

COURSE OF STUDY SCHOOL OF OHIO at MTSO

2018 Spring

April 13-14 & May 11-12

COS 523 – Evangelism

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course introduces students to the theology and practices of evangelism as an expression of the mission of God.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Students will be able to:

1. Reflect on and articulate the meaning of the Gospel and an understanding of the Church as bearers of God's Word to the world.
2. Ground a theology of evangelism in scripture, the Gospel, and the mission of God.
3. Interpret of the Wesleyan heritage of evangelism.
4. Reflect on and implement strategies and models for evangelism by the congregation.

COURSE OVERVIEW:

This course intends to help students construct their own theology of evangelism based on biblical and theological foundations, and develop a program of evangelism appropriate to their own ministry contexts. Attention will be given to a Wesleyan understanding of evangelism as well as the place of evangelism within the whole mission of the church. Contemporary models and strategies of evangelism will be theologically and contextually examined. The students will be encouraged to develop a style of faith-sharing that reflects their own theology and personality, and to have some hands-on experience in witnessing. The course will consist of lectures, class discussions, case studies, and student presentations.

TEXTBOOKS:

Texts—required from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry:

Arias, Mortimer . *Announcing The Reign of God*

Knight, Henry and Powe, F. Douglas. *Transforming Evangelism: The Wesleyan Way of Sharing Faith*

Fox, Eddie and Morris, George. *Faith-Sharing: Dynamic Christian Witnessing by Invitation*. Rev. ed. Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1996.

Supplementary—helpful, but not required suggested by the professor:

Gunter, Stephen and Robinson, Elaine ed. *Considering the Great Commission*

Abraham, William. *The Logic of Evangelism*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989.

Crandall, Ronald K. *Witness: Exploring and Sharing Your Christian Faith*. Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2001.

Green, Michael. *Evangelism in the Early Church*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970.

Guder, Darrell L. *The Incarnation and the Church's Witness*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999.

Hooker, Morna D. *Not Ashamed of the Gospel: New Testament Interpretations of the Death of Christ*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995.

Hybels, Bill and Mark Mittelberg. *Becoming a Contagious Christian*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994.

Logan, James C., ed. *Theology and Evangelism in the Wesleyan Heritage*. Nashville: Kingswood, 1994.

Powe, F. Douglas. *New Wine and New Wineskins: How African American Congregations Can Reach New Generations*

Swanson, Roger K. and Shirley F. Clement. *The Faith-Sharing Congregation: Developing a Strategy for the Congregation as Evangelist*. Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1996.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS and ASSIGNMENTS:

(1) Class Attendance and Participation:

Attendance at all sessions is expected. Exceptions must fit within COS policies. Much of the value of this course will come from interaction among the participants. Students are thus to prepare for each class session by carefully reading the assigned texts, and to take an active part in the discussions.

(2) Critical Book Reviews—due via email by midnight on Friday, April 6, 2018:

Students are required to complete **three** book reviews of the REQUIRED or SUPPLEMENTARY texts, critically reflecting on the text for implications for theology and practice of evangelism. Each review is to be two pages in length (1.5-spaced), with parenthetical citations rather than footnotes, if necessary.

The following is a quote from "How to Write a Book Review" by Joel Green, which I believe provides excellent guidelines:

"First, the review should indicate a thorough knowledge of the book as a whole, read on its own terms. . . . with an eye to several important questions, including: What is the book's fundamental aim? Central theme(s)? Presuppositions? Method(s)? Second, the review should engage the book critically and personally. . . . Is its argument cogent? How has the reading of this book shaped you? . . . Whenever possible, you should situate your critique of the book within the larger discussion of the subject [that is, for us, the ministry of evangelism]."

Given the limited length of your review, it is to be succinct and to the point. You would thus need to be very selective of the themes and topics to critically reflect on. What I would hope to see are indications of your thorough reading of the text and of your critical engagement with it. Also you are to briefly share how the text has shaped and affected your own understanding and practice of evangelism.

(3) Integrative Research Paper—due via email by midnight Friday, May 4, 2017:

A carefully integrated and researched paper of no more than 2500 words (1.5-spaced).

The focus of the paper is to be on constructing one's own understanding of evangelism, which is biblically and theologically grounded. Students are to wrestle with the understanding of the gospel and with the issues of motivation and substance of evangelism,

reflecting on how their own view of the gospel might shape the way it is communicated. They are also to provide observations and interpretations of the current state of the church and the cultural characteristics of North America today. The paper should reflect a working knowledge of resources currently available. In addition to careful research, students are to engage various aspects of the course learning, including the readings, in an integrative way.

(4) Your Testimony—due by e-mail by midnight on Friday, April 6, 2018 at Midnight:

This is to be two pages (1.5 spaces).

There is nothing more powerful and effective than our individual experiences of God's saving grace in our lives. We cannot lead people to Someone we do not know for ourselves, and often times our story is the entrée to share God's story of redemption in the lives of others. Please winsomely share your story of encountering and coming to faith in Jesus.

At some point in the class, you will be asked to share your story in less than three minutes in front of the rest of the class.

(5) Reflection on a Biblical Understanding of the Gospel and Evangelism—due at the beginning of class on Friday, May 11, 2018:

Each student will choose and study one book in the New Testament with an eye for understanding the biblical meaning of the gospel and evangelism for that author and context, and will provide a single-spaced, one-page reflection.

Bring two copies with you to class, and be prepared to share your reflection with the rest of the class at some point during the class.

WRITTEN WORK:

All written work must be typed with 12-point font. It will be evaluated on the basis of (1) clarity of the writing, (2) critical interaction with the text, and (3) the student's own integrative reflection. There will be a penalty for late papers commensurate with the degree of lateness and the adequacy of the excuse.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE:

In accordance with MTSO's policy on inclusive language, all students are expected to use gender inclusive or gender neutral language in their writing and in the classroom discussions when referring to human beings.

EVALUATION:

25% Class Attendance and Contribution
30% Three Critical Book Reviews (10x3)
25% Integrative Paper
10% Personal Testimony
10% Biblical Understanding of the Gospel and Evangelism

GRADING STANDARDS:

• **A (94%), A- (90%):**

Superlative work that demonstrates a profound commitment to the course material, and excellence in thinking and performance as well as depth of insight.

- **B+ (87%), B (84%), B- (80%):**

Very good work that completely fulfills all the requirements of the course in a conscientious and dedicated manner, and that demonstrates good mastery of the course content.

- **C+ to C-:**

Satisfactory work that fulfills all the requirements of the course in an acceptable manner, but that falls short of demonstrating rigor and mastery.

- **D+ to D-:**

Unsatisfactory work that reflects poor thinking and performance as well as lack of clear comprehension and understanding of the subject.

Due Dates and Discussion Topics:

April 7: Critical Book Reviews and Personal Testimony papers are due by e-mail by midnight

April 13-14

—Overview of the Course and assessment of expectations

—Definitions of Evangelism:

Be prepared to discuss “What Is Your Understanding/Definition of Evangelism?”

—Life of a Witness: Theology and Ministry of E. Stanley Jones and Harry Denman

—Proper Confidence in the Gospel for Evangelism

—What Is the Gospel?

—What Is Conversion?

Be prepared to discuss: “What is the difference between being a witness and being an evangelist?”

—Place of Evangelism within the Mission of the Church

—Biblical and Theological Foundations for Evangelism

Be prepared to discuss: “Is evangelism a process or event?”

—Evangelism and the Practice of Hospitality

—Evangelism as Holy Conversation

—Wesleyan Evangelism

—Wesley’ Way of Salvation and an Evangelism Construct

Be prepared to discuss” “What are the fundamental differences between Wesleyan, Calvinist and Catholic understandings of conversion and salvation?”

—Discussion of Faith-Sharing versus Marketing

Be prepared to discuss: “How is faith-sharing and congregational evangelism related to and different from marketing and placement strategy?”

—The Language of the Gospel for Faith-Sharing

—Discussion of Wesley’s Sermon: The New Birth

—the Four Road to Salvation in Scripture

—Sharing of “Conversion” Stories

—Sharing of a Biblical Example of Evangelism

May 4: Integrative Paper papers is due at midnight

May 11: Biblical Understanding of the Gospel and Evangelism paper is due at the start of class

May 11-12:

- Church Planting as an evangelism tool
- Discussion of Fresh Expressions of the Church
 - Be prepared to discuss: “What do you believe the answer is to recapture or reclaim our evangelistic fervor?”
- Discussion of Unbinding the Gospel
- The Current State of the Mainline Church
- Evangelism and the Renewal of the Church
 - Be prepared to discuss; “How will you provide leadership in the evangelistic task in your context?”
- Inter-religious Dialogue and the Exclusivity of Jesus
 - Be prepared to discuss: “Is the Gospel of Jesus inclusive or exclusive?”
- The Congregation as Evangelist
- Wrap up topics and discussion
- Sharing of “Conversion” Stories
- Sharing of a Biblical Example of Evangelism
- Conclusion
- Evaluation

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.