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IS 502 Vocation of Ministry

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IS502 - Vocation of Ministry
T 6:15pm - 9:00 pm
Provisional Syllabus
Fall 2006

Ellen L. Marmon, Instructor
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Office Hours: T 9:30-10:45 am;
W 4:00-5:45 pm;
and by appointment

Ministry begins as we spend more time listening, rather than talking; accepting rather than judging; healing pain and hopes, rather than blaming; and reaching out together side by side into the world. Listening is the key. Walking together is the style.
-- Jack Seymour

Course Description (highlights on our journey)

IS502 addresses the question, "How is a vocation to Christian ministry discerned, shaped, and sustained?" This course challenges you to explore, from a Wesleyan perspective, the biblical and theological foundations of Christian personhood and vocation.

Course Objectives (targets I aim for you to hit)

Having successfully completed this course, you should:

1. Understand the nature of Christian vocation, including God's call of all Christian disciples to ministry in the church and in the world.
2. Grasp the relationship between spiritual growth and theological reflection in the practice of ministry;
3. Demonstrate respect for and sensitivity to cultural, ethnic, age, and gender issues, especially with regard to their importance in ministry;
4. Understand the importance of a Christian's integrity and moral formation in ministry, clearly comprehending boundary issues related to ethical conduct;
5. Demonstrate commitment to a life of personal and social holiness through immersion in the means of grace and service;
6. Articulate a coherent narrative of your own call, as well as God-given gifts and graces for ministry; and
7. Write a personal vision for ministry, a "Rule of Life" that guides and guards you in ministry.

Modes of Instruction (methods to help us learn)

You'll experience three main learning models in this class: first, we will meet together as one large group for instruction and interaction; second, you'll participate in covenant discipleship groups within the class that will explore Christian conduct and character; third, the discipleship groups will also participate in assigned projects, so you can experience directly some issues we study in class.

Required Textbooks (reading that forms and informs)

Canham, Elizabeth. (1999). Heart Whispers: Benedictine Wisdom for Today.

Nashville: Upper Room.

Dunnam, Maxie & Moore, Steve. (Ed.) (2005). Living Life on Purpose: The Joy of Discovering and Following God's Call. Franklin, Tennessee: Providence House.

Grenz, S. & Bell, R. (2001). Betrayal of Trust: Confronting and Preventing Clergy Sexual Misconduct. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Guinness, O. (1998). The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life, Waco, TX: Word.

Pearcey, Nancy. (2004) Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from its Cultural Captivity. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

Roberts, Benjamin T. (1891; 1992). Ordaining Women: Biblical and Historical Insights. Indianapolis: Light and Life Press.

EITHER:

- Haugen, Gary A. (1999). Good News About Injustice. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press.

OR:

- Yankoski, Mike. (2005). Under The Overpass: A Journey of Faith on the Streets of America. Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah Publishers.

Recommended Reading (a wish list to keep)

Arterburn, S., et. al. (2000). Every Man's Battle: Winning the War On Sexual Temptation One Victory at a Time. Colorado Springs: Waterbrook Press.

Muto, S. and van Kaam, A. (1994). Divine Guidance: Seeking to find and follow the will of God. Pittsburg: Epiphany.

Roberts, B. (1891, reprinted 1992). Ordaining Women: Biblical and Historical Insights. Indianapolis: Light and Life Press.

Foster, Richard. (2003, 25th anniversary). Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth. San Francisco: Harper.

Haugen, G. (1999). Good News About Injustice: A Witness of Courage in a Hurting World. (founder of International Justice Mission). Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press.

Course Grading Criteria (standards to go by)

You'll find the following descriptions on p. 29 of your *ATS Academic Catalog, 2004-2006*:

A = exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives

B= Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives

C = Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives

D = Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives

F = Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives

I'll calculate your course grade based on a 100-point scale:

95 - A

80 - B-

90 - A -

77.5 - C+

85 - B+

75 - C

82.5 - B

72.5 - C-

Late Work

Assignments that you turn in late will receive a 1/3 reduction in grading, unless you contact me about a conflict before the due date.

Incomplete Work

The official end of each term is 4:00 pm on the last day of the examination schedule. This hour is the deadline for handing in all course work. Each instructor may set an earlier deadline for submission of any or all course work. The student must petition the faculty person involved and the student's advisor for permission to receive an "I" at the end of a semester. **A grade of "I" denotes that the work of a course has not been completed due to an unavoidable emergency, which does not include delinquency or attending to church work or other employment.** If the work of a course is incomplete at the end of a term without an emergency, a letter grade will be given based on the grades of work done, with incomplete work counted as "F" (p. 29, 2004-2006 Academic Catalog).

Course Assignments (experiences to help things sink in)

NOTE: I haven't corrected the dates yet for the Fall 06 assignments!!!

- **Spiritual Journey Paper (15 points)**

Write a 4-5 page paper that reflects on your spiritual journey, in light of what we read and discussed during the first four weeks of class. You'll include values, calling, mission, and holiness as themes to guide your reflection, as well as Scripture, and insights from your DISC instrument. Since this is a personal paper, please write in first-person (I, me, my, etc.). Use 1-inch margins with 12-point type, double-spaced. Document your sources from within the paper, for example (Guinness, 32), and place your bibliography at end – it does not count as one of your pages for the assignment, **Oct. 5 (portfolio piece)**.
- **Cross-Cultural Conversations and Reflection Paper (10 points)**

During the semester you need to have two, 1-hour long conversations with someone who is culturally different than you are (ethnicity). In the first conversation, find out where this person was raised, how the family functioned, about the role of Christianity in their life. In the second conversation, talk about each other's call to ministry, how they evolved, who and what God used in your lives to get you to Asbury seminary. You'll write a 3-5 page paper summarizing what you discovered and reflecting on the differences and similarities in your spiritual journeys, **Nov. 16 (portfolio piece)**.
- **Social Justice Project (10 points)**

Your group needs to find a project that you can do together outside of ATS. You must put yourself in a position to serve the poor and needy in the Wilmore or surrounding communities, spending approximately 5 hours together on the project. This will require some detective work on your part, contacting people connected with service-related agencies. I'll provide some suggestions in class. The group will then prepare **one** report that describes your project, lists the participants and explains how this act of service connects theologically and biblically with the Kingdom of God. Finally, share three things that you learned as a result of this experience, **Nov. 16 (portfolio piece)**.

- **Integrative/Creative Paper (10 points)**
 At the end of unit two, you have a choice as to whether you will write a 5-6 page integrative paper that answers the question: “How can a life of personal and social holiness help develop a life of integrity in ministry?” Your other option is to devise some creative alternative, such as a video, power point, visual display, poetry, short story, collage, etc. You’ll need to clear your idea with me by Oct. 19th. Both will need to reflect the themes, readings and discussions of Units 1 and 2, **Nov. 2nd**.
- **Active participation in covenant group (10 points)**
 Each group member will attend and participate actively in your covenant group discussions. During the semester you will evaluate your group’s interactions and the quality of each other’s contributions to the forming of Christian community and group processing, **Dec. 7**.
- **Journaling for *Heart Whispers* (10 points)**
 Each week, you’ll read one chapter in Canham’s book and use her reflection suggestions, as well as weekly Scripture passages to write for 15-20 min. in a journal. At the end of the semester, you will turn that journal in and receive 1 point for each completed entry, **Dec. 7**.
- **Rule of Life Paper (25 points)**
 The central theme of your final paper will be “My Commitments to a Vision For Ministry.” Drawing from all aspects of the class (texts, discussions, group experience, cross-cultural conversations, journaling, guest speakers, etc.), write about your present vision for ministry (this, of course, will evolve over time). Include your views about working in a multi-cultural world with persons of different ethnicity, gender, age, and socio-economic status than your own. Describe the personal, family, and institutional commitments you are willing to make and what you will put in place in your life to keep you on track to fulfill your calling to ministry, **Dec. 14 (“Rule of Life” portfolio piece)**.
- **Course reading (10 points)**
 At the end of the semester, you need to e-mail the IS502 Office (under our course icon in First Class) to let me know if you completed the semester’s reading, by **Dec. 14**.