

# F502/F502B M.Div. Review

Bethany Theological Seminary

Spring 2020 Wednesdays 6:00 to 9:00 PM

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Office Hours: Wed. 4:30-5:00, Fri. 1:30-4:00, and by appointment

## Course Description

This course is the culmination of the M.Div. curriculum. It challenges students to pull together prior course work and ministry formation with a view toward future learning and ministry. Particular topics change from year to year, but four ongoing goals are perennial. The course is designed to help students to (a) *integrate* and (b) *interpret* prior and ongoing learning, while using various theories and demonstrating awareness of various contexts. The course also asks students to (c) *communicate* prior and ongoing learning in ways that are effective (i.e., clear, precise, persuasive, beautiful, etc.). Finally, the course invites students to (d) *anticipate* their future life, learning, and ministry, and to demonstrate this forward-looking view in their written and oral work.

## Course Objectives

The course objectives correspond with the overall M.Div. curricular goals (noted in parentheses). Students who successfully complete this course will have demonstrated they are able to:

- ◆ **Interpret** Christian sources, including Scripture, church history, theology and church practices. (M.Div. curriculum objective 1)
- ◆ **Integrate** learning from theological disciplines and relate it to the practice of ministry. (M.Div. curriculum objective 3)
- ◆ **Communicate** ideas clearly, logically, and creatively, and with attention to both texts and contexts. (M.Div. curriculum objective 2)
- ◆ Reflect on their prior education and ministry in ways that **Anticipate** their further learning and future vocation. (M.Div. curriculum objective 4)

## Pattern of Our Work

Students are required to attend classes and to participate through active listening and thoughtful speaking. The latter includes offering your own ideas, as well as working to clarify, question, or build upon the ideas of others.

Ideally every student will be able attend every class. If for some reason you cannot be present, please let the professor know in advance, if possible. To receive credit for the course, a student cannot miss more than three classes.

The work for the course will entail (1) doing weekly preparation for topics we will work on together, (2) making weekly progress on your final project and completing it on time, (3) compiling a final portfolio of your seminary work, and (4) organizing and participating in a final interview.

## Weekly Discussions

(1) Each week in class we will address a topic of faith and practice that is dynamic, problematic and pertinent to Christian ministry today. These topics will summon us to do **interpretation** of Christian sources; **integration** of the curricular disciplines (biblical studies, systematic or constructive theology, Christian history, and practical theology); **communication** of ideas and convictions; and **anticipation** of future ministry situations.

Please review the following list of possible topics. **Choose four** that interest you the most. Email your choices to me as soon as possible and **before December 14**. I will send out the final list before our first class. Work on these topics will usually require some reading or research, plus a short writing assignment (about 250 words per week).

### Possible Topics for 2020:

1. Understandings of the Atonement
2. Evolution and Creation in Genesis and Romans
3. Theology and Ethics of Sexuality
4. Nonviolent Communication and Conflict Transformation
5. Baptism of the Holy Spirit and Pentecostalism
6. The American Church Today: Recent Trends of Decline and Growth
7. Faith and Science
8. Climate Change and Creation Care

## Final Project

(2) The final project has two components: a paper and a classroom presentation.

(a) The paper.

Prepare a final paper (about 12 to 14 pages) on an issue of faith and ministry that interests you. The paper should engage several areas of the seminary curriculum (biblical, historical, theological and ministerial studies). It can reference your previous work but should also contain new work on the issue. The topic can relate to one of the areas listed above, but that is by no means a requirement.

Identify the focal question of your paper by **February 19**. On that date, submit a half-page proposal that states the question and the resources you will use to answer it. Feel free to ask faculty members for their suggestions and guidance in framing your topic, especially as it relates to their areas of expertise. By **March 04**, submit an abstract of your essay that clearly states your thesis (the main idea you intend to set forth).

(b) The presentation.

Present your final paper ideas for classroom discussion in a creative and thoughtful way. Do not simply read your paper to the class. Your presentation should include discussion that invites others to participate in the processes of interpreting, integrating, communicating and anticipating.

## Final Portfolio

(3) The final portfolio should include:

(a) A table of contents.

(b) Five examples (usually written papers) of your previous course work, one each from these five areas: Biblical studies, theological and historical studies, ministry studies, interdisciplinary studies, and ministry formation. For ministry formation, you should include evaluations from your supervisor and teaching committee; your peer evaluations and self-assessment are optional.

(c) As a preface to each of the five papers, a one-page reflection that outlines how this particular paper shows competency in two or more of the four activities named above (interpretation, integration, communication, and anticipation).

(d) A summary document that includes the following: a list of courses you have taken in the M.Div. program; a selected annotated bibliography with two books in each of the five areas of the curriculum (10 books total); and a statement that expresses in which areas you feel most and least confident (about 250 words on each).

- (e) Your spiritual autobiography.
- (f) The final essay for this course.

Please note: One week prior to your interview, you must be sure that each member of your interview committee has received your completed portfolio. Ask committee members whether they prefer electronic or hard copies. Please give some attention to the organization of your portfolio, including pagination. Make it easy for your interview committee to reference and access portions of your portfolio during your final interview.

### **Final Interview**

(4) The final interview must be held before the end of the semester. The following people should attend your final interview: your academic advisor, the Ministry Formation professor, a peer participant from the class, and the professor of this class. If your academic advisor is also your teacher for this course, then you should invite another member of the teaching faculty to participate. Word of advice: talk to people early on to arrange an interview date and time (of approximately two hours), before schedules are full. You are responsible for scheduling the interview and for reserving and preparing the meeting room for your interview.

All of this may seem like a lot to organize, and it is. But students of former years have found that if they get an early jump on it, the process can be relatively smooth and even surprisingly beneficial.

## **Considerations**

(1) The seminary is committed to making reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. If you need some kind of assistance, please contact Bethany's director of student development during the first two weeks of the semester. The student handbook contains a section on the seminary's policy regarding students with disabilities.

(2) The standard seminary style for citing sources in your written work is explained in the most recent edition of *Kate Turabian's A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Guide to Writing, Editing, and Publishing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press). Another respected citation style is APA (American Psychological Association), which is used in education, psychology, and

other human sciences. For this course, you may use either the Turabian or the APA style—but not both in the same paper.

(3) Please make sure you understand and follow the seminary’s policies in favor of inclusive language and against plagiarism. As you review these policies, feel free to talk to me or other faculty members if you have any questions. The consequences for committing plagiarism are serious, but easily avoidable.

(4) This syllabus is not a legal contract. It may be changed by the professor in light of new information or changing circumstances. My aim would be to consult the rest of the class before making any substantial changes.

(5) If you decide to drop this course, here are important dates and procedures:

Last day to drop and receive a full refund: **February 10, 2020.**

Last day to drop without receiving a NC on transcript: **March 09, 2020**

A course is not considered dropped until you have recorded your decision in Banner Self Service. After doing so, please email Terri McDonough ([mcdonte@bethanyseminary.edu](mailto:mcdonte@bethanyseminary.edu)), informing her of your decision. Give her your name and this class number (F502/F502B), so that she can adjust your tuition bill.

## Course Text

Practical theology, as an academic discipline, has been around for centuries, but recent decades have seen new interest and creativity in the field. To assist you in doing your final project, we will read together this assigned text:

Osmer, Richard. *Practical Theology: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008.

Other texts you are welcome to consult include the following:

Browning, Don S. *A Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.

Hastings, Thomas John. *Practical Theology and the One Body of Christ: Toward a Missional-Ecumenical Model*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007.

Hunsinger, Deborah van Deusen. *Theology and Pastoral Counseling: A New Interdisciplinary Approach*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995.

- Loder, James. "Normativity and Context in Practical Theology: 'The Interdisciplinary Issue.'" In Schweitzer and van der Ven, *Practical Theology: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. Berlin: Peter Lang, 1999.
- Miller-McLemore, Bonnie. *Christian Theology in Practice: Discovering a Discipline*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012.
- \_\_\_\_\_, ed. *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.
- Poling, James. *Rethinking Faith: A Constructive Practical Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011.
- Root, Andrew. *Christopraxis: A Practical Theology of the Cross*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014.

## Updated Schedule

Reading and viewing are to be done prior to the class date listed.

### The American Church Today: Recent Trends of Decline and Growth

1. Jan. 29      Mark Chaves, *American Religion: Contemporary Trends—Second Edition*, 1-55.
2. Feb. 05      Mark Chaves, *American Religion: Contemporary Trends—Second Edition*, 56-123.  
Richard Osmer, *Practical Theology: An Introduction*, viii-30

### Nonviolent Communication and Conflict Transformation

3. Feb. 12      Marshall Rosenberg, *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life* (Encinitas, CA: Puddle Dancer Press, 2003), pp.1-128.  
  
“NVC Marshall Rosenberg - San Francisco Workshop,” YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7TONauJGfc>. Watch the first 50 minutes or so, and more if you remain interested.  
  
Write a summary (half page) of a conflict—whether personal, interpersonal or church-wide—that we could work on together.  
  
Richard Osmer, *Practical Theology: An Introduction*, 31-78
4. Feb. 19      Theresa Latini and Deborah Van Deusen Hunsinger, *Transforming Church Conflict: Compassionate Leadership in Action* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013), pp.ix-37, 78-95, 154-201.  
  
Richard Osmer, *Practical Theology: An Introduction*, 79-128

## Relating Faith and Science

5. Feb. 26 Edwin Black, *War Against the Weak: Eugenics and America's Campaign to Create a Master Race* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows), xv-xxv.

Jennifer Wiseman, "A Dialogue on Science, Ethics, and Religion"  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hN8cKL1MDY4>

Richard Osmer, *Practical Theology: An Introduction*, 129-218.

6. March 04 Adam Bolt, dir., *Human Nature* (San Francisco, CA., Wonder Collaborative Films, 2020).

R. Alta Charo, "Rogues and Regulation of Germline Editing" (*New England Journal of Medicine*, January 24, 2019).

Iñigo de Miguel Beriain, "Human dignity and gene editing" (*EMBO reports*, September 20, 2018).

Adam Hayden, "Justice and Genes" (*Science*, October 4, 2019).

Prashant Mali, Kevin M. Esvelt & George M. Church, "Cas9 as a versatile tool for engineering biology" (*Nature Methods*, Vol. 10, No. 10, October 2013).

Sara Reardon, "The CRISPR Zoo" (*Nature*, Vol. 532: March 10, 2016).

## Evolution and Creation in Genesis and Romans

7. March 11 John Walton, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve: Genesis 2-3 and the Human Origins Debate* (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 1-127.

8. March 25 John Walton, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve: Genesis 2-3 and the Human Origins Debate* (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 127-211.

## **Climate Change and Creation Care**

9. April 01 Readings TBA

10. April 08 Reading TBA

### **Student Presentations**

11. April 15 Presenters TBA

12. April 22 Presenters TBA

13. April 29 Presenters TBA and Final Discussion