- developing research and information literacy skills;
- searching DTL and other library resources.

Bibliography

Blodgett, Barbara and Floding, Matthew, ed. *Brimming with God: Reflecting Theologically on Cases in Ministry*. Eugene: Pickwick, 2015.

Floding, Matthew, ed. *Engage: A Theological Field Education Toolkit*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2017.

Hillman, George. *Ministry Greenhouse: Cultivating Environments for Practical Learning*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008.

Hillman, George M., ed. *Preparing for Ministry: A Practical Guide to Theological Field Education*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008.

Miller, Calvin. *Letters to a Young Pastor*. Colorado Springs: David C Cook, 2011.

Pyle, William T. and Seals, Mary Alice, ed. *Experiencing Ministry Supervision: A Field- Based Approach*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1975.