

PHILLIPS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY SYLLABUS DISCLAIMER

The following syllabus is the teaching and learning guide for the last time this course was taught. It will give you a good idea of the descriptions of the course, how it was taught, the reading, the papers and other assignments, the intended outcomes, and the workload. By examining this syllabus and others, you will be able to form an impression of what graduate theological education at Phillips Theological Seminary requires of students.

Due to periodic curriculum revisions, course names and/or numbers may be different on this syllabus than what the name and/or number of the current offered course may be.

This syllabus is provided for your information only. The faculty reserves the right to revise the curriculum, and each professor reserves the right to decide how best to meet the learning goals of the curriculum. Therefore, the following syllabus is an historical artifact rather than a promise of how the course will be taught in the future, or that the course will be taught again.

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PL 725 The Church and Evangelism
Winter 2016
Phillips Theological Seminary
Instructor – Rev. Dr. Rob Weber

Class Meetings: 8:30 am -12:00 noon and 1:15 pm - 5:00 pm March 7-11
Room 302
Email: robweber@aol.com
My preferred method of communication is email.
If there is a need to have a phone conversation, please
schedule an appointment by email.

Important Notice

Due to the beginning of the semester and the timing of the class, there are assignments that begin immediately. The work in this class is loaded heavily towards the beginning of the semester. All papers need to be completed before the intensive week. The due dates for the assignments are included with the paper descriptions later in this syllabus.

Course Objective

To provide a setting and process that will challenge students to consider the nature and task of evangelism (especially in the Wesleyan tradition), and to develop a personal understanding of the ways in which evangelism is at the heart of the mission of the Church: “To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” Students will explore evangelism in various historical, theological, Biblical, diverse cultural, and sociological dimensions, with a bias towards developing practical applications for local congregations and other ministry settings. (While one of the objectives of this class is to fulfill the requirement for ordination in the United Methodist Church, the subject matter is both applicable and transferrable to other Christian denominations.)

Learning experiences will include lecture, discussion, reading, video-conferencing, writing reflective papers, role-play, small group work, and “reading the culture.”

Learning Goals

Students should be able to understand the following:

- Major historical expressions of evangelism
- Unique theological perspectives of Wesleyan evangelism
- Major cultural shifts that affect the life of the church and the practice of evangelism
- How to design and implement a process of discipleship formation which includes the practice of storytelling and coaching as faith sharing
- Basics of new congregational development
- How to use several resources to assist in developing a congregational culture of evangelism

Assignments and Expectations

Due to the compressed format of the class as an intensive learning week, all the reading and writing projects (other than the final project, and various homework assignments that will be given during the week) are to be completed before the class. This will give us some common vocabulary and a familiarity with the subject to serve as a starting point for our time together. I believe this will allow us to enter the week ready to make significant progress in learning and for the consideration of the practical application of the subject.

Required Reading

Sara Miles. *City of God: Faith in the Streets*. Jericho Press; (February 2013)

George G. Hunter III. *The Celtic Way of Evangelism: How Christianity Can Reach the West...Again*. Abingdon Press; 10th Revised edition (2010) (earlier version or kindle is fine.)

Leslie Newbigen. *Proper Confidence: Faith, Doubt and Certainty in Christian Discipleship*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. (March 30, 1995)

Maynard, Phil. *Shift: Helping Congregations back into the Game of Effective Ministry*. Self Published (December 2013) (available through amazon or at churchleadershiptraining.com)

The following resource is out of print. I will have digital copies available in class (no cost).

Weber, Rob. *ReConnecting - A Wesleyan Guide for the Renewal of Our Congregation: Leader's Guide with DVD*. Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 2002. ISBN: 9780687022342 (Note that this resource will be introduced in a class session on Tuesday. It is not necessary to read the entire material; however, it would be helpful to read the introductory section at the front section of the book.)

Assignments and Grading

Class Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. It is PTS policy that a student who misses 20% or more of class hours *cannot pass* or successfully audit the class. (PTS Catalog)

Class Participation – (20%)

Students are expected to be prepared, attentive, and engaged in all activities of the class: lectures, discussions, activities, devotional experiences and small groups.

Reflection Papers

Reflection papers will be written based on the pre class reading material. Papers should be double-spaced with one-inch margins in 12 point font and are to be delivered to the instructor by email in a Microsoft word compatible format. The file name format is very important in order to keep the large numbers of incoming papers in order: File names should follow the following format Last name, first name date turned in Paper# (1, 2, 3 etc.) - example - *Nordyke, David 3 1 2016 Paper 5.doc* Send papers to Jennifer Green office@newlifeluling.com my administrative assistant). Particular cover sheet formatting is not necessary. Remember to always keep a back-up copy of your work in case of trouble with the email system or computer network. You will receive a response upon receipt of your paper, acknowledging that we are able to open and read it. **Papers must be received on time or will not be eligible for complete credit.**

The first paper will be graded according to the degree of serious thought and effort used in preparation and writing. In grading the following papers, there will be a further expectation that students demonstrate having read and understood the assigned material. In these papers, students should not only report on the contents, but also engage the concepts and reflect on challenges, opportunities, practical application, etc.

Paper 1 – Starting Place (10%)

Due – Tuesday, February 2nd

Prior to researching the topic of evangelism, write a 2-3 page paper informally responding to these questions: What is evangelism? Why and how do we do evangelism? Please do not go first to see what others have written on the topic. I would like to read your current *reflection* and understanding.

Paper 2 – (10%)

Due – Friday, February 12th

After reading *The Celtic Way of Evangelism*, write a 3 - 5 page paper on Hunter's description of the unique nature of "Celtic Evangelism," making sure to address:

- 1) The social dynamics of the Celtic era that influenced the development of this particular model
- 2) The distinct method of communication
- 3) The mission in relation to the culture
- 4) Reflections on ways in which this model could be used in congregations today

Paper 3 – (10%)

Due – February 22nd

After reading *Proper Confidence*, write a 3-4 page paper reflecting on the theological issues facing the author and how they can inform our understanding and practice of evangelism.

Paper 4 – (10%)

Due – Wednesday, March 2nd

After reading *City of God: Faith in the Streets* write a 4-5 page paper

- 1) In what ways do you see prevenient, justifying, and sanctifying grace evident in Sara's story? In what ways does the work of grace in Sara's life impact your understanding of evangelism?

- 2) It has been said that authentic Christian conversion requires three turns: a turn to Christ; a turn to Christ's body (the church); and, a turn to Christ's vision for the world. In what ways do you see these three turns in Sara's story? In what ways can each of these turns provide opportunities to build relationships with pre-Christian people?

- 3) In what ways is the ministry in the Mission an incarnational expression of the body of Christ? What insights do you glean as it relates to church planting?

Reflection – (10%)

Discussion in class throughout the time together incorporating insights of the Phil Maynard's *Shift* book – (10 points)

Final Presentations – (20%)

Participation in research and proposal groups – during certain times, students will be divided into groups to consider one particular challenge in the area of evangelism. Groups will research and discuss various aspects of the assigned problem and formulate a presentation of the problem and a proposal for the church as a solution. The presentations of the groups will be made on the last day of the class. The particular topics or problems will be provided on the first day of class, and time will be allocated during the week for project development in groups. Some work on these presentations will be necessary outside of class time. *Shifts* will be part of the discussion for presentation groups and thus needs to be read before the intensive week begins.

Final written project – (10%)

The final paper/project will be a paper (8-12 pages) describing the design and implementation of an evangelism strategy and discipleship process in a local congregation or other ministry setting. The scope of this project will be described in more detail in class. The final project will be due no later than Saturday 9th.

Information on the daily structure of classes will be provided later.

PTS Policy

- Please refer to PTS handbook for seminary policies on academic dishonesty and plagiarism.
- The date for incompletes is publicized on Friday, one week before the end of classes. Applications for incompletes dated after the deadline are not accepted, except in extraordinary circumstances.
- Students are not to fax term papers or other assignments to the school.