



**Grace Communion Seminary**

**CM505 Women in Leadership**

**Short Syllabus**

**Instructor:** Michael Morrison, Ph.D.

**Assisted by:** Sheila Graham, M.A.R., M.A.R.

### **Course description**

This course explores the issue of women serving as leaders in the church. Students will identify the historical place of women in Jewish, Greek and Roman societies through the time of Jesus and then within the early church. Discussion will include how the role of women as church leaders and its challenges has developed from the early church until today.

### **Required textbooks**

Becker, Carol E. *Leading Women: How Church Women Can Avoid Leadership Traps and Negotiate the Gender Maze*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1996. ISBN: 978-0687459643. 208 pages. Cost: About \$4 new. Discusses how men and women work together.

Belleville, Linda L. *Women Leaders and the Church: Three Crucial Questions*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000. ISBN 0-8010-5351-X. 217 pages. Cost: \$8. Excellent insights on three crucial questions.

GCI Study Papers. *Women in Church Leadership*. Glendora, CA: Grace Communion International, 2006. 118 pages. Denominational doctrinal study on women in leadership. Free. Available in e-book formats at <https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/159506>.

Johnson, Alan F., editor. *How I Changed My Mind About Women in Leadership: Compelling Stories from Prominent Evangelicals*.

Grand Rapids: Zondervan. 2010. ISBN 978-0-310-29315-6. 270 pages. Price: \$12. Autobiographical accounts of evangelical leaders—ethnically diverse men and women from a broad range of denominational backgrounds.

### **Recommended supplemental books**

Grenz, Stanley J., with Denise Muir Kjesbo. *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1995.

Hull, Gretchen Gabelein. *Equal to Serve: Women and Men Working Together Revealing the Gospel*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991.

Husbands, Mark, and Timothy Larsen, editors. *Women, Ministry and The Gospel: Exploring New Paradigms*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2007.

Pierce, Ronald W., and Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, editors. *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity Without Hierarchy*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004.

### **Student learning outcomes for CM505 Women in Leadership**

1. Identify the historical and biblical background of women as leaders, to be informed of the cultural, scholarly or patriarchal decisions that have governed the acceptance or rejection among the various eras where women have filled or not filled office. This will be the focus of the lectures and will form one component of the final paper.
2. Summarize the primary theological controversies that dominate the question of women in leadership. This will be expressed in the Review/Reaction papers and the final paper.
3. Read material with discernment, to distinguish whether they are persuasive, inadequate, or whether they merit further investigation. This

will be considered in the papers and online comments written by the students.

4. The student will evaluate how women and men did and/or can collaborate in leadership to the church as well as consider their observation of the argument from both sides of the question. This will be the focus of the final paper.
5. Using an online forum, students will summarize their observation of the current lecture topic and address the forum topic tactfully and with supporting evidence. The instructors will participate in the online discussion and provide additional guidance as needed.

### **Course requirements and assignments**

1. Read the lectures. Lectures will be posted each Monday for the first ten weeks. See the *Academic Catalog* for study suggestions. You should read the scripture references in the lectures.
2. Participation. Part of the learning that occurs in traditional classrooms comes through discussion and interaction with other students. In an online class, you attain this through comments posted on a forum. The comments count for 10 percent of the final grade.
3. Read the textbooks. They total about 849 pages, or about 85 pages each week (some weeks more, some less).
4. Papers. These count for 90 percent of the final grade. We estimate that you will need to allocate about 70 hours to work on these papers – an average of 7 hours per week – some weeks more, some less. See articles on how to write papers in the *Academic Catalog*, section VI.
  - A. Book Review and Reaction Paper: *Women Leaders and the Church* (4-5 pages; double-spaced). The purpose of this paper is to interact with the assigned reading and give a brief summary of the three questions the author addresses, and her answers.

- a. Identify the issues presented and their persuasiveness or if they merit further investigation. Describe how the text addresses the biblical, historical and cultural background of women in church leadership.
- b. Even if you agree with the author's conclusion, identify at least one area where you disagree, or remain unconvinced, or feel that not enough evidence was presented to support the point.
- c. Explain how you would coach a woman who feels a call to pastoral ministry but needs guidance on understanding the call and what it means to live a life of service in pastoral ministry in today's world. How would you help her develop a strategy for pursuing a career in pastoral ministry? (Paper is due at the end of week 5, and counts for 20 percent of final grade.)

B. Book Review and Reaction Paper: *Leading Women: How Church Women Can Avoid Leadership Traps and Negotiate the Gender Maze* (4-5 pages; double-spaced). The purpose of this paper is to interact with the assigned reading and briefly summarize the main points of the author. Discuss the issues presented and their persuasiveness or if they fall short and merit further investigation. Expound on your counsel for those whom you see have the gifts for pastoral ministry – how would you help awaken their understanding of their gifts and calling? How do they prepare to fulfill that call within the church? (Paper is due at end of week 9; 20 percent of grade.)

C. Personal testimony (2-3 pages, double-spaced). After reading *How I Changed my Mind about Women in Leadership: Compelling Stories from Prominent Evangelicals* write your own 'contribution' to the book illustrating your thoughts on women in church leadership by defining how what you once believed has matured and developed because of what you observed women actually contributing in the church and society. You do not necessarily have to agree with the instructors or the textbook authors, but we do

expect that your views have changed at least a little over the course of your life! Paper is due at end of week 7; 10 percent of grade.

D. Research Paper: (10 pages; double spaced) Student will explain how women and men can serve together in leadership to the church as well as defend their answer to those that disagree. Evaluate in what roles women have served historically. Show how culture influenced those roles. Relate what opportunities you see available for women and men serving together in the church today. How are those opportunities greater or lesser than in the past? Conclude with your personal vision for how women and men in ministry can collaborate effectively within the context of serving together in church leadership. (Student can use assigned readings for research as well as books from Recommended books and the Bibliography list. Paper due at end of week 12; 40 percent of grade.)

5. Here’s a chart to summarize the assignments:

**Assignments, estimated hours, and grade weighting**

Assignment	Hours *	Percentage of grade
Reading the syllabus and lectures	18	0
Reading discussions and making responses	10	10
Reading the textbooks	40	0
Writing one research paper	50	40
Writing three reaction or review papers	26	50
Total – about 12 hours each week	144	100

\* This is a *rough* estimate. A student who reads quickly may be slow in writing papers, and vice versa. Some students will complete the course requirements in less total time, and some will take more time. These are estimates for the hypothetical “average” student.

## Weekly topics and assignments

Lecture Topics	Assignments-complete by next class, Papers-by Due Date
Week 1. Introduction – In the Beginning	Larry King Live, “Should Women Be Pastors?” June 14, 2000. <a href="http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0006/14/lkl.00.html">http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0006/14/lkl.00.html</a> GCI Study Paper on Women in Church Leadership. <a href="http://www.gci.org/files/Women-all.pdf">http://www.gci.org/files/Women-all.pdf</a> , pages 1-27 (preface through chapter 4, for those who use an e-book) Belleville, pages 15-56; Johnson, read 38 pages – your choice. Students introduce themselves on Forum
Week 2. Women Serving Historically	GCI Study Paper, chapters 5-6; Belleville, pages 57-99 Johnson, read 38 pages. Discussion on Forum
Week 3. Social Acceptance and/or Rejection	GCI Study Paper, chapter 7; Belleville, pages 100-141 Johnson, read 38 pages. Discussion on Forum
Week 4. Issues in the Text	GCI Study Paper, chapter 8; Belleville, pages 142-183 Johnson, read 38 pages. Discussion on Forum
Week 5. Jesus Relates to Women	GCI Study Paper, chapter 9; Becker, pages 11-73 Johnson, read 38 pages. Discussion on Forum <b>Belleville Book Report and Reaction Paper due Oct. 19</b>
Week 6. Women in the New Testament	GCI Study Paper, one third of chapter 10; Becker, pages 74-139; Johnson, read 38 pages. Discussion on Forum
Week 7. Challenges of the early Church	GCI Study Paper, another third of chapter 10; Becker, pages 143-186; Johnson, read 42 pages. Discussion on Forum <b>Johnson Book – Personal testimony due Oct. 2</b>
Week 8. Women in the Reformation	GCI Study Paper, finish chapter 10 and 11 Discussion on Forum
Week 9. Changes in the Culture	Research and study for Research Paper <b>Becker Book report and Reflection paper due Oct. 16</b> Discussion on Forum
Week 10. Serving Together	Research and study for Research Paper due week 12 Discussion on Forum
<b>Research paper due by the end of Sunday, Dec. 6, 2015.</b>	

