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# CL 553 United Methodist Polity and Discipline

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**CL553 UNITED METHODIST POLITY AND DISCIPLINE  
SPRING 2005 – 2 Hours Credit**

**Instructor: Dr. Jeff Greenway  
Guest lecturer: Dr. James Holsinger**

**Meets Mondays February 7, 14, 21, 28; March 7, 14, 21, 28; April 4 and 11 from 6:15-9:00  
PM  
Room: TBA**

**My office is located in the Administration Building. I will be happy to arrange to meet for any necessary consultation. Please call Sheila Lovell at 858-2202 for an appointment.**

Welcome! This class is one of four courses offered at Asbury that are designed to meet denominational requirements for United Methodist students seeking ordination as a deacon or elder in the United Methodist Church. The other courses are The Theology of John Wesley, United Methodist History, and United Methodist Doctrine.

*Instructor: Jeff Greenway* – Ordained Elder and Full Member of the Western Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church. Son of a UM pastor who has lived in parsonages his entire life. Elected as a delegate to four General and Jurisdictional Conferences. Chaired the Discipleship Legislative Committee at the 2000 and 2004 General Conferences. Served eight years (1996-2004) as a Director of the General Board of Discipleship, chaired the Discipleship Ministries Unit of the GBOD and served on its Evaluation and Executive committees, and served on many ad hoc task forces for the GBOD. Presently serves as a Director of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Has served for 11 of the last 13 years (including presently) as a member of the Board of Ordained Ministry in the Western Pennsylvania Conference. Has served First UMC (downtown) of Butler, PA, Christ UMC (suburban) in Erie, PA, and as the District Superintendent of the Pittsburgh-East District (economically distressed) in the Western Pennsylvania Conference.

*Guest Lecturer: Jim Holsinger* – Is a lay person who has distinguished himself as a leader throughout the connection of the United Methodist Church and in world Methodism. Has been a delegate to four General and Jurisdictional Conferences. Served on the UM Study Committee on Homosexuality from 1988-1992. Distinguished himself as a gifted debater and student of the Book of Discipline. Was elected to the Judicial Council in 2000, and was elected as its President in 2004. Is the treasurer of the World Methodist Council and serves on its Executive Committee. Is a graduate of Duke University, the University of Kentucky, and Asbury Theological Seminary (MA in Biblical Studies in 2004) to name a few.

It is our sincere desire to share with you our passions for personal involvement in service to students who are preparing for leadership and ministry in our church and for committed leadership and involvement throughout our great connectional church. Please know that it is our sincere intent to assist you in any way reasonably possible to master the requirements of our course in Polity and Discipline!

**Purpose of the Course:** This course seeks to acquaint you with how the United Methodist Church orders and structures itself in its total life, doctrine, ministry and mission. The course purposes to fulfill the denominational requirement for polity for you who are seeking ordination in the United Methodist Church.

**Objectives:**

- To enable you to have a working understanding of church order and practice and the practical discipline of The United Methodist Church and The Book of Discipline. This course seeks to ready you to use the Discipline as an ordained minister in a local United Methodist church, and to understand the functioning of our polity in its broader scope.
- To be able to recognize and appreciate the biblical, theological, and historical foundations for United Methodist structure.
- To be able, in a spirit of affirmation, for you to offer candid critique and visioning for the future of our United Methodist polity.
- To enable you to become more conversant through classroom discussion with the live issues relating to United Methodist polity.

**Course Requirements:**

1. Punctual class attendance is expected. Active class participation (i.e., reading pre-assigned texts, attentive listening, note-taking, asking relevant questions, and entering into discussions) is vital *and will compose 10% -- 10 points of your final grade*. Students are allowed two unexcused absences without a grade penalty. Three points (out of 100 possible) will be deducted from your final grade for each subsequent, unexcused absence. The **only** absences excused will be severe illness corroborated by a physician's statement, death of a family member, and genuine life-threatening emergencies.
2. You will be expected to fulfill all class requirements on time. Under dire circumstances, arrangements may be made **beforehand** to adjust a due date. Weekly assignments will not be accepted after the dates due.
3. Read the entire Book of Discipline (2004). Read Polity, Practice and the Mission by Thomas Frank. Submit, by each reading due date, **two** typewritten observations / reflections taken from your assigned weekly reading (one from each text). An observation is a reference to a particular sentence or paragraph in the readings (please cite) and your reflection should be approximately 2 paragraphs (each) in length. (*Value of the final grade: 18% -- 18 points.*)
4. During the semester, attend one Church Council or Administrative Board meeting of a United Methodist church and observe what organizational structure is assumed by the church. In light of ¶ 243, 244.1, 244.2 and 247.2 briefly describe in one or two paragraphs the church's organizational plan. Is it the "basic organizational plan" described in ¶244 Does it use the former Administrative Board and Council of Ministries structure or does it use the Administrative Council structure? Does it use some alternative structure per ¶247.2 and ¶243. What leadership style did you observe from the leaders? What are the strengths and weaknesses of that leadership style? (*Value of final grade: 12% -- 12 points*)

5. Submit a reading report by the last day of class that details your reading of “related texts.” You are expected to read at least three of these texts as listed in the course bibliography. *(Value of final grade: 10% -- 10 points.)*
6. Comprehensive Final Exam *(Value of the final grade: 50% -- 50 points.)*  
Your final exam will test your knowledge of assigned course readings, course lecture content, and any materials made available in classes. There is no real substitute for consistent class attendance, good notes, and full completion of all assigned reading in preparation for this exam.

**Summary of Grading Procedure:**

A = 93-100

B = 80-92

C = 70-79

D = below 70

A	4.00	Exceptional work: outstanding/surpassing achievement of course objectives
A-	3.70	
B+	3.30	
B	3.00	Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives
B-	2.70	
C+	2.30	
C	2.00	Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives
C-	1.70	
D+	1.30	
D	1.00	Marginal Work: minimal or inadequate achievement of course objectives
D-	.70	
F	0.00	Unacceptable work: failure of course objectives

**CL553 CALENDAR  
SPRING 2005**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>Reading from <u>Discipline</u>*</b>	<b>TOPIC of Class and Reading from Frank* (Topic for Class is Subject to Change)</b>
Feb. 7	Pp. v-20	Syllabus and Introduction to Polity Historical Considerations in the Formation of UM Polity Chs. 1, 2
Feb. 14	Pp. 74-86	Our Theological Task Ch. 4
Feb. 21	Pp. 127-193	The Local Church Ch. 6
Feb. 28*	Pp.21-74	Constitution and Doctrinal Standards Ch. 3
March 7	Pp. 194-283	The Ministry of the Ordained Ch. 7
March 14*	Pp. 87-125	The Ministry of All Christians and Social Principles Ch. 5
March 21 Spring Break	No assignment	
March 28*	Pp. 285-311	The Superintendency <i>Ch. 8</i> <i>Organizational Plan of Local Church Due</i>
April 4*	Pp. 451-708	Administrative Order and Church Property Ch. 11
April 11	Pp. 709-746	Judicial Administration Ch. 12
April 18	Pp. 313-449	The Conferences – General, Jurisdictional, Central & Missionary Ch. 9 The Annual and District Conferences Ch. 10 Reading Report Due
April 25		<b>Final Exam</b>

**\*Please note: The readings listed for each date should be completed before coming to class.**

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### REQUIRED TEXTS

The Book of Discipline 2004. Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 2004.  
 Thomas Edward Frank, Polity, Practice, and the Mission of the United Methodist Church  
 Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997.

### RELATED TEXTS

- Campbell, Dennis, The Yoke of Obedience: The Meaning of Ordination. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988.
- Campbell, Dennis M., William B. Lawrence, and Russell E. Richey, editors. Doctrine and Disciplines. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999.
- Decisions of the Judicial Council, UMC (1968-1996). Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 1996.
- Harmon, Nolan B, The Organization of the Methodist Church. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962.
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- Lawrence, William B., Dennis M. Campbell, Russell E. Richey, editors. The People(s) Called Methodist: Forms and Reforms of Their Life. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998.
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- Tuell, Jack M., The Organization of the United Methodist Church. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997.
- Wesley, John, The Works of John Wesley, ed. By Thomas Jackson, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 14 vols., vol. 8: Addresses, Essays, Letters. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979.
- Willimon, William H., Calling and Character: Virtues of the Ordained Life. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000.