

10-600 Final Integrative Project 2017-2018

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(Note: This is a copy of the course Moodle page—the Moodle page is the official syllabus for the course.)

At Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, MDiv students are required to develop a final integrative essay (aka FIP). The *purpose* of the project is for a student to demonstrate one's ability to integrate the many curricular components of the M.Div. degree and one's capacity for theological reflection. The *focus* of this project is the development of a considered theological and practical response to a ministry / leadership situation that has emerged either in the student's ministry experience or as a question that has broader significance for the church and the world. For example, the situation might be one that focuses on the developmental, emotional, or justice needs for a particular group of people; or, on the need for changes in particular pastoral practices such as preaching, teaching, or pastoral care; or, on denominational practices or policies that pose pastoral problems; or, on organizational and leadership issues that prevent a congregation or social agency from effectively fulfilling its mission or that prevent effective leadership from an individual. In developing this response, the student is expected to undertake description, interpretation, theological reflection and analysis for the sake of constructive thinking and planning in that situation.

FIP is a *two-semester process*, with the first two sections of the paper completed in the Fall semester, and the final sections in January and the Spring semester. The process will emphasize substantive peer as well as faculty review and small group interaction around your work. A single letter grade will be given for the course and the project, based upon your participation in the course process (35%), primarily your participation in peer and small group interaction, and on the FIP paper (65%). All papers will be read and graded by a faculty team including your FIP small group leader and another faculty member. Please note due dates for all draft component parts, review comments, and revisions.

Due dates for Forum Discussions *are for initial postings*; you should continue to read and respond to postings during the week following the initial deadline. Read the *Guidelines for Forum Discussions* and the rubrics for *Assessing Peer Review Participation*, both provided below. Links to *Small Group Folders on GoogleDrive*, where you will submit your drafts throughout the year, are below. [Note: The links in this document version are *not active*.]

[News forum](#)
[Course Deadlines](#)
[Guidelines for Forum Discussions](#)
[Assessing Peer Review Participation](#)
[FIP Grading Rubrics](#)
[Group 1 \(R. Anderson\)](#) [Group 2 \(TBD\)](#) [Group 3 \(TBD\)](#) [Group 4 \(TBD\)](#) [Group 5 \(TBD\)](#)
[Group 6 \(TBD\)](#)

Introductions

The task for this first week is to introduce yourself to your small group members. Follow the instructions on the "Introduce Yourself" forum below. **To be completed by 5 pm Sept. 8**

[Introduce yourself Forum](#)

Learning to be a Peer Reviewer

This week the task is to explore what it means to be a peer reviewer and to develop some strategies for providing peer review. This will set up one part of your work for the remainder of this project--for you to help your colleagues strengthen their work and for them to help you strengthen yours. Part of your assessment for this project will be based on your participation in the review process with your colleagues.

1. Watch this short [YouTube video](#) about providing peer review and feedback. Notice the different purposes or types of review and think about which of these are most important for your work on the FIP.
2. Read the two short articles "Giving and receiving feedback" and "Peer Review: Reading Critically and Giving Constructive Criticism" provided below.
3. After watching the video and reading the articles, complete the FIP Case Study exercise below. (It is based on the Description section from a FIP, used by permission of the writer.) The exercise has four steps:
Review the "Guiding Questions" in the first part of the exercise;
Read the Ministry Situation description;
In a paragraph or two answer the review questions found on the final page of the exercise;
and
Post your answers on the "Practice Review" forum.

After everyone in your group has posted their responses, read the feedback your group has offered to this writer. Do you agree or disagree with your colleagues? Do you think they missed anything in their responses? If so, what did they miss and why do you think it is important? *Add this feedback to this forum.* Remember that *your goal*, even in responding to your colleagues, *is to either invite further clarification or to provide constructive critique that will strengthen their work.* 4. After your group has posted these comments, use the "Receiving Feedback" forum to discuss what you learned from this exercise, what you found helpful, and what you found difficult. Think about what kind of feedback you gave and what kind you think will be helpful to your own writing. **To be completed by 5 pm Sept. 22.**

[Giving and Receiving Feedback File](#)

[Peer review: Reading critically and giving constructive criticism File](#)

[FIP Practice Review File](#)

[Practice Review Forum](#)

[Receiving Feedback Forum](#)

Part 1: Description and Interpretation

The first part of the FIP is the description and interpretation of a ministry / leadership situation in its personal, social, historical, cultural, and religious dimensions. In this section of the paper, you will identify the "what, who, where, when, and why" of this situation. Here are some guiding questions for this section.

- What situation is being addressed? Who are the people involved? What group or community faces this concern and why?
- What is being done or not being done now to address the situation?
- Why is this situation a concern for ministers or community leaders? Why is the situation of particular concern for you? What is your relationship to the situation?
- What assumptions about this situation do you already hold that you need to test as you reflect on and respond to this situation?

- What is the history of the situation? What is the cultural context? What social factors are contributing to this situation (e.g., economic, race, gender, age, religion, place)?
- In what ways have power, authority, or institutional politics impacted this event?

Using the case study you began to develop at the end of your second year of VFCL or a new ministry/leadership situation, if what you used last year now seems inadequate for this project, *begin to write this first part*. 1. To *get started*, use the guiding questions to create an outline in which you simply answer each question. 2. Then, working from your outlines and your answers to the guiding questions, begin to reshape this from a series of questions and answers into a more "narrative" structure, filling in any gaps in information that you discover along the way. 3. After you have completed this initial narrative, check it for spelling and grammar errors, correct those, then upload it to your small group's GoogleDrive folder using the links provided in the first section of this Moodle site. This section should take 5-7 pages (1200-1500 words). **Due by 5 pm Sept. 29.**

A note about writing: As with all papers, please take care with your writing—grammar, spelling, citations and documentation of citations. Proof read, run spell and grammar check, and make corrections before submitting your paper, even in draft form. As is the seminary's practice, use the footnote / bibliography method found in Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*, 7th ed., chapters 16-17 and the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th ed. A link to this information is available [here](#).

Peer Review: After you have written and submitted your first section, you and your partners will read each other's papers, accessing them on GoogleDrive. You will be able to download these papers and comment on them using the "New Comment" function on the Reviewing toolbar in Word. [We'll provide instructions about how to do this here.] To prevent overloading you in this review process, your small group will be divided in two, so you will be working with two, or at most three, other students' papers. As you read, first ask yourself "What did I learn from this description? What were its strengths? What were its main ideas?" Summarize this feedback in a comment to your colleague. Then, consider these questions: Does this situation seem to call for the kind of reflection required in this paper? Has my colleague made the case for why this is important to explore? If not, what would help them do so? Finally, focus on the guiding questions provided above. Have your partners answered these questions? Do any of the questions need a bit more attention? If so, what additional information do you think is needed for you to fully understand the situation? Summarize your answers to these questions in a comment on your colleague's paper(s). **Review comments due by 5 pm Oct. 6.**

Review: Read and review the feedback you received from your colleagues. Then, using the "Discuss Feedback on Part 1 Forum," discuss the feedback on this part of your paper with your group. What kind of feedback was helpful? What was not helpful? What did you learn from the feedback you received?

Revise: In light of that feedback and discussion, go back and revise this part of your paper. (And, while you are at it, do a careful spell and grammar check!) Revised drafts due by **5 pm Oct. 13.**

[Discussing Feedback on Part 1 Forum](#)

Part 2: Theological Reflection and Analysis

In this second section of the project you will move from description of the situation to developing connections between that experience and your theological beliefs, your religious / denominational traditions, and your evolving understanding of God. The resources for this section are primarily those things you have read, studied, and learned in your courses at Garrett-Evangelical. You are not expected to undertake additional research, although your colleagues and group leader might

suggest additional resources for you to consider. The following questions are intended as a kind of *map* for the work of reflection and analysis that draws on the whole of the M.Div. curriculum; *they are not intended as an exhaustive checklist or an outline of your paper.*

- What *theological issues* are in play in this situation? How do you translate this event into theological language, images or categories? What are the theological questions or dilemmas that are at stake in the event you described (e.g., does the event raise the theological question of the efficacy of prayer, or perhaps make you wonder if God really does have a preferential option for the poor?)
- What *theological and ethical resources* should you draw on? Why are these resources appropriate to this situation and how will they inform your analysis? Is there an overarching doctrine that shapes your understanding of this situation? If so, what is it and how does it apply?
- What from your work in *biblical studies* helps you interpret and assess this ministry event? What narratives and images from Scripture have application to this situation and why? Do not simply quote Scripture, but explore in some depth the narratives and images that contribute to your assessment and interpretation of this situation.
- Are there struggles in the *history of the Church* that inform your understanding of the present situation? If so, what are they and how do they connect? What do they contribute to your understanding of this situation?
- What *church doctrines and teachings*, including denominational statements and creeds, apply to the situation? How does your denominational affiliation influence the way you understand the situation?
- Are *resources from the areas of pastoral care, worship, Christian education, congregational leadership, and spiritual formation* needed in response to this situation? Which are most appropriate, why are they so, and how might they be used in the analysis of this situation? (Not all situations will require resources from some of these areas; some areas will be more appropriate than others.)

This is a major part of the FIP, so we'll take it in several steps.

1. Use this map/guiding questions to begin to *gather* resources. Place a short summary of your situation (2-3 sentences) at the top of a page. Below it, provide a list of the resources you considering using, with a brief description of why these will be important for or helpful to the analysis of your situation. *Upload* this list and description to your small group's GoogleDrive folder. **Due by 5 pm Oct. 27.**
2. *Review* the lists of your group members. Ask of yourself and of each other "Are some of these resources stronger than others? Do some seem to speak more directly to the particular situation you are working with? Does it feel like something is missing?" Provide feedback to each other in the Resource Forum below. **Due by 5 pm Nov. 3.**
3. Then, after the feedback and assessment of your resources, *sort* through your resources, *supplement* them in response to the feedback you have received, and begin to *develop a narrative* from them. In this narrative, begin to develop a "conversation" between the situation you described in Part 1 and these theological, biblical, historical, and pastoral resources. You will not only need to summarize relevant information from these resources, but also begin to show how you think these resources contribute to your understanding and interpretation of your particular situation.
4. After doing a spell and grammar check, and making any necessary corrections, *upload* your draft of this section to your small group's GoogleDrive folder and begin the peer review process described below. **Due by 5 pm Nov. 27.**

This section of the project should take 10-15 pages (3000-4000 words). For the sake of your colleagues, provide a brief (no more than 1 paragraph) summary of the ministry situation at the beginning of this section.

Peer Review: Just as you did on Part 1 of the project, after you have written and submitted this section of your paper, you and your partners will read each other's papers, accessing them on GoogleDrive. As you did with the first part, begin your review by asking "What did I learn from this part of the paper? What were its strengths? What were its main ideas?" Summarize this feedback in a comment to your colleague. Then, consider how the theological, biblical, and other resources your colleague has used in this part fit the situation that he or she is working with. Do they seem appropriate to this situation? If they do, then give your colleague some praise, but if they do not seem appropriate, explain why they do not seem to fit. What suggestions do you have about resources that will either be more appropriate to or strengthen your colleague's paper? What connections can you make between the biblical and theological work that your classmate may not have included? Again, focus on the guiding questions provided above. Has your colleague answered these questions? What have they done especially well? Do any of the questions need a bit more attention? If so, which questions need more work and why? Review comments **due by 5 pm Dec. 4.**

Revise: After you had received, read, and discussed the feedback on this part of your paper, go back and revise this part in light of the feedback. (And, while you are at it, do another careful spell and grammar check!) If you do not understand the feedback you have received, ask your colleagues and group leader for clarification. Upload your revised draft to your group's GoogleDrive folder. **Due by 5 pm Dec. 15.**

[Discussing your resources Forum](#)

[Discussing the first draft of your theological reflection Forum](#)

Part 3: Developing a Response

In this third section of the FIP, your task is to move from description and theological reflection on the situation to the development of a response that is both appropriate to the situation and to your theological analysis. Your goal is to construct a response that offers insight and guidance for the community of faith. Note that the task here is not to justify what you have already done, but to propose a response that grows out of your biblical and theological reflection. It may, in fact, be something you actually did in this situation, but it could as likely be a completely new response. Here are some guiding questions for this section:

- Given your biblical and theological reflection, what are some possible responses to this situation? Of these, which is the most appropriate response for this situation and why?
- What did (or should) you and this community and/or its leaders do and why? What is required to make this happen?
- What are the risks and challenges in undertaking this response? What are the risks if no response is undertaken?
- Explain your proposed response in light of your exploration of the biblical, historical, theological and pastoral resources that you developed in the preceding section. *Make the connections between your response and your biblical and theological work explicit.*

As you did with Part 1, begin working on this section by answering the above guiding questions in outline form. Once you have done that, go back and begin to shape your answers in a more narrative form. One way to begin this narrative is "Given the resources I have been exploring, the following are possible responses to this situation...." Once you have finished a draft of this section (and, again, a spelling and grammar check with corrections), upload your draft of this

section to your group's GoogleDrive folder. Then read what your colleague's have written and follow the peer review process below. This section should take 5-7 pages (1250-1750 words).

Draft due by 5 pm Jan. 12.

Peer Review: Just as you did on Parts 1 and 2 of the project, after you have written and submitted this section of your paper, you and your partners will read each other's papers, accessing them on GoogleDrive. As you did with the previous parts, begin your review by asking "What did I learn from this part of the paper? What were its strengths? How would this set of responses be helpful in your ministry? Does one response seem more likely than another? If so, why?" Summarize this feedback in a comment to your colleague. Again, focus on the guiding questions provided above. Has your colleague answered these questions? What have they done especially well? Do any of the questions need a bit more attention? If so, which questions need more work and why? Then, you might briefly review what your colleague wrote in the previous section of the paper. Do the proposed responses seem to grow out of the biblical and theological analysis of that section? Given the same resources, would you have come to the same conclusions about the possible responses? If not, why not? Is there something you see that you think your colleague missed in moving from the biblical and theological analysis to the response? Do the connections from description to analysis to proposed response make sense to you? What suggestions do you have that you think will strengthen this section of your colleague's paper? **Review comments due by 5 pm Jan. 19.**

Revise: After you had received, read, and discussed the feedback on this part of your paper, go back and revise this part in light of the feedback. (And, yes, do another careful spelling and grammar check!) Upload your revised draft to the GoogleDrive folder. **Revised draft due by 5 pm Jan. 26.**

Discussion of Part 3 Feedback Forum

Part 4: Assessing your practice

In this final section of the FIP, your task is to reflect reflect back on the process itself as it prepares you for your responses to the next situations you will encounter in ministry and leadership. One purpose of this section is to remind you that while you may now be focused on finishing the [expletive] FIP, the task at hand is to prepare you for ministry and leadership. As with the other sections, here are some guiding questions.

- How did this situation inform vocational or identity questions for you? What did you learn about yourself as a Christian leader from your theological reflection?
- Did you discover new gifts, consider a different path, experience confirmation of a previous decision? In what ways?
- Did this event allow you to think critically about your own culture, or prompt you to consider your own social location from a different standpoint? If so, how?
- In what ways were your convictions challenged, stretched, confirmed or enhanced through this process of reflection and discernment? How has your mind changed?
- What did you learn from this project that will influence your commitment to on-going formation as a minister or community leader? How will your theological reflection influence your practice of ministry?

In considering these guiding questions, you may conclude that you do not have answers to some of these questions. Perhaps some of your answers are simply "No, I didn't discover..." or "No, my convictions weren't challenged but they were confirmed." These are important discoveries, so don't assume that a "No" allows you to avoid the question! Begin this section by again answering the questions in outline form. Then go back to your answer and begin to shape them into

paragraph form. It might be helpful to think about each question as the "thesis" for a paragraph. When you have completed this section, upload it to your group's GoogleDrive folder and begin the peer review process for this section. This section of the FIP should be 2-3 pages (500-750 words). **Draft due by 5 pm Feb. 2.**

Peer Review: This is the most "subjective" part of the paper, so harder in some ways to assess. Nevertheless, give your colleague some praise for making it this far. Then, ask yourself, "How well did my colleague assess his or her practice of ministry?" Do you see that perhaps they did not see? Do you think they have provided an honest and fair assessment of their work? Finally, answer the final guiding question for yourself as a way of affirming your colleagues' work: What did you, the reviewer, learn from this project that will influence your commitment to on-going formation as a minister or community leader? **Comments due by 5 pm Feb. 9.**

Revise: You are almost there! Once again, revise this section of your paper in light of the feedback you have received. Once you have done that, you will have a completed FIP-but not quite ready for submission. That follows the next, and final, step of the process.

Revised draft due by 5 pm Feb. 16.

[Discussing feedback on Part 4 Forum](#)

Completing a full first draft

As noted in the previous section, you are almost there; you have all of the component parts of your FIP. Now your task is to weave together these component parts into a single narrative whole. Notice where and how you need to make explicit connections between your description of the situation, your theological analysis and reflection on that situation, and the proposed responses you are making to that situation. Once you have finished weaving the whole together, upload it to your group's GoogleDrive folder. **Full first draft due by 5 pm March 5.**

Peer Review: Throughout this FIP process you have been invested in each other's work in a significant way. Success will be due, in part, to that investment with each other. The work of peer review this time will be a little different, in that you will read and review only one other paper from your group. (We'll ask you to choose a partner from your group for this final step.) Before you read your colleague's paper, review the FIP Grading Rubrics document (included below). This document includes 11 categories on which the faculty readers assess the project. Use these criteria to provide a final review to your colleague. In what ways do you think they've met all of these requirements? If one section is weaker than another, what suggestions do you have to strengthen the weaknesses?

Part 1: adequacy and appropriateness of the situation, well-developed description and interpretation of the situation, and the ability to take a critical perspective on the situation.

Part 2: appropriateness of biblical and theological resources, accurate and considered use of these resources, and quality of interpretation.

Part 3: application of resources in construction of response and coherence of response.

Part 4: self-awareness (being) and awareness of others (empathy). The final criterion--quality of writing--applies across the whole paper, so note any continuing problems with spelling, grammar, and citations.

Review comments due by 5 pm March 12.

Discuss the feedback you have received with your small group. You may also find it helpful to discuss this feedback one-on-one with your small group leader.

[Discuss final feedback from peer review Forum](#)

Submitting your revised final paper

Now that you have had a chance to process all of the feedback you have received, go through your paper one more time. Think about the questions you have been asked by your colleagues and group leader, the ways in which you have answered those questions, and the implications of these answers for your paper as a whole. *Revise* your paper according to the feedback you have received. *Review* the formatting for all of your footnotes. Have you provided citations for all quoted materials? Are your citations complete, accurate, and formatted correctly (see the link to the Chicago Manual in the Part 1 section)? *Correct* them as needed. Do yet another *spelling and grammar check* and make any needed corrections. Once you have done all of these things, *upload* your paper to Turnitin, using the link below. **Your completed FIP is due by 5 pm April 2.**

[Final Integrative Project \(2016-2017\) Turnitin Assignment](#)

A final FIP conversation

At the beginning of this process, as you introduced yourself to your group, we asked you to list your three most important values and then to write a brief paragraph describing why these were important to you. Go back to that list of three values. In what ways have those values been evident for you as you worked through this FIP process? In what ways have those values been affirmed? In what ways have those values shaped the work you have done on this project? In what ways have those values been challenged or modified? Use these questions for the final forum below. **Post your responses by 5 pm April 9.**

["Valuing FIP"](#)