

## **COURSE OF STUDY SCHOOL OF OHIO at MTSO**

**2019 Spring Weekend**

April 5-6 and May 3-4, 2019

### **COS 524 – Theological Reflection: Practice of Ministry**

Dr. Jeff Greenway

c/o Reynoldsburg United Methodist Church

1636 Graham Road

Reynoldsburg, OH 43068

jgreenway@rumc.org

614-866-5864

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#### **Course Description:**

This 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 Overview:**

This 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. It integrates the role of the practicing pastor with the church's theological heritage and its particular Wesleyan expression. Each participant is expected to think, speak, and act from a theological foundation with practical application. Current issues, events and our historic roots will serve as the context. Living each day as God's gifted and called leaders requires pastors to balance study, prayer and action.

#### **Required Texts:**

1. *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church 2012*. "Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Tasks", pages 45-90.
2. Will Willimon—*Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry* (Abington Press Nashville, 2002 ISBN: 0687045320)
3. Kathleen Cahalan—*Introducing the Practice of Ministry* (Liturgical Press, 2010 ISBN 081463169X)

4. Charles Wood and Eva Blue—*Attentive to God: Thinking Theologically in Ministry* (Abington Press Nashville, 2008 ISBN 068765162X)
5. Frederick Buechner—*The Sacred Journey: A Memoir of Early Days* (Harper San Francisco, 1991; ISBN 0060611839)

**Assignments for Theology and the Practice of Ministry—COS 524:**

Assignments to be completed prior to attending the first class and emailed or sent via USPS by **Wednesday, March 27, 2019**—ten days prior to the start of class:

1. *Personal Spiritual Autobiography*, 2,000 words—maximum length 2,200 words—12 point font (please complete this assignment before moving to the next assignment). The purpose of a spiritual autobiography is to reflect on your life’s journey, to understand God’s call and your gifts for ministry. The writing is to be in four sections:
  - Early years
  - Teen years
  - Adult years
  - Present time

For each of the first three sections reflect and write on your awareness of God. How have you been blessed and broken, and how have you acted or lived out your calling as a beloved Child of God?

For the Present Time section: What keeps your faith vibrant? What is the nature of your relationship with God? Describe the role of scripture in your relationship with God. What methods of prayer work best for you? What is Sabbath rest for you? Email or mail your work to me by midnight ET on **Wednesday, March 27, 2019**.

The following assignments are due on **Friday, April 4, 2019**—the first day of class:

1. Read the section “Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task” (Pages 45-890, paragraphs 101-104) in *The 2012 Book of Discipline*. You will be asked to demonstrate your learning from this book with a guided discussion.
2. Read “Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry” by Willimon. You will be asked to demonstrate your learning from this book with a guided discussion.
3. Read “Introducing the Practice of Ministry” by Cahalan. You will be asked to demonstrate your learning from this book with a guided discussion.
4. Read “Attentive to God: Thinking Theologically in Ministry” by Blue and Wood. You will be asked to demonstrate your learning from this book with a guided discussion.
5. Submit a printed copy of the first draft of your Credo. A credo is a written statement of belief describing your understanding of essential Christian doctrine and should be a minimum of 2,000 and a maximum of 2,200 words—12 point

font. Do not copy or quote from The Book of Discipline or other sources. This is not an exercise in repeating doctrinal formulations that you have learned. This is an exercise in expressing in your own terms what you believe. Your credo should flow as a coherent narration of your own understanding as a pastoral theologian and servant leader. Your credo should include at least a section on each of the following topics:

- Bible
- Trinitarian Theology
- Human situation in history, including how we face suffering and evil
- Salvation/Liberation in the light of Eschatology
- The Nature of the Church and its Future
- The meaning and purpose of the sacraments in our life together

The first draft will not be graded, but will be used in class discussions and developed further and is due at the beginning of class on **Friday, April 4**. It will be returned to you with comments by Friday, April 18, 2016.

The following assignment is due via e-mail by midnight on **Friday, April 25, 2019**:

1. The second draft of your Credo is due on **Friday, April 25, 2019**.
2. Read *The Sacred Journey* and write a reflection of minimum of 1,500 and a maximum of 1,700 words—12 point font. What was awakened in you? Where did you find connection? Where and how do you need to discover healing, assurance or direction? With what do you wrestle when it comes to faith or relationships? What are your doubts and frustrations? This will be a confidential paper between you the writer and me, but will be graded and is due on **Friday, April 25, 2019**.
3. Reflect theologically on a contemporary issue (spiritual, local, national, or global) that impacts the life of your community and/or congregation. Write a minimum 500 word and maximum 600 word “Church Newsletter Column” or pastoral letter on this issue for your congregation. This is due on **Friday, April 25, 2019**.

### **Class Time Outline:**

#### **We will cover the following topics during our time in class**

- Remembering Our Baptism—Who we are and whose we are
- Role of Prayer, Rest, and Sabbath Time—Balance in the chaos
- Knowing Yourself—a personal timeline
- Moving to a place of Insight—thinking and reflecting theologically—the three lenses of pastoral theological leadership
- *The United Methodist Discipline*
  - What is the role of theology in the United Methodist Church?
  - What is its relation to ministry?
  - What difference (if any) does it make in the life of the church?
- Writing your credo and dialogue
- The Uniqueness and Attractiveness of a Wesleyan Theological Construct

- An Ethnography—becoming an expert in your context
- Principles of Leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit
- Practices of Leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit
- Passions of Leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit
- Holy Communion
- Dialogue on Servant Leadership, Adaptive Leadership and Strategic Leadership

**GRADING:**

The grade for this course will be determined on a scale of 100 points:

15%	Spiritual Biography
10%	Completion of Credo draft one
15%	Sacred Journey Paper
10%	Contemporary issue newsletter article
25%	Final Credo
<u>25%</u>	Class attendance and informed participation
100%	

Graded assignments will be graded from “A” to “F” and assigned corresponding point values according to the COS handbook.

## **Academic Honor**

The Course of Study School of Ohio requires that all material submitted by a student in fulfilling his or her academic requirements be the original work of the student.

Violations of academic honor include any action by a student indicating dishonesty or lack of integrity in academic ethics. Violations in this category include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly passing off work of another as one's own.

Cheating includes seeking, acquiring, receiving or passing on information about the content of an examination prior to its authorized release or during its administration. Cheating also includes seeking, using, giving or obtaining unauthorized assistance in any academic assignment or examination.

Plagiarism is the act of presenting as one's own work with the work of another whether published or unpublished (including the work of another student). A writer's work should be regarded as his or her own property. Any person who knowingly uses a writer's distinctive work without proper acknowledgement is guilty of plagiarism.

A student found guilty of a violation of the academic honor code, after a review of the case, may be subject to one or more of the following actions: (1) warning; (2) probation; (3) suspension for the remainder of the course; (4) dismissal from the Course of Study School of Ohio; (5) grade of Fail for the course. Regardless of the outcome, a letter will be sent to the student's District Superintendent and Board of Ordained Ministry representative.