

ACTEA Tools and Studies No. 20

Learning Contracts for Theological Institutions

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Dr Richard Gehman was principal of Scott Theological College in Kenya for eight years. During that time the College became the first institution in Africa accredited by ACTEA. Dr Gehman has also been managing editor of the *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology* (AJET). In addition he was a member of the Theological Advisory Group of the Africa Inland Church in Kenya, and is author of several widely used texts, including: *Doing African Christian Theology: An Evangelical Perspective* (1987); *African Traditional Religion in Biblical Perspective* (1989); and *Who are the Living Dead?* (1999).

Many of our theological schools in Africa are offering excellent education, preparing men and women for Christian ministry vocations. Through the testimony of our graduates we can declare with confidence that God has blessed and prospered our training programmes. But theological institutions which are alive and healthy will always be looking for ways to improve what they are doing. The proposal of this paper is that one excellent way to strengthen an already well-developed theological educational programme is by the introduction of *Learning Contracts*.

Learning Contracts have been used with great effectiveness overseas in institutions of higher learning. Scott Theological College in Kenya represents one of the ACTEA-related schools that has taken a lead in implementing this approach in Africa, with much benefit. When Scott Theological College was awarded a charter as a private university in Kenya, Dr. Davy Koech, the Chairman of Kenya's Commission for Higher Education, had these words to say during that special ceremony.

Scott Theological College, small and young as it is, can be singled out as a university-level institution in Kenya that offers a balance between imparting knowledge in their chosen field of theology as well as imparting relevant skills for the world of employment through their Field Education and Learning Contracts programme.

Your Excellency, the concept of Field Education and Learning Contracts is a methodology of training not confined to theology only, but one which can be adopted by other disciplines in higher education as well. One of the biggest challenges to higher education world-wide at the close of the current century is how to bridge the gap between acquisition of knowledge and imparting and translating that knowledge into relevant practical skills. It is in this regard that the pioneering effort by this College in this field becomes of great interest, not only to the private universities in Kenya, but also to the public universities as well.

Along with all other institutions affiliated with ACTEA, Scott is required by ACTEA to consider character as a qualification for graduation. But the major challenge has always been, "How do you measure character? How do you quantify character so that one can be assured that in this respect some students qualify for graduation and some do not?" This was of great concern to the Commission for Higher Education, the Kenyan body commissioned to accredit educational institutions in Kenya. The introduction of Learning Contracts was a major contribution which satisfied their concerns.

Descriptions of Learning Contracts

A Learning Contract is a formalised way of mentoring students on various issues of character and skills for ministry. Informal mentoring has been a staple ingredient of theological colleges whenever we counsel weak, errant or inquiring students. But Learning Contracts go a step beyond. They provide a structured mentoring environment.

A Learning Contract involves a signed, written agreement between a student and his/her mentor to follow certain steps which lead to improvement of a mutually perceived weaknesses. Generally, both student and mentor participate in developing the contents of the Learning Contract so that it is owned by the student and approved by the mentor. The two major ingredients of a Learning Contract are 1) a statement of perceived weakness which the student desires to strengthen; and 2) learning steps which will be taken to overcome that weakness. The Learning Contract always involves change in the student's life and experience, a change in attitudes, acquisition of knowledge, development of skills and more.

The Learning Contract sets forth what one desires to learn and specifies learning objectives. Essential for the Learning Contracts are specific, measurable goals which should be achieved by the end of the Learning Contract. Then steps are laid out which must be followed in order to meet those objectives. The various learning activities may include, observation, participation, interviewing, reading, memorising of Scripture, weekly meeting with the mentor and writing of papers (see *Appendix B* for examples of Learning Contracts.)

The heart of the Learning Contract is a journal which is kept weekly, tracing the activities of a student, recording a summary of lessons learned and an evaluation of

struggles and improvement which the student has experienced. The Journal is a diary which traces one's growth in knowledge, character and skills in the effort to achieve the measurable goals established in the Learning Contract. This Journal forms the basis for weekly discussion and interaction with the mentor (see *Appendix A* for guidelines in keeping a Learning Contract Journal).

No exams or quizzes are given for a Learning Contract. Instead, through the various learning steps the mentor/lecturer is able to determine the extent to which the student is achieving his/her goals and overcoming the stated weakness.

Integration with Educational Programme

Learning Contracts should not be seen as an appendage attached independently to the educational programme of an institution.

In the past we have likened the educational programme of Scott Theological College to a three legged stool. Without one leg, the stool would collapse. 1) Learning in the classroom; 2) Supervised Field Education; 3) Informal education (including dormitory life, chapel, sports, student council, informal interaction with staff lecturers, and other student-arranged activities).

Learning Contracts should be seen as that brace which strengthens each of those three legs. Learning Contracts neither replace any of the above; nor are they appended as a fourth leg. Rather, Learning Contracts are integrated into all the other aspects of education in such a way that they strengthen what is being taught elsewhere.

Here are some examples of this. During the first term of the first year all students take a course on *Christian Life*. Included in this "academic instruction" is reading and instruction on the devotional life. To strengthen this, we have a Learning Contract on the Devotional Life. A written Learning Contract is signed by student and mentor in which the student agrees to follow certain learning steps in order to strengthen his devotional life. Students meet weekly with their mentor to discuss and share the report found in their Learning Contract Journal.

During the first term students also take a course on *Evangelism and Discipleship*. During the first year students practice evangelism in their supervised Field Education ministries. Discipleship is practised during the second year. A ten day evangelistic campaign follows the first term. But to strengthen the skills in evangelism a Learning Contract on Evangelism is taught during the second term. After their first term's experience students may be aware of certain problems they have faced. So they choose a topic describing this weakness. Learning steps are then prepared as students dialogue with their mentors to find ways of overcoming those weaknesses. This same process is followed in the third term with discipleship.

These are examples of how Learning Contracts are integrated with both classroom instruction and field education to reinforce both.

Integration with Field Education

Since Learning Contracts are so closely tied to Field Education, at least as they have been developed at Scott, it may be helpful to describe this process a bit more.

Philosophy of Field Education: 1) F/E is church based. Teams of no less than four students are assigned to a particular church. This team includes first, second, third and fourth year students. This enables students to learn in practical ways from the pastor, elders and lay church leaders within the church programmes. 2) F/E is structured in graded learning steps. First year students focus on evangelism, second years on discipleship, third years on Bible teaching and fourth years on preaching and leadership. 3) F/E is essential for graduation with assessment marks awarded. 4) F/E is integrated into the total educational programme so that various courses and Learning Contracts teach certain skills expected of students in Field Education. 5) F/E is supervised by staff who serve as mentors. Staff mentors generally oversee three teams of students and visit them on site once or twice each term. Weekly meetings are held with the staff mentors and the student leaders.

Student Leaders: Fourth year students serve as the student leaders of each Field Education team. These fourth year student leaders are mentored during the whole year in three Learning Contracts on leadership. These student leaders personally mentor the first year students in their Learning Contract on the Devotional Life, Evangelism and Discipleship. They are responsible, under the counsel and guidance of the staff supervisor, to co-ordinate the students as they work together with the pastor and elders to develop ministries which fit into the educational goals of the college. The staff supervisor is always there to step in and help whenever a problem arises beyond the student's ability to resolve. Student leaders meet with their F/E team weekly in a 50 minute seminar to discuss and evaluate the week's ministries. Hence, the fourth year student leaders are learning in practical ways the dynamics and qualities of effective leadership.

Internships: During the third term of the third year students are assigned to places of ministry for three months of Internship. This extended form of Field Education provides opportunity of applying the various skills for ministry which have been learned over the first three years, including evangelism and discipleship, Bible teaching and preaching, counselling and leading of small groups.

During the Internship a Learning Contract is taken on "Balancing Life Styles." Students read, plan and experience the practical lessons of balancing one's life so that no part suffers but all parts of life are given appropriate emphasis, including the spiritual (one's relationship with God), physical, social, emotional, mental, family as well as ministry. The goal is a healthy servant of God who avoids burn out.

Integration with Informal Education

Learning Contracts can also be related to the informal sector of education. At Scott Theological College there are Learning Contracts on “Worship” and “Leading Small Groups.” Not only is worship studied in books, but also learned through interviews and observations of various styles of worship and discussed with the mentor in class. The leading of worship is then conducted by students throughout the year in weekly worship chapels. Theory is once again integrated with practice.

Third year students who learn the art of “Leading Small Groups” then practice this in our Friday fellowship groups. All Scott students are divided into small groups which meet weekly in the homes of lecturers. For the full year these third year students oversee the conducting of these small group fellowships.

Second year students take the Learning Contract on “Encouraging Others.” While this may involve some of the dynamics of counselling in ministry, a life style of daily encouragement is also promoted.

Evaluation of Learning Contracts

Learning Contracts are a recognised form of education overseas, in both Christian and secular institutions. But each institution must incorporate Learning Contracts creatively to fit into their history and tradition of theological education. At Scott Theological College there has been an evolutionary development in this respect as we have learned better ways of making the Learning Contracts increasingly effective.

It is safe to say that Learning Contracts are no panacea to all our problems. The absence of Learning Contracts does not mean a failure of our educational programme, nor does the implementation of Learning Contracts mean assured success. But we can affirm with certainty that Learning Contracts can strengthen the educational programme of any theological institution. For example:

Learning Contracts teach lessons which students will never forget: When students practise in the field under skilled supervision what they have studied academically in the classroom, they cannot forget. This has been affirmed by many students. When one student was asked why he was so enthusiastic about Learning Contracts, he replied, “I will never forget the lessons I learned in the Learning Contract.” A frequent comment by students is that Learning Contracts have transformed them. One student reported, “The Learning Contract on Evangelism has been a tool of sharpening my skills. I thank God for this particular learning because it helps us to apply the theoretical methods we learn in class with the real life situation.”

Learning Contracts can transform the attitude and skills of a student: As various students have commented, they will never be the same after taking certain Learning Contracts. After one student took the course on Evangelism and Discipleship, after he

had spent one term in Field Education and gone on a ten day evangelism campaign, he still felt anxiety and fear of starting a conversation for witness. “Deep in me there is a fear of someone turning his back on me,” said one student. “I dread that.” Through various components of the Learning Contracts, including the pairing with an experienced student in weekly evangelism so that the first year could learn from the experienced student, he has gained confidence. He concludes, “This Learning Contract has imparted to my personality the art of evangelism and opened the door to this life ministry.”

Learning Contracts help students stretch and grow in leadership abilities: Some students fear when they are assigned to lead another team of students in church ministry. But through the weekly counsel and encouragement by the staff mentor, these students grow. A fearful fourth year leader ventured forth as the leader and mentor of a first year in evangelism. At the end of the term the first year student commented that the prayers, words of encouragement and reading assignments offered by the fourth year student all helped. “His example challenged me too. As we went out together to evangelise, I gained practical skills. This Learning Contract has been effective in my life since evangelism is part and parcel of my life now.”

Learning Contracts provide staff mentors the opportunity to become models to students: Education is far more than classroom instruction enabling students to pass examinations. This unfortunately is the western model of education which both expatriates and Africans tend to follow. Life transforming education changes lives by equipping students with character and skills needed to serve in the field after graduation. What Jesus was able to provide his disciples during his three year course in a mobile school (a life lived before them as a role model), cannot be provided in mere classroom instruction.

Learning Contracts, when properly handled, can offer students insight into the real life of a staff lecturer. Take the Learning Contracts on “Character” and “Temptation and Sin.” A truly transparent lecturer will help students themselves to be transparent. This enables students to see into the inner life of a lecturer things that they would never have known during formal instruction in a classroom. Lives are transformed as students begin to identify with a lecturer as someone who struggles with similar spiritual struggles of students but finds victory through Jesus Christ. Students learn how their lecturer handles these struggles and these lessons will never be forgotten.

Learning Contracts become tools for students to use in ministry: In many ways the Learning Contracts are simple devices which can be used by students when they graduate. In fact students have told me that they plan to use this method to disciple their own church members. They can easily draw up a Learning Contract which applies to a particular person he seeks to help.

Challenges in Implementing Learning Contracts

Let no one be misled. Implementing Learning Contracts does pose challenges. Here are some of them:

Challenges from the viewpoint of students:

1) *Assessment Marks*: When a class of 25 students is divided among eight staff lecturers who differ in their criteria of grading, this can become a major problem. Students quickly learn that some lecturers give higher marks for Learning Contract than do other lecturers. Failure to provide uniform standards of assessment causes much controversy.

2) *Work Load of Students*: The same problem occurs when some staff lecturers are lax and demand little, while other lecturers are more strict and follow higher standards. Students talk. They know that some students get higher grades with less work than they themselves have received. So restlessness develops.

3) *Unfaithful Mentors*: It is a fact that some staff mentors are not as faithful as they should be in devoting themselves to Learning Contracts. They share little of themselves with no transparency. They treat the Learning Contracts as a bother and not their first priority. Some students even report that their lecturers say, "I don't know what I am doing. I am learning with you."

4) *Breaking of confidentiality*: When students share with their lecturers, it is imperative that lecturers follow strict rules for counselling. What a student shares with a lecturer, such information must not be shared by that lecturer with anyone else. Otherwise, the consequences will be destructive for the effectiveness of all Learning Contracts.

5) *Design of the Learning Contract*: In the beginning Learning Contracts were designed in such a way that students interpreted them to be the "taking of an oath". They resisted any oath-like commitment to the keeping of a Learning Contract. Some Learning Contracts have been constructed which allow very little student input. Instead, everything has been laid out for the student. All they need to do is sign the Learning Contract and fulfil it.

Challenges from the Viewpoint of the Staff Lecturers:

The greatest challenge for staff lecturers is the work load of Learning Contracts. Learning Contracts are labour intensive. Instead of teaching a class of 25 students, they mentor one or two or three students. If staff lecturers are not fully committed to Learning Contracts and/or if they are already overworked with classroom teaching and administrative responsibilities, then a loud chorus of complaints will arise.

Proposed Solutions to the Above Challenges:

Many precious things in life are tender and delicate and must be handled with care. No one would dispose of babies even though they require intensive care and love. The same is true with Learning Contracts. They are precious elements to help meet our educational goals. To dispose of Learning Contracts because of the challenges would be short sighted. But Learning Contracts do need care. Following are some suggestions:

1) *Treat the Learning Contracts as part of the whole educational programme.* When calculating the workload of staff lecturers, include the work of a Learning Contract along with the course instruction. The amount of credit hours attributed to Learning Contracts depends on the time expected and required of a lecturer to fulfil his/her duties.

2) *Balance the labour intensive Learning Contracts with those requiring less intensive labour.* Sometimes through planning or sometimes through necessity, Learning Contracts are handled with the whole class by one staff lecturer. Certain Learning Contracts can be handled in this manner, such as “Worship” and “Leading Small Groups.” Instead of interacting with three students and fielding their questions, the mentor does this for the whole class. The Learning Contract, however, is not treated as a regular course because no exams are given. Learning Contracts that require confidentiality, such as “Character” and “Temptation and Sin”, must be handled on the one-on-one basis. To eliminate that kind of Learning Contract with one to three students because of time consumption would be very short sighted. How else can we mentor students in character? One must balance the ideal with the practical. This may require some compromise. However, the goals of an institution must be kept in mind. The best education is not through mass production but through personal mentoring.

3) *Mentoring fourth year students as leaders of Field Education teams can ease the staff burden while enhancing student preparation.* The initial motivating factor at Scott in mentoring fourth year students as leaders for the Field Education teams for was, simply put, weary lecturers. But this has not only reduced the burdening of staff in mentoring of first year students, but has also been a significant boon in preparing students as future leaders in the field. Having worked their way through the thorny problems of practical relationships when dealing with pastors, elders and the local church traditions, these student leaders will be better able to face the harsh realities in the churches as they learn patience, love and wisdom.

4) *The staff supervisor overseeing Learning Contracts should meet regularly with all staff mentors,* at least once per term, to discuss various issues that arise. Effort must be made to create an even-handed approach to students in their grading and work load. Student unrest can be averted if the supervisor of all Learning Contracts in the institution is alert to any simmering problems that may be developing. Lecturers also need reminding and they need supervision. Lecturers may also need individual

counselling to help them keep up the standard, so it is important that the full backing and support of the school administration is evident and understood within the teaching staff.

Conclusion

This explanation of Learning Contracts has been very specific, tied to the present educational programme of Scott Theological College in Kenya. To know how another institution is developing its Learning Contracts programme can be very helpful. Furthermore, we learn best when theory is linked with concrete example.

However, it is best for institutions to think through their own goals and educational programme first in order to develop the numbers and topics of their Learning Contracts. Education is always an evolving process. We learn by doing. Instead of introducing Learning Contracts wholesale, one for each term, your institution may decide to introduce only three or four at the beginning.

Nevertheless, if we can in part judge the educational programme by student response, we find at Scott that the majority are enthusiastic. As one student wrote concerning the Learning Contract on “Encouraging Others”: “This Learning Contract has been so effective and has equipped me, in that my character has been changed, my understanding of encouragement has been broadened, my skills have been shaped, my weaknesses have been dealt with and my experience has increased. Unhesitatingly, let me say that I am now effective and ready for that ministry of encouragement.”

APPENDIX A

Guidelines on Keeping a Journal for a Learning Contract

A Learning Contract Journal will have the following standards:

1. Between 7-10 pages per week.
2. Includes a record of activities done during the week to achieve the goals.
3. Includes a summary of pertinent knowledge and understanding one has gained during the week, indicating the source of that knowledge (whether from books, interviews, observation etc.).

4. Includes an evaluation of one's progress or lack of it.
 5. Includes plans for correction or improvement in the coming week.
- Hence the Learning Contract Journal each week will contain:

A Record of Activities (pages read, interviews, activities etc.).

A Summary of Insights Gained (from the above activities).

A Personal Evaluation (involves introspection, assessment, comparing what one has done or achieved with what one knows as the ideal; it involves assessment of successes or failures, strengths or weaknesses, achievements or struggles.).

Future Plans, including planned corrections and improvements.

APPENDIX B

Learning Contract on Evangelism

Name of Student: _____ Date: _____

Name of Learning Contract Mentor: _____

Assigned Field Education Ministry: _____

Name of F/E College Supervisor: (usually same as L/C Mentor)

Evangelism is part and parcel of the Great Commission as given in Matt. 28:19,20. The Christian must not only be conversant with evangelism as a skill, but also live a lifestyle of evangelism.

Therefore, this Learning Contract is designed to help you identify specific areas of weakness in regard to evangelism and then through a variety of activities help you strengthen these weaknesses and gain confidence to live a lifestyle of evangelism.

Evaluation of Present Situation:

1. Review your skills and understanding in the field of evangelism. In what specific skill or understanding are you strongest? In what area are you weakest? (Write them down.)

Areas of Strength:

Areas of Weakness:

2. Identify one particular attitude and one particular character trait which may be contributing to your areas of weakness which you desire to strengthen. (Write them down.)

Activities of the Contract:

The substance of these activities should be chosen in order to strengthen your attitude, character trait and weakness identified above.

1. Each week witness to one or more people in your area of F/E. (20%)
2. Interview four people specifically on your area of identified weakness in evangelism. Submit your planning, notes and evaluation of the project upon completion. This alternative must receive approval from your mentor first. (10%)
OR: Plan and conduct a field project, such as a 2 hour seminar in the Church on Evangelism. Submit your planning, notes, and evaluation of the project upon completion. This alternative must receive approval from your mentor first.
3. Read at least 200 pages on evangelism selected from the books on Reserve Shelf (seek to read primarily on your identified areas). Record the insights learned in your Journal (10%).
4. Keep a Weekly Journal, containing descriptions of what you have learned about evangelism through: (30%)
 - a) Readings;
 - b) Interviews;
 - c) Your own evangelistic experiences each week; (record and evaluate)
 - d) Meeting with your mentor weekly;
 - e) Reflect on what you are learning each week.
5. Memorise at least eight Scripture verses on the topic and quote them all in one sitting to your mentor. (5%)
6. Write a Research Paper, 5-6 pages long, on what you have learned based on Scripture, readings, experiences, and interviews. (due the end of Week 8) (20%)
7. Write a two-page summary/evaluation paper at the end of the Learning Contract entitled, "Effectiveness of the Learning Contract in My Life". This should include the way in which the Learning Contract and the Mentor helped you and suggestions for improvement in the future. (5%)

Recommended Reading: (various titles and authors recommended)

Practical Application by the Students:

1. The activities mentioned above are intended to help you identify and improve areas of weakness in evangelism.
2. The successful completion of these activities are required and will be graded. The grading of the activities of the students, mentioned above, will consider:
 - a) Practical application of the learning contract by the student in:
 - i) Responsiveness and positive attitude of the student to the mentor.
 - ii) Evidence of growth in your confidence and skill in doing evangelism.
 - iii) Faithfulness and diligence in doing evangelism each week.
 - b) Fulfilment of the requirements of the Learning Contract.
 - c) Well written and neat assignments.

Role of your 4th Year Mentor

Your ministry team 4th year will meet every week with you (together with other 1st years on the ministry team) for a half an hour in order to:

1. Review your progress, check that your assignments are being done on time, answer questions, discuss problems, and encourage you to excel in evangelism as a life style.
2. Read and make comments in your Learning Contract Journal. The mentor needs your Journal prior to the time of meeting with you, in order to read it and prepare for the weekly session.
3. Collect and give your Journal to the staff supervisor at Mid-term and at the end of the term for their review.
4. Check for your readings, memory verses and interviews are completed and report this to the staff supervisor at the end of the term.
5. Go with you to do evangelism at least four times during the term to observe your areas of strengths and weaknesses in evangelism and seek to help you to do evangelism better and more effectively.

Role of your College Staff Supervisor:

1. The College Staff Supervisor will be overseeing the work of your 4th year leader via his/her Learning Contract on Leadership Development.
2. All your written assignments not recorded in the Journal are to be given directly to the College Staff Supervisor to be graded by him or her.

Learning Contract of the Student:

I consent before the Lord and with my Mentor, by God's help and grace, to develop a faithful lifestyle of evangelism. I will pray much, trust God, and work hard to improve my area of perceived weakness. I will share my weekly progress with my Mentor and team members in order to find encouragement and help to maximise my growth in evangelism.

Signature of the Student: _____ Date: _____

Signature of the Mentor: _____ Date: _____

Learning Contract on Developing Leadership

First Term, Fourth Year

Name of Student: _____ Date: _____

Name of Mentor for Learning Contract _____

Assigned Field Education Ministry: _____

Name of F/E Mentor: (F/E Mentor usually same for L/C)

The purpose of this Learning Contract is to assist the student to develop skills, tools, and experience in mentoring team members. This contract will use an integrated approach to learning by using readings, participation in a local Christian ministry, and practical assignments with a ministry team of students. Attention is given to mentoring, developing goals and a programme to meet these goals, encouraging and developing team members, and evaluating and adjusting the programme as it progresses.

Contract Activities:

1. Lead a team of fellow STC students in their weekly Field Education Ministry.
2. Read at least one chapter from books on Reserve Shelf (or an article from a magazine) on each of the following topics: Establishing goals and vision, delegation, motivating team members, decision making as a team, difficulties of leadership, evaluation of team members and the programme, and developing new leaders. Read at least 200 pages in total. (10%)
3. Keep a weekly Journal of insights gained from readings, leadership activities, leadership lessons learned, problems encountered and solutions applied. (10%)
4. Meet weekly with your Learning Contract Mentor.
5. Mentor the 1st year students on your team in “Devotional Life” by: (30%) (Note: 1st term, 1st year is L/C on the Devotional Life)
 - a) Meeting weekly with the 1st years for one hour to review their progress, check that their assignments are being done on time, answer questions, discuss problems, and encourage them to excel in their personal devotional life (1st year Learning Contract).
 - b) Read and make comments in their Learning Contract Journals before the weekly meeting.
 - c) Give the 1st years’ Journals to the staff supervisor at Mid-term and at the end of the term for their review.
 - d) Check that their readings, memory verses and interviews are completed and report this to the staff supervisor at the end of the term. (Other written assignments of the 1st year’s Learning Contract are to be given directly to the staff supervisor for grading.)
6. Do the weekly assignments listed in the following section:

Weekly Activities:

Week 1 & 2: Meet with the Pastor/leader of your assigned church/ministry to understand his/her goals for the ministry to be reached over the coming academic year and his/her strategy and people involved in reaching these goals. You need to also understand how the Pastor/leader wants your STC team to fit within the

church/ministry programme over the next year. Write this report in your Journal. (5%)

Week 2 & 3: Meet with each team member individually to determine their areas of gifting and skills. Seek to discern their ministry strengths and areas needing more development and experience. Also find out what they desire to accomplish as an individual and as a team over the year. Propose specific ways in which you as their team leader can help each individual to excel in their ministry. Write this report in your Journal of 2-3 pages per member. (10%)

Week 4 & 5: Meet with the team and establish goals for the team to accomplish this Academic Year and the programme (timetable and participants) to do this. Show how your team's goals and programme are integrated with the church/ministry goals. This needs to incorporate the Learning Contract activities of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd years, i.e. Evangelism, Discipleship, Worship, Encouraging others, Leading small groups, and Developing Mission Vision in the church. Record this on separate paper. Due at the end of Week 5. (10%)

Week 6 & 7: Take a deliberate action to encourage and mentor each member of your team to foster growth in their ministry skills and to help them accomplish their ministry goals. This should build from what you have learned and observed in Week 3. Record these actions in your Journal, together with the response from each member to your action. (10%)

Week 8 & 9: Meet as a team to evaluate the team's accomplishments and progress thus far and then revise the team's goals and programme for the remaining two terms of the Academic Year. Submit a written report and revised programme. Due at the end of Week 9. (10%)

Week 10: Do a two page self-evaluation of your role as the team leader and mentor. Make recommendations as to how you can improve during the next two terms. Meet with your mentor to review your self-evaluation and the evaluations from other team members. (5%)

Learning Contract of the Student:

I agree to:

1. Pray much, trust God and work hard to take my leadership responsibilities of the ministry team and to seek to develop leadership skills that will encourage and motivate the team members to excel.
2. Share this Learning Contract and my weekly progress with my mentor and team members in order to find encouragement and help to grow in this area.
3. I agree to encourage and help my team members to grow in their ministry skills and character development by praying for them and speaking words of encouragement and help.

I freely consent and commit myself, as God enables me, to fulfil this Learning Contract in order to develop and improve in the skills of team leadership that will bring honour and glory to God's work.

Signature of the Student: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Mentor of Learning Contract: _____

Additional Resources

Gross, R. *The Lifelong Learner*. New York: Simon and Schuster Adult Publishing Group, 1977.

Hiemstra, Rodger and B. Sisco. *Individualizing Instruction: Making Learning Personal, Empowering, and Successful*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990. Chapter 8 "The Importance and Use of Learning Contracts."

Knowles, M.S. *Using Learning Contracts: Practical Approaches to Individualizing and Structuring Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publications, 1986.

Wickett, R. E. *How to Use the Learning Covenant in Religious Education: Working with Adults*. Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1999.

Websites: Many websites with learning contracts are hosted by various educational institutions, often as part of a class or on-line syllabus. They are not always updated regularly, but are often a good source of additional information, particularly if print resources are hard to access. None of these are specific to theological education.

<http://www.msu.edu/user/coddejos/contract.htm> Contains Joseph Codde's article, "Using Learning Contracts in the College Classroom." On the Michigan State University website. Includes bibliography.

http://www.dmu.ac.uk/~jamesa/teaching/learning_contracts.htm A UK site with an extensive bibliography, but not limited to just learning contracts.

http://carbon.cudenver.edu/~ldeleon/pad5220/learning_contracts/about_contracts/menu.html Includes a step-by-step guide to create a learning contract.

http://www.umdnj.edu/meg/active_sdl.htm This is a website composed of links to sites dealing with self-directed learning and learning contracts. Because it is from a university of medicine and dentistry, some of the links would not be applicable to theological education.

http://www.education.uts.edu.au/ostaff/staff/publications/db_7_ab_ieti_96.pdf Australian university staff-published paper. Good article, good bibliography. In PDF format.

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