

1 **CERTIFIED RULING ELDER COURSE GUIDELINES FOR THE**
2 **PRESBYTERY OF SCIOTO VALLEY**

3 (A Responsibility of the Commission for Church Professionals)

4 **Adopted March 23, 2017 (Amended January 10, 2019)**

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6 **This program syllabus replaces the “Certified Lay Professionals Program**
7 **Syllabus for the Presbytery of Scioto Valley” policy Adopted April 17, 2008**

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10 **1. Introduction to the Old Testament**

11 This introductory and critical survey course on the Old Testament will give
12 students an idea of the flow of the history, geography, people, and
13 theological development of the Old Testament. Time will be spent developing
14 a sense of the historical background and major themes of the Old Testament
15 as well as a general overview of the contents of the books of the Old
16 Testament. A basic understanding of the Old Testament’s literary genre will
17 be discussed: history, poetry, prophetic, literature, apocalyptic; as well as
18 basic hermeneutical/exegetical skills for interpretation (context, genre,
19 historical, setting of the book/passage, how the text has been interpreted in,
20 and used by the church).

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22 **2. Introduction to the New Testament**

23 This introductory and critical survey course on the New Testament will give
24 students an overview of the development, time-line, geography, people and
25 themes of the New Testament. Time will be spent developing a sense of the
26 historical background of the New Testament and the order of its writing, the
27 development of the literary genre therein (Gospel, history, letters,
28 apocalyptic literature), and the roles these played in the early church; as
29 well as basic hermeneutical/exegetical skills for interpretation (context,
30 genre, historical, setting of the book/passage, how the text has been
31 interpreted in, and used by the church), and a discussion of the critical and
32 theological importance of the New Testament.

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34 **2. Reformed Theology**

35 This course will examine doctrines of our faith through the Reformed
36 Tradition. Participants will be able to express key theological beliefs, orally
37 and in writing, including an understanding of God, humanity, sin, evil and
38 salvation, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the church, sacraments, and a
39 personal call to ministry.

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44 **4. Reformed Worship and Sacraments**

45 This course will look at the elements of worship and cover the skills needed
46 in planning and leading worship, speaking, reading Scripture, choosing
47 hymns, etc. It will also introduce some of the resources available in planning
48 of worship. Students will explore the sacraments of our church through
49 historical, theological and liturgical considerations pertaining to services for
50 other than Sunday mornings, such as funerals and weddings.

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52 **5. Introduction to Preaching**

53 This preaching course focuses on the Old and New Testament and offers the
54 participants training in skills needed to develop a sermon from a text. Using
55 selected texts from either of the Testaments, the course will focus on the
56 many aspects of sermon preparation, resources for sermons, kinds of
57 sermons and styles of preaching, the cycle of the Christian year, and the
58 lectionary (using it and diverging from it).

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60 **6. Presbyterian Polity**

61 This course uses the Book of Order and actual case studies to delve into the
62 connection between the spiritual character of the Church and its human
63 organization and system of agreed-upon rule by which it governs itself. It
64 will cover the content of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA),
65 the make-up of the Book of Order (The Form of Government, The Director
66 for Worship, and the Book of Discipline), the structure and function of the
67 governing bodies, (session, presbytery, synod and General Assembly), and
68 the other governing bodies with which our General Assembly has
69 relationships.

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71 **7. Introduction to Pastoral Care**

72 This introductory course deals with the needs of both the caregiver and the
73 recipient, with strong emphasis on hospital visitation, boundary issues,
74 ethical concerns, roles and issues, and referrals to other helping
75 professionals. It will focus on particular pastoral care issues, such as
76 conducting pastoral care, hospital visits, and grief counseling.

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78 **8. Christian Education**

79 This course will utilize a variety of learning opportunities and activities to
80 explore and articulate the purpose and nature of the ministry of Christian
81 Education in the church today. This will include: defining Christian Education
82 in the church today; the biblical and theological basis for Christian
83 Education; the impact of human development and learning styles on faith
84 development; available curriculum and resources; skills development in CE
85 program assessment and planning.

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88 **9. Healthy Boundaries Training**

89 This course will be a classroom course required by the presbytery for
90 completion and certification of the student. Students will use case studies to
91 discuss duties and responsibilities church professionals have in dealing with
92 parishioners, volunteers and staff of the church, including boundary issues,
93 ethical concerns, confidentiality and sexual misconduct. The Presbytery's
94 Policy on Sexual Misconduct is the text for this course. Participants will be
95 required to sign a statement that they have read and understand the
96 Presbytery's policy on sexual misconduct.

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98 **10. A Nine-Month Supervised Field Experience**

99 Each student will complete a nine (9) month individually designed,
100 supervised, field education experience in a church other than the candidate's
101 home church. As a key component to the spiritual development of the
102 student, this experience will have an emphasis on preaching and pastoral
103 care and include exposure and involvement with the administration and
104 planning needed to serve a congregation.

105 **11. Alternative Clinical Experience**

106 Each student will complete a Hospital Based CPE experience. This experience
107 will serve to enrich pastoral care and student to student interpersonal
108 communications.

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110 **12. Communications Coaching**

111 Each student will complete a presbytery designed coaching to develop
112 concise, focused, and effective communication skills.

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