

Perkins Regional Course of Study School

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224 Administration & Polity

Instructor Reflection/Class Encouragement

I consider it a great privilege and opportunity to work with Local Pastors in the COSS. As I think forward to the future of the UMC, our system will be leaning more and more on the ministry of Local Pastors. I am honored to have this opportunity to interact with you. This class is manageable, and my narrative and dialogical teaching approach will make the class lively and engaging. It is not an “easy” class, however if you complete your pre-class assignments and turn them in on time, you’ve gone a very long way toward ensuring success in the class.

Course Description

I look forward to working with each of you as you learn, develop, and grow your skills as an administrative "and" spiritual leader in the areas of Polity and Administration in the United Methodist Church. Through a variety of discussions, interactions, and activities we will experience together, you will be equipped and empowered to effectively lead a local church and effectively work with that with local church's laity and lay leadership. You will also be given insights on how to leverage district, conference, and general church leadership and resources in a way that can help you grow as a church administrator. In our time together, I expect my students to participate and be actively engaged in all facets of our class: face to face discussions, video conferences, and other ways we will interact along the way. I am excited to get to meet and work with each of you.

Learning Goals

By the end of this course, candidates will be able to:

- Articulate a biblical and theological understanding of polity.
- Understand and explain the polity of the United Methodist church, including conferencing, oversight, and discipline.
- Articulate the nature of Stewardship biblically and theologically.
- Identify techniques and develop skills as effective administrators of local churches, including financial management.
- Better understand United Methodist polity and organization.
- Better understand the current tension between the polity and organization of the general and local church and its impact on the growth and mission of the church to “make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”
- To relate local church order, leadership and administration to United Methodist polity.

Required Texts

Lovett H. Weems Jr.- Leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit. 1999

Lacey Warner - The Method of Our Mission: United Methodist Polity and Organization. 2014

Gil Rendle - Back to Zero: The Search to Rediscover the Methodist Movement. 2011

The United Methodist Church Book of Discipline

Pre-Class Assignments

1. Pre-class Assignment #1

a. Complete a 2 page double spaced 12pt. written reflection paper from the book The Method of Our Mission by Lacey Warner with a focus on local pastors. Discuss the three categories of local pastors and their relationship to the local church and to the Annual Conference. What concerns or challenges have you experienced as a local pastor in regards to these relationships and what recommendations would you make to address those concerns?

b. The pre-class assignment is worth 25 points in your Pre-Assignment grade. Please make sure to review the rubric to see how your pre-class work will be evaluated.

Grading Rubrics

Timeliness: Submitted work on time	15.0 pts
Writing Quality: Written work demonstrates a certain quality of writing skills	5.0 pts
Comprehension: Work demonstrates a certain level of comprehension of material	5.0 pts

2. Pre-class Assignment #2

a. Complete a 2 page double spaced 12 pt. written reflection paper from the book Back to Zero: The Search to Rediscover the Methodist Movement by Gil Rendle. In this book the statement is made "...The increasing complexity of the denominational bureaucracies naturally shifted their attention from external mission to internal institutional structure, resources, and processes." Institutional survival can no longer serve as a purpose." What are your thoughts regarding this statement and what difference does it make administratively in your ministry setting?

b. The pre-class assignment is worth 25 points in your Pre-Assignment grade. Please make sure to review the rubric to see how your pre-class work will be evaluated.

Grading Rubrics

Timeliness: Submitted work on time	15.0 pts
Writing Quality: Written work demonstrates a certain quality of writing skills	5.0 pts
Comprehension: Work demonstrates a certain level of comprehension of material	5.0 pts

3. Pre-class Assignment #3

a. Complete a 2 page double spaced 12 pt. written reflection paper from the book Leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit by Lovett H. Weems Jr. What chapter did you find to be especially meaningful in this stage of your ministerial journey? What in your reading caused you to stretch and grow as a local pastor and administrator in the local church?

b. The pre-class assignment is worth 25 points in your Pre-Assignment grade. Please make sure to review the rubric to see how your pre-class work will be evaluated.

Grading Rubrics

Timeliness: Submitted work on time	15.0 pts
Writing Quality: Written work demonstrates a certain quality of writing skills	5.0 pts
Comprehension: Work demonstrates a certain level of comprehension of material	5.0 pts

4. Pre-class Assignment #4

Please read the article at this link: <https://www.umnews.org/en/news/ruling-same-sex-weddings-solely-up-to-pastors> and talk about how the decisions of General Conference 2024 and the ruling of the Judicial Council in the linked article have impacted your ministry and your personal thoughts about serving as a UMC Pastor. The decision of the General Conference and the Judicial Council rulings for most have created a sense of "settled" science to this particular issue. How can this decision impact small, medium, and large UMC's? I want to hear your thoughts and your thinking process in your paper. Please complete a 2 page double spaced 12pt. written response to this case study.

b. The pre-class assignment is worth 25 points in your Pre-Assignment grade. Please make sure to review the rubric to see how your pre-class work will be evaluated.

Grading Rubrics

Timeliness: Submitted work on time	15.0 pts
Writing Quality: Written work demonstrates a certain quality of writing skills	5.0 pts
Comprehension: Work demonstrates a certain level of comprehension of material	5.0 pts

Percentage of the total of all pre-class assignments for the final grade [not to exceed 30 percent]

COSS Policies

Standard Inclusion of Material for All Pre-Class Assignments

1. Pre-class assignment completion policy
Pre-class assignments for the first session are due a week before the beginning of the course. Instructors have discretion to lower a student's grade for the pre-class assignments and their overall course grade for late submission of pre-class assignments. Submission of all pre-class assignments by the first day of class is required to attend the class. Students who do not have pre-class assignments completed by the first day of class will be required to withdraw from the course without a refund.
2. Students are encouraged to contact their instructor if they have any questions about the pre-class assignments for their courses. They should also contact their instructor if they expect to submit their pre-class assignments following the submission deadline.
3. All pre-class assignments will be submitted by uploading the Microsoft Word documents to Perkins Course of Study School's learning management system (LMS), called "Canvas." Video tutorials on how to upload documents to Canvas are available on Perkins COSS web site. Perkins COSS staff are available to assist students learn to upload their pre-class assignments to Canvas.
4. COSS Writing Style
All Perkins Course of Study School courses use the same style of writing, known as the Chicago/Turabian style of writing. Basic examples of citations for written assignments are available for reference in the COSS Student Policies and on the COSS web site.

All students are encouraged to purchase the following book that is the basis for submitting written work using the required formats for citations/footnotes.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, Ninth Edition: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers (Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing) Ninth Edition

ISBN-10: 022643057X

ISBN-13: 978-0226430577

5. Writing assistance is available through the Bridwell Library: <https://www.smu.edu/Bridwell/Help/TWC>