

# COSSO Newsletter

*Course of Study School of Ohio (COSSO)*

2015  
Winter



From the Director's Desk  
*Rev. Dr. Joon-Sik Park*

Welcome to the Winter Session of the Course of Study School of Ohio (COSSO)!

In *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity* (1987), Eugene Peterson laments that American pastors “are preoccupied with shopkeeper’s concerns—how to keep the customers happy, how to lure customers away from competitors down the street, how to package the goods so that the customers will lay out more money.” He then stresses that “the pastor’s responsibility is to keep the community [of faith] attentive to God.”

It is easy for ministers to simply give “ceremonial attention” to God without seriously attending to God in all matters of ministry. Yet, for us to stay true to our calling, it is essential to remain in touch with God’s presence and action in relation to ourselves, communities of faith, and the world. Only by gaining “a trained attentiveness to God” through prayer and Scripture reading, we could faithfully live out the pastoral vocation rather than merely do religious jobs.

When we primarily attend and respond to God, and not just to people’s tastes or desires, “we actually benefit people at a far deeper level than if we simply did what they asked of us.” I hope that your theological education at COSSO will help you cultivate the kind of theological reflection and spiritual formation needed for developing and sustaining pastoral integrity. Yet, it is hard work and thus needs God’s grace.

Now the new revised curriculum is in full swing, which provides clearer pedagogical objectives and greater focus on formation and pastoral identity. Those students who have taken courses under the old curriculum should take extra care in registering not to enroll for already completed courses. As indicated in the *Student Handbook* (p. 4), it is strongly recommended that all students progress through the levels sequentially: (1) all 100-level courses are to be completed prior to taking higher-level courses; and (2) 500-level courses are to be taken after all lower-level courses have been completed. In cases of scheduling difficulties, however, up to two 500-level courses may be taken if all 100–300 level courses and at least two 400-level courses have been completed.

All of us on the COSSO staff are excited to welcome 14 new students and look forward to journeying with you all in 2015. May we intently listen to the voice of God and faithfully follow it in this new year.

Grace and peace,  
Joon-Sik Park  
E. Stanley Jones Professor of World Evangelism

**If you are planning to graduate from the program in 2015, please let us know!**

Spring 2015	Instructor	Crs#
April 10-11 & May 8-9 Reg. Deadline: 2/10/15	B. Binau	123
	J. Jaynes	222
	D. Lewis	324
	R. Knowles Wallace	421
	D. Eastman	522

# Spiritual Formation

From Rev. Rebeka Maples, Ph.D., Director of Spiritual Formation



## NEW YEAR GREETINGS

from Rebeka Maples, COS spiritual director

Time flies. My spiritual guru, Joan Chittister, writes, "Time, is nature's way of preventing everything from happening at once" (*For Everything a Season, 2014*). The truth is, though, sometimes things do seem to happen all at once, and time flies by. Time carries us through life while we are busy doing over things. The measure of life, however, is not how we have spent our days but whether we have lived life in the process, whether we have used the time we have been given as best we can.

Sister Joan says that living life well is like paddling a rowboat in the ocean. We have a choice. We can fight each wave until we break apart, or we can give ourselves to the water to be tossed around until we find ourselves beached at a place we may or may not have wanted to be.

Life is wild and tragic, full of the planned and unexpected. To live life well, we can join the dance and move in its mystery, or we can sit where it's safe and watch it all go by, forever a stranger to what it means to be alive and face its challenges. In either case, we can go with the flow or we can resist it all the way. We can learn from it or reject anything and everything that comes along. There is only one thing we cannot do in life; we cannot ignore its lessons. Life is a relentless teacher, and time is an endless learning process.

It is the beginning of another year, and the words of my dear friend, Rev. Jill Dunlap, seem to capture the passing of time best. Even after her son lost his leg in a farming accident right before Christmas, she offers hope and a reminder that God is with us as time flies by: "It is a new year. It won't be a perfect year; but it can be a good year – a very good year. We will have highs and lows. We will celebrate and mourn. We will try things we love and things that don't go over well. We will have our problems, but we will also have our reasons to rejoice. But whatever happens, it will happen with God. Of that I am sure! I am not sure of anything else, but of that I am sure" (*from Trinity UCC Newsletter, Jan-Feb 2015*).

In this new year, may our time be filled with the beauty and mystery of God, and may we have - a good year.

# Views from the Coordinator

By Terri Litchfield



## COS Transcripts

Several districts are now requiring students to provide a copy of their COS transcripts on an annual basis. Students have always been responsible for submitting copies of COS grade sheets to their district offices. (The COS office sends a copy of each grade sheet to the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry [GBHEM] which has each student's official COS record, a copy to each conference local pastor registrar to verify student met requirements for any financial reimbursement or conference scholarship, and a copy to each student.) It's easy to request an official transcript from GBHEM. Address your COS transcript request to Pamela Frost, [cosregistrar@gbhem.org](mailto:cosregistrar@gbhem.org). To help her confirm she has the correct student, include your full name, PID# (it's on all grade sheets), annual conference, and date of birth. She usually emails transcripts within a day or two. Please check any transcript you receive against the reports you receive on the first day of each COS class you take here (this is an UNOFFICIAL listing) and let us know if there are any discrepancies. Remember that grades are due one month after the final class session. Grades are usually processed at GBHEM five or six weeks after the end of the COS term. If you have COS credit from another COS school which isn't showing on the UNOFFICIAL listing we provide, let us know and we will request a transcript and then update our records.

# Words Words Words

From Margaret Van Sickle, Writing Coach



Welcome (or welcome back) to COSSO! I hope you are looking forward to your classwork and to your assignments and to worship and fellowship.

The information in this newsletter article will hopefully refresh your memories of past educational information. Two frequent errors in writing academic papers are run-on sentences and sentence fragments. Both are often overlooked in informal writing and speaking; but both can be easily corrected in formal writing.

**RUN-ON SENTENCES.** A run-on sentence results from putting together two independent clauses with no punctuation or incorrect punctuation between them. For example: "Hurricane winds hit ninety miles an hour, they tore the roof from every house on Paradise Drive."

To avoid this error, ask this question: Can you make each independent clause a separate sentence?  
"Hurricane winds hit ninety miles an hour. They tore the roof from every house on Paradise Drive."

**SENTENCE FRAGMENTS:** A sentence fragment is a group of words that is capitalized and punctuated as a sentence; but the word group lacks a subject, a predicate (verb), both a subject and a predicate, or fails to express a complete thought.

For example: "That bicycle over there. Good job. Not if I can help it."

In academic writing, express your ideas in complete sentences. Usually fragments are easy to spot and easy to correct. To edit your work for sentence fragments, ask these questions: Does the sentence have a subject? Does the sentence have a complete verb?

Other problems in academic writing include plagiarism, incorrect punctuation, and errors in word choices.

I am looking forward to the writing workshop on Friday afternoon to share information to refresh your writing skills. I would also encourage each of you to join the COSSO Choir [no audition required!] to prepare an anthem for the COSSO graduation service in March.

## 2014 Fall COS Graduates: Robert Eckert, Dawn Krishart, Ronald McIlvaine, Teresa Smolka, Roger Warnes

Laying on of Hands



2014 Fall Graduates picture



**Congratulations, 2014 Fall Graduates!**

**May God continue to bless your journeys.**

## 2015 Winter COS Faculty



**Sarah Lancaster**

### **Sarah Lancaster**

Teaching 122:  
Theological Heritage I:  
Introduction

Rev. Dr. Sarah Lancaster received her M.Div. from Perkins School of Theology and her Ph.D. from Southern Methodist University. An elder in the North Texas Annual Conference, she is Professor of Theology at MTSO.



**Paul Kim**

### **Paul Kim**

COS 221:  
Bible II: Torah & Israel's  
History

Rev. Dr. Paul Kim received his M.Div. and Th.M. from Princeton Theological Seminary, and his Ph.D. from the Claremont School of Theology. A Presbyterian elder, he currently teaches Hebrew Bible at MTSO.



**Fulgence Nyengele**

### **Fulgence Nyengele**

Teaching 323:  
Congregational Care

Rev. Dr. Fulgence Nyengele received his M.Div., M.A.T.S., and Ph.D. from the Claremont School of Theology. He is an elder in the North Katanga Annual Conference of the Democratic Republic of Congo, and currently teaches Pastoral Care and Counseling at MTSO.



**Charles Gutenson**

### **Charles Gutenson**

Teaching 424:  
Ethics

Dr. Charles (Chuck) Gutenson received an M.Div. from Asbury Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. in Philosophical Theology from Southern Methodist University. He is a church consultant, and previously served 10 years at Asbury Seminary, most recently as professor of Theology and Philosophy.



**David Eastman**

### **David Eastman**

Teaching 521:  
Bible V: Acts, Epistles &  
Revelation

Dr. David Eastman received his M.A. from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and his M.A., M.Phil., and Ph.D. from Yale University. He is Assistant Professor of Religion at Ohio Wesleyan University.

### **2015 & 2016 COS Schedule**

The 2015 and 2016 schedules have been posted. An updated planning grid is available.

See the **COURSE PLANNING GRID** link on the left pane of the SCHEDULE page of the website, [www.cosohio.org](http://www.cosohio.org).