

# Wesley Theological Seminary

## Course of Study

### Online

#### CS-423 Mission

Faculty: Rev. Dr. Aaron M. Bouwens

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#### Course Description

This course introduces the theology and scope of mission, and the pastor's role in leading congregations in their mission as agents of God's transforming redemption. Students will be able to:

1. Articulate a biblical and theological framework for Christian mission.
2. Explain the Wesleyan relationship of personal piety and social holiness.
3. Examine and reflect on unjust social realities and the response of the church locally and globally.
4. Analyze their ministry context and develop strategies for transforming mission.

#### Texts:

Robert, Dana, *Christian Mission*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.

Volf, Miroslav, *A Public Faith*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2011

Warner, Lacey and Gaston Warner, *From Relief to Empowerment*. Nashville, TN: General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, 2018.

### Assignments

#### Due October 2, 2022

**Part 1: Book Summaries (20% of grade)** For each of the books, write a 1-2 page response as outlined below. Please start your reflection on each book on a new page. You must cite the page numbers of references for mentions of the books in parentheses. Write your responses in paragraphs; bullet points or outlines are not acceptable. Each response should speak to the learnings, questions, and applications you gained from the reading.

- Describe at least three things about mission you have learned from this reading—new knowledge, insights, understandings, perspectives, and/or analysis of issues.
- Pose at least three questions related to mission that you have about the reading—things you don't understand, disagree with, or need further explanation or clarification about.
- Identify at least three applications to the ministry and mission of your congregation. How can the concepts written in each book make an impact on your ministry?

**Part 2: Community Analysis (15% of grade)** Write a 3-5 page analysis of your church(es) and local community as context for mission. What does the demographic makeup of your church(es) and community, its history and culture mean for ministry in your context? In particular, what are the needs in your community for justice, reconciliation, healing, and hospitality? What attempts have been made to address those needs to date? What obstacles have prevented addressing them in the past?

## **Due November 2, 2022**

### **Feature Films (20% of grade)**

From the list of movies below, select two. After watching the movies write a 1-2 page reflection, one each movie, focused on how the movie speaks to Christian missions. Use the texts for the class guide your reflection, however, this is intended to be your thoughts not a series of quotes from the movies, or the authors. Be sure to highlight points of resonance and dissonance with your understanding of mission. Finally, include how you would apply your reflections of the movie to the ministry context you are serving.

Joffe, Roland dir. *The Mission*. 1986; Warner Brothers.

Scorsese, Martin dir. *Silence*. 2017; SharpSword Films.

Hanon, Jim dir. *End of the Spear*. 2006; Every Tribe Entertainment.

Cameron, James dir. *Avatar*. 2009; Twentieth Century Fox.

Apted, Michael dir. *Amazing Grace*. 2007; Bristol Bay Productions.

## **Due November 5, 2022**

**Personal statement of mission (30% of grade)** Drawing on the work and readings of the course and prior education in the COS program, write a 4-6 page personal statement of mission. This statement should be divided into four sections:

1. How do you define mission?
2. How do you understand God's mission in the world?
3. What is the church and how does it relate to God's mission?
4. What is your personal sense of mission?

For the first three sections, you must cite biblical, historical, and theological resources help inform your sense of mission. In other words, quote Bible passages and other things you have read in this course and in other courses in the Course of Study to support your argument. All sources must be cited.

Part of the purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to synthesize your learning from other courses and this one, but students found reproducing sections of papers produced for other courses will receive a failing grade on this assignment.

All papers will be evaluated by the standards of the assignment, clarity of writing, accuracy, consistency, the ability to make a coherent argument, and fidelity to proper academic standards, including accurate quotation and citation of sources. Papers must include complete references.

Proper citation of all sources is expected. Please submit all papers double spaced in Times New Roman, 12 point font, with 1 inch margins. Papers more than 1 page shorter or longer than the page requirements will be marked down accordingly.

**Class Participation (15% of grade)** All students are expected to be present and engaged during class time. Students will be expected to demonstrate they have read and engaged with that material. This will include two required Zoom sessions, November 4 7pm-9pm and November 5 10am-noon. There will be an optional Zoom session September 8 7pm-8pm.