

**IS151 -- THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION:
GOD, COMMUNITY AND TRANSFORMATION**
UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF THE TWIN CITIES
Fall, 2008- Monday – 6:00 – 9:15

SYLLABUS

FACULTY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COURSE:

Marilyn Salmon, Chris Smith, Richard Weis, Joseph Bush

INSTRUCTORS FOR FALL, 2008

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course serves as an introduction to the approach to theological thinking and learning that is fundamental to the ethos and pedagogy of UTS. United uses a theological model of education that attends seriously to the pluralistic contexts in which theology is done, to the person doing the theology, to the resources of the students' traditions, and to our deepest theological values and (e.g., justice, love, hope, liberation). Focus on one theme throughout the course is intended to provide a sharpened and integrated learning experience for the student's beginning year. *No prerequisites.*

Theme for this year: Vocation

COURSE OUTCOMES

1. Given a particular topic or question, students will be able to use the resources for theological reflection taken from Stone and Duke, *How to Think Theologically*, to guide their explicit theological reflection on that topic or question.
2. Given those same resources students will be able to identify theological resources used by authors we will be reading.

3. Students will be able to identify ways that a person's social location and identity shape theological reflection. This entails both gifts and limitations in the articulation of theology which students will be able to identify in their own as well as in another's theological expression.
4. Students will be able to draw on social analysis and/or natural sciences and/or the arts to open up and analyze a particular topic or question for theological reflection.
5. Students will be able to find and assess bibliographic resources in a variety of formats on a particular theological topic.
6. Students will have completed their spiritual autobiography and will have made an appointment to discuss it with the chaplain.
7. In theological conversation, students will be able to engage those of differing viewpoints respectfully and, at the same time, critically debate the substance of those viewpoints.
8. Students will be able to articulate an understanding of vocation that connects personal vocation with vocation in creation, vocation for justice, and the church's vocation. In doing so, they will engage theological resources from religious tradition, personal and social experience, and their communities of reference and accountability.

ASSUMPTIONS AND STARTING POINTS

This course makes the following assumptions about its participants:

1. ***You are self-motivated learners*** who will take responsibility for your own learning within the structures of the course.
2. ***Already, before the start of the course, you each have your own particular way—your own habits—of thinking theologically and living religiously.*** Thus the work you do in this course can never be purely “academic,” but will always have a personal dimension.
3. We assume that this course may open up new ways of thinking theologically that can be challenging and even troubling. ***You will need time and space in order to process and integrate your learnings in this course.*** Some of this space and opportunity is provided within the structure of this course. We are glad to be available for individual conversation if that would be helpful. ***Also, we assume that your processing and integrating will go on well past the end of the course.***
4. ***As a class, we constitute a highly diverse group:*** in gender, race/ethnicity, age, sexual identity, work experience, formative experiences, denominational background, theological literacy, theological convictions, skills in social analysis, vocational clarity, vocational direction, degree program, etc. This is a great value for our work together. ***This also puts a premium on***

the work of listening carefully and respectfully to each other, and on the work of speaking in ways that contribute to greater understanding.

5. *We assume that Cell phones and MP3 players will be turned off during class.*
6. *Students can use computers in the classroom if they choose to do so.*

This course makes the following assumptions about its subject:

1. ***Theology is human talk about God; it is not God.*** It partakes of human frailty and limitation even though it attempts to speak of One who transcends human frailty and limitation. Thus all theological statements are in some sense provisional and subject to critique and revision.
2. ***Theology is a process of interpreting*** and making sense of the world in relation to God, and it is a process of understanding and shaping our lived faith in response to God in the world.
3. We assume that ***theological conversation among diverse voices*** enriches, deepens and expands the theological understandings of all, and that a diversity of voices has the potential to bridge between the particularities and individual limits of our own theology.
4. ***Attentiveness to the explicit process*** of theological reflection is more important for this class than knowledge of specific doctrinal material (although that is not without its own importance).

CLASS ORGANIZATION

Each class session will begin with a brief service of worship. Each class session typically will include three elements: presentation(s), split class or all class discussion or exercises, and guided small group discussion. The sequence of these three elements, and whether or not there is a split/all class discussion exercise will vary some from week to week. However, there will be small group discussion each week, typically 55 minutes during the middle of class time. Membership in these groups will be assigned by the instructors and will remain the same throughout the course.

The course will also have a required electronic component in the form of discussion forums and document sharing facilities for the in-class small groups. Most weeks the instructors will post a question(s) or topic to be addressed in the small group discussion forum. These on-line discussions will function as a kind of preparation for or continuation of the in-class small group discussions. In addition, course documents will be posted on the course's site in Moodle.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

The course is graded on a pass-no credit basis. The expectations for participation in the course for credit are as follows:

1. That each participant **will have done the week's assignments**, and **will participate constructively in large class time and in her or his small group both in person and online.**
2. That each participant will meet **minimum expectations for participation in the on-line small group discussions.** After the first week these are: at least one substantive posting in response to the topic/question(s) posed by the instructors or one substantive response to a colleague's post. "Substantive" postings engage both the substance of the topic at hand and are critically appreciative of others' postings. Each student should make an initial substantive posting by 6:00 pm on Sunday evening in order to provide classmates in your small group with sufficient time to read (and possibly respond) to your initial posting before the class meets on Monday.
3. That each participant **will submit seven papers/assignments** (only five of which will be evaluated and two of which will be submitted but not evaluated)
 - **Two copies** of your 3 page spiritual autobiography due September 15 (an electronic version is due to your small group colleagues on September 14 at 6:00 pm.) Both instructors will read all of these papers, but we will not evaluate or make notes on your work.
 - Theological reflection on Psalm 65 or Psalm 104 taking the form of artistic or liturgical expression. Due Oct. 6. As with the above assignment, this too will be received by the instructors with appreciation but without evaluation.
 - A 3 page paper in response to Max Weber. Due Oct. 27.
 - One 3 page paper reflecting on the readings from Sawyer, *The Church on the Margins*, pages 23-80, due November 3.
 - One 2 page paper assessing one of the readings assigned from *Lift Every Voice* using categories from Stone and Duke. Due Nov. 10.
 - One annotated bibliography, due November 24.
 - Choose one of these topics:
 - The Church and Eco-justice/injustice
 - The Arts and Theology
 - The Vocation of the pastor/clergy

Use 7 sources:

- 1 articles from reference works (dictionaries, encyclopedias, etc.)
- 1 monographs (books by a single author rather than an edited volume)
- 1 review of one of the book listed above
- 2 periodical/journal articles, 2 of which are indexed in the ATLA Religion Database, and are therefore likely to be of scholarly worth
- 2 resources found on the internet, for which a case must be made as to why they are academically credible (See handout on evaluation of resources to be distributed during the library research session October 13.)
 - Annotations should include four or five sentences which (1) give a general description of the main theme or focus of the text, (2) present the structure and contents of the text, (3) further indicate the nature of the argument, information of the text, (4) present some evaluation of how the text may be used.

- **Two copies** of a final 4 page statement of your theological understanding of your vocation, due December 8.

Specific instructions for each of these papers will be found in the course schedule section of this syllabus or will be distributed in class. The spiritual autobiography paper and the reflection will be read by both instructors, but not evaluated. The paper in response to Max Weber, the paper reflecting on *The Church on the Margins*, the paper assessing a reading from *Lift Every Voice*, and the annotated bibliography will be evaluated by one of the two instructors. They will each respond to half of the class's papers, and will alternate the half to which they respond. Both instructors will read all final papers about your understanding of vocation, but each instructor will give explicit feedback to only half of the class.

4. Will complete other assignments that do not need to be submitted to instructors for evaluation, notably:
 - there is a 1-2 page reflection paper on a work of art (due Sept. 29) that will be used in small group discussion
 - a library tutorial is due on Oct. 13.
5. That each participant **will have completed their spiritual autobiography and will have made an appointment to discuss it** with the chaplain.
6. Will participate in **leading opening class worship** (10 minutes) once during the term as part of a three- or four-person team. This responsibility for leadership includes bringing a cloth and appropriate symbols for the center table in the classroom.

We expect that you will observe the normal practices of the academic world for acknowledging dependence on the work of others. Your papers will have bibliographies listing works you consulted in writing the paper even if these are only Bible translations or textbooks and no matter how few or many there are. Except for the spiritual autobiography no paper no paper will be accepted without a bibliography! Wherever in the paper itself you use information, ideas, opinions, etc. gained from your reading, it is not enough to list the source(s) of that material in the bibliography. A footnote identifying the source(s) at the actual point of usage is also necessary. Failure to identify the sources of material that is not your work, but taken over from others, is plagiarism. If you hand in work containing plagiarism, we will grade it "NC," and will not let you replace or make up that paper. Note that the *Masters Student Handbook* shows a possible penalty of dismissal from school in the event of repeated offenses.

REQUIREMENTS FOR AUDITORS

Auditors are welcome in this class within the limits defined by seminary policy providing they keep faith with the first expectation for the course, completion of all reading assignments and participation in class discussions. Auditors will not complete written assignments that are submitted to instructors for evaluation.

SEMINARY POLICY ON EXTENSIONS

The work for a course is terminated at the end of the final class session. The student's performance in the course is evaluated on the basis of the work submitted by that time, unless an exception is made by the instructor[s], in which case a formal petition for extension must be approved by the instructor[s] by the end of the final class session. Extensions (of course work) beyond the end of the semester will be approved only under extraordinary circumstances. Each instructor will include this policy on each course syllabus as well as the criteria by which she or he [they] will grant such an extraordinary exception. In this course extensions ordinarily will be granted only when the need for additional time arises from a significant life change that materially alters the time a student can give to course work (e.g., serious illness, family crisis, change in job hours).

In the event such an exception is approved, the instructor[s] shall file the extension form with the Registrar by the date grades are due. The Student Review Committee shall monitor extensions. If no extension is filed, a final grade will be submitted.

An extension may be granted for a period not to exceed six months from the end of the term. If the work is not completed by the date petitioned, a final grade will be submitted. Any renewal of an extension must be approved by the

instructor[s] and filed with the Registrar prior to the due date on the original petition. No extension or its renewal will exceed six months from the end of the term in question.

SEMINARY POLICY ON THE USE OF INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Exclusive language is any form of communication which demeans, discounts, or ignores the experiences and full humanity of a group of people on the basis of gender, race, ethnic group, class, age, sexual orientation, or differing abilities and hence fosters oppression and injustice. Language shapes relationships between persons and shapes the self-image of persons. UTS seeks to affirm the human community in all its diversity. In a tradition of seeking justice as an educational community and while embracing the diversity of faith traditions, UTS strongly encourages all of its members to use language in writing and speech that is inclusive in regard to gender, race, ethnic group, class, age, sexual orientation, or differing abilities.

Implications:

1. Sexually inclusive language refers to human beings either in ways which are not gender-specific (e.g. “humankind,” “chairperson,” etc.) or which use balanced male and female terms (e.g. “she or he,” “all men and women,” etc.).
2. Nonsexist language is a broader category that refers to:
 - Language about God as well as well as about human beings, either using non-gender specific references for God or using pronouns and personal or non-personal images for God which reflect male/female balance; and
 - Language about human beings that acknowledges the full equality of women and men rather than reinforcing assumptions of male superiority and social privilege and/or reinforcing gender stereotypes (e.g. “pastor” rather than “woman pastor,” “nurse” rather than “male nurse,” “flight attendant” rather than “stewardess,” etc.).
3. Racially and ethnically inclusive language rejects the equating of color with virtue and does not equate darkness with negative qualities or lightness with positive qualities. It also rejects the use of or construction of “otherness” in language that connotes superiority of the dominant group.
4. Inclusive language also rejects the identification of single physical characteristics with a whole person, particularly in the case of physical or mental limitations, and instead strives to name the personhood first (e.g., “person who is blind” instead of “the blind person”).
5. Inclusive language rejects sexuality-specific language in general reference to relationships (e.g. “partner” is a more inclusive term than “husband” or “wife”).

6. Likewise, inclusive language referring to age, class, and other categories acknowledges the full humanity of persons and does not use terms which identify only singular characteristics of a person or group. (e.g. people who are homeless)

Further elaboration of this policy and suggestions and resources for its implementation may be found on reserve in the library in the folder marked "Inclusive Language." You may also find these resources helpful:

Clanton, Jann Aldredge. *In Whose Image?* New York: Crossroad, 1990.

Hardesty, Nancy A. *Inclusive Language In the Church.* Atlanta: John Knox, 1987.

Miller, Casey and Swift, Kate. *The Handbook of Nonsexist Writing.* Second edition. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1989.

Mollenkott, Virginia Ramey. *The Divine Feminine: The Biblical Imagery of God as Female.* New York: Crossroad, 1987.

Schwartz, Marilyn, and the Task Force on Bias-Free Language of the Association of American University Presses. *Guidelines for Bias-Free Writing.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995.

Wren, Brian. *What Language Shall I Borrow?* New York: Crossroad, 1990.

CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTORS

You may contact either or both of the course instructors any time you have questions, concerns or other matters related to the course that you would like to discuss. This contact can come via e-mail, telephone, or in person. **(The most reliable and quick method is e-mail)** If the matter is routine and informational, we are happy to respond via e-mail or telephone if that is more convenient way for you. *However, if you wish to discuss substantive questions, concerns or struggles you are experiencing in the course, we ask that you use the telephone or e-mail to set up a face to face appointment with one or both of us.*

TEXTBOOKS

Cooper, Burton Z. and John S. McClure. *Claiming Theology in the Pulpit.* Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003

Hildegard of Bingen, *Illuminations.* Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions.

Sawyer, Mary R. *The Church on the Margins: Living Christian Community.* Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2003.

Stone, Howard W. and James O. Duke. *How to Think Theologically*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006.

Thistlethwaite, Susan Brooks and Mary Potter Engel, eds. *Lift Every Voice: Constructing Christian Theologies from the Underside*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1998

Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Dover Publications, 2003.

OTHER REQUIRED READING

Bass, Dorothy and Mark Schwehn, "Measure of Success" **On reserve and on FirstSearch**

Buchanan, John M. "A Vocation To Save Life." **On reserve and on FirstSearch**

Casaldaliga, Pedro and Jose-Maria Vigil. "Everyday Faithfulness." Chapter in *Political Holiness: A Spirituality of Liberation*. **On Reserve in the library**

Copenhaver, Martin B. "Portrait of a Pastor: Mysteries and Blessings." **On reserve and on FirstSearch**

Dillenberger, Jane. *Style and Content in Christian Art*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1965. **On reserve in the library**

Everist, Norma Cook. "Connecting The Learning Community And Vocation In The Public World." **On reserve and on FirstSearch**

Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Continuum, 2000. Ch. 1, pp. 1-51. **On reserve in the library**

Habel, Norman C., ed. *The Earth Story in the Psalms and the Prophets*. The Earth Bible, 4. Cleveland: Pilgrim, 2001. pp. 51-64; 84-97. **On reserve in the library**

Harding, Vincent. "I Hear Them...Calling." Chapter in *Leading Lives that Matter: What We Should Do and Who We Should Be*. Edited by Mark R. Schwehn and Dorothy C. Bass. **On Reserve in the library**

Haynes, Deborah. "Theology of the Arts and the Vocation of the Artist." **On reserve and on FirstSearch**

Hessel, Dieter T.. "Where Were/Are the U.S. Churches in the Environmental Movement?" In *Theology for Earth Community: A Field Guide*. Edited by

Dieter T. Hessel. **On Reserve in the library**

Holland, Scott. "The Public Vocation of the Pastor." **On reserve and on FirstSearch**

Horsley, Richard A. *1 Corinthians*. Abingdon New Testament Commentaries. Nashville: Abingdon press, 1998. pp. 21-55, 100-104. **On reserve in the library**

Jacobson, Rolf A. "Stewards of God's Mysteries." **On reserve and on FirstSearch**

Jones, David Lee. "The True Self and the Stewardship of Vocation" **On reserve and on FirstSearch**

Knitter, Paul F.. "Conclusion: An Interreligious Common Front and Common Hope." In *Visions of a New Earth: Religious Perspectives On Population, Consumption, And Ecology*. Edited by Harold Coward and Daniel C. Maguire **On Reserve in the library**

Lischer, Richard. "The Called Life: An Essay on the Pastoral Vocation." **On reserve and on FirstSearch**

May, Melanie A. "One Woman's Wrestling With Vocation." **On reserve and on FirstSearch**

Piercy, Margaret, "To be of use." Poem in *Leading Lives that Matter: What We Should Do and Who We Should Be* edited by Mark R. Schwehn and Dorothy C. Bass. **On Reserve in the library**

Postlethwaite, Martha. *Spiritual Chronicle*. Chs. 1-3. New Brighton: UTS, 2008. **To be passed out in class**

Larry Rasmussen, "Eco-Justice: Church and Community Together." In *Earth Habitat: Eco-Injustice and the Church's Response*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001. **On reserve in the library**

Rhodes, Lynn N. "Vocation: Meaningful Work." In *Co-Creating: A Feminist Vision of Ministry*. **On reserve in the library**

Russell, Letty. *The Future of Partnership*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1979. pp. 164-176 **On reserve in the library**

Schweitzer, Albert . "I Resolve to Become a Jungle Doctor." Chapter in *Leading Lives That Matter: What We Should Do and Who We Should Be*. Edited by Mark R. Schwehn and Dorothy C. Bass. **On Reserve in the library**

Segundo, Juan Luis. *The Liberation of Theology*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1976. pp. 7-9.
On reserve in the library

SUPPLEMENTAL SUGGESTIONS

Baxter, Richard. "Directions about Our Labor and Callings." In *Callings: Twenty Centuries of Christian Wisdom on Vocation*. Edited by William C. Placher. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005. pp. 278-285. **On reserve in the library**

Calvin, John. Excerpts from *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. In *Callings: Twenty Centuries of Christian Wisdom on Vocation*. Edited by William C. Placher. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005. pp. 232-239. **On reserve in the library**

Gaiser, Frederick J., "What Luther Didn't Say About Vocation." **On reserve and on FirstSearch**

Howe, Mark DeWolfe. *The Garden and the Wilderness*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965. **On reserve in the library**

Isaac, Donald J., "Work and Christian Calling." **On reserve and on FirstSearch**

Luther, Martin. "Commentary on 1 Corinthians 7" in *Luther's Works*, Vol. 28. Saint Louis: Concordia, 1973. **On reserve in the library**

Martin. Joan M., "Whose Work Ethic? A Womanist Reading of 'A Work Ethic' from the Bible to the United States." In *More Than Chains and Toil: A Christian Work Ethic of Enslaved Women*. **On Reserve in the library**

Stone. Phillip C., "Mistaken Identities: Dignity and Value in All Work" **On reserve and on FirstSearch**

Wesley, John. "The Danger of Riches." Sermon LXXXVII in *Wesley's Works*, Vol. VII: Sermons, Vol. III. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1884. **On reserve in the library**

Wesley, John. "The Use of Money." Sermon L in *Wesley's Works*, Vol. VI: Sermons, Vol. II. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1884. **On reserve in the library**

COURSE SCHEDULE

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ART & CRAFT OF THEOLOGY

I. BEGINNINGS

Session 1. September 8 Introduction To The Course

Worship, introductions, opening statements, walk through the syllabus

Guest lecturer: Professor Barbara Anne Keely "SMALL GROUP DYNAMICS"

Guest lecturer: Bee Yang "MOODLE AND ONLINE DISCUSSIONS"

II. VOCATION: IDENTITY, FAITH, SPIRITUALITY, AND THEOLOGY

Session 2. September 15 Personal Vocation: Spiritual Journeys in Social Contexts

Readings:

- *Spiritual Chronicle*, chs. 1-3
- Juan Luis Segundo, *The Liberation of Theology*, pp. 7-9
(the rest of ch. 1, pp. 10-38, recommended!)
- "A Vocation To Save Life," by John M. Buchanan
- "Everyday Faithfulness," by Pedro Casaldaliga & Jose-Maria Vigil
- "I Resolve to Become a Jungle Doctor," by Albert Schweitzer
- "I Hear Them...Calling," by Vincent Harding
- "To be of use," by Margaret Piercy
- "The True Self and the Stewardship of Vocation" by David Lee Jones

Guest Lecturer: Chaplain Martha Postlethwaite

Written Assignment: A 3-page paper articulating your "Spiritual Autobiography" as explained in Chapter 2 of *Spiritual Chronicle*. You should post your paper to the members of your small group by 6 p.m. on September 14 so that each member of the group is able to read everyone else's story before coming to class on the 15th. **Bring two paper copies to class for the instructors.**

Session 3. Sept. 22 – Theological Interpretation: Worldviews, Foundational Questions, Methods, and Sources Of Authority

The Nature of Theological Reflection
 embedded vs. deliberative theology
 resources for theological reflection
 processes of theological reflection (interpretation, correlation, assessment)
 contextuality of theological reflection
 theological reflection as dialogue

For discussion: Talking Turkey (to be distributed in class)

Readings:

- Stone and Duke, *How to Think Theologically*, pp. V – 95
- *Lift Every Voice*, introduction, pp. 1-23

III. VOCATION: GOD AND CREATION

Session 4. Sept. 29 Theology as Imaginative Work: Art as a Model of Theological Reflection

Readings:

- Hildegard of Bingen, *Illuminations*
- Jane Dillenberger, Style and Content in Christian Art, pp. 11-28.
- Deborah Haynes “Theology of the Arts and the Vocation of the Artist”

Guest Lecturer: Cindi Beth Johnson

Assignment:

1-2 page reflection on art work

Write a 1-2 page reflection paper on a work of art that will be posted on the course web site or from *Illuminations*. A set of instructions for the paper will be posted on the web site. Bring the paper to class to share in your small group. Otherwise, the paper is not handed in or evaluated.

Session 5. Oct. 6 Theology as Imaginative Work in Scripture

Assignment:

Artistic or liturgical expression on Psalm 65 and Psalm 104

Reflect theologically on Psalm 65 and Psalm 104, and allow your reflection to take the form of artistic or liturgical expression. You may use any medium you like for an artistic expression of your theological reflection. Liturgical expressions might take the form of a written prayer, hymn, act of praise, etc. Try to do this assignment BEFORE attending to

the assigned readings. This assignment is to be handed in, but it will not be evaluated.

Readings:

- The Earth Story in the Psalms and the Prophets, pp. 51-64; 84-97.
- *Lift Every Voice*, chs. 5, 10, 18, 19, pp. 69-81, 146-158, 265-288

Integrative Notebook Introduced

IV. VOCATION: JUSTICE AND TRANSFORMATION

Session 6. Oct. 13 - The Research That Undergirds Our Work

Guest Lecturers: Sue and Dale

Assignment: Library Tutorial Due – This will be posted on Moodle

During the week go to the course web page and work through the two library tutorials:

Which Word Works Where?

Building a Keyword Search

Your performance will not be evaluated, but we will track names to ensure that everyone completes both tutorials. Be sure to do the tutorials on the IS151 course web page rather than the library web page, or you will not receive credit for having completed them. If you have trouble with either of them feel free to consult the library.

READING WEEK – No Class

Session 7. Oct 27 Vocation at Home and Work: A Historical, Sociological and Theological Critique

Required Reading:

- Richard A. Horsley, *1 Corinthians*, Abingdon New Testament Commentaries, (Nashville: Abingdon press, 1998), pp. 21-55, 100-104.
- Letty Russell, *The Future of Partnership*, pp. 164-176
- Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*

Recommended Reading:

- Martin Luther, "Commentary on 1 Corinthians 7"
- Calvin in *Callings*, pp. 232-239
- Baxter in *Callings*, pp. 278-285
- John Wesley, "The Use of Money"
- John Wesley, "The Danger of Riches"

- Frederick J. Gaiser, "What Luther Didn't Say About Vocation"
- Donald J. Isaac, "Work and Christian Calling"
- Phillip C. Stone, "Mistaken Identities: Dignity and Value in All Work"
- Joan M. Martin, "Whose Work Ethic? A Womanist Reading of 'A Work Ethic' from the Bible to the United States." In *More Than Chains and Toil: A Christian Work Ethic of Enslaved Women*.

Assignment: Making reference to the readings, especially Weber, discuss the idea of vocation in historical perspective. What social forces may have shaped a Western understanding of vocation? How has a theology of vocation, perhaps, shaped western social and economic realities in turn? This should be a short reflection (approximately 3 pages) in response to the readings.

Session 8 Nov. 3 Contextuality: The Particularity & Relatedness of Individuals & Communities

Readings:

- Sawyer, pp. 23-80 (recommended: pp. vii-23 as well)
- Lift Every Voice, chs.1,3, 4, 9 & 20, pp.24-29, 40-52, 53-68, 127-142, 289-297

Assignment: Three page reflection paper on Sawyer, pp. 23-80

Your paper should address these two tasks:

1. describe how your experience of religious community has been similar or different from those that Sawyer describes;
2. describe some of the challenges for good theological work in light of what Sawyer describes.

Session 9 Nov. 10 Justice and Overarching Systems of Oppression

Systemic injustice

Issues of privilege and power

Readings:

- Lift Every Voice, chs. 2, 6, 12, 13, 14, pp.30-39, 82-95, 173-220
- Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, ch. 1, pp. 1-51 (entire book recommended)

Assignment:

A two page paper assessing one of the chapters in Lift Every Voice using categories from Stone and Duke

V. VOCATION: CHURCH AND COMMUNITY

Session 10. Nov. 17 New Expressions of Church and Religious Communities

Required Readings:

- Lift Every Voice, chs 15, 16, 17 pp. 221-264
- Sawyer, read any two chapters from Part II

Recommended Reading:

- Mark DeWolfe Howe, *The Garden and the Wilderness*, pp. 1-31

Session 11. Nov. 24 *The Church as Communities of Theological Reflection, Public Witness, and Transformation*

Readings:

- Sawyer, pp. 222-281
- Norma Cook Everist, "Connecting The Learning Community And Vocation In The Public World."
- Paul F. Knitter, "Conclusion: An Interreligious Common Front and Common Hope." In *Visions of a New Earth: Religious Perspectives On Population, Consumption, And Ecology*. Edited by Harold Coward and Daniel C. Maguire
- Dieter T. Hessel, "Where Were/Are the U.S. Churches in the Environmental Movement?" In *Theology for Earth Community: A Field Guide*. Edited by Dieter T. Hessel.
- Larry Rasmussen, "Eco-Justice: Church and Community Together." In *Earth Habitat: Eco-Injustice and the Church's Response*

Assignment: An Annotated biography assignment due on one of these three topics:

- a) The Church and Eco-Justice/Injustice
- b) Art and Theology
- c) Vocation of the pastor/clergy

This annotated bibliography should include 7 sources:

- 1 articles from reference works (dictionaries, encyclopedias, etc.)
- 1 monographs (books by a single author rather than an edited volume)
- 1 review of one of the book listed above
- 2 periodical/journal articles, 2 of which are indexed in the ATLA Religion Database, and are therefore likely to be of scholarly worth

- 2 resources found on the internet, for which a case must be made as to why they are academically credible (See handout on evaluation of resources to be distributed during the library research session on November 8.)
Annotations should include four or five sentences which (1) give a general description of the main theme or focus of the text, (2) present the structure and contents of the text, (3) further indicate the nature of the argument, information of the text, (4) present some evaluation of how the text may be used.

VI. VOCATION: PERSONAL VOCATION REVISTED

Session 12. Dec. 1 – Our Vocation as Theologians

Required Reading:

- Rolf A. Jacobson, "Stewards of God's Mysteries."
- Cooper & McClure, pp. 1-73
- Dorothy Bass and Mark Schwehn, "Measure of Success"
- David Lee Jones, "The True Self and the Stewardship of Vocation"
- May, Melanie A. "One Woman's Wrestling With Vocation."
- Lynn N. Rhodes, "Vocation: Meaningful Work." In *Co-Creating: A Feminist Vision of Ministry*.

Recommended Reading

- Richard Lischer, "The Called Life: An Essay on the Pastoral Vocation."
- Martin B. Copenhaver, "Portrait of a Pastor: Mysteries and Blessings."
- Scott Holland, "The Public Vocation of the Pastor."

Assignment: Theological Profile – Part I and II

After completing the reading in Cooper & McClure, fill out your theological profile charts (handed out in class and available on the course web page), and come prepared to discuss this with your small group in class

Session 13. Dec. 8 Final Class Session

Assignment: A final 4 page paper describing your current theological understanding of your vocation drawing on the resources of the class. **Please bring 2 copies to class.**

