

# Introduction to Diaconia

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## Academic credits

2 KP (3 ECTS)

## Prerequisites

None

## Approved by

Methodological Commission (February 2023)

## Course author and Lecturer

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## Content (Course Annotation)

Students understand the interpretation of the notion of diaconia and the various definitions, their application and theological justification, and the historical development of diaconia as a form of Church expression. Knowledge and skills are provided to enable students to engage in diaconia activities, both in the Church and parish environment and in society, after graduation.

## Aims

- To present the theological grounds of diaconia;
- to discover the interaction between the theological and social aspects of diaconia;
- give students a basis for the theory and practice of the work of diaconia.

## Learning Outcomes

### ***Knowledge***

*The students will know:*

- the theological rationale of diaconia;
- basic practical ministry principles;
- methods for organizing voluntary work.

### ***Skills***

*The students will be able to:*

- explain the role of diaconia in the work of the congregation;
- prepare and motivate the workers of the diaconia.

### ***Assessment***

Examination

Individual task  
Presentation 1

### **Competencies**

*The students will be able to:*

- establish and practice ministry in congregations; Presentation 2
- contribute to the development of mental and social care in the Examination municipality.

## FULL-TIME STUDIES

### Lesson plan

| <i>Subject</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <i>Academic<br/>hours<br/>(45 min)</i> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 1 The theological rationale of diaconia. Diaconia as the proclaiming of the Gospel in action. History and development of diaconia.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 4                                      |
| 2 Diaconia in congregation and society: The objectives, goals and structure of Diaconia. Diaconia working methods, planning and organisation. Place of diaconia in the life of the congregation                                                                                                                                                                              | 4                                      |
| 3 Diaconia and spiritual guidance. Understanding mental care. Basic skills in nursing work – negotiating, empathy, ethics and privacy. Introduction to counselling practices. Rights and obligations, awareness of borders. Mental care for people in different crisis situations. Ethics, principles, standards of a diaconia worker.                                       | 4                                      |
| 4 Working with different target groups, individuals and families. Stages of old age and family development. Care for sick and elderly people, home care. Working with children and teenagers. Working with persons with disabilities, restrictions on movement, mental disabilities, persons without a defined place of life, persons with dependencies and co-dependencies. | 4                                      |
| 5 Church and society: Mental care in institutions - hospital, prison, social care centers. Cooperation with national care professionals, social institutions and NGOs.                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 4                                      |
| 6 Types of social and mental needs. The impact of social and environmental factors on care. Mental hygiene. Trauma, the impact of injury and crisis intervention.                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 4                                      |
| 7 Loss and mourning. Mourning and spiritual support for grieving                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 4                                      |
| 8 Prayer ministry. Organizing and managing support and self-help groups. The mental life of a diaconia worker – overcrowding, growth and support.                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 4                                      |
| TOTAL                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 32                                     |

### Individual study plan

| Individual studies | Number of<br>hours |
|--------------------|--------------------|
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## Introduction to Diaconia

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Presentation: Awareness of the work of diaconia in the Bible and its implementation in practice, describing the work of diaconia in my congregation/organization | 12 |
| 2. Presentation: Mental care (in one of the selected areas)                                                                                                         | 12 |
| 3. Individual task: counselling and negotiating skills                                                                                                              | 24 |
|                                                                                                                                                                     | 48 |

### Assessment

|                    | Learning Outcomes |        |              | % of the final score |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------|--------------|----------------------|
|                    | Knowledge         | Skills | Competencies |                      |
| Presentation 1     | +                 |        | +            | 15                   |
| Presentation 2     |                   | +      |              | 15                   |
| Individual studies | +                 | +      | +            | 30                   |
| Examination        | +                 | +      | +            | 40                   |
|                    | TOTAL             |        |              | 100                  |

### Readings

#### ***Mandatory Readings***

1. *Diakonija: dvēseļu kopšanas sarunas*. Fragmenti no Reinharda Turres grāmatas "Diakonija" un Hansa Kristofa Pīpera grāmatas "Dvēseļu kopšanas sarunas". Sast. M. Zviedre. Rīga: Svētdienas Rīts, 1998.
2. *Garīgā aprūpe slimnīcā*. Rokasgrāmata. Rīga: Svētdienas rīts, 2002.
3. Mīlts A. *Ētika. Saskarsmes ētika*. Rīga: Zvaigzne ABC, 2004.
4. <https://www.diaconija.lv>

#### ***Additional Readings***

1. Thompson, J.A. *Handbook of Life in Bible Times*. Inter-Varsity Press, 1986.
2. M. Pocock, G. Van Rhee, D. McConnel. *The Changing Face of World Missions: Engaging Contemporary Issues and Trends*. Baker Academic, 2005.
3. Rügger, Heinz und Sigris, Christoph. *Diakonie – eine Einführung. Zur theologischen Begründung helfenden Handelns*. Zürich, 2011.