

eFolio Capstone  
**Program Integration Paper #2**

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## **Introduction**

This is a summary of my study and work in the Masters of Arts in Christian Outreach (MACO) program. Over the past two years I have been challenged to grow in my knowledge, competencies, and practical application of Christian outreach ministry. I have studied concepts and research related to current trends in Christian outreach in the postmodern era, as well as the successes of congregations that have become revitalized in small town/rural communities. As a result, I have become more competent in my abilities to serve God as a Christian outreach ministry professional.

Throughout this course of study I have been challenged emotionally, financially, physically, as well as spiritually. I have had failures, lapses of commitment, and at times questioned my purpose for being in the program. However, I have also experienced the presence of God's mercy, grace, and peace. I have learned to trust in His provision and He has provided for my daily needs. God has helped me to grow in my faith and relationship with Jesus Christ. I am convinced that it was and continues to be God's will that I am coming to the end of this course with a desire to develop a ministry to serve rural/small town congregations.

### **I. What useful knowledge have I gained through the MACO Program?**

The courses that we had in the MACO program over the past two years and in particular the books that I read for my research papers contained a lot of practical information that I plan to use in the future. I will take what I have learned and apply it as I develop ministries to equip leaders for outreach in rural congregations and communities.

#### **a. What courses of study were particularly significant?**

We began our program with THY521 Spiritual Leadership. I found this course to be valuable because of my desire to develop outreach leadership training materials to be used in

congregations. I intend to focus one part of the training on the role of spiritual leaders within a congregation. The leaders would be encouraged to dig deeper into the scriptures to gain an understanding of their purpose within the mission of God.

In our study of Wright (2006) for THY572 *Missio Dei*, the concept of God choosing people to be His partners in His missional activity was highlighted through multiple references in both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. This renewed missional understanding has currently led several congregations to become revitalized and transformed into missional congregations, once again actively reaching their communities for Christ (Crandall, 1995).

In our course THY531 *Worldviews and the Gospel*, we discovered that people have a variety of concepts that shape their view of god (Steinbronn, 2007). We also discussed the foundations for our Christian faith and compared that to the faith formations of other religions. In *The Christian Faith* by Dr. Robert Kolb (1993) we are told:

God has fashioned his human creatures to find some identity, security, and meaning in other persons and places than in himself [or herself]. ... That primary source of identity, security, and meaning is our god. ... The Christian faith rests upon the person of our God, who has revealed Himself as Jesus of Nazareth. ... He is the only source of our ultimate identity, security, and meaning. ... To try to establish our ultimate identity upon what we do, rather than upon what God has done for us, always ends up in idolatry (Kolb, 1993, pp. 9,10).

It is important that I keep this concept in mind as I engage others in conversations about faith and religious beliefs. Even those who claim that there is no god have a need to believe in someone to provide them with identity, security, and meaning, and may even become a god unto themselves. However, we can be confident that all other gods and objects will ultimately fail

those who have put their trust in them and that Jesus is the only God who can meet our human need for identity, security, and meaning.

We continued our study with THY573 Outreach Ministry in Context I – Theory. In this course we discussed the importance of becoming incarnational missionaries within the cultures where God places us as His missional people. I found this principle to be especially valuable as I make preparations to work within the rural cultural environment. Not only is the rural cultural community unique, but it is also becoming increasingly bi-cultural as more non-English speaking immigrants locate in rural areas.

The next course in our cohort was THY541 History of Missions. The perspective that I gained from the conversations in this course was a renewed appreciation for the commitment and sacrifices of Christian missionaries. They willingly risk their lives to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to the people of foreign and distant lands. These stories served as an inspiration and motivating factor for my continued missional work within my own community.

In the summer of 2009 our cohort began THY551 Social Issues in Mission. In this course we wrestled with the balance between sharing God's love by our words and sharing God's love by our actions. In our future ministry developments it will be important to show God's love to others through both of these actions, without favoring one over the other. Our challenge will be to discern when we should focus our efforts on meeting social needs and when we should focus our efforts on proclaiming the Gospel message.

The Practicum that I chose for my first year was THY584 Outreach in the Urban, Suburban, or Rural Center. In this Practicum I designed a survey to assess the needs of people within our immediate community. I recruited some volunteers to go door-to-door throughout a local community to engage people in conversations about their most pressing needs. It was a

blessing to engage in conversations about Christ with the people of the community. As a result of conducting the survey, I was invited to speak with the area ministerial association about the experience and the results of the survey. Through this opportunity I was able to encourage the area pastors to become more involved in building relationships with the people of the community.

At the end of the August 2009 I completed my first research paper for the eFolio. This study focused on the means of bringing about missional transformation within congregations. In preparing for the paper, I found a wealth of information about missional leadership, missional congregations, and missional transformation. I read several books on these subjects and have added them to my personal book collection for future use.

I decided to implement some of this research material into my second Practicum and chose THY562 Writing / Production of Evangelism / Leadership Development Materials. After meeting with the leadership of a small congregation in Motley, Minnesota, in September of 2009, the congregation voted to extend an invitation for me to lead their Sunday morning adult Bible class through the end of February for my second Practicum. I chose to use materials that would help them to identify their core beliefs and values in relationship to God's missional purpose for the Church. The experience presented challenges, setbacks, and some disappointments. I was not able to keep up with my proposed action plan. However, it was also an enjoyable, relationship building, learning experience that helped me to understand the dynamics of working with rural/small town congregations. In the very limited amount of time that we were able to spend together, this class exhibited significant strides toward missional understanding and development.

This group also became the inspiration for my second research paper for the eFolio, which focused on understanding barriers in rural ministry. To complete this paper I conducted an online research for information related to rural ministry and discovered several books that dealt specifically with rural and small church transformation, ministry, and evangelism. Several of these books were also added to my personal collection. (I had to buy an additional bookcase to hold all of my “new” finds.)

Our cohort continued its online coursework in October of 2009 with THY582 Evangelism in the Life of the Church. Through this course I was guided to develop a specific three-year outreach plan for a congregation. I chose to develop my plan around small group formation. This course was the most technically challenging and practical course in our MACO program. The insights and skills that I gained from this course have helped me to gain confidence in developing specific ministry action plans. This is an area of ministry with which I have struggled in the past.

Our final online course has been THY581 Outreach Ministry in Context II – Strategy. The NET Fishing model for outreach taught in this course gave clarity to the rural ministry model that I have been working on throughout the past two years in the MACO program. Specifically, I will use the model of NET Fishing to develop three levels of evangelistic teams as I develop my rural ministry. The first level of NET Fishing would be a personal network for support and encouragement. The second level of NET Fishing would be the formation of a cohort of ministry leaders in a community that would be trained for outreach. And the third level of NET Fishing would be a regional model of ministry that would serve multiple congregations or communities by duplicating the formation of the second NET Fishing level.

The eFolio journaling for the MACO program was a component for the entire course that tied it all together. At times I struggled to keep the journal up to date, but I also learned to value its importance in directing my attention toward the lessons that God was using to shape me for His ministry throughout my interactions with others and the assignments in my courses.

**b. What books were most helpful?**

The books that I found to be the most helpful throughout this program were the books that I read during my research of missional and transformational congregations. I have included a list of all the books that I have read over the past two years in the references section of this paper. However, four of these books were chosen for my Practicum book reports because of their significance and application to my outreach experiences.

Barna, G. (1995). *Evangelism that works: How to reach changing generations with the unchanging gospel.*

- † In this book I discovered that there are no shortcuts in building relationships and sharing Christ – the most effective method of evangelism is for congregations to encourage every individual person to share their faith as they are going about their daily routines and to encourage them to actively seek out non-Christians to engage in relationships and to disciple for Christ. I also learned that Christian outreach cannot be separated from Christian education – it takes both – at the same time.

Stetzer, E., & Nation, P. (2008). *Compelled by love: The most excellent way to missional living.*

- † In this book I was helped to see that my role in God's plan is to show love to others because of the love God has shown to me. I was reminded that God's love compels us to

show love to others through acts of mercy and to verbally proclaim God's love for all people. This love is found in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Stetzer, E., & Putman, D. (2006). *Breaking the missional code: Your church can become a missionary in your community.*

- † This book addresses the changes we might have to make in our attitudes and our preferences to reach those to whom we have been called. This book is not just another model for ministry but a call to understand the ministry to which we have been called and a guide for developing the right models of ministry to reach these people for Christ.

Crandall, R. (1995). *Turn around strategies for the small church.*

- † The book is relevant for outreach in the rural community, because its focus is to help pastors lead their congregations to look outward. The renewal process is a spiritual process that leads the congregation to return to a missional process, which means “reaching out” and “inviting in” those who are living without Christ in the communities in which God has placed the congregation. Throughout the book evangelism is addressed in many ways as one of the primary purposes for the church. The book contains many practical examples of ministering in smaller congregations and rural communities.

**c. Specific examples of knowledge gained, theories challenged, failures experienced, and success that I have had as a result of my coursework and Practicums.**

Throughout the past two years I have grown in my understanding of missional transformation. It begins with the personal spiritual transformation and leadership development of those whom God has placed as the leaders within His church. This transformation is an ongoing process of discipleship, and it begins with me. It takes spiritually disciplined leaders to lead congregations into missional transformations. These disciplines grow out of a relationship

with Jesus Christ and are strengthened through daily exercises of reading God's Word and spending time with God in prayer.

Last night, while watching the last movie in *The Lord of the Rings* series, I identified with the role of Sam. Sam's responsibility was to make sure that Frodo carried the ring to its final destination. He was the encourager and motivator. At one point Sam had the ring, but Frodo took it from him, stating that it was his (Frodo's) burden to bear. So while it was Frodo's job was to carry the ring, it was Sam's job was to make sure that Frodo did not give up. At a point when Frodo was too weak to go on, with sheer determination Sam picked up and carried Frodo forward to finish the mission on which they had been sent. I need to have the courage and motivation of Sam. As a missional leader within the church, I recognize my responsibility is to encourage and motivate other leaders to continue in the work that God has prepared for them to do. I must continue to push and even carry others forward even when they are ready to give up.

Over the past two years I have gained confidence in my ability to speak to others about spiritual disciplines and the purpose of the Church within the mission of God. I have also refined my plans for a regional rural ministry. I have addressed errors in my model and have had to step back to discover where rural congregations really need to be helped. I have learned to listen more and speak less frequently or at least until I have thought through what I am about to say.

I have suffered setbacks and failures in my Practicums, because I sought to impose my strategies on others without taking the time to explore their plans and ambitions. I have struggled with time management, financial concerns, and the loss of focus, when I should have kept more active in the churches where I was serving and put my faith in God to provide for my needs.

I have also experienced successes in my coursework and in my papers. I have been complimented with good remarks and good grades in almost all of my classes and on many of my

papers. Specifically, I have seen the members of three different congregations embrace my work and assist me in the completion of my Practicum assignments. I have not only grown but I have seen the growth in others around me as they have become more actively involved in outreach ministries.

**II. How has the MACO Program affected my competency in the way in which I plan and conduct activities in the area of Christian outreach?**

As a result of my study within the MACO program I have discovered a wealth of resources that I will be able to use to prepare and develop the leaders around me for Christian outreach. The resource materials from THY521 Spiritual Leadership, in particular, *Spiritual leadership: The interactive study* (Blackaby, H.T., & Blackaby, R., 2006), will be used to create a course for newly elected leaders within a congregation to discover the true meaning of spiritual leadership. The material from *Leading congregational change workbook: A leadership network publication* (Furr, J. H., Bonem, M., & Herrington, J., 2000), will be used to help congregations develop missional transformations in their ministry and mission focus. And the material from NET Fishing will be used to help define the ministry development of my regional rural ministry model.

I have also had the opportunity to develop and enhance my “MACO Competencies” in the following areas:

- 1) I have had multiple opportunities to “relate to other people in positive and practical ways” both inside the church and in the community, as I completed my coursework and conducted interviews with pastors, social ministry workers, congregation members, and the people living in our communities.

- 2) “I was able to demonstrate the application of research for Christian outreach in the context of interactive human relationships.” During my first Practicum, I went door-to-door conducting a survey of peoples needs and also asking their opinion about the role of the church in their community. During my second Practicum, I went to several businesses in town to see if anyone could tell me the location of the congregation I was serving. I was surprised to find that very few people in a town of only five hundred could give good directions to the church.
- 3) I had multiple opportunities to “communicate Christ crisply, clearly, and creatively.” Throughout the MACO program I was required to communicate with others about my faith in Jesus Christ. This is not something that I take for granted, and I spent a lot of time preparing what I would say in response to others to make sure that my message was clearly understood.
- 4) I also had several opportunities to “encourage and equip others to communicate Christ crisply, clearly, and creatively.” I spent a lot of time leading others to share Christ through Bible classes and through the door-to-door surveying of the community. In each situation I would challenge the participants to explain their answers, just to be sure that they would be prepared to share their faith with those we would meet outside of the classroom.
- 5) I was given the opportunities to “identify, expose, and control relevant research variables.” In my first Practicum, I attempted to identify the most pressing needs facing the people within our communities. In my second Practicum, I attempted to identify the barriers that Christians face as they are reaching out to others with the Gospel of Christ, particularly in the rural culture.

- 6) I worked to develop a means for “systematically organizing data for meaningful research and writing.” During the past nine months, I spent a lot of time reading and researching information on transforming congregations, in particular, small or rural congregations. I collected many good resource materials and books. My research techniques still need improvement, but I have learned how to systematically document my reference list for future use.
- 7) I gained experience in “informally and formally analyzing, refining, and reanalyzing data in order to identify emerging categories and significant findings, conclusions, and results.” I still need to work on this area of competency. I was able to form initial opinions from my research, but I struggled to formally analyze the information beyond making mental notes of the material that I had read. Most of my analyses and conclusions were informally gathered from the data I researched.
- 8) I was able to “achieve conclusions and results that have been demonstrated to be distinctive and functional in the field of Christian outreach among a present-day population.” The conclusions of my research are a reflection of the findings of other scholars and ministry professionals in the field. I cannot take a lot of credit for my work, but I hope that I have made it possible for others to have a better understanding of the topics that I researched. I also hope that my papers will inspire others to continue in the pursuit of bringing transformation into rural congregations and communities.
- 9) As I had the opportunity, I “encouraged and led the Body of Christ locally and globally in unified and unifying approaches in the area of Christian outreach.” I have been leading people within my locality to become more involved in Christian

outreach. My global influence in Christian outreach has been limited to the people of our MACO cohort and a few others, in particular, my children who have become involved in overseas missions.

**a. What am I doing differently now as compared to two years ago?**

Two years ago I was working as the full-time Director of Christian Outreach at Zion Lutheran Church in Brainerd, Minnesota. I was aware of our financial struggles and knew that my position was in jeopardy of being eliminated. The congregation made the decision to terminate the position on September 30, 2008. I spent my last six months at Zion preparing people to take over the ministry duties that I had been fulfilling, in order to keep the outreach ministries strong. In the midst of this time our congregation became divided, and my focus was shifted from external ministry to internal ministry and, in particular, conflict resolution.

In the eight months following the loss of my position, I withdrew from ministry involvements at Zion, allowing the congregation to begin the process of moving forward on their own and allowing the pastor to proceed with his ministry agenda. However, because of the conflict that was created within Zion over their decisions, many families left and began to worship at sister congregations in the area. I attempted to participate in ministry in these sister congregations but was prevented from having an active role until “the dust had settled” and the leadership of the congregations had had the opportunity to meet with the leadership of Zion. In April of 2009 the door was opened for ministering with the Board of Outreach at Prince of Peace in Baxter. It was at this time that I was able to restart my first Practicum and bring it to completion.

In September of 2009 I was able to begin working with another congregation in our area, St. John's in Motley, and minister to them through my second Practicum. I led their Sunday morning adult Bible class from November of 2009 through the end of February 2010.

I wish that I could say that as a result of the MACO program I have become more involved in ministry and am accomplishing new ministries for God. But over the past two years I have been less involved in direct ministry within congregations than I had been prior to starting the program. I have, however, had the opportunity to reflect on many of my mistakes and have been given the opportunity to become more focused on the development of a new ministry model for reaching rural communities for Christ. I have read more books in the past two years than I had in the twenty years prior to enrolling in the MACO program. I have also learned to be patient and wait on the Lord for His plan for my ministry to unfold.

**b. How have the Practicums influenced and shaped my current approach to ministry?**

During my first Practicum and with all of the twists and turns that I faced in getting a workable site, I learned to be patient with God. The actual Practicum experience also gave me the opportunity to lead and model outreach in our communities for people within two different congregations. My second Practicum allowed me to understand the dynamics of working within the culture of a rural church. In both cases I had planned to do more than could be accomplished within the timeframe of the Practicum and became disappointed with the results. However, I have also come to realize that even small victories are worth celebrating and that my time was being used to move people into a new direction and mindset for ministering within their communities.

The past two years have been much like my years of farming, at times rewarding, and at other times depressing and dark. Yet, I have come to realize that these are the times when God

reveals Himself to me through His Word. Once again I am reminded that ministry is not about me or what I am able to do, but it is about God and what He is able to do through me.

**III. How has the MACO Program influenced the future direction of my work as a practitioner of Christian outreach?**

The primary influence that MACO has had on my future is a renewed confidence in myself as a ministry professional. I believe that I have been better prepared to engage in intelligent conversations with others in ministry, and that through these conversations, I will be able to help these ministry leaders become better equipped to carry out their role in God's mission. I also have an expectation that I will be involved in ministry formation beyond the local community and will be serving the church on district, regional, state, or national committees, particularly focusing on rural/small town ministry formation or revitalization.

**a. What will I do differently during the next twelve months?**

In the next twelve months I intend to work on the formation of a regional rural ministry model. My primary focus will be to find a couple of willing congregations to become my partners in this ministry. I will begin by approaching the pastors of the congregations within 60 miles of my current home and share with them how I might be able to assist them with their outreach ministries within their communities. I intend to use the community survey that was developed for the first Practicum as one of the initial tools and propose conducting a survey of the communities with the help of volunteers from the congregation(s). I will also propose leading a group of committed individuals through a series of Bible studies on topics of spiritual leadership, social ministry and outreach, faith foundations, and Biblical images of the role of the Church in God's missional activity. These courses will be modifications of the leadership course that I taught during my second Practicum.

To support this ministry I will be sending out letters and emails to my friends and family, explaining the details of the plans and asking for their prayers and possible financial support. I also will expect the congregations and individuals being served to provide support, as they are able. And I may have to take on a part-time position in a secular job until the ministry grows in acceptance, but I will be careful to place the ministry development as my first priority.

**b. In what ways has the MACO program impacted my professional plans for the future?**

I came into the MACO program with an idea of developing a new model for ministering in the rural communities. I have been able to use my time over the past two years to define and refine my concept of what that ministry would look like. Initially, I thought that rural congregations would be excited to have someone help them develop a strong outreach presence in their communities. However, I have discovered that many rural congregations are unaware of the need for outreach in their communities, and even when they are aware, they are unwilling to make the investment of having someone other than their pastor lead them in ministry. This new understanding has created a greater challenge for the implementation of the ministry plan. So for now, before I can begin to serve rural congregations in ministry, I will have to sell them on the idea of how they and the people within their communities will benefit from the ministry.

Throughout the MACO program I have had to face challenges, tackle assignments, and push forward through times of depression and despair. I have also come to appreciate the support of my friends and colleagues, the coaches and teachers of the courses, and other pastors serving in ministry. I know that difficult times are lying ahead for me, but I also know that I have many friends that I can turn to for advice and prayer support. I cannot single out just one event from the

MACO program that has prepared me for my future ministry, but I know that God has used this time in my life to prepare for the ministry that He has in store for me in the future.

**IV. What has been the effect of the MACO Program on my spiritual journey?**

A few weeks ago I read a selection from Max Lucado's book, *Facing your giants* (2006). Lucado was describing the time when David, the future king of Israel, was hiding from King Saul in the caves by the Dead Sea. It was during this time that David wrote many psalms and revealed his deepest faith in God's provision. David may not have realized that God was using this time in his life to prepare him for his future role as the king of Israel, but the lessons that he learned in the caves became foundational later in his life, when other conflicts arose as he carried out his leadership role among God's people.

While I cannot begin to compare my life to that of David, my ministry in the past two years has been more like working from the context of a cave (my home) than like working out in the public (in a church office). While at Zion I was very involved in ministry in the community. After leaving Zion I withdrew from many of my public obligations and commitments, because I was no longer the congregation's representative. Instead, I turned my focus onto the completion of my course work and my participation in an overnight paper delivery position. (I imagine that my paper route had the same appeal to me as David's raiding parties had to him. It was not something that I enjoyed, but it put food on the table for a period of time.) Yet, it was through these experiences that I was given the time to reflect on my ministry and the purpose for my being involved in Christian outreach and also in the MACO program.

By April of 2009 I had come to realize that I needed to turn my full attention to the MACO program and the coursework, if I was going to continue in the program. This meant that I would have to quit my overnight position and trust that God would provide my wife and me with

enough income to pay our bills. After discussing our options with my wife, Marci, I turned in my resignation, which took effect in the middle of May 2009. God did provide for our needs, and I have been able to focus on the completion of the MACO program.

My financial help from God has come in the form of additional student loans, which will need to be repaid in the near future. But I am trusting that He will again provide for us as He has done in the past. After all, God has not changed; He is still the same God who provided for David in the caves.

**a. How has my personal understanding of the meaning of “disciple of Jesus Christ” been changed?**

My personal understanding of the description of a disciple of Jesus Christ is one who follows Christ’s example of living incarnationally among the people to whom God sends him or her. This means that disciples will adapt to the culture around them as much as possible, while maintaining a strong relationship with God through the study of His Word. They will seek ways to bring the message of Christ to the people of that community in a language that the people will understand. They will speak to the needs of people and reach into their hearts with the message of God’s love shown to them through Jesus Christ. They will also show God’s love to others through their actions and ministries of mercy.

My calling to be one of Christ’s disciples is personal. It is a privilege. It was not by my choice but out of love He called me to Himself and into His service. This call comes with certain responsibilities, which I have willingly accepted in response to His love for me. Others have gone before me and carried their cross for Christ, even in the face of death. My role as Jesus’ disciple is to go where He leads me and to willingly make personal sacrifices for the sake of those who still do not know of Him.

**b. How has my MACO experience influenced the way in which I interact both with other Christians and with those who do not yet know Jesus as their Savior and Lord?**

I would like to believe that I have become better equipped to lead and equip other Christians for outreach ministry as a result of participating in the MACO program. I have become more confident in my abilities as a Christian leader and as a ministry professional. I have learned to be patient with others, because God has been patient with me. In many ways I have been humbled that God has called me into His ministry. It is by His mercy and strength that He has gifted me for His service. I cannot take credit for anything that He has accomplished within me.

God has also given me a new passion for reaching out to those who are living without salvation. The MACO program has encouraged me to take greater risks for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In the past I have encouraged others to share Christ as they go about their daily tasks, and yet I have struggled to follow my own advice. Throughout this program I have become increasingly aware of those around me who do not know Jesus Christ as their Lord and have begun to intentionally create opportunities where I would be able to share Him with them.

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The program-integration algorithm proposed by Horwitz, Prins, and Reps provides a way to create a semantics-based tool for integrating a base program with two or more variants. The integration algorithm is based on the assumption that any change in the behavior, rather than the text, of a program variant is significant and must be incorporated in the merged program. The need to integrate several versions of a program into a common one arises frequently, but it is a tedious and time consuming task to merge programs by hand. The program-integration algorithm proposed by Horwitz, Prins, and Reps provides a way to create a semantics-based tool for integrating a base program with two or more variants. Justine Desaulniers Integration Paper #2 5/5/2016 In navigating the inner world, everybody has a different take. People utilize symbolism, fantasy stories, and basic human connection in order to understand themselves and the world around them. Theme I The first theme I noted throughout the material was the use of symbolism to access the inner world. Open WSO2 Integration Studio and click Miscellaneous â†’ Create New Registry Project in the Getting Started view as shown below. In the dialog that opens, enter a name for the registry project. Click Finish and see that the project is now listed in the project explorer. See the instructions on creating and using registry artifacts. Mediator Project. Create this project directory to start creating custom mediator artifacts. You can use these customer mediators when you define the mediation flow in your ESB config project. Creating a Mediator project. Open WSO2 Integration Studio and click Miscell