

## **Proposed Syllabus**

### **THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT AND ITS CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS**

Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Fall Term, 2009

Clifton Kirkpatrick, Professor

*This online syllabus should be used to gain a better understanding of the content and focus of a course. The syllabus given out in the class may differ from this online version and its content supersedes that of the online syllabus.*

## **Course Description**

We are living through a period in ecumenical life that promises to substantially reshape the character of ministry, especially in mainline churches, for years to come. Viewed through a perspective that is both Reformed and ecumenical, this course will begin with an overview of the history and theology of the ecumenical movement, then examine in some depth four contemporary developments and their underlying themes: reclaiming the legacy of Calvin for the renewal of ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, understanding the changing context and enduring gospel values for mission, shaping our witness for social justice and peace, and moving us forward in more positive relationships with neighbors of other faiths. This course will also provide students with an opportunity to experience the life and worship of a Christian community other than their own or one of another faith and to share with one another what they learn from that encounter and what perspectives they might develop in their own ministry for relating ecumenically and with people of other faiths. This course is designed to share the fresh insights from the ecumenical movement and current ecumenical developments, to understand their implications for the ministry of our congregations, and also to give visible expression to Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary's newly adopted Quality Enhancement Plan, whose purpose is to "prepare men and women for ministry in a religiously diverse world."

## **Objectives**

At the conclusion of the course students:

- Will have an understanding and a broad overview of the history, theology, and challenges of the modern ecumenical movement
- Will have experienced the life and worship of a Christian tradition other than their own or of another religion
- Will have a broad understanding of the major traditions within the Christian world
- Will have a deeper understanding of the legacy of the Reformation, the changing context for mission in a global and ecumenical church, the shared values for social witness emerging in the ecumenical movement, and theological options for engaging with other faith traditions
- Will have developed more fully their own ecclesiological identity within an ecumenical ethos

- Will acquire skills for dealing with other communions, faith groups, and ecumenical bodies in their ministry or pastoral context
- Will develop their own theological rationale and vision for ecumenical relations

### **Course Requirements**

- Regular attendance and active participation in class discussions and small groups that displays a thorough understanding of the assigned readings to aid in discussion. (20%)
- Preparation of two reading reviews during the semester and leading of small group discussions around those reviews (15%)
- Visit an event and/or worship service at a congregation of a Christian tradition other than your own or of another religion followed up by discussion with the members or leaders of that community and seeking from them one document that would capture the deeply held faith and convictions of that tradition
- Preparation of a class presentation on that other faith tradition, what they value, how your own tradition is seeking to relate to that group, and what suggestions you have for moving toward greater Christian unity or better interfaith relations with that tradition (25%)<sup>1</sup>
- Participate in Bible study (using *lectio divina* methodology) on biblical texts on Christian unity, lead on one occasion in prayers for the church ecumenical using the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle of the World Council of Churches, and work with other students to prepare a liturgy for a worship service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (10%)
- A final paper (10-15 pages) that will explore your understanding of the theological basis for ecumenical relations, with specific attention given to your denominational position(s) on these relations, and how that understanding might address two contemporary issues facing the churches today. (30%)

### **Academic Honesty**

All work turned in to the instructor is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Students unfamiliar with issues relating to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center and should make use of these resources, since violations of this seminary policy can lead to a failing grade for the course.

### **Inclusive Language**

The use of inclusive language in course work is a policy of Louisville Presbyterian Seminary. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, avoid

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<sup>1</sup> D. Min and Th.M. students will be expected to prepare this presentation in relation to another community of faith within their ministry context and to also write a paper explaining the opportunities and challenges for ecumenical and interfaith relations in their ministry context based on the learnings from this course.

language for people which leaves out part of the population or perpetuates stereotypes. Do not assume masculine gender when the gender of the person is unknown. When referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors. See [http://www.lpts.edu/Academic\\_Resources/ASC/avoidinggenderbiasinlanguage.asp](http://www.lpts.edu/Academic_Resources/ASC/avoidinggenderbiasinlanguage.asp)

## Accessibility Issues

Any student who has issues of access, various learning abilities, or environmental sensitivities is invited to speak to the professor early in the term.

## Weekly Class Themes (for lecture and discussion)

1. Introduction to the Course/Sharing of our backgrounds and ecumenical experiences
2. Birth of the Modern Ecumenical Movement
3. Major Christian Families
4. The Faith and Order Movement and the Movement to Full Communion
5. The Life and Work Movement Leading to a passion for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation
6. The World Mission Movement and the Changing Global Church
7. Recent Ecumenical Developments: Within the Reformed Family: Legacy of John Calvin
8. Recent Ecumenical Developments: In Response to the Social Crises of our Time: The Social Creed of the Churches
9. Recent Ecumenical Developments: Changing Mission Context: Toward Edinburgh 2010
10. Recent Ecumenical Developments: Relations with our Muslim Neighbors: *A Common Word Between Us and Them*
11. Student Presentations on Another Faith Tradition
12. Ecumenical Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
13. Pastoral Ministry in An Ecumenical Age

## Required Texts

Goosen, Gideon; *Bringing Churches Together: An Introduction to Ecumenism*; World Council of Churches, 2002, ISBN 9782825413487

Hinson-Hasty, Elizabeth and Peters, Rebecca Todd; *To Do Justice: A Guide for Progressive Christians*; Westminster John Knox, 2008, ISBN 0664232825

Kinnamon, Michael, and Cope, Brian, editors, *The Ecumenical Movement: An Anthology of Key Texts and Voices*, Eerdmans/WCC, 1997, ISBN # 0-8028-4263-1

Nyomi, Setri, and Vischer, Lukas, editors, *The Legacy of John Calvin: Some Actions for Churches in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, World Alliance of Reformed Churches, 2008, ISBN # 978-2-9700619-0-8

## Required Texts Accessible on the Web

*A Common Word Between Us and You*, <http://www.acommonword.com/> In addition to the Common Word document itself, we will be considering under the tab, “Christian Responses,” responses number 57 and 59 (from the Archbishop of Canterbury and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches)

*Ecumenical Movement in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Foundational Texts*, <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/ecumenical-movement-in-the-21st-century/foundational-texts.html>, read all texts except the one on “Mapping the Oikoumene”

*In God’s Hands: Ecumenical Prayer Cycle* will be used as an online resource, <http://www.oikoumene.org/?id=3038>

Jenkins, Phillip: *The Next Christianity*,” <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200210/jenkins>

*Towards 2010*, <http://www.towards2010.org.uk/> (under the tab marked, “Papers,” go especially to the papers by Andrew Walls, *The Great Commission, 1910-2010*, Samuel Escobar, *Mission From Everywhere to Everyone*, and Samuel Kobia, *A WCC Perspective on Cooperation and Unity*.

## Web Sites that will be useful for research during the course

Anglican Communion, <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/>

Baptist World Alliance, <http://www.bwanet.org/>

Christian Churches Together, <http://www.christianchurchestogether.org/>

Churches Uniting in Christ, <http://www.cuicinfo.org/>

Ecumenical Patriarchate, <http://www.ec-patr.org/>

Formula of Agreement, <http://www.pcusa.org/dear/formula.pdf>

Global Christian Forum, <http://www.globalchristianforum.org/>

Lutheran World Federation, <http://www.lutheranworld.org/>

National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., <http://www.nccusa.org/>

Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity of the Vatican, [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/chrstuni/](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/)

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Ecumenical Relations, <http://www.pcusa.org/dear/ecurelations.htm>

United Methodist Ecumenical Relations, <http://www.gccuic.org/>

World Alliance of Reformed Churches, <http://www.warc.ch>

World Council of Churches, <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/home.html>