

# Wesley Theological Seminary Course of Study School

## ***CS 524: Theological Reflection: Practice of Ministry*** **Spring Weekend 2018**

### Instructor Information

**Faculty:** Dr. Jonathan Dodrill

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**Term:** Spring Weekend Course

### Course Information

**Course Session Dates:** March 16-17 and April 20-21. Fridays 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.; 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.; Saturdays 9:00-1:00 p.m.

**Course Description:** The course is the capstone to the student's basic course of study. Its focus is the integration of the biblical, theological, and practical aspects of ministry.

**Course Objectives:** Students will be able to:

1. Articulate a Trinitarian theology for the practice of ministry
2. State clearly the nature and mission of the Church and its relation to pastoral ministry
3. Demonstrate the ability to reflect theologically
4. Develop a plan for lifelong theological reading, reflection, and growth

**Course Expectations:**

1. Students are expected to come prepared to engage with one another in a respectful manner. A respectful manner includes:
  - a. Listening to classmates. It is important for all of us to listen attentively to others so to help them sharpen their theological perspective and to be sharpened by their theological perspective. Open dialogue is how we grow and help others grow!
  - b. Sharing your insights. Just as it is important to listen, it is important to share. Even if we are not completely confident in our perspective, we can only grow by sharing and being willing to be teachable.
2. Students are expected to come prepared, having thoroughly read the assigned readings.
3. Students are expected to submit quality assignments.
  - a. Assignment submissions should be submitted on time.
  - b. Assignment submissions should engage the reading and show signs of previous course work (this is a capstone class after all!)
  - c. Papers and any other written work should be reviewed and be double checked for accuracy, spelling, and grammar.

**Prerequisites:** See COS Curriculum

## Textbooks and Supplementary Materials

### REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

1. Willimon, William H. *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry*, Revised Edition (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2016)
2. Cahalan, Kathleen. *Introducing the Practice of Ministry*
3. Wood, Charles M. and Blue, Ellen. *Attentive to God: Thinking Theologically in Ministry* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008)

## Assignments and Participation

### Assignment to prepare for the March portion:

- A) Read **Chapters 1-7 and Interludes** (pg. 9-196) in *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry*. Write a 5-page paper responding to these questions:
1. Willimon presents different models for pastoral ministry. Evaluate these models. Outline the strengths and weaknesses you assess in each model. Explain why.
  2. Which of these models do you most strongly identify with in your ministry? Explain how this is reflected with specific examples. Review what you put down as a weakness for the model you chose – how can you account for these in your ministry?
  3. Which model seems the least interesting or the least like your pastoral ministry? Why do you think this is the case?
- B) Using an online generator such as [www.wordle.net](http://www.wordle.net) or [www.worditout.com](http://www.worditout.com) (or search for “word cloud generator” to find your own),
1. Create and submit a single word cloud based on your **10 most recent** sermons.
    - (a) Copy and paste the text of **all** 10 sermons into a single word cloud generator (*don't do a separate word cloud for each sermon*).
    - (b) Generate the word cloud, save it (and print), and submit.
    - (c) if you normally only use outlines for your sermons, you may copy your outlines into the generator instead.
  2. Examine your word cloud and write a 2-page response, considering the following questions:
    - (a) Which words are the largest?
    - (b) Which are the smallest?
      - (1) The larger the word, the more frequently it appears in your sermons/outlines.
    - (c) What surprises do you find in your word cloud?
    - (d) Were there words you expected to be there that were absent or smaller than you expected?
    - (e) What does your word cloud suggest about your recent preaching?

### **Assignment to prepare for the April portion:**

1. Read Cahalan's *Introducing the Practice of Ministry* and the article handed out in class in March.

Write a 5-page reflection paper responding to these questions:

- a. What is my understanding of my vocation? What is my understanding of my ministry? Where do I see the two intertwine?
- b. What value does my vocation bring to me? What value does my vocation bring to God? What value does my vocation bring to my neighbor (literal neighbors, congregants, society at large).
- c. If I were not to serve in parish ministry, I would fulfill my vocational calling through...

2. With your groupmates, be prepared to present on multiple case studies and learning objectives in Wood's and Blue's *Attentive to God: Thinking Theologically in Ministry*.

### **Grading Procedure:**

#### **Grading**

Class Participation  
Pre-Course Assignment  
Sermon Series Outline  
Reflection Paper

#### **Late Assignments**

Assignments not received by the due date will have the grade lowered according to the policy noted below.

Grades will be reduced:

- a step (e.g. from B to a B-) for assignments turned in late (up to 24 hours).
- and a full letter grade for any assignments 24 hours past due.
- Assignments over 48 hours past due will be lowered two letter grades.
- We need to talk if an assignment is over 72 hours past due.

### **Grading Scale:**

The instructor assumes that everyone in the class is capable of the work required to receive a "B" grade for each assignment. The following interpretations of the meaning of each grade have been developed to help class members review their work to identify strengths and problems.

- B** means that the basic elements of the assignment have been faithfully included, the argument is internally coherent, and clearly articulated.
- B+** means the assignment is also well crafted.
- A-** means that the assignment is not only well crafted, but it also probes the issues with considerable insight.
- A** means the assignment is well crafted, reveals considerable insight, and moves beyond the range of the student's prior knowledge to begin to construct new perspectives and meanings for the subject. In other words, it shows the student's imagination at work; it has a creative edge.
- C+** means that the assignment lacks clarity or focus, tends to reveal more the writer's opinions than the results of the writer's analysis, and lacks reflective insight into the issues being discussed.
- C** means that the assignment does not move beyond the reporting of information from readings and/or class discussions to engaging them with issues being discussed; it may indicate inappropriate or misuse of data and readings.
- C-** means that despite some moments of focused discussion and insight, major gaps exist in the development of the argument or discussion.
- F** means the individual needs to see me immediately.

### Students With Disabilities

If you have a physical, psychological, or learning disability and might require accommodations in this course, please contact the Office of Community Life early in the semester regarding Wesley's policies and procedures for documenting and accommodating disabilities at ext. 86. The seminary allows accommodations only through this policy.

### Academic Misconduct

All students have signed the Covenant of Professional Ethics and Behavior. This must be adhered to, particularly in regards to academic honesty and plagiarism. Plagiarism is regarded as a serious offense and will result in substantial penalties, including the possibility of academic dismissal. The Faculty regards the following as forms of plagiarism or dishonesty:

- copying from another student's paper
- giving or receiving unauthorized assistance to or from another student during an examination
- using unauthorized material during an examination
- borrowing and presenting as one's own (i.e., without proper attribution) the composition or ideas of another.

The mutilation, defacement, or stealing of library materials are examples of academic dishonesty and/or professional misconduct and are also subject to disciplinary action.

### **A Note on Plagiarism**

There are two kinds of plagiarism, both equally serious. First, there is plagiarism that occurs when a student uses someone else's work word-for-word without placing the cited material in quotation marks. Even if you cite sources in a bibliography at the end of your paper, if you have used someone else's words and have not properly placed those words in quotation marks (and cited the course appropriately in a footnote or parentheses), you have plagiarized.

Second, there is plagiarism that occurs when you use someone else's ideas without acknowledging that you have done so. For example, if you find some really interesting information on the Internet, change the wording a bit, and put that information into your paper without properly acknowledging (in a footnote or parentheses) that you have used this source, you have plagiarized.

In both cases, the work that you have turned in is not your own, original work, but someone else's work that you have copied. Please note well that plagiarism will not be tolerated in any Course of Study course.

### **Weather Policy**

Include the Seminary's weather policy: If the seminary is open we will have class. If the seminary is closed, class is cancelled. If the seminary is closed there will be a recorded message at the main switchboard number: 202-885-8600.

### **Inclusive Language Policy**

Bearing in mind that language reflects, reinforces, and creates social reality, the Seminary expects class conversation and written work to employ language that respects the equal dignity and worth of all human beings. In particular, linguistic sexism and racism are to be avoided.