

## **DM703X Biblical and Theological Foundations for Practical Theology**

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

Doctor of Ministry Program

Spring 2021

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**Office Hours by Appointment**

**Microsoft Teams for Groupwork Available from Within Moodle**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This online course builds and broadens the biblical and theological bases from which the practice of ministry grows. Through exposure of various models of biblical interpretation and theological reflection, this course seeks to help students natural move between theological reflection and praxis.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- Knowing –
  - To assist students in developing an ethical approach to biblical interpretation which considers both the historical contexts in which texts were written and the contemporary contexts in which they are to be applied.
  - To familiarize students with the prominent approaches to theological reasoning (e.g. narrative, process, correlational, political) as well as key methodological questions (e.g. determining a proper use of social scientific information) involved in the practice of theology in the present.
- Doing –
  - To increase proficiency in ethical biblical interpretation through the use of multiple methodologies: historical-critical, literary, and post-modern methods and in consideration of historical and contemporary contexts; and
  - To increase proficiency in thinking, communicating, and acting theologically about the many pastoral, congregational, and socio-political issues facing ministers today.
- Being –
  - To deepen personal knowledge of and faithfulness to the God who is Father/Mother, Son, and Holy Spirit.
  - To become more aware of the biblical and theological constructs of faith and practice that undergird the work of ministry in the church ecclesially and beyond into non-traditional areas of ministry.

## COURSE OUTCOMES

### At the conclusion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Better exegete Scripture from both the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and the New Testament utilizing multiple methodologies: historical-critical, literary, and post-modern methods and through learning more contextual techniques.
2. Articulate at least three contemporary approaches to theological reasoning, documenting both strengths and weaknesses in their applicability to ministry.
3. Describe a theological method appropriate to your anticipated research project taking into consideration contextual strengths and weaknesses so as to demonstrate appropriate use.
4. Demonstrate the ability to engage fellow ministers in theological reflection through careful listening, respectful questioning, and helpful suggestion.
5. Document personal spiritual engagement in the practice of theology through reflection on the theological issues raised in your context of ministry.

## COURSE TEXTS

Anderson, Cheryl B. *Ancient Laws and Contemporary Controversies: The Need for Inclusive Biblical Interpretation 1st Edition*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009 (ISBN-13: 978-0195305500. 256 pp.). Price: \$30.37 (Hardcover); \$13.79 (Kindle).

Brown, William P. *A Handbook to Old Testament Exegesis*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2017 (ISBN-13: 978-0664259938. 428 pp.). Price: \$14.79 (Paperback); \$14.05 (Kindle).

Gooder, Paula. *Searching for Meaning: An Introduction to Interpreting the New Testament*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008 (ISBN-13: 978-0664231941. 230 pp.). Price: \$16.02 (Paperback).

Graham, Elaine, Heather Walton, and Frances Ward, eds. *Theological Reflection: Methods*. London: SCM Press, 2005 (ISBN-13: 9780334029762 (300 pp.). Price: \$25.78 (Paperback).

Osmer, Richard R. *Practical Theology: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008 (ISBN-13: 9780802817655. 256 pp.). Price: \$18.37 (Paperback); \$14.16 (Kindle).

### Bible (One of the Following):

*The Cambridge Annotated Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version*, notes and references by H. C. Kee. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993. Price: \$9.99 (Hardcover).

*The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, NRSV*, edited by B. M. Metzger and R. E. Murphy. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991 (or newer edition). Price: \$20.85 (Hardcover); \$10.99 (Kindle).

*The Harper-Collins Study Bible. Fully Revised and Updated: NRSV*. General editor, revised edition, Harold W. Attridge. HarperSanFrancisco, 2006. Price: \$27.32 (Paperback); \$25.32 (Hardcover); \$17.99 (eTextbook).

*The People's Bible. New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha.* General editor, Curtiss Paul DeYoung. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009. Price: \$30.98 (Hardcover).

#### SUGGESTED READINGS

Armour, Ellen “Queer Bibles, Queer Scriptures? An Introductory Response” in *Bible Trouble: Queer Reading at the Boundaries of Biblical Scholarship*. Society of Biblical Literature, 2011. (ISBN- 13-978-1589835528. 372 pp.)

Bailey, Randall C. “ Were All Together in One Place? Toward Minority Biblical Criticism,” *Society of Biblical Literature Semeia Studies*, 2009. (ISBN-13: 978-1589832459. 412 pp.)

Berlin, Adele and Marc Zvi Brettler, eds. *The Jewish Study Bible: Second Edition 2nd Edition*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. (ISBN-13: 978-0195297546. 2000 pp.)

Brueggemann, Walter, Bruce C., Birch, and Terrance C Freithem. *A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament: 2nd Edition*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2005 (ISBN-13: 978-0687066766. 504 pp.)

Carter, Warren. *Seven Events That Shaped the New Testament World*. Ada, MI: Baker Academic, 2015 (ISBN-13: 978-0801039164. 182 pp.).

Cahalan, Kathleen and Mikoski, Gordon. *Opening the Field of Practical Theology: An Introduction*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowan and Littlefield, 2014. (ISBN-13: 9780742561267. 332 pp.)

DeYoung, Curtis Paul et al. *The People's Companion to The Bible*. Fortress, 2010 (ISBN-13: 978-0800697020. 320 pp.)

Foley, Edward. *Theological Reflection Across Religious Traditions: The Turn to Reflective Believing*. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2015. (ISBN-13: 9781442247192. 180 pp.)

Gafney, Wilda C. *Womanist Midrash: A Reintroduction to the Women of the Torah and the Throne*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2017. (ISBN-13: 9780664239039. 342 pp.)

Graham, Elaine, Heather Walton, and Frances Ward, eds. *Theological Reflection: Methods*. London: SCM Press, 2005 (ISBN-13: 9780334029762 300 pp.)

Hornsby, Teresa J. and Ken Stone. *Bible Trouble: Queer Reading at the Boundaries of Biblical Scholarship*. Society of Biblical Literature, 2011. (ISBN-13: 978-1589835528. 372 pp.)

Levine, Amy-Jill and Marc Zvi Brettler, eds. *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. (ISBN-13: 978-0190461850. 856 pp.)

Sugirtharajah, R.S. *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the World: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World, 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition*. Orbis, 2016 (ISBN-13: 978-1626982055. 496 pp.)

Sugirtharajah, R.S. *The Postcolonial Bible*. Sheffield Academic Press, 1998. (ISBN-13: 978-1850758983. 204 pp.)

Volf, Miroslav. *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996 (ISBN-13: 9780687002825). (306 pp.)

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

- 1) Students will post two documents that help to explain their ministry context during the second week.
  - a. A description of the student's ministry setting, including their role, length of time there, and a general sketch of regular pastoral/leadership activities (2-3 pages)
  - b. A brief outline of the student's anticipated research project (1-2 pages)
- 2) Regular participation in weekly readings and discussion with instructor. Students will provide regular (weekly) postings on Moodle with responses to assigned readings and other materials provided for the course. **The deadline for posting these responses will be no later than Saturday night each week.**

### **Responses should each be 350-400 words in length and follow these guidelines:**

- a) Avoid summarizing the material, since all of us will have read the material assigned for the week.
  - b) Note three or four particular issues raised in the readings that capture your attention – because they confirm ideas you already hold, because they surprised you, because you disagree (thoughtfully) or because you don't grasp the concepts. Include any terms that are unfamiliar to you or are used in a new way.
  - c) As the course proceeds, begin drawing connections with other readings in the course – comparing and contrasting.
  - d) Keep in mind the concluding assignments (and ultimate purpose) of the course – the theology chapter in your upcoming research project. In addition to comprehending the reading materials, sift these ideas for ways they might shape your own writing.
  - e) The posts are not limited to fully formed narrative sentences and paragraphs. Feel free to use bullet points, etc. to make your ideas concise.
- 3) In addition, students will be expected to respond to the posts of colleagues in the class. After you have posted your response each week, you will be able to view the posts of classmates. Please post a brief response to each. Avoid simple praise or critique (e.g., "Nice job, or "thoughtful" or conversely, "I don't agree" unless, of course you go ahead and make a respectful argument.) **These responses should be posted no later than Tuesday evening each week.** Keep this in mind as an incentive to post your own initial responses on time!
  - 4) In consultation with the instructor and likely your advisor, **students will exegete two biblical texts that will serve as conversation partners in writing the final paper.**
  - 5) Students will choose a book from a contemporary or recent major theologian to serve as a conversation partner in writing the final paper.

- 6) An **initial draft of your theology chapter will be due week 5 (5 – 10 pages)**. This paper is an early attempt at constructing the ideas that will form your writing. Based on our commitment that practical theology is a set of communal practices, each student must find a classmate to be in conversation with regarding their theology paper. More instructions will be given in advance of that assignment.
- 7) **Old Testament Exegetical Paper (5-10 pages)**. Using one of the methodologies from Brown’s A Handbook for Old Testament Exegesis, Chap 4 – 13 and taking into consideration one of the contextual issues outlined in Chapters 15 – 22, exegete a pericope from the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible that can serve as a conversation partner for your final project.
- 8) **New Testament Exegetical Paper (5-10 pages)**. Using one of the methodologies from Gooding’s Searching for Meaning Chap 1 – 12 and taking into consideration one of the contextual issues outlined in Chapters 13 - 23, exegete a pericope from the New Testament that can serve as a conversation partner for your final project.
- 9) A **final paper that will serve as an initial draft of the biblical and theological framework for your final thesis project (20-25 pages)**. This paper builds on the work of the previous assignments. In this paper, students should demonstrate an ability to utilize at least three of the theological approaches discussed in class (Outcome #1 above); the ability to articulate a clear theological rationale and framework for your own research (Outcomes #2 & 4 above); the ability to exegete a Biblical pericope that is pertinent to your final project. Further guidelines for this paper will be provided during the class. This will build on your previous papers.

## COURSE CALENDAR

### February 1 – 7, 2021: Introduction to Methods of Theological Reflection (Part 1)

**Read:**

- Graham et al., Theological Reflection, Intro – Chap. 3

**View:**

- LaBoy lecture

### February 08 – 14, 2021: Introduction to Methods of Theological Reflection (Part 2)

**Read:**

- Graham et al., pp. Chap. 4 – 7

**View:**

- LaBoy lecture

**Due:**

- Introductory documents outlined above (See Assignment #1 above)
- Respond to your colleagues’ outline of their ministry project. One (1) response is sufficient. (See Assignment #2 and 3 above)

**February 15 – 21, 2021: Introduction to Practical Theology (Part 1)**

**Read:**

- Osmer, Practical Theology, Intro – Chap. 2

**View:**

- Osmer & Callahan Lectures

**Due:**

- Post as per Moodle instructions (See Assignment #2 and 3 above)

**February 17, 2021: *Ash Wednesday (No Classes)***

**February 22 – 28, 2021: Introduction to Practical Theology (Part 2)**

**Read:**

- Osmer, Practical Theology, Chap. 3 – 4

**View:**

- Nichols and Sensing Lectures
- *Theology As Living Discourse: The Future of Feminist Practical Theology*

**Due:**

- Post as per Moodle instructions (See Assignment #2 and 3 above)

**March 1 - 7, 2021: Initial Draft of Theology Paper Due (Self Study)**

**Due:**

- Initial draft of theology paper (5 – 10 pages) outlining which theological methods will be applicable to your final research project and key theology partners that you will be in conversation with. **See Moodle for more instructions and helpful hints/tips. (See Assignment #6 above)**

**March 8 - 14, 2021: Understanding the Need for Ethical and Inclusive Biblical Interpretation**

**Read:**

- Anderson, *Ancient Laws and Contemporary Controversies*, Chap. 1, 2
- Randall C. Bailey, “The Danger of Ignoring One’s Own Cultural Bias in Interpreting the Text” in *The Postcolonial Bible* (**posted on Moodle**).
- R.S. Sugirtharajah, “Biblical Studies after the Empire: From a Colonial to a Postcolonial Mode of Interpretation” in *The Postcolonial Bible* (**posted on Moodle**)

**View:**

- Gafney Lecture

**Due:**

- Post as per Moodle instructions (See Assignment #2 and 3 above)

**March 15 –21, 2021: Ethical and Inclusive Biblical Interpretation – OT/Hebrew Bible (Part 1)**

**Read:**

- Anderson, *Ancient Laws and Contemporary Controversies*, Chap. 3
- Brown, *A Handbook for Old Testament Exegesis*, Chap. 1- 6 (Skim)

**View:**

- Anderson Lecture
- LaBoy Lecture

**Due:**

- Post as per Moodle instructions (See Assignment #2 and 3 above)

**March 22 – 28, 2021: Ethical and Inclusive Biblical Interpretation – OT/Hebrew Bible (Part 2)**

**Read:**

- Brown, A Handbook for Old Testament Exegesis, Chap. 7-14 (Skim)

**View:**

- LaBoy Lecture

**March 29 – April 5, 2021: Spring [Easter] Break – No Work Due**

**April 5 – 19, 2021: Ethical and Inclusive Biblical Interpretation – New Testament (Part 1)\***

**Read:**

- Gooding, Searching for Meaning, Chap 1 – 12 (Parts 1 & 2)

**Due:**

- Self-Study/Work on Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) Exegetical Paper
- Self-Study/Refine Theological argument for Final Paper

***\* No response to the readings due this week.***

**April 19, 2021:**

**Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) Paper Due (Self Study)\***

- Old Testament Exegetical Paper (5-10 pages) Using one of the methodologies from Brown's A Handbook for Old Testament Exegesis, Chap 4 – 13 and taking into consideration one of the contextual issues outlined in Chapters 15 – 22, exegete a pericope from the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible that can serve as a conversation partner for your final project.

**April 19 - 26, 2021:**

**Ethical and Inclusive Biblical Interpretation – New Testament (Part 2)**

**Read:**

- Gooding, *Searching for Meaning*, Chap. 13 – 23, Part 3

**April 27 – May 3, 2021:**

**Ethical and Inclusive Biblical Interpretation – New Testament (Self Study)**

**Due:**

- Self-Study/Work on New Testament Exegetical Paper

May 3, 2021

**New Testament Exegetical Paper Due (Self Study)\***

**Due:**

- **New Testament Exegetical Paper (5-10 pages)** Using one of the methodologies from Gooding's *Searching for Meaning* Chap 1 – 12 and taking into consideration one of the contextual issues outlined in Chapters 13 - 23, exegete a pericope from the New Testament that can serve as a conversation partner for your final project.

May 3 – 12, 2021:

**Final Paper: Biblical and Theological Foundations for Your DMin Project (Self Study)**

**Due:**

- Self-Study/Refine Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) and New Testament Exegetical Papers, Theological argument for Final Paper
- Begin work on Final Paper (which should flow out of the two exegetical and the theological papers.)

May 12, 2021:

**Final Paper Due**

**COURSE GRADING:**

**Class Participation:** 10% (based on posts and responses)

**Introduction/Outline of Ministry Project:** 10%

**Initial Theology Paper:** 15%

**OT/Hebrew Bible Brief Exegetical Paper:** 15%

**NT Exegetical Paper:** 15%

**Final Paper:** 35%

**Grading Criteria for Written Assignments**

1. Each answer offers a clear thesis statement, follows a logical organization, is well developed, and is free of grammatical and spelling errors.
2. You enter into intelligent, critical conversation with the course texts, fellow students, and lectures.
3. You demonstrate a depth of theological and pastoral insight in your critical analysis and constructive claims.

**Please note that although I will assign a letter grade to each assignment, You may choose to take this course as Pass/Fail.**