

LANCASTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Doctor of Ministry Program

IS 640 (H) Where Theology and Strategic Planning Meet

Rev. David M. Mellott, PhD

OPENING COURSE WEBINAR

Monday, October 1 – 2:00-3:00 ET

Professor will email information for computer access to webinar on Zoom. Everyone should make plans to attend. A recording of the webinar will be made and available on the Moodle classroom for those who need to refer to it again.

Course Description

Many churches are struggling with reduced membership and the corresponding reduced financial support. Both of these realities are affecting the health of congregational life and the effectiveness of their ministry. In many cases, the financial challenges can drive many of the conversations, which can lead to new initiatives that are not theologically-grounded and ill conceived.

This course seeks to cultivate theologically-grounded strategic planning practices for congregations to enable medium- and long-term focus on goals beyond what is financially urgent. We will work through the steps of communal strategic thinking and planning, paying attention to issues of church polity, leadership, and acting with integrity. The course will increase students' familiarity and comfort levels with institutional planning, fundraising, and community growth. While non-profit organizations will not be the main focus of the conversation, many of the ideas that will be explored in the class will also apply to those contexts.

First Two Books – In Order of Assignment

Heclo, Hugh. *On Thinking Institutionally*. Boulder: Paradigm, 2008.

Dulles, Avery Cardinal. *Models of the Church*. Expanded ed. New York: Image, 2002.