

Draft Syllabus for Seminar II, June 2011
Dr. Johanna Bos and Dr. David Hester, Instructors

General Description

Seminar II will engage students in biblical reflection on a practice of ministry. Your biblical reflection might include, for example, gender construction in patriarchal societies, race relations in the United States, situations of grief and suffering, or relations among different faith groups. Topics such as Feminist/Womanist/Mujerista Interpretation of the Bible," "Connections and interactions between different faith communities seen through the biblical lens," and "Psalms of Lament" might be the focus of attention. Or, you may focus on another biblical theme that is particularly important to your context or possible project.

In preparation for Seminar II:

1. Students are asked to continue to reflect on their pastoral identity and the context in which they practice. This involves further thinking about the readings and cases from Seminar I.
2. Students are to read the assigned texts. The readings are designed to encourage students to think about a particular scriptural frame or biblical hermeneutic that informs and transforms their ministry setting, and ultimately underscores their project in ministry. Discussion of the texts will be part of the Seminar. These readings include:

Bellis, Alice Ogden and Joel S. Kaminsky, ed. *Jews, Christians and the Theology of the Hebrew Scriptures*. Society of Biblical Literature, Second Edition, 2000.

Sacks, Jonathan. *The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations*. Continuum, 2003.

Van Wijk-Bos, Johanna H. *Making Wise the Simple: The Torah in Christian Faith and Practice*. Eerdmans, 2005.

Zenger, Erich. *A God of Vengeance?: Understanding the Psalms of Divine Wrath*.
Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004.

3. Students will write a short paper [no less than 10 pages, no more than 12], to be submitted to Johanna Bos and David Hester two weeks before Seminary II. The paper will address a practice of ministry that involves a biblical theme, as articulated in the general description or as chosen by the student in consultation with the Seminar leaders.

The following steps should be included in the paper:

- a. A brief statement of the practice and its relevance to a biblical theme.
 - b. A more detailed reflection on the chosen practice and how it relates to the world of the Bible including reflection on areas of disconnect as well as connections between the student's context and the biblical context.¹
 - c. A theological reflection on the practice, including thoughts about God's involvement in and engagement in the world and the life and work of the student.
 - d. A short statement about ways in which the practice of concern might lead to a project study question.
4. Students should be prepared to discuss, in class, their area(s) of concern/interest and a critical biblical perspective on the area(s) in light of the assigned readings.

¹ For example, if the area of concern and focus of discussion would be reproductive choice, the reflection may involve issues of women's equality and dignity in a still patriarchal world, issues of anxiety about fertility and population in today's world as compared the world of the Bible, etc.