REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY – WASHINGTON, D. C. CAMPUS

COURSE SYLLABUS

COMMUNICATIONS 6PT508/10

Fall Session, 2008
Thursday Evenings, 7:30pm to 10:00pm, September 4 to December 18
McLean Presbyterian Church

INSTRUCTOR: Peter Y. Lee EMAIL: plee@rts.edu

- **COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course addresses communication for pastors with an emphasis on preaching philosophy and style, textual exposition, and sermon structure. Written and oral, verbal and non-verbal communications are included. Communication I and Communication Lab I are to be taken at the same time.

- **COURSE OBJECTIVES:** Objectives are in two part which parallel the hybrid nature of the course.
  - Communication theory
    - ✓ To understand the biblical and theological principles of homiletics.
    - ✓ To understand basic sermon components and their functions.
    - ✓ To understand the fundamentals of sermon preparation and delivery.
    - ✓ To understand the priority and practice of Christ-centered preaching.
    - ✓ To increase competence in Christ-centered teaching/preaching.

  - Communication lab
    - ✓ To provide ample opportunities for students to prepare and deliver sermons/instructions.
    - ✓ To provide feedback on sample instructions.

  The focus of this course is not on the history and philosophy of preaching/teaching, although there will some materials on that subject. Rather, we will spend the bulk of our time discussing the mechanics of "Gospel Communication" in relation to the ministry of the Word of God in the local church. The principles discussed in this class will often times seem more testimonial than principial. Students should know that there are more than one correct way to prepare for Scriptural instruction and they will be encouraged to discover their own practices as it is helpful to them.

- **REQUIRED READINGS.** The reading requirement for this course is not heavy, as is evident below. Students will be responsible for the reading assignment as the requirements of the course will demonstrate.

  - ❒ Bryan Chapell. *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005.

- **REQUIREMENTS:**

  - ATTENDANCE: You are required to attend each class. If you know you cannot make it to a class session, notify me in advance.

  - FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS **CLASS**….

    - *Reading Report*:

      - ✓ **Reading Report #1 ~ Chapell Report**: In place of a Mid-term exam, you will turn in a Reading Report on the required reading textbook by Bryan Chapell. At the end of each chapter, there are a series of "Questions for Review and Discussion." Students are to answer those questions and turn them in on the due date below.

      - ✓ **Reading Report #2 ~ Separate Book on Preaching**. Students will also read of books on preaching from the list below. Students will write a brief report following the form provided below.

        - ❒ Graeme Goldsworthy. *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmanns Publishing Company, 2000.

        - ❒ Dennis E. Johnson. *Him We Proclaim: Preaching Christ from All the Scriptures*. Phillipsburg: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing, 2007.

        - ❒ John Piper. *The Supremacy Of God In Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990.

        - ❒ Edmund P. Clowney. *Preaching Christ in All of Scripture*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2003.

        - ❒ Marcel. *The Relevance of Preaching*.

    - *Pastoral Interview*: Students are required to sit and interview their preaching/teaching pastor at their local church and to learn from their preaching practices. Students are to inquire about their weekly preparation time, preaching strategy, how they prepare their sermons, etc. See the "Pastoral Interview" sheet below.

  - FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS **LAB**….

    - *Preaching in class*: You will have *at least* TWO opportunities to preach/teach as part of the communication lab. Time will be spent during class to rehearse the delivery of public addresses and speaking.

      - ✓ Communication #1: Student will deliver a sermon based on a passage in Scripture from the Old Testament.

      - ✓ Communication #2: Student will deliver a sermon based on a passage of Scripture from the New Testament.

- Each sermon is to be a length of 25 to 30 minutes.

- A full manuscript of each delivery is to be provided to the instructor PRIOR to their scheduled delivery.

- Students will delivery these two sermons or instructional settings in their individual church contexts and have it **video recorded** (not audio). Two copies are to be provided to the instructor on the given due dates. The sermon/instruction will be viewed by a committee of reviewers who will make comments and return them to the student.

- *Due Dates of Assignments:*
  - ✓ Reading Report #1 — Due October 9
  - ✓ Reading Report #2 — Due October 16
  - ✓ Pastoral Interview — Due December 18
  - ✓ Video Recordings — Due date by sign-up in class.

- *Total Grade:* You will receive two grades, one for the CLASS, a second for the LAB.
  - ✓ For Communication Class
    - Reading Report #1: 40% of total grade
    - Reading Report #2: 40% of total grade
    - Pastoral Interview: 20% of total grade
  - ✓ For Communication Lab
    - Sermon/Instruction #1: 40% for each
    - Sermon/Instruction #2: 40% for each
    - In-class Deliveries: 20% for each

- **OFFICE HOURS:**
  - Every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon ~ 3:30pm to 5:30pm at the RTS office
  - Or by appointment (contact the instructor to setup a time and place).

- **INFORMATION ON PETER LEE:** If you have questions, cannot attend a class, or need any further assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me.

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PASTORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Your local pastor is a great source of resources for the ministry of the Word. The more preaching one does, the more one learns how to be a good communicator of the Gospel. Students preparing for the ministry of the Word should tap into their pastor for patterns, examples, and guidelines on the regular daily, weekly, monthly, even annual ways in which they prepare for their pulpit ministry. Provided below is a list of sample questions that you are to consider asking in your interview. Prepare a list of questions before meeting with your pastor.

- **Your Name:**
- **Your Pastor whom you interviewed:**
- **Name of the Church/Denomination:**

1. How far ahead do you plan out your sermons/instruction?
2. What is your weekly schedule in preparation for the coming Sunday's sermon?
3. How many hours out of your week do you spend on sermon/instruction preparation? What would be ideal?
4. Do you rehearse the sermon before Sunday morning?
5. How much of the material that you research is **not** incorporated into the actual message itself?
6. What is the rationale of the themes/books (of the Bible) that you choose in preach?
7. What are some of the struggles that you face as a preaching pastor?
8. What would make you change your scheduled outline of sermons, if at all?
9. What were some of the mistakes you have made in your preaching ministry? Successes?
10. As you assess the needs within the congregation, how much do you try and address these needs in your preparation (application)?
11. What manuscript/notes do you take up with you onto the pulpit when you preach on Sunday mornings?
12. How do you assess/evaluate your own preaching ministry?

COMMUNICATIONS 1 ~ READING REPORT #2[1]

- **Your Name:**
- **Title and Author of Book:**
- **Report:**

1. Overview - Give a brief overview of the book, including its theme, perspective and approach.
2. Critique - Offer a brief critique of the book, including elements of strength and weakness.
3. Application - Offer some specific application to your own ministry demonstrating the value and relevance of the material in this book.
4. Best Quotes – Write significant quotes as you come across them and write a brief paragraph explaining why you found this to be significant (minimum of 5 needed).

[1] This form is an adaptation from the Communications course taught by Professor Larry Kirk of Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando.