

WTS 2017-2018 Elective Courses

BIBLICAL FIELD

BL509 Conflict in the Created Order

Boogaart

This course will explore how the conflict between the ordering word of God and the disordering waters of the deep in the creation story is recapitulated in the narrative, prophetic, and wisdom literature. We will explore why Western Christians have tended to overlook this conflict, and how a deeper understanding of it can revitalize Christian communities. 3 cr

BL513-DL Studies in Prophets

Boogaart

The role of prophets in Israelite society, their theology, and their impact on Western culture. 3 cr

BL514 Psalms

Bechtel

An exegetical study of selected psalms in the context of both the Old Testament and the larger canon of Scripture. Attention is also given to the role of the psalms in the liturgical, devotional, and theological life of the church. 1.5 cr, DL & IR

BL517 Wisdom Literature

Bechtel

DL & IR This course explores the forms, vocabulary, and concepts of wisdom in the Bible, emphasizing Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes. 3 cr

BL529 Matthew

Brownson

An overview of the theology and narrative shaping of the first gospel, using close readings of selected texts. Particular attention is paid to Matthew's vision for discipleship, the church, and Christian life and witness. Prereq: BL100, BL101A&B or equiv. 3 cr

BL530-DL Romans

VanVoorst

Introduction and overview of the letter, together with exegetical study of selected portions in Greek. Prereq: BL100, BL101A&B, BL102 or equiv. 3 cr

BL551-DL Disability, Bible and Pastoral Imagination

Boogaart

What do people with disabilities find when they try to find themselves in our biblical texts? This course addresses some of the issues, hermeneutical and pastoral, that people with disabilities encounter when reading the Bible. The class will read interpretative texts written by persons with a variety of disabilities and consider how their insights can support our pastoral imagination. 1.5 cr

BL552 Scripture and Human Sexuality

Brownson

This course explores a variety of ways of reading the Biblical text, particularly with a view to interpreting how Scripture speaks to the role and responsibilities of Christians with different sexual attractions in relation to the Church. Contrasting perspectives will be presented in the class (some via guest speakers), and students will be invited to deepen their capacity for constructive dialogue, discerning common ground amidst difference, and integrative thinking on these challenging questions. 1.5 cr

BL618 Advanced Hebrew

West, Bush

Advanced interactive learning in the language and theology of the Old Testament. Students develop a deeper understanding of grammar, syntax, translation and interpretation through hearing, speaking, and reading Hebrew, as well as memorization and enactment of scripture. This course is held off-site as a 10 ½ day overnight retreat experience. Pre-work includes grammar review, translation and creative exegetical project. Post-work involves a dramatic analysis paper. Prereq: BL110 & BL111 3 cr, DL & IR

BL614 Hebrew Reading and Performance

West

Using memorization and movement as the primary tools of exegesis, students engage with one Old Testament narrative deeply for 14 weeks. This course builds on BL110 and BL111, deepening

students' engagement with the oral nature of the Hebrew Bible. 1.5 cr

BL523 Joshua and the Paradox of Grace

Billings

Come explore the book of Joshua as an entryway into the historical and theological issues surrounding Israel's struggle to claim its God-given inheritance in the Land of Canaan. Together, we'll seek distinctive ways to read this book as the Church, and discover ways to live into this biblical story of incorporation and exclusion, hopelessness and salvation, apostasy and grace. 3 cr

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY FIELD

MN118-DL Cultural Competency

Kantzer-Komline

This course supports students in developing the cultural competencies and intelligence necessary for leading communities of faith in today's global, intercultural context. Focusing on ministerial formation, students will participate in cultural intelligence (CQ) assessment and debriefing. They will gain tools to interpret their own sociocultural locations, to become conscious of intercultural dynamics, to critique the relationship between power and culture, and to plan for intercultural ministry. 1.5 cr

MN116-DL Intro to Disability and the Church

Conner

Introduces different conceptions, definitions, and expressions of disability in the United States. Gives general overview of the history of disability in the U.S. and introduces students to innovative practitioners who paved the way for today's disability theology. Covers service systems and advocacy groups that support persons with disabilities.

MN503 Global Leadership Summit

Small

This course is in partnership with the Willow Creek Global Leadership Summit

(GLS). The purpose is to appreciatively and critically engage The Global Leadership Summit seeking to explore, question, and develop the skills, practices, and habits for leading Christian communities. Participants will work online July 9-August 19 and attend the GLS in Barrington, IL, from August 8-11, 2018 (tentative). Attendance in Barrington is required to receive a grade for the course (satellite attendance does not count for credit). Tuition covers entrance cost to the GLS and subsidizes lodging; students are responsible for a \$200 fee plus transportation costs. Carpooling is encouraged. 3 cr

MN508-DL Writing for Pastoral Life
Munroe

Ecclesiastes 12 says that there is no end to the making of many books, and in the pastoral life there is no end to the writing and saying of many words. Words have enormous power--after all, it was with words that God spoke his creation into being. This course will help students choose and use words with care and thoughtfulness. We will work toward becoming better writers (and readers), and in the process become better preachers, teachers and pastors. 1.5 cr

MN511-DL Spiritual Writing
DeGroat

An intensive creative workshop for those interested in writing, however tangentially, about matters of faith. We will focus our attention on nonfiction prose in which the writer's own life experience or personal opinions are placed in the foreground. Students will consider the work of specific Christian authors. This course will suit those who enjoy literature, as well as those aspiring to publish or preach. No creative writing experience necessary. 1.5 cr

MN539 Living the Christian Life According to Pop Christian Culture
Johnson

Through generous and critical engagement with recent best-selling Christian books, this course will explore the different visions of living the Christian life that emerge. We will look at authors that "people in the pews" are reading, like Francis Chan, Bob Goff, Sarah Young, Rob Bell, Shane Claiborne, and Ann Voskamp. We will also engage

with some theological, classical, and non-traditional Christian voices to explore their visions of the Christian life. Through this course students will be invited to practice reading with discernment to articulate their convictions about living the Christian life, and to imagine how to encourage faithful living in their current and future ministry settings. 1.5 cr

MN556 Psychology and Christian Spirituality
DeGroat

DL & IR - There is a strong tradition of psychological wisdom with the contemplative Christian tradition. In fact, the contemplative tradition provides a kind of framework for self-reflection, for healthy intimacy, and for genuine spirituality. Looking at resources from Augustine and Calvin, Evagrius and Theresa, we'll see that contemporary ministry, pastoral care, and mission can all be aided by a rich and deep understanding of Christian spirituality. 3 cr

MN575 Theology and Philosophy of Youth Ministry
Veas

This course will be offered three weekends throughout the semester with work completed online between the face to face times. Students will meet at the seminary the weekends of September 22-23, October 20-21, and November 10-11, 2017 from 3-6 pm on Fridays and 8 am - 5 pm on Saturday with a break for lunch. 3 cr

MN581-DL Ministry & Margins
Conner

Explores the boundary-crossing ministry of Jesus, in particular, how he redefined the margins and the center with a Kingdom perspective. The class will consider ways in which ministry to and with those who are often marginalized in our society can amplify the witness of our congregations. People groups that are under-served include, but are not limited to, the elderly or home-bound, people suffering from dementia, people in group homes, people struggling with literacy, people with disabilities, people living in poverty, immigrant communities, and people without homes. 1.5 cr

MN582-DL Ministry, Aging and Dementia
McDonald

Aging presents us with both pastoral challenges and important gifts for individuals and the body of Christ. How do we walk well with and learn from those who are in the final stage of their earthly journeys? One increasingly common aspect of aging that acutely challenges the faith, hope, and love of all of us is dementia. Together we will explore theological and pastoral resources for dealing faithfully with those who suffer from dementia, and those who care for them. 1.5 cr

MN588 Summer Institute on Theology and Disability (Travel Seminar for GCDM)
Conner

Attend this unique week-long gathering of theologians, academics, ministry leaders, people with disabilities, and other to explore the intersection of faith and disability. Stay tuned for 2018 location. 1.5 cr

MN591-DL Strategies for an Inclusive Church
Carter

Although we affirm that the Church is incomplete without people with disabilities and their families, congregations often struggle to welcome well and fully include this segment of their community. This course addresses practical strategies and promising pathways for moving beyond proclamations of inclusiveness and toward practices of invitation, hospitality, and belonging. Students will learn about effective starting points, supports, and strategies for enabling people with disabilities and their families to participate deeply in congregational life and experience belonging within a church community. 1.5 cr

THEOLOGY FIELD

TH518 Eschatology: Christian Hope and Last Things
McDonald

Eschatology (the study of the "last things") concerns Christian hope for the future consummation of all of God's promises and purposes and what this means for Christian living today. Drawing on biblical scholars and

theologians past and present, as well as art, music, and literature, this course will explore scriptural-founded contours for thinking wisely about the “last things,” and help us to recognize the impact of our eschatological views on our discipleship now. 3 cr

TH532-DL Augustine: His Life and Thought

Kantzer-Komline

Western philosophy, so the saying goes, consists of footnotes to Plato. Augustine has impacted western theology in a similarly profound way. In this course, students will engage this North African Christian living on the margins of the crumbling Roman Empire in his own words, reading both classics, like the Confessions, and lesser-known texts stemming from Augustine's pastoral ministry, such as sermons and letters he wrote to colleagues, parishioners, and other inquisitive citizens of his late ancient world. 1.5 cr

TH533 Africa to Anatolia: Mothers and Fathers of the Church

Kantzer-Komline

Parents and place of origin shape a person. It is the same with theology. This seminar on early Christian theology engages our mothers and fathers in the faith, whose perspectives, developing in diverse contexts from urban hubs such as Carthage and Alexandria to the high plane of Cappadocia, have so profoundly shaped our own. 3cr

TH632-DL Introduction to the World's Religions

VanVoorst

An introduction to the beliefs and practices of the major religions of the world, with a study of their scriptural traditions. New religious movements such as Baha'i, The Unification Church, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (“Mormons”) are also treated, paying special attention to their relationship to Christianity. The Christian theological response to other religions is also considered. 1.5 cr

TH570 The Reformation Then and Now

McDonald

The divisions and developments of the Reformation era in the 16th century continue to shape us and our churches in more ways than we realize. Some of what we have inherited from the Reformation has been rich and fruitful; other aspects of that inheritance have done great damage and continue to cause deep hurt. This course will examine aspects of the theology and history of the Protestant and Roman Catholic Reformation movements of the 16th century, and trace their ongoing implications for today. 3 cr

-DL = Distance Learning course

Learn more about the elective courses and the faculty teaching them at Western Theological Seminary's Online Electives Catalog located in CANVAS:

<https://westernsem.instructure.com/courses/2098999>