



Flourish Courses Developed by Gordon-Conwell.

MC601 | Polity of ECO

Course Developer & Instructor: Rev. Dr. Dana Allin

Spring 2022 (February 8th – May 16th)

Required Web-Meetings:

Tuesday, February 22nd (7-7:30 PM ET / 4-4:30 PM PT)

Tuesday, March 1st (7-8 PM ET / 4-5PM PT)

Tuesday, April 5th (7-8 PM ET / 4-5 PM PT)

Tuesday, April 19th (7-8 PM ET / 4-5 PM PT)

Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me. – Colossians 1:28-29 (ESV)

Contacts

Course Instructor: Rev. Dr. Dana Allin, dana@eco-pres.org or (805) 319-4044 (office)

Course TA: Rev. Linda Snyder

Flourish: registrar@flourishmovement.org

Course Description

The goal of this course is to give students a practical and working knowledge of the polity of ECO. We will present the polity in the larger context of the ethos and culture that ECO has been founded upon and seeks to enhance.

Our polity is short and there are few concepts that need to be mastered, so we will also discuss some best practices for utilizing the polity within congregational and denominational contexts. Students therefore will have shorter lectures than many courses that have a larger body of knowledge and will spend more time in reflection, observation, and dialogue in a variety of settings.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate a working knowledge of the specifics of *ECO Polity*.
- Be able to apply the *ECO Polity* and the culture of ECO into a variety of common situations that the church faces.

Course Modality

This course is offered online at flourishmovement.org. This online course has a fixed start and end date, scheduled weekly Lessons and study requirements, and scheduled assignments. Although this course is primarily asynchronous (meaning that students usually do not have to be online at certain times to complete course requirements), students will need to adhere to due dates. In addition, students will have to be present for occasional web meetings scheduled by the Instructor. More information can be found within the course site.

Those taking the course for personal enrichment are strongly encouraged to stay on track with the schedule for credit-seeking students. Access to course content is not guaranteed after the course end date.

Course Schedule

The course is organized into eleven content weeks called “Lessons,” one holiday week, and two additional weeks focused on completing major summative assignments. Weeks begin on a Tuesday and end on a Monday.

Week	Dates	Lesson Title
1	Feb. 8-14	Lesson 1 The Ethos of Our Polity – How Polity Can Be an Asset or a Hindrance
2	Feb. 15-21	Lesson 2 Our Vision Frame – How ECO Answers the Five Irreducible Questions of an Organization
3	Feb. 22-28	Lesson 3 What is a Flourishing Church?
4	Mar. 1-7	Lesson 4 The Congregation and its Covenant Partners
5	Mar. 8-14	Lesson 5 The Session and its Elders
6	Mar. 15-21	Lesson 6 Introducing Policy Governance
7	Mar. 22-28	Lesson 7 Ordained and Commissioned Ministries
8	Mar. 29-Apr. 4	Lesson 8 The Presbytery
9	Apr. 5-11	Lesson 8 The Synod
10	Apr. 12-18	Holy Week – No Coursework Due

11	Apr. 19-25	Lesson 10 Civil Authority and Ecumenical Relationships
12	Apr. 26-May 2	Lesson 11 Discipline within ECO
13-14	May 3-16	Final Course Assignments Completion Period

Course Requirements

I. Readings

Students are required to obtain and read several books for this course. Books can be obtained through the [Gordon-Conwell Charlotte Bookstore](#) or any online retailer. Weekly reading assignments are posted in the course site. Students are required to complete the readings to pass the course and will submit a course report at the end of the course attesting that they have completed this requirement (and others).

Required Books

Students should purchase the following books:

- George, Carl F. and Warren Bird. *How to Break Growth Barriers: Revise Your Role, Release Your People, and Capture Overlooked Opportunities for Your Church*. ISBN-13: 978-0801092466
- Hirsh, Alan. *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating Apostolic Movements*. ISBN-13: 978-1587433863
- Kaiser, John. *Winning on Purpose: How to Organize Congregations to Succeed in Their Mission*. ISBN-13: 978-0687495023
- Malphurs, Aubrey, *Leading Leaders: Empowering Church Boards for Ministry Excellence*. ISBN-13: 978-0801091780
- *ECO Constitution* – download available in course site

II. Lectures

Students are required to watch weekly lecture videos. These videos are posted in the course site. Students are required to watch all of the lecture videos to pass the course and will submit a course report at the end of the course attesting that they have completed this requirement (and others).

III. Class Discussions

The three web-meeting discussions sessions are also required. If a student is unable to make a discussion session an alternative assignment will be given.

IV. [Session, Presbytery, or Synod Visit](#)

As part of the learning, students will attend either a local church session meeting, a Presbytery meeting, or the ECO Synod Meeting. If a student is not able to attend any of the above, an alternative and comparable assignment can be arranged in consultation with the instructor.

V. [Papers and Other Written Assignments](#)

Students will prepare four major papers during the course:

- A paper on the how the student would use ECO's measures of a flourishing church to develop a personalized framework for evaluating a church's vitality. (4 pages)
- A paper related to covenant partners. This includes both a one-page covenant partner covenant as well as a two to three page overview of a process that the student would use to bring in covenant partners into the life of the church and continue to support them. (4 pages)
- A letter to session describing the model of leadership outlined in *Winning on Purpose* and an articulation of why the session should adopt some or all of the principles. (3-4 pages)
- An integrative paper on the student's observation of a Session, Presbytery, or Synod Meeting. The student should evaluate the experience based upon our desired ethos, our vision frame, polity, and aspects presented in *Winning on Purpose*. (7-8 pages)

In addition, students will submit five other smaller writing assignments.

- These will be short reflection papers related to the weekly lessons.

Full descriptions of the papers and writing assignments can be found in the course site.

VI. [Course Reports](#)

At the end of the course, students will complete a Course Report verifying completion of all non-graded activities including reading, lecture viewing, and class video session attendance.

[Assignment Formatting and Submission](#)

Writing assignments should be submitted as either a Microsoft Word document or PDF file in the course site (email submissions are not accepted).

All assignment file names should follow this convention:

Last updated: January 19, 2019

FirstinitialLastname_AssignmentName_MMDDYY

example: JSmith_ResearchPaper_123119

All written assignments should be double-spaced with one-inch margins and a 12-point standard font and **should follow the most recent edition of Turabian (*Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*) for paper formatting and citations.**

Course Grading

All course grading will be completed by the Course Instructor. **All assignments and activities must be completed to pass the course.**

Assignments and Weighting

Assignment	Weighting
Reflection Papers	25%
Measures Paper	15%
Covenant Partner Paper	15%
Session Letter	15%
Integrative Paper	35%
Course Report (pass/fail) includes:	
Reading	Must complete to pass course.
Lecture Viewing	Must complete to pass course.
Class Web Meetings	Must attend to pass course.
Total	100%

Grading Scale

A	93-100%	B+	87-89%	C+	77-79%	D+	67-69%		
		B	83-86%	C	73-76%	D	63-66%	F	Below 60
A-	90-92%	B-	80-82%	C-	70-72%	D-	60-62%		

Academic Standards

All submitted materials should be of graduate level academic quality and edited to reflect the student's best effort. Students should ensure that their submitted work is free from spelling, grammatical, and formatting errors. Students who are not confident that their writing meets

graduate level standards or who are looking to improve their writing abilities are encouraged to enroll in one or both of the following courses through Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary:

- CT490 – Writing Skills Workshop. CT490 is a one-credit-hour online refresher course that introduces seminary students to essential grammar and composition skills necessary for the pursuit of graduate-level writing.
- CT500 – Introduction to Theological Research and Writing. CT500 introduces students to graduate-level research and writing skills with specific attention to academic writing, theological research, integrating sources, understanding and avoiding plagiarism, and the proper citation of sources following the Turabian style manual.

To enroll in one of these courses, please contact charlotteadmissions@gordonconwell.edu.

Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of personal and academic integrity. Cheating involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination or the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors. Plagiarism involves the use of another person's distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one's own instead of giving proper credit to the source. Plagiarism can also involve over-dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one's writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures.

Accommodations, Dropping the Course, and Extensions

If you are a student in need of accommodation due to disability, please contact registrar@flourishmovement.org for guidelines and next steps. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the Instructor of the documented accommodations at the beginning of the semester.

If you would like to drop the course, you are able to do so. The deadlines and amount you will be refunded or asked to pay depends on the type of student you are.

If you are a CLP2 student, you have until the start of the 7th week to drop the course for no additional charge. If you drop after the start of the 7th week, you will be asked to pay a \$150 drop fee. For the spring semester, the date to drop by, with no extra fee, would be March 30th.

If you are a Flourish or CLP1 student, the deadlines and refund percentages are below:

- February 18th – Last day to drop Spring course(s) for 100% refund
- March 4th – Last day to drop Spring course(s) for 80% refund
- March 18th – Last day to drop Spring course(s) for 50% refund
- May 13th – Last day to drop Spring course(s) with no refund

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Once May 13th passes, and you have not completed the coursework, you will be asked to take an "incomplete" for the course.

When you request to drop a class, you will be asked to fill out a form for our records with the name of the course, the reason you are dropping the course, and confirmation that you have paid the additional fee (if applicable) and notified your professor.

Arrangements for submission of late work at a date on or before the end date for the semester are made between the student and Instructor. However, course work to be submitted after the publicized end date for the semester or term must be approved by Taylor Woods. ***An Extension Petition must be submitted to registrar@flourishmovement.org no later than the Friday before the last day of the course.*** Extensions are only available for those with exigent and unforeseen circumstances and are generally not granted for work, ministry, or educational overload. There will be a fee for extensions of \$40 that will need to be paid when the student submits their Extension Petition. To request an Extension Petition, please email Taylor Woods at registrar@flourishmovement.org with the name of the course and the deadline you and your instructor agreed upon.