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COURSE DESCRIPTION
O'Driscoll Forum on Preaching and the Arts
Vancouver School of Theology SUMMER 2023: July 10-14, 9am-12pm

PURPOSE:

Preachers and artists continue to seek faithful, imaginative, and meaningful responses to the challenge of communicating Christian faith. Good Christian communicators recognize that the richness of narrative and image, metaphor and symbol, can still carry “the theological freight” while providing modes of language that move powerfully among us to make meaning and inspire joyful discipleship.

Using a highly interactive “master class” approach, participants will dive into the concepts and models that sustain the grammar of preaching, will be fed by the Word of God, and will have the opportunity to hone their own gifts for narrative proclamation. Other forms of liturgical art and expression will also be explored as media for fostering new hope and profound delight in the sharing of the Great Story of God.

EXPECTATIONS AND COMPETENCE OBJECTIVES:

Upon successful completion of this course, a student should be able to:

- **exhibit development in narrative preaching skills,**
 - **articulate principles for the use of symbol and image in liturgical expression,**
 - **practice a particular method for structuring gospel messages**
 - **create media that can effectively:**
 - **proclaim and celebrate God’s action in both the bible and world**
 - **proclaim God’s grace in a balance with God’s judgment**
 - **have a sound theological structure**
 - **use language which has sensory appeal**
 - **assist the work of the Holy Spirit**
- (other outcomes/objectives from Louise will be added)**

REQUIRED READINGS (Pre-reading expected):

Students will read ONE of the following books before the course begins: (please purchase your own copy or find one to borrow)

Preaching as Poetry: Beauty, Goodness, and Truth in Every Sermon, Paul Scott Wilson, Abingdon, 2013

Actuality: Real Life Stories for Sermons That Matter, Scott Hoezee, Abingdon, 2014.

Preaching in Pictures: Using Images for Sermons That Connect, Peter Jonker, Abingdon, 2015.

Other readings for use during the course will be made available on the course Populi site.

ASSIGNMENTS

A two-part assignment (for every participant) will be presented on the last day of the Forum: a ten-minute sermon or other gospel “expression”, and a plan for further exploration and/or practice. (detailed descriptions to come)

Reading and class participation: All Students, including auditors, are expected to do all the required readings and participate in class discussions. Advanced Degree students may have additional readings assigned. 100% attendance is encouraged for all and required of Certificate and Degree students.

Certificate students: Certificate students are required to hand in 4-6 pages of writing that demonstrates the ability to thoughtfully engage the material and reading for the class and gives a personal reflection on the reading and material covered. No additional research expected.

Due August 7th

Basic degree students (Diploma; MA; MDiv): are required to do any required oral assignments during the course itself and submit any combination of written assignments totaling approximately 1800-2400 words/6-8 pages. Research Depth: 5-8 sources beyond course readings. **Due August 7th**

Advanced degree students (ThM, GDTS): are required to do any required oral assignments during the course itself and submit any combination of written assignments totaling approximately 3600-4000 words/12-15 pages. Research Depth: 20+ sources beyond course readings. **Due Sept 5th**

Further details about assignments will be provided on the course syllabus posted on the classroom Populi LMS site, and handed out in class.

DRAFT OUTLINE:**Day 1 (Monday July 10)**

9:00 – 10:30 Introduction to “the Forum”, the O’Driscolls, instructors, and participants.

10:45 – 12:00 A culture that is resistant to “the gospel” but open to “beauty”.

Day 2 (Tuesday July 11)

9:00 – 10:30 Proclamation and Sacramentality, expressions of grace.

10:45 – 12:00 Language as mediation and participation.

Evening public lecture:

“Taking the plunge: biblical patterns for coming to faith in Christ.” (T. Townshend)

How does one become a Christian believer? By plunging into the waters of baptism and the “living waters” of Christian language and culture. This lecture will trace the patterns and contours of how people come to faith in Christ.

Day 3 (Wednesday July 12)

9:00 – 10:30 Structures and dynamics for liturgical preaching and artistic liturgical expression

10:45 – 12:00 What is grace? What is gospel?

Day 4 (Thursday July 13)

9:00 – 10:30 A new “habitus” for a community of Christian practice.

10:45 – 12:00 Designing your expression.

Day 5 (Friday July 14)

9:00 – 11:45 Participant presentations:
 1. final project (sermon or other expression),
 2. and their plan for further exploration / practice.

11:45 – 12:00 Evaluation.

COURSE POLICIES

1. **Attendance** For an intensive course, VST requires 100% attendance.
2. **Reading and assignments** Students are expected to read all required assignments before class and to complete all assignments as outlined in the syllabus within the specified dates of the course and term.
3. **Academic honesty** Students are expected to adhere to VST’s requirements for academic honesty as published in the Student Handbook.
4. **Inclusive language** In speaking and writing, inclusive language is expected when making reference to humans and a variety of metaphors are anticipated when making reference to God.

5. Assignment and Course Evaluation

- Course evaluations at VST combine a letter grade system (A+ to B-; course failure is “Not Approved”) including narrative comments based on the competencies of the course. No number grades or weights of assignments are calculated, nor are final grades given numerical equivalents.
- Individual assignments within a course are given narrative evaluations, that is, APP (Approved) or INC (Incomplete) with narrative comments, based on the competencies and expectations set for that assignment. One re-write is allowed on any assignment that is INC. The re-written assignment is due two weeks after the work is returned. The final evaluation for an assignment can be APP or NAPP after a re-write.
- For a passing grade in the course, all assignments must be Approved.

6. Late assignments

Submission of assignments on time is a part of academic, professional and pastoral competence and a part of every course at VST. All assignments in courses are due on the dates specified in the syllabus. Failure to submit an assignment on time will be noted in the narrative evaluation of an assignment. Repeated failure to submit assignments on time may affect the final grade for the course.

7. Limitation on use of social media

Ordinarily, the use of electronic devices in the contexts of classrooms or meetings will be to support the learning, formation, or agenda at hand.

8. VST is committed to creating safe space and an inclusive learning environment. If you have a diagnosed or suspected learning disability, chronic condition, mental health concern, or physical requirement which you anticipate may impact your participation in this class, you are encouraged to discuss your needs with the instructor and the Dean within the first week of classes.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

TBD