D-907: God, Congregations, and Contemporary Culture

Christian Theological Seminary
Doctor of Ministry Intensive Seminar
August 15-19, 2011
Room 158

Instructor: Matthias Beier, M.Div., Ph.D.
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Purpose:
This is the first seminar in the Doctor of Ministry program at Christian Theological Seminary. Its purpose is to help students reflect on their experience in ministry as it comes to focus in their evolving understandings of God in relation to three contexts of ministry: congregational life, specialized ministries of pastoral care (counseling, chaplaincy, etc.) and contemporary culture. In this seminar students will: (1) situate their experience in ministry within a broad overview of congregational life today; (2) assess their own current strengths and growing edges in ministry; (3) assess the strengths and growing edges of the congregations (or other forms of religious association) in which they are involved; (4) understand the impact of contemporary culture on congregational life and theological reflection; and (5) develop a projected path through the DMin. program based on the above.

Preparation BEFORE class meets:
- Consider preparing in advance of the course your précis on one of the assigned books and the two page paper on Butler. Email instructor by Aug. 8th your preferred reading for the précis! See assignments below for details.
- To begin preparing for your presentation on your project topic, do the following: 1) think about a likely thesis topic, something you care about deeply, want to know more about, etc. If the topic interests you it will be interesting to others. 2) Plan your presentation so that it is informative and include time for questions and discussion (see assignments below for details).
- Please plan to arrive Sunday night if you are traveling from out of town so that we can gather first thing Monday morning. If you need overnight accommodation during the seminar, please contact Amelia Walker (317 931-2319) or awalker@cts.edu no later than Aug. 8th.

Required Reading:
Please complete these assigned readings BEFORE the course begins.
NB: These books have been ordered for you and are available at the CTS bookstore, located near the chapel. Please support our excellent campus bookstore by purchasing your text books there! (Call 317 931-2377 or e-mail bookstore@cts.edu for summer hours)

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*Additional books on 3 hour library reserve (recommended but not required):*


Cooper-White, (2004). *Shared Wisdom: Use of Self in Pastoral Care and Counseling*


Jones, Serene, (2010). *Trauma and Grace: Theology in a Ruptured World.*

Kelcourse, Felicity. (2004). *Human development and faith: Life-cycle stages of body, mind and soul.* [Recommended for those who have not taken a human development course].


Lartey, E. (2003). *In living color: An intercultural approach to pastoral care and counseling (2nd Ed.)*


Visit the CTS bookstore to see whether any of these books may be available for discount purchase this summer!

**Assignments and evaluation:**

(1) **One in-seminar 45 minute presentation – 25%**. This presentation should be based on a topic of interest to you that is relevant to your anticipated research focus. Presentations will be scheduled on the first day of class. Your presentation should include a power point and/or print outline, a bibliography relevant to your topic, with time allotted for questions and discussion. Please do not exceed the allotted time frame. **DUE on day of presentation; copy of PowerPoint or Print outline of presentation.**

Please submit ALL written material electronically to my email listed above. No hard copies required.
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(2) One two page paper due 8/16 – 10%, on the Parable of the Sower. What do the apocalyptic challenges imagined in this book suggest about the life of faith? What responses arise out of your own experience? What are your thoughts about Butler’s idea of God and faith community as you understand it? How does it differ from your own?

(3) One two page précis due on the day you present on the day’s assigned reading – 10 %. The précis should include both a factual summary of roughly half of the pages of the day’s assigned reading (excluding the Butler novel) and a personal response to the reading. Include your name, date, and the complete citation for the reading. These summaries will inform a discussion of the assigned readings in class. Please email the instructor by 8/8 the order of your preference (choice 1, 2, 3) as to which reading you would like to write and present your précis on – this will help to avoid duplication. (see email).

(4) Seminar participation (15 %) Participants are expected to share discussion time equitably and listen respectfully to their peers.

(5) One 15 page paper at the conclusion of the seminar – 40 %. The paper should address this question: What are the central practical theological challenges in your current (or prospective) ministry? Using the readings from this seminar, the paper should develop a critical perspective on your current context of ministry and of your theology, the strengths and limitations of your community’s theological resources (including your own) to address that context, and your sense of your role as a current or future leader and/or caregiver/minister/healer in your current or imagined future context(s).
Due Aug. 19, 9 am: 1-page outline with subheadings of your 15 page final paper.

Final draft due October 17th - 40% of course grade.

Course Outline
(Note that the specific time frames below may be subject to change. I will invite on-campus guests to join us for lunch and informal conversation.)

Monday, August 15
9:00 - Gathering/Breakfast provided – Opening meditation (Beier)
9:15 – Initial orientation: Why we are here …
10:15 - Break
10:30 - Journeys in Ministry – Connect your journey to your possible DMin project topic
12:00 - Lunch
1:00 – Discussion of Octavia Butler’s The Parable of the Sower
3:00 – Break
3:15 – Scheduling presentation and précis choices. Those who have summarized a particular chapter will lead the discussion about that chapter.
3:45 - Evening meditation led by _________________________

Evening:
Write (or revise) two page, single-spaced paper on The parable of the sower. (See assignments, above.)
Prepare for presentations and two page, single-spaced précis on book of your choice.
Review Ammerman.
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**Tuesday, August 16**
9:00  Morning meditation led by _________________________
9:15  Discussion of Ammermann - Presentation of précis _________
10:45  Break
11:00  Discussion of Ammermann cont.
12:00  Lunch
1:00  Orientation to CTS library and research resources. (Cheryl Maddox)
2:00  Introduction to CTS on-line resources. (Cheryl Maddox)
3:00  Discuss issues in Butler novel (based on short papers)
4:00  Evening meditation led by __________________________

**Evening**
Prepare for presentations and two page, single-spaced précis on book of your choice.
Begin preparation of a 1-page outline with subheadings of your 15 page final paper, due Friday morning.
Review Beier and McRoberts

**Wednesday, August 17**
9:00  Morning meditation led by __________________________
9:15  Discussion of Beier - Presentation of précis’ ______________
10:15  Break
10:30  Discussion of Beier cont.
11:15  Presentation 1: ____________________________
12:00 – 2pm - Lunch with current DMin. students and graduates (Room 164)
2:00-3:30  Individual Advising Sessions with DMin Director, Dr. Felicity Kelcourse
3:30  Break
3:15
3:45  Evening meditation led by ____________________________

**Evening:**
Prepare for presentations and two page, single-spaced précis on book of your choice.
Continue preparation of a 1-page outline with subheadings of your 15 page final paper, due Friday morning.

**Thursday, August 18**
9:00  Morning meditation led by ____________________________
9:15  Discussion of Kujawa-Holbrook & Montagno ed. - Presentation of précis’ ___
10:15  Break
11:15  Presentation 2: ____________________________
12:00  Lunch
1:00  Discussion of McRoberts
2:30  Break
2:45  Presentation 3: ____________________________
3:30  Discussion of common themes from the week’s readings & topics for 15 page final paper
4:00  Evening meditation led by ____________________________

**Evening:**
Complete preparation of a 1-page outline with subheadings of your 15 page final paper, due Friday morning.

DUE Today:
2-page paper on *The Parable of the Sower*
Friday, August 19
9:00 - Morning mediation led by _______________________________________

This day will be led by faculty teaching in the DMin PCC program.
General topic: Planning course work, paper topics, thesis proposals, clinical requirements, etc., for successful completion of the program
9:15-10:15 – Meet with Bill Kincaid, Director of Field Education: Bill will follow up on the Moschella reading and describe how ethnographic experience serves as a crucial step in understanding and renewing congregational identity.
10:30-11:30 – Meet Sarah Evans, bookstore manager
11:30-12:30 – Meet with Suzanne Coyle, Director of the Marriage and Family Program:
Suzanne will talk about applications of systems thinking for congregations as well as couples and families and the theological implications. She will also address narrative and collaborative which are less "systems" focused.
12:30-1:30 Lunch
1:30-2:30 – Meet either with Dean Bernie Lyon or DMIN Director Felicity Kelcourse (tentative)
2:30-3:30 – Meet either with Dean Bernie Lyon or DMIN Director Felicity Kelcourse (tentative)
3:30 - Parting meditation led by ________________________________

After the seminar: You should leave the seminar with a topic outline for your final paper and with resources for your projected DMin topic. For the final paper of the course, Focus on the readings you plan to use. Additional references may be used but at least 4 of the books assigned for the course must be referenced substantially.

I look forward to our gathering on August 15th! In the mean time feel free to contact me or Margaret Coffey, Doctor of Ministry Program Assistant (mcoffey@cts.edu) if you have questions or concerns. During the week of class, Mrs. Coffey will be out of the office. Mrs. Kate Bell (kbell@cts.edu) will be available to address any questions or concerns regarding logistics for the week.

Enjoy your course preparation!
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