

APPENDIX B

Theological Reflection Paper Template

Intern:

Paper Number:

Supervisory Session Date:

Mentor Pastor:

Faculty Supervisor:

A. Narrative Account (see Writing Instructions)

I. Introduction

The Introduction should provide relevant background information to help the reader understand the context and your experience. What is the time and place? What is the purpose of the meeting or conversation? Who are the people, and how do they know one another? Use pseudonyms to avoid identifying the persons by name (i.e., Ms. A).

II. Description

Write a narrative account that describes the dialogue between the persons involved. Retell exchanges and responses as accurately as possible using dialogue form. Feel free to summarize long exchanges. But make sure to use quotes to highlight important parts of the conversation (see example below).

Identify in your narrative account the salient non-verbal factors such as gestures, facial expressions, body language, insinuations, etc. Explain how these factors influenced your feelings, responses, and/or conclusions.

B. Guiding Questions

I. Be Aware

- i. Try to identify the underlying theological-ethical issue(s) of your narrative account. In a few words, how would you describe the main issue(s) at stake?
- ii. What was going on with you internally (what were you thinking and feeling) during this experience?
- iii. What assumptions were you making? How did you test your assumptions? How did your awareness of your assumptions affect your subsequent responses and reactions?

- iv. What power dynamics (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, social status, leadership role, etc.) were at play in this incident?
- v. Did you learn anything new about yourself? For instance, did you learn something new about your ability to listen, your faith, your ministerial identity, your communication style, your approach to ministry, or your theological commitments

II. Think Theologically

- i. How did you experience the presence and activity of the Divine? How did this experience help you to think differently about the Divine and how the Divine relates to us? Was your theological imagination—your views about God and Creation—challenged, expanded, or reinforced? Explain. Alternatively, if you did not experience the presence of the Divine, why do you think that is? Explain.
- ii. What doctrines (e.g., Christology, ecclesiology, salvation, creation, eschatology, etc.) were raised in the narrative account?
- iii. As you reflect on the main theological-ethical issue at stake in the narrative account, does it promote or oppose the Divine desire for creation? What gaps exist between that intention and the way of the world? Explain.
- iv. How did you rely on exegesis of Scripture to address the theological-ethical issue(s)? How did this exegesis help you act in a way consistent with your theological commitments while maintaining a pastoral relationship?
- v. As you consider your seminary education as a whole, what other coursework (besides biblical and theological studies) could you use to deepen your theological analysis of your narrative account? Explain.

III. Lead Faithfully

- i. What leadership qualities were you trying to embody (e.g., assertive, approachable, inclusive, authoritarian, etc.)? Explain.
- ii. How might others describe the leadership you displayed? What, if anything, interfered with your intended leadership?
- iii. What spiritual disciplines, if any, did you rely on to lead in this incident? Explain.
- iv. As you re-read your paper and think about this incident, did your leadership enable others to think about their understanding of the faith and their Christian witness in a different way? If so, describe how.
- v. What leadership qualities did you discover about yourself from this incident