

SENIOR SEMINAR: FALL 2012

Theme: Ecumenical Ministry in a World of Religious Diversity

Wednesdays 1:30-4:20 pm

Schlegel 121

Instructors: Kathryn Johnson and Clifton Kirkpatrick

Senior Seminar description

The Senior Seminar focuses on an area of theological study related to the practice of ministry, providing M.Div. students in their final year of study an opportunity to integrate the various elements of their theological education in a way that contributes to the ongoing discernment of their vocation. Students will produce a substantial essay or project that brings the methods of theological study to bear on problems and opportunities in ministry and that expresses the student's theological vision. The topic for the Fall 2012 seminar is *Ecumenical Ministry in a World of Religious Diversity*.

Course: Ecumenical Ministry in a World of Religious Diversity

The fall seminar will concentrate on ministry in the context of the diverse Christian family of traditions, with attention both to its glorious internal diversity and to contemporary efforts toward healing its painful divisions. Students will deepen their acquaintance with the major traditions within the Christian world and will develop more fully their own ecclesiological identity within an ecumenical ethos. They will acquire skills for dealing with other communions, faith groups and ecumenical bodies in their ministry and pastoral context and will develop a theological rationale and vision for Christian unity. They will be able to articulate ways in which ecumenical perspectives open opportunities both for common social witness and social action and also for interfaith engagement.

Course goals

This course will provide an opportunity for senior students to integrate theological study with pastoral practice and build their capacity for ministry both within their own Christian tradition and in partnership and unity with other Christian traditions. Students will:

1. Bring their passions for ministry and theological reflection into productive conversation with religious and cultural traditions;
2. Gain practice in collaborative theological methods;
3. Refine their skills of constructive theological and ethical reflection and expression;

4. Continue processes of vocational discernment and that are theologically grounded, ethically informed, and that draw on several theological disciplines (biblical studies, historical and constructive theology, ethics, practical theology).

Learning outcomes

At the conclusion of the seminar students will have grown in the:

1. Ability to describe and articulate important characteristics of the of the ecumenical movement and of the history, traditions, practices, and perspectives of at least one Christian ecclesial tradition other than their own;
2. Ability to articulate, orally and in writing, their own theological perspective, including a theology of ministry, mindful of their distinctive ecclesial tradition and the global, ecumenical, multicultural, multireligious contexts of contemporary ministry; and
3. Ability to participate constructively in intra-Christian dialogue and activity, with appreciation and respect, as evidenced by a demonstrated ability to articulate the views of their dialogue partners and to identify similarities and differences with their own.

Course requirements

1. *Preparation and participation:* Students are expected to attend all seminar meetings, read all assigned material, and enter into thoughtful discussion of the matters the class takes up. The class itself will be an ecumenical “laboratory” in which students from different Christian traditions will shape their own theology, understanding of ministry, and ecumenical learning through ecumenical sharing with one another in class. Students are partners to one another in their work for this course, and so conscientious preparation and active participation for each seminar meeting is essential.

2. *Sermon Manuscripts:* Early in the course, students will submit and share with one another a sermon manuscript for either World Communion Sunday (especially recommended for those with congregational placements where the sermon could be preached during the fall semester) or for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Sermons may be developed from many appropriate texts from all parts of the Bible. One resource for “ecumenically relevant texts,” with stress on the New Testament, can be found at: http://www.masscouncilofchurches.org/ecum_texts.htm.

In this sermon, students will share in a form appropriate for a congregation their biblical and theological understanding of the call to Christian unity and its implications for a congregation of their own tradition. This understanding will serve as a reference point at the end of the course: during the final discussions, students will be asked to reflect on how their understandings have changed.

3. *Senior Seminar project*: The culminating project of the seminar will show the fruits of an in-depth encounter with another Christian tradition and reflection on the implications of that encounter for ministry in one's own community of faith.

This project may take a number of forms: a substantial essay (about 25 pages); a curriculum for church use; a liturgical project; a literary work such as a play or cycle of poems, accompanied by theological reflection; etc.

The final determination of the project, its scope, and the resources appropriate to produce it will be the work of the student together with the instructors, in collaboration with the seminar as a whole.

3.1 In shaping their projects, students should keep in mind that one of the intentions of this seminar is to help the Seminary to fulfill and evaluate one of the goals of the D2D program, that "students will gain an understanding and appreciation at some depth of a Christian tradition other than their own." Thus, intentional experience with another Christian tradition is integral to the course, and will be one aspect of preparation for completing the seminar project.

Selection of this tradition should be done in consultation with the instructors and other course participants; it is essential that the tradition have at least one active community in the Louisville area whose leadership is willing to welcome the student in learning more about them. Guidance will be given about how to engage this community in a variety of dimensions, including worship, faith formation, and social engagement.

3. 2. Final project presentation

Whatever its genre, the final project should give evidence of – and invite theological reflection on – awareness of the student's own relation to a church family; engagement with the chosen other Christian tradition; a vision of Christian unity in the present religiously diverse realities in which the student will minister; and (if possible and appropriate) concrete proposals for ministry in these contexts.

Schedule for projects:

A. *First Presentations* – mid-semester weeks to be determined

Presentation of draft and directions for final project. As part of their presentation, students will prepare and give (using whatever media they feel is most effective) a 15-20 minute presentation of their engagement with the chosen "other Christian tradition," including what the other faith tradition values most, how that tradition is relating to their own, and how churches of that tradition might influence their future ministry.

B. *Final presentation of final project*: in class (Weeks 10-12).

As with all senior seminars, grading is Pass/Fail.

Books:

Goosen, Gideon, *Bringing Churches Together*, rev. ed. Geneva: WCC Publications, 2001.

A non-specialist introduction to the major Christian families and to the theology and history of the ecumenical movement.

Harmon, Steven R., *Ecumenism Means You, Too: Ordinary Christians and the Quest for Christian Unity*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2010.

An invitation to the pursuit of Christian unity, with special appeal to young adults.

Kaspar, Walter, *Harvesting the Fruits*. London: Continuum Publishing, 2009.

A Roman Catholic perspective on the accomplishments of a half-century of theological dialogue with four partners (Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists, Reformed).

Kinnamon, Michael and Cope, Brian E., *The Ecumenical Movement: An Anthology of Key Texts and Voices*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997.

Indispensable collection of texts from a wide range of ecumenical projects and

Other Articles and Chapters:

George, K. M., "Bearing Witness to Christ and to Each Other in the Power of the Holy Spirit," http://globalchristianforum.org/manado_updates/bearing_witness_to_christ.php.

A 2011 address on Orthodox understandings of the Holy Spirit, given by a theologian of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church to an international gathering of the Global Christian Forum, with strong Pentecostal presence.

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

An accessible introduction to Jenkins' influential theses on the impacts of growth in churches of the "Global South."

Johns, Cheryl Bridges, *When East Meets West and North Meets South: The Reconciling Mission of Global Christianity*, in Hubert van Beek, ed., *Revisioning Christian Unity*. Oxford: Regnum Books, 2009, 93-101.

Pointed observations from a US Pentecostal scholar on the changing global church.

Ernst Käsemann, "The Canon of the New Testament and the Unity of the Church," in *Essays on New Testament Themes*, trans. W. J. Montague (Naperville, IL: Alec R. Allenson, Inc., 1964), 95-107.

Classic statement of the theological significance of biblical diversity.

Kirkpatrick, Clifton, "Reconciled Diversity: An Ecumenical Vision for the 21st Century," http://www.lpts.edu/About_Us/Chapel_Sermons_Text/Kirkpatrick2-11-10.pdf

Convocation address from February 11, 2010, articulating a vision for contemporary ministry.

Walls, Andrew, "Christianity in the Non-Western World," in *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002, 27-48.

Perspectives on the significance of Christian diversity from a leading church historian.

Policies of LPTS:

Inclusive Language:

In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. 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, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible's images for God. See for further assistance, http://www.lpts.edu/Academic_Resources/ASC/avoidinggenderbiasinlanguage.asp.

Academic Honesty:

All work turned in to the instructors 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. Use of another's language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy, and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and may result in failure of the course. Multiple occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues relating to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For the Seminary policy, see The Code of Student Conduct, 6.11; the Student Handbook, p. 19.

Special Accommodations:

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center (kmapes@lpts.edu) during the first two weeks of a semester and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Citation Policy:

Citations in your papers should follow the Seminary standard, which is based on these guides: Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center.

Attendance Policy:

According to the Seminary catalog, students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. Where an absence is unavoidable, students should if possible consult with the instructors in advance. In any case, they should be in communication with them no more than 24 hours after the class session. Multiple unexcused absences may result in a lowered grade; missing 3 sessions or more may result in failing the course.

TENTATIVE CALENDAR

This schedule is subject to change as the course develops. Brief readings, especially from the web, may be added as resources. Guidance will be given for focus when large blocks of readings are indicated.

Summer Preparation

Students are encouraged, at least tentatively, to decide upon the “Christian tradition other than their own” on which they will focus. Especially for those wanting to begin forming this relationship over the summer, conferences in June with the instructors and colleagues will clarify the expectations and strategies for their particular engagement.

Advance reading for the first weeks of the course is also encouraged!

Readings: Goosen
Harmon
Resources & statements from the student’s denomination and from the
“other Christian tradition, as agreed with the instructors

September 12

Introduction to the course: An ecumenical lens on contemporary ministry
Introduction to one another: hearing our ecumenical journeys and visions

Readings: Kinnamon and Cope:
General Introduction and Introduction to I, pp. 1-10
Ecumenical Highlights Chart, pp. 526-527
“Unto Churches of Christ Everywhere,” pp. 11-14
Temple, Message and DeDietrick, pp. 17-27
Decree on Ecumenism of Second Vatican Council, pp. 17-34
Raiser, pp. 70-77
Statements of ecumenical vision from your denomination
This is an opportunity to become acquainted with ecumenically helpful material on the website(s) of your tradition.

September 19

Mapping the Christian World: What unites and divides the major families of churches?
Where is there movement toward unity? Which issues and practices seem most intractable?

Readings: Kasper
Kinnamon and Cope:
Introduction to II, Lambeth, pp. 79-83
Orthodox Perspective (in box), pp. 92-93
Bonino, pp. 102-107
“The Unity of the Church as Koinonia,” pp. 124-125
Introduction to III, Brown, pp. 129-131
Filioque Clause; “Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry,” pp. 172-204
Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JDDJ)
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/documents/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_31101999_cath-luth-joint-declaration_en.html
Reformed-Catholic Dialogue
http://warc.jalb.de/warcajsp/side.jsp?news_id=626&part_id=0&navi=6
“A Formula of Agreement”
<http://www.pcusa.org/ecumenicalrelations/resources/formula.pdf>

September 26

Mapping the streams of the ecumenical movement: mission and evangelism; “Faith and Order”;
“Life and Work”; “spiritual ecumenism,” interfaith relations

Readings:

Kinnamon and Cope:

Introduction to IV, pp. 211-212

Racism, South Africa, Women, pp. 218-227

Introduction to V, pp. 263-265

Diaconia; Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation, pp. 315-324

Introduction to VI, pp. 325-327

Azariah, pp. 327-330

Introduction to VII, pp. 393-394

Religious Plurality, pp. 417-422

“An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace”

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/programmes/public-witness-addressing-power-affirming-peace/promoting-just-peace.html>

“Together towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes”

http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/mission-and-evangelism/together-towards-life-mission-and-evangelism-in-changing-landscapes.html?print=1_print%20Common%20parents%20in%20the%20faith

“Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations for Conduct” (join document from the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, WCC, World Evangelical Alliance)

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/interreligious-dialogue-and-cooperation/christian-identity-in-pluralistic-societies/christian-witness-in-a-multi-religious-world.html>

October 3The 21st century: the changing faces of the search for Christian unity

New challenges & new players

Claiming a vocation for Christian unity

*For this class, sermons will have been circulated in advance and will be discussed.***Readings:**

CAMS articles by George, Jenkins, Johns, Kirkpatrick and Walls (see above)

October 10

Working for Christian unity “at home”

Conversation with Rev. Dr. Marian McClure, executive director of the Kentucky Council of Churches: roles of local ecumenism; challenges and hopes for the future
Discussion of ecumenical commitments of students’ churches (at local, national & denominational levels)

Reading Browse enough on the KCC website to become acquainted with its work: <http://www.kycouncilofchurches.org/>
Review Harmon on local ecumenism

RESEARCH AND STUDY WEEK

October 24

First presentations I

October 31

First presentations II

November 7

First presentations III

Harvesting and evaluating I

November 14

Ministry and ecumenical vocation

Gathering biblical, theological and pastoral resources for pursuing Christian unity

Reading: CAMS article by Käsemann

Other readings as developed through the course

November 21 – class ends at 3:00 for Thanksgiving holiday

Final presentations I

November 28

Final presentations II

December 5

Final presentations III

Harvesting and evaluation II