Saint Paul School of Theology

**Course of Study**

**224 Administration and Polity**

**Summer 2022**

Instructor: Rev. Dr. Heecheon Jeon

Email: Heecheon.jeon@gmail.com

Phone: 515-664-6040

**Course Description**

This course focuses on developing the student’s competency as an administrator in a United Methodist congregation.

*While polity includes the rules, procedures, and practices of the Church, it is so much more. Polity is grounded in our history and doctrine, and has evolved in response to the changing environments in which the UMC has lived. – Anne L. Burkholder and Thomas W. Elliott, Jr.*

**Course Objectives**

Students will be able to:

1. Articulate a biblical and theological understanding of polity.

2. Understand and explain the polity of The United Methodist Church, including conferencing, oversight, and discipline.

3. Articulate the nature of stewardship biblically and theologically.

4. Identify techniques and develop skills as effective administrators of local churches, including financial management.

**COS 224 - Booklist**

**Required Texts- for assignments**

* **Thomas Edward Frank, *Polity, Practice, and the Mission of the United Methodist Church,* Updated Edition. Abingdon Press, 2006. ISBN-13 ‏ : ‎ 978-0687335312**
* **Laceye Warner, *The Method of Our Mission: United Methodist Polity and Organization.* Abingdon Press, 2014, ISBN-13 ‏ : ‎ 978-1426767173**

**Recommended Texts – for further understanding**

* ***The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*. United Methodist Publishing House, 2016. Available in an online PDF:** [**https://www.ctcumc.org/files/fileshare/2016-book-of-discipline.pdf**](https://www.ctcumc.org/files/fileshare/2016-book-of-discipline.pdf)
* **Lovett Weems, *Focus: The Real challenges That Face The United Methodist Church,* Abingdon Press, 2012, ISBN-13 ‏ : ‎ 978-1426740374**

**Three Writing Assignments**

**Assignment 1 (Research paper): Due date: Thursday, August 4, 2022**

Submit a seven-page paper on an issue related to United Methodist polity, such as connectionalism, judicial/legislative/executive bodies, trust clause, the roles and responsibilities of the charge/district/annual/jurisdictional/central/general conferences, global connection (central conferences), superintendency (missional strategist), boards and agencies, and so on.

* State the issue and the historical development which have precipitated the issue.
* Analyze conflicting views or positions regarding the issue by stating each one’s biblical, theological, philosophical, and scientific premises. Note how terms are defined and used.
* Argue for a position or build a case of resolution. Persuade the reader, giving reasons why this is the reasonable argument. Demonstrate the strength of your case.

**Assignment 2 (Reflection paper): Due date: Thursday, August 11, 2022**

*5 pages designed for personal/pastoral reflection on vocation discernment by answering one of the following questions:*

* Describe your understanding of the unique responsibilities and distinct differences related to (a) Elders, (b) Deacons, and (c) Local Pastors. Given these distinctions, why are YOU on the track you are on?
* If you wanted to start a new ministry that doesn't exist anywhere, how could you use the rules of your Order to do this?   What would you start, if you could?

**Assignment 3 (Project): Due date: Thursday, August 18, 2022**

* *5 pages of a ministry tool (sermon, Bible study, etc). You will be asked to create either a sermon series or a Bible study outline to teach topics related to UM Polity.* 
  + *See the two following websites that will give some ideas on your project: “Emerging United Methodism” (*[*https://www.emergingmethodism.com*](https://www.emergingmethodism.com)*) or “Revised Social Principles.”* <https://www.umcjustice.org/news-and-stories/social-principles-2020-607>

**Moodle Forums**

**7/13-7/22** (2 Forums per week)

**Final Grade**

*Final grade percentages*

* + Four Forum participations (asynchronous) (4 forums x 10% = 40%)
  + Participation in ZOOM classes (synchronous) (30%)
  + Three written assignments (3 writings x 10% = 30%)

Two special notes:

1. Late papers receive a grade no higher than C (unless by special accommodation) and may receive no credit.
2. Missing one class session or 20% of a class work results in no credit for the course. [See the COS policy below]

**CLASS STRUCTURE**

**ZOOM ORIENTATION—Meet from 6-8 pm CST, Thursday, July 7th** for an introductionto the class. Attendance is required for all students

**ONLINE FORUMS – July 13-July 22, 2022**

FORUMS - 2 forums per week (a total of 4 forums)

❖ In these two weeks I will post 2 forums per week. Each of the 2 forums will invite reflection on course material.

❖ Students engage these forums by making initial posts (250 – 300) in response to the forum topics. You may wish to reference course texts, narrated PowerPoints, videos, or other material.

❖Students will then respond to initial posts by two other students in each of the two forums each week (50 – 100 words)

❖ Initial forum posts by students must be done by Wednesday by 11:59 pm of each week to allow students to write at least two responses to their classmates by Friday 11:59 pm.

❖ Forum postings on time will count and be graded as class participation and attendance.

**Forum Topics:**

**Topic 1**:Describe your understanding of the unique responsibilities and distinct differences related to (a) Elders, (b) Deacons, and (c) Local Pastors. Given these distinctions, why are YOU on the track you are on?

**Topic 2**: Describe your understanding of Church Council membership as described in the BOD and the options that will be available to you and the church, and your understanding of the difference between a Church Conference and a Charge Conference.  What is their function, make up, and purpose?

**Topic 3:** In 150 words, please summarize the teachings contained in that Social Principle and discuss its importance for informing the work of the local church.

**Topic 4**: Based on your reading of what the BOD says about the role and responsibilities of conferences (annual, jurisdictional, central, and general), what would you say are the decision-making roles of the various conferences in regard to church schism.

**ONLINE CLASS MEETING—Thursday, July 28th, 2022 from 8-12, 1-5 pm CST**

Classes will be held via Zoom for 10 hours (combination of orientation and class day) to meet GBHEM policies and educational best practices.

You will receive a zoom invite from your instructor. A computer or tablet with a camera are preferred – and please plan to have your camera on during class to facilitate discussion.

**Overview of the Class:**

1. Introduction on Polity & Administration
2. The United Methodist Constitution (the overall organizational structures)
3. Judicial Administration
4. Local Church
5. The Ministry of the Ordained (Licensed) Ministry
6. The Superintendency
7. The Conferences
8. Administrative Order (General Boards, Agencies, and Commissions)
9. Church Property
10. Social Principles
11. Conclusion: Leadership development in a Connectional system (Weems)

**Course Policies**

In this course, we have multiple accountabilities. First, we are accountable to the Triune God and the Christian life and work to which we are called. Second, we are accountable to the Church and to the believers who make up the COS community. Third, we (instructor and students) are accountable to the Course of Study Policies and Guidelines, which help us to be faithful to our calls, the Church, and each other. I refer you to the COS policies but will highlight a few important expectations in this course.

*Class Attendance*

“A student is expected to attend every class session. Unexcused absences may be cause for loss of credit or dismissal from the school. A student missing twenty percent (20%) or more of the class room work shall not receive credit for those classes. Online work shall be included in the attendance policy.” [COS Policies and Guidelines, page 5]

*Academic Integrity Statement/Plagiarism*

All students are expected to document the sources they use in their written work properly. All words from the source should be quoted and cited even if only one unique word, a phrase, or model and typology headings. The use of a concept, idea, or fact must also be given recognition.

Any violation of COS’s policy on may result in a zero for the assignment, course, and disciplinary action against the student may be taken, including, but not limited to, dismissal.

Note from the instructor: To avoid plagiarism, which is taking someone else’s ideas or words/phrases/sentences and representing them as your own. In this course, **be sure** to use quotation marks to indicate when you’re quoting an author. Use footnotes to cite the places where anyone can find the quoted material or ideas. I recommend using Kate L. Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers.* See the folder posted in Moodle to learn the style expected. A quick reference guide is found at:

[*https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/turabian/turabian-notes-and-bibliography-citation-quick-guide.html*](https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/turabian/turabian-notes-and-bibliography-citation-quick-guide.html)

See/contact the instructor whenever you need writing support or advice.

*Sexual Harassment and Racial Harassment*

Note from the instructor: The two policies are too lengthy to quote here, but I refer you to the texts in the COS Policies and Guidelines, pages 19-23. Needless to say, the expected practice in our classroom will be to encourage, respect, and support each other in our work. The classroom is not a competitive or contentious place, but a collaborative and mutually responsible setting.

*Learning Accommodation*

As part of its commitment to equal opportunity, the Seminary is committed to providing qualified individuals with disabilities with reasonable accommodation. Students seeking accommodation should contact Margaretta Narcisse, the Associate Dean of Student Affairs at [margaretta.narcisse@spst.edu](mailto:margaretta.narcisse@spst.edu).

This office maintains the forms necessary for medical documentation of disabilities required before any accommodation can be considered. Following receipt of medical documentation from the student, the Associate Dean of Student Affairs will determine reasonable accommodations for specified needs, including identifying persons to whom this information will be released.