

United Methodist Polity Syllabus
Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
Fall 2017

Adjunct Instructor:

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Course Description

This course is designed to provide students with the opportunity to fulfill the learning goals described by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of The United Methodist Church for fulfillment of the Polity requirement.

We will read through the *Book of Discipline (2016 edition)* and *Book of Resolutions*, through the lens of Wesley's questions:

- What to Teach? - United Methodist Polity and Theology
- How to teach? - United Methodist Ecclesiological structure and identity
- What to do? - United Methodist expressions of Christian mission

Disability Accommodation Statement: Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary is committed to providing equal access to its programs of graduate professional education for all qualified students with learning, physical, medical, or psychological disabilities. The Seminary aims to provide reasonable accommodation for qualified individuals with a disability (based on clinical documentation) to ensure their access and participation in Seminary programs. For details, see "Disabilities Policies and Procedures" in the Student Handbook.

Course Objectives

The course will engage the students with:

Knowing

- The mission and vision of The United Methodist Church,
- The governance structures and mechanisms of The United Methodist Church,
- The Orders of Ministry of The United Methodist Church,
- The ecology and ecclesiological connections and relationships within and outside the denomination.

Being

- A participant in the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church through a deeper understanding and facility with the ecclesiology and order of the denomination.
- A knowledgeable participant in the structures of The United Methodist Church.

Doing

- Utilizing the operations described in the Book of Discipline to accomplish the practical work of mission in the church.
- Envisioning appropriate governance adjustments and ecclesiological reforms that bring together the particular theological focus, renewed understanding of aligned governance

and ecclesiology and the capacity for effective change and reformation in The United Methodist Church.

- Articulating the meaning of Baptism, Licensed Ministries and Ordained Ministries in terms of their place in The United Methodist Church and a rationale for the student's ministry finding itself within one of these categories.
- Articulating the alignment of mission and governance as it is presently expressed in The United Methodist Church and possible stumbling blocks and options for moving into the future.

Expectations

PUNCTUALITY: Online learning requires you to manage time and deadlines on your own. Instructor(s) will try to send reminders through Moodle, but you are expected to know and follow the dates set on this syllabus.

Failure to meet the deadlines will be reason for failure of the course. Late work will not be accepted under any circumstances. No extensions will be granted.

TECHNOLOGY: It is the student's responsibility to have sufficient technology to access and participate in the course. The instructor will assume this, and is not obligated to take technological difficulties into account when assessing the student's work.

Readings

Primary Required Reading

The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 2016. Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 2012. ISBN: 9781501833212.

FREE VERSION available here -

<https://www.cokesbury.com/forms/DynamicContent.aspx?id=87&pageid=920>

The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church, 2016. Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 2012. 9781501833243.

Crain, Margaret Ann, *The United Methodist Deacon: Ordained to Word, Service, Compassion and Justice.* Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2014. ISBN: 978-1426776113.

Frank, Thomas E., *Polity, Practice and the Mission of The United Methodist Church, 2006 ed.* Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006. ISBN: 978068733512.

Warner, Lacey. *The Method of Our Mission.* Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2014. ISBN: 978-1-4267-6717-3.

OTHER READINGS AS ASSIGNED

COURSE SCHEDULE

Class Dates	Lecture/Discussion Topics	READINGS
WHAT TO TEACH: Theology		
WEEK of September 4	Orient yourself to the course, the syllabus, and to Moodle	
Session 1 WEEK of September 11 DISCUSSION FORUM 1 Post - Wed Sept. 13 Response - Sat. Sept. 16	- Introduction to Course - The Constitution of The UMC - The Worldwide Nature of The UMC	1. BOD Part I & II 2. Frank 1-40, 115-140 [Introduction & Ch 3] 3. Warner 1-43 [Intro, Part I Chapt. 1&2]
Session 2 WEEK of Sept. 18 Discussion Forum 2 Post - Wed Sept. 19 Response - Sat. Sept. 23	- Our Theological Task	1. BOD Part III 2. Frank 41-68 [Chapter 1]
Session 3 WEEK of Sept. 25 Discussion Forum 3 Post - Wed Sept. 27 Response - Sat. Sept. 30	- Social Principles - The Book of Resolutions	1. BOD Part V 2. Frank 141-158 [Chapters 4] 3. Warner 45-66 [Part I Chapt. 3] Take time this week to look through the Book of Resolution for issues of interest to you/your ministry setting.

HOW TO TEACH: Structure & Identity		
<p>Session 4 WEEK of October 2</p> <p>Discussion Forum 4 Post – Wed. Oct. 4 Response – Sat. Oct. 7</p>	<p>- Ministry of All Christians</p>	<p>1. BOD Part IV 2. Frank 159-172 [Chapter 5]</p>
<p>Session 5 WEEK of Oct. 9</p> <p>Discussion Forum 5 Post - Wed October 11 Response - Sat. Oct. 14</p>	<p>- The Local Church</p>	<p>1. BOD Part VI, Chapter 1 2. Frank 173-194 [Chapter 6] 3. Warner 109-127 [Part II Chapt. 6]</p>
<p>Session 6 WEEK of Oct. 16</p> <p>Discussion Forum 6 Post - Wed Oct. 18 Response - Sat. March 18</p>	<p>- Ministry of the Ordained - Superintendency</p>	<p>1. BOD Part VI - Ch 2-3 2. Frank 195-254 [Chapters 7 & 8] 3. Warner 69-108 [Part II Chapt. 4&5]</p>
<p>READING WEEK WEEK of Oct. 23</p> <p>BONUS POST – Wednesday Oct 25 BONUS RESPONSE – Saturday Oct 26</p>	<p><i>The reading is required, but the posts this week are a BONUS. They offer an opportunity to replace a week you are late/missing a post.</i></p> <p><i>*So don't say no one ever gave you Extra Credit in Grad school...</i></p>	<p>REQUIRED Reading: Crain, Margaret Ann, <i>The United Methodist Deacon: Ordained to Word, Service, Compassion and Justice.</i></p>
<p>WEEK of Oct. 30</p>	<p>CASE STUDY SESSIONS</p>	

WHAT TO DO: Missiology		
<p>Session 7 WEEK of Nov. 6</p> <p>Discussion Forum 7 Post - Wed Nov. 8 Response – Sat. Nov. 11</p>	<p>- Conferences: <i>Charge - District - Annual - Jurisdictional/Central - General</i></p> <p>- Property</p>	<p>1. BOD Part VI - Ch 4 & 6 2. Frank - 255-284, 299-310 [Chapters 9 & 11] 3. Warner 131-146 [Part III Chapt 7]</p>
WEEK of November 20 No Lectures or Forum Posts (THANKSGIVING)		
<p>Session 8 WEEK of Nov. 13</p> <p>Discussion Forum 8 Post - Wed Nov. 15 Response - Sat. Nov. 18</p>	<p>- Administrative Order: <i>General Agencies</i></p>	<p>1. BOD Part VI - Ch 5 2. Frank 285-298 [Chapter 10] 3. Warner 147-163 [Part III. Chapt 8]</p>
<p>Session 9 WEEK of November 27</p> <p>Discussion Forum 9 Post - Wed Nov. 29 Response - Sat. Dec. 2</p>	<p>Judicial Administration: <i>Judicial Council and the Judicial Order</i></p>	<p>1. BOD Part VI - Ch 7 2. Frank 311-320 [Chapter 12]</p>
<p>Session 10 WEEK of December 4</p> <p>Discussion Forum 10 Post - Wed Dec. 6 Response - Sat. Dec. 9</p>	<p>The Future of the UMC</p>	<p>1. Frank - 321-328 [Conclusion] 2. Blog Posts (if any - current/relevant links will be posted to Moodle)</p>
<p>WEEK of December 11 No Lectures/Posts Work on FINAL PROJECT</p>	<p>Teaching Plan - or - Research Paper</p>	<p>DUE: FRIDAY December 15</p>

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

1. Lectures, Reading, and Discussion Forums 40% of final grade

- There are 10 lectures posted on this course's Moodle page
- Each of these weeks, students will watch the lecture and complete the reading assignment posted.
- By **WEDNESDAY** (noon) of each week, students should post a reflection demonstrating their engagement with the lecture and the readings. (~ 300 words)
- By **SATURDAY** (noon) of the week, students should respond to *at least one* other student's post. Further interaction on each forum is highly encouraged, but not required. (~150 words)

2. Case Study (Oral Exam) 25% of final grade

- The Week of **Oct. 30** will be used to conduct **Case Study Exams**
- Students will sign up for a time to participate in a Zoom Web-based Meeting with no more than 4 other students.
- The professors will ask each student to respond to a scenario with the following questions:
 - What does the Discipline say? (What section(s) of the Discipline address this issue.)
 - What do you say? (How do you carry this out in your ministry context?)
- You will be assigned your scenarios via email **2 weeks** before the date you are to present

3. Final Paper (Written Exam) 35% of final grade **DUE: FRIDAY DECEMBER 15**

Select one of the following options for a written final:

1) Teaching Plan: (See Moodle for Template of Layout)

Reflecting back on your assigned Case Study, create a plan for how you would teach this issue in your ministry context.

- What do you want people to know about UM Polity?
- Why does it matter that we respond in this way?

2) Research Paper: (10-15 Pages, double spaced)

Reflecting back on your case study, write a paper that gives additional depth to the concern facing your ministry context. You should include **3-5 sources** beyond the books listed in your syllabus.

- Why do United Methodists believe we should respond in this way?
- How long has this been a part of our polity/identity as United Methodists?

The Research Paper should include citations of your sources in footnotes with a properly formatted bibliography. (Chicago Style/Turabian preferred)