



# Youth Leader Training Program

## Handbook

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*CONVENTION of Atlantic Baptist Churches*

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# Youth Leader Training Program Handbook

## General Information

### Preamble

Our Convention has over 220 active youth ministries. Approximately 100 of these are overseen by paid staff while the remainder are totally volunteer-led. As well, in the churches with paid youth leadership, a substantial number of volunteers fill out the programs. Our best estimates tell us that there are approximately 1000 volunteers regularly working with youth within the churches of our Convention!

### Mandate

The Youth Leader Training Program (YLTP) exists to provide top quality training for volunteer youth leaders serving within the Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches (CABC). This is to be done in a format and location that is accessible to them. **The YLTP is not designed to train people for vocational ministry.**

### Administration

Day-to-day administration of the program is the responsibility of the Program Administrator, in consultation with the chair as necessary. Questions, comments, or concerns are normally directed to the administrator as the primary contact.

## Admission

### Application to the Program

Application forms for the YLTP are available from the Program Administrator and on the CABC website ([www.baptist-atlantic.ca/YLTP](http://www.baptist-atlantic.ca/YLTP)). Completed application forms should be mailed to the Program Administrator along with a \$50.00 application fee and a letter of commendation to the program from the applicant's Pastor or Board of Deacons.

### Admission to the Program

Admission to the YLTP will be open to all persons who are currently serving as a youth leader in a CABC church.

Because of the nature of the program, it is not in the best interest of prospective students to enter studies at any point other than the beginning. Thus, all persons must begin with Year one, Semester one.

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## Financial Information

### Tuition

Tuition paid by students helps cover the costs for instruction in the nine courses, printed materials handed out by the instructors, the noon meal on the Saturday of each session, and coffee breaks each weekend. It does not include costs for student travel to the course or costs for books.

Tuition costs are as follows:     \$250.00 per Semester (\$750.00 for the full program)

Students who fail to successfully complete a course will be required to pay full tuition when the course is taken again.

Students are required to purchase all books through the Program Administrator.

A \$50.00 non-refundable application fee must accompany the application.

Invoices for tuition and books will be presented to students at the first session of each semester. All invoices are payable within 30 days of receipt. In the event that payment cannot be made within thirty days, it is incumbent upon the student to contact the Program Administrator and make special arrangements. Failure to do so may jeopardize the student's continuation in the program. (*Cheques can be made payable to the "Atlantic Baptist Mission Board - YLTP".*)

Students will not receive their certificate from the program until all invoices and fees have been paid in full.

### Refunds

Students who must drop out of the program within the first month of any given Semester may be refunded 50% of their tuition for that Semester. After the first month tuition for that Semester will not be returned.

### Financial Assistance

All efforts are made to keep the cost of the YLTP to a minimum so as to be affordable to most students. It should be acknowledged, however, that tuition fees paid still do not cover actual costs of the program. Costs are subsidized with annual income from a bequest given "for the training of lay people" by the late Ruth Colburne of Moncton, New Brunswick, and through the annual budget of the Atlantic Baptist Mission Board.

While students are responsible for all stated tuition fees and program costs, if finances prevent a worthy student from participating, application may be made for limited assistance. The availability of assistance changes from year to year and, if granted, would normally be for such things as travel or cost of books.

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Students admitted to the program, who serve as a volunteer youth leader in a CABC church, have an additional option if more assistance is needed. The Program Administrator will be pleased to approach the church being served to request that the church assist the student in paying the program costs.

## Course Information

### Course Configuration

The YLTP is a course of study leading to a certificate in Volunteer Youth Ministry. It is a three semester (year and a half) program requiring the successful completion of nine courses related to local church youth ministry.

Each semester of study will contain three courses, each with four hours of instruction. Teaching will happen on two Saturdays during the semester, resulting in six hours of instruction on each of the Saturdays.

In each course there will be only one required text. Instructors may recommend other texts, but these will not be required reading for the students, and students will not be required to purchase them. In order to assist students, books will be ordered by the Program Administrator for purchase by the students. Except for the first semester of the program, students will usually receive textbooks for the coming semester at the last class of the previous semester.

While it is ideal for a student to complete the program in three semesters, up to 3 years may be allowed when circumstances necessitate.

### Student Attendance

Students will be required to attend both Saturday sessions of each semester for successful completion of the course.

### Grading System

All students must successfully complete all required work and achieve a passing mark in order to complete the program and receive their certificate.

<b>Percent</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Definition</b>
90-100	A +	Excellent	60-69	C	Average
80-89	A	Very Good	50-59	D	Pass
70-79	B	Good	0-49	F	Failure

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It is expected that students will complete all course work according to the schedules and requirements outlined by individual instructors. Special arrangements for extensions on assignments or course completion may be granted at the discretion and decision of the respective instructor with the following proviso: *No extension given shall exceed ten days after the assignment deadline as marks have to be submitted to the administrator.* **ALL assignments, including prescribed reading assignments, must be completed in order for students to achieve passing credit in any given course.**

## Completion of the Program

The requirement for completion of the YLTP and the receipt of the earned Certificate is the successful completion of all respective course work with a passing mark in every subject. Before a student can receive their certificate, all financial obligations relating to tuition, cost of books, and other expenses must be paid in full.

Certificates will be awarded at the Springforth Leaders Conference. This event happens each May in conjunction with the Springforth Youth Conference.

## Program of Study

The Program of study over the three semesters will be as follows:

### First Semester

- Course #1 – History and Theology of Youth Ministry
- Course #2 - Understanding Youth Culture
- Course #3 – Evangelism and Discipleship in Youth Ministry

### Second Semester

- Course #4 – Children’s Ministry as a Foundation to Youth Ministry
- Course #5 – Programming & Mission Tours
- Course #6 – Leadership Development

### Third Semester

- Course #7 –Family Based Youth Ministry
- Course #8 – Young Adult Ministry
- Course #9 – The Power of Relationship

## Course Descriptions

### History and Theology of Youth Ministry

This course will briefly look at the rise of youth ministry in North America, with special focus on its development in Atlantic Canada. There will also be a focus on the basic theology behind ministry to youth, and how to use theological methods to grapple with issues in youth ministry.

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## **Understanding Youth Culture**

This course will explore current youth culture, including such areas as psychological and social development, cultural pathologies, global awareness, internet and social networking. The impact of these cultural trends on youth ministry and church life in Atlantic Canada will be delved into.

## **Evangelism and Discipleship in Youth ministry**

At the core of any successful youth ministry is making disciples. This course will examine strategies of bringing people to faith in God through Jesus Christ and the process of discipleship. Practical advice on preparing and leading Bible Studies and equipping youth for peer evangelism will be included.

## **Children's Ministry as a Foundation to Youth Ministry**

In order for a church to have thriving and consistent youth ministry, it is essential to have a growing children's ministry that feeds into it. This course will look at the reasons why it is essential to connect with children. It will also address rites of passage, changes in children's culture and ministry models and approaches.

## **Programming & Mission Tours**

It is within the programming of a youth ministry that relationships can be built and spiritual nurture often takes place. This course will look at preparing and leading mission tours, intentional programming for youth ministries of various sizes, planning and attending events, fundraising, and developing long term plans.

## **Leadership Development**

In this course, participants will learn how to develop their own leadership abilities, build a leadership team, discover spiritual gifts, work within church leadership structures and develop student leaders.

## **Family Focused Youth Ministry**

Youth are with their families much more than with their youth leaders, so any successful youth ministry must work with this understanding. This course will dig into how youth leaders can partner with, encourage and equip parents to spiritually nurture their own children.

## **Young Adult Ministry**

Young adult ministry is an aspect of church life that is often overlooked, and if not, usually done poorly! This course will address extended adolescence, diversity of young adult ministry, rites of passage, connection with Para-church ministries, as well as practical ideas for starting or reenergizing a young adult ministry.

## **The Power of Relationship**

This course will look at how to incorporate youth into the broader church, mentoring relationships, using small groups, as well as child protection policies and appropriate boundaries for leaders.

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## Instructors' Guidelines

### General Information and Policies

Instructors for the YLTP will normally be enlisted from the ranks of youth pastors accredited by the Board of Ministerial Standards and Education and serving (or having served) in churches of the Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches.

Selection of instructors will be guided by the following criteria:

- a. Significant and healthy youth ministry experience
- b. Expertise in the area of study
- c. An ability to teach
- d. An ability both to earn and inspire the confidence of the students.

Prospective and/or new instructors are required to be knowledgeable in all aspects of the YLTP as outlined in the handbook. Of particular importance are:

- a. The philosophy of the program
- b. The curriculum being offered
- c. The process of a semester and weekend teaching session
- d. Expectations of instructors

Instructors will accept responsibility for preparing individual courses, including the preparation of assignments, submission of syllabus/course outline, their evaluation, and the appropriate grading of students' performances.

Instructors will give a two hour lecture on their course subject at each of the two Saturdays that comprise a full semester. This makes a total of four hours of classroom instruction.

Instructors are required to submit a copy of the syllabus for their course to the administrator of the YLTP. Updated copies of the syllabus should be submitted to the administrator annually reflecting changes to the course material, instructor's contact information and dates. Whenever there is a change the administrator's copy should be updated so the syllabus can be reviewed and kept on record.

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## Specific Guidelines for Instructors

### *A Teaching Team*

Instructors are asked to be part of a teaching team, with the clear purpose of helping to train persons who feel called to volunteer youth ministry or who are already involved in such ministry. The course being taught by any one instructor is part of a comprehensive curriculum that “as a whole” helps prepare students in a balanced way. Consequently, it is important to note the following:

- Instructors should read carefully and lecture within the parameters set forth in the course description for their course.
- Instructors should also read and be familiar with the course descriptions of the other eight courses so as not to stray into any other instructor’s subject area. This will help to focus the scope of an instructor’s preparation and lecture and be most beneficial to the student.
- The three instructors who teach together in any particular semester should be intentional in communicating with one another throughout. If possible, they should get together some time before the first session to discuss such things as their syllabi, their expectations of students, how marking is going to be done, etc. This can be done in person, or by phone or email.

### *Preparing To Teach*

The required reading (text) for the course will be selected by the Youth Leader Training Committee, although input and suggestions are invited from instructors. The pedagogical principle under which instructors will prepare their material is this: *“One does not teach the book, but teaches the course and uses the book to supplement the teaching.”* However, it is important to recognize the central place of the textbook in the course. It is the primary resource that the student will take with him/her when the course is over. Consequently, it must figure significantly into the course. Instructors must help the student interact with and understand the text.

In preparing to teach the course, then, the instructor should:

- Read and become thoroughly familiar with the course text.
- Prepare two (two hour) lectures using but not being constrained by the required text. The instructor’s own experience in ministry is an important component in “modeling” ministry, and should be woven into the curriculum.
- Prepare a syllabus to be handed out to students outlining the topics to be covered in the two lectures, the required reading for the course, expectations regarding homework and assignments (with deadlines), and how students’ marks will be determined.
- Prepare lecture outlines or notes for students for each lecture. Many of the students (most of whom have been out of school and away from “note-taking” for some time) will be greatly helped by the handout.
- If possible, plan into the lecture opportunities for questions, interaction, and discussion. This will aid in the assessment of student capability and response. (Instructors should remember they are not simply sharing information. They are teaching people and must seek to develop a sense of their varying levels of understanding.)

Three other factors are important for instructors as they prepare their lectures and assignments. Understanding these factors should give the freedom to challenge and stretch the students while at the same time recognizing their limitations and the limitations of the course itself.

- Clear understanding of the purpose of the Program: The Youth Leaders Training Program is designed for, and therefore is to be taught for volunteer youth leaders serving in a local church.

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- Understand the composition of the class: i.e. it is made up of lay people. Many of the students in the Program will have lost most of their connections with any kind of formal study. Note-taking skills, ability to comprehend and process information, and writing abilities, for example, will probably not be at the level one would expect from a M.Div. student. In addition, most of the students will be working full-time jobs and working with youth in their church as they take these courses.
- The “introductory” nature of the courses: It is important to remember that the philosophy of the program is not to train a professional youth pastor by trying to put a full M.Div. level course into two two-hour lectures and one text book. The goal is to give introductory teaching and some practical tools to volunteer youth leaders as a means of equipping them to serve within their churches. Much more will be left untouched than will be taught.

Prior to the first weekend teaching session the instructor will receive a list containing the names of those registered for that semester.

### *The Weekend Teaching Sessions*

Instructors are expected to participate in two weekend teaching sessions during the Semester and to teach two (two hour) sessions each time.

Each Semester offers three courses to the students. The normal schedule for a Saturday will be as follows:

<b>Saturday</b>	8:00-8:30	Arrival and registration (first semester only)
	8:30-10:30	Course 1 (normal start time for all subsequent weekends)
	10:30-11:00	Break
	11:00-1:00	Course 2
	1:00-2:00	Lunch
	2:00-4:00	Course 3

Note:

Instructors must **never** go over their allotted time for their lecture. Doing so is discourteous to the instructor that follows and, with the tight schedule for the day, will result in someone not having their full two hours for lecturing. The sessions **must** be done by the 4:00pm.

In addition to participating with students in the two weekend sessions, instructors are encouraged to be available to them throughout the semester as they work on assignments and wrestle with the course subject matter. This availability will be primarily through telephone and e-mail. Contact information can be made known to the students at the first semester or included in the course syllabus that is handed out.

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## *The Lecture Time*

Normally, instructors will use a portion of their first class to give students a general overview of the course, aimed at exciting their interest in the subject area and stimulating their desire for more. The text book will normally be introduced and its direction indicated. At that time, students should get a syllabus or "course description" which spells out the instructor's expectations of the student over the entire period and how the student mark will be determined. With these preliminaries taken care of the instructor will then proceed to the defined course material. No tests or exams should be given. The limited class time should be focused on teaching and student interaction.

The final class will normally be straightforward lecturing, although the time may include reflections by the instructor on the work submitted by students, not by naming people, but by identifying issues, problems, misunderstandings, and areas requiring clarification. As this is the final session with the students, the instructor should plan to bring the teaching elements of the course to the point of summary and conclusion by the end of the class.

## *Requirements and Assignments*

Because of the nature of the program and the composition of the classes in the YLTP, the following guidelines on work requirements and assignments **must** be carefully adhered to by Instructors:

- Each student will be required to read the course text (or the reading assigned from it) and, by the end of the Semester, sign a statement verifying that the reading has been completed.
- Instructors will not require students to do any reading beyond the one text for the course. If other reading is recommended, it shall be classified as "optional reading only" and no student will have his/her final mark affected either by choosing or by not choosing the option.
- Regardless of the number of pages in a course textbook, there shall not be more than 300 pages of required reading assigned from it for the semester. Instructors will determine the chapters/pages required and will have them cited in the course syllabus. It should be noted, however, that "300 pages" is a regulation designed only to state a "maximum allowable" requirement when a textbook contains over 300 pages. If a textbook contains less than 300 pages this regulation is not intended to give permission for instructors to require additional reading assignments to bring the total pages read by the students "up to 300". At this point the regulation concerning "only one required textbook per course" takes precedence.
- Students **must** complete all assignments. Failure to complete all assignments given by the instructor will result in a failure to pass the course.
- Assignments may relate to the required reading but instructors are asked to refrain from giving assignments requiring students to do summaries of all the chapters in the text.
- Assignments should not be of a nature that requires students to do research beyond the text and lectures of the course. The goal of the assignments should be to determine if students understand or can interact with the materials presented.
- Written assignments and papers, whether one major paper or two smaller ones, shall not require the students to write less than 1,000 words or more than 2,000 words per course for the entire semester. Instructors shall consider the semester to be completed at the end of the second weekend session, however, students will be given 2 weeks following the last class to complete and submit all assignments. This allows for the material taught in the last class to be incorporated into their written assignments. No assignments given shall have a deadline beyond that point unless it is an extension granted to an individual student(s).

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## ***Assessment and Student Marks***

Students must complete all required reading, all assignments, and must meet the attendance requirements in order to pass any particular course. Failure to do so will automatically result in a mark of “I” for incomplete. Any student receiving an “I” will have to redo that particular course (class and assignments) at a later time in order to graduate from the program.

Assuming that all requirements have been met, each instructor is to make a final grade assessment for each student. The grade should be based upon the following:

- performance and participation in the classroom setting (10% of final mark)
- grades on assignments (80% of final mark)
- prescribed reading of the text (10% of final mark)

Instructors will ultimately decide just how a student’s grade will be determined. The cumulative performance of a student on their semester assignments and class participation will be sufficient to assign a final mark.

As the second Saturday closes, the instructors may want to consult together on the students as a group and individually, with a view to assisting one another in the final assessment and grade. In doing so, they should consider not only academic performance, but also personal commitment, attitude, and development.

## ***Submission of Grades***

Instructors will submit final grades to the administrator of the YLTP who will then inform the student. Please note the following time-line:

- Final grades must be submitted by Instructors to the Administrator within one month of the final weekend session of a semester.
- Students will be informed of their final grade(s) by the Administrator no later than the 7 days after received from the Instructors.

## ***Presentation of Certificates***

All students who successfully complete the requirements of the YLTP will be presented with a certificate of completion at the Springforth Leaders Conference.