

## **COS 224 – Polity and Administration**

Methodist Theological School of Ohio

Instructors: Rev. Cara Stultz Costello and Rev. Tom Snyder

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Fridays and Saturdays June 26 & 27 and July 17 & 18

### **Course Description and Expected Outcomes**

This course focuses upon developing the student's competency as an administrator in United Methodist congregations. Upon successful completion the student of local churches 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, including financial management.

### **Required Texts**

*The Holy Bible*

*The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016* (Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 2017)

*The Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church 2016* (Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 2017)

Lacey C. Warner, *The Method of Our Mission: United Methodist Polity and Organization* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2014)

Weems, Lovett H., *Leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999)

Articles and excerpts from books may be posted on Populi.

### **Frequently used websites**

[www.umc.org](http://www.umc.org) The official website of The United Methodist Church

[www.gbhem.org](http://www.gbhem.org) General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

[www.gcfa.org](http://www.gcfa.org) General Council on Finance and Administration

[www.umc.org/decisions](http://www.umc.org/decisions) Archives of Judicial Council decisions

### Focus: June 26 & 27

- Call Stories and Vision for Ministry
- Local Church, District, Annual Conference
  - o Guest Presentations
    - Stewardship
    - Episcopacy, Superintendancy and Supervision
    - Board of Ministry and Credentialling

### Focus: July 16 & 17

- Jurisdictional Conferences, Central Conferences, General Conference
  - o Guest Presentations:
    - Conferences and Conferencing
    - Future of the UMC
  - o Student Presentations:
    - Book of Discipline/Resolution Group Presentations

### Assignments and Due Dates

- 1) Arrive to our first class prepared to share your call story and vision for ministry. - **5 Points/Due June 26, 2020**
- 2) **Part #1** - Prior to beginning your reading assignments, write a 3-5 page statement describing the organization of your current ministry setting, articulating your biblical, theological, missional and practical understanding of administration and polity in the United Methodist tradition, and assessing how the organization of the United Methodist Church helps or hampers the ministry of your local church. – **20 Points/Due June 15, 2020**  
  
**Part #2** – As an accompaniment to your “Signed Reading Covenant” for Weems and Warner write a 4 - 6 page reflection comparing and contrasting your pre- reading/pre-class understanding to your post-reading/post-class understanding of administration and polity. Ask yourself, “How has this material and instruction invited me to think differently about my initial assessments? What new/different ways will I approach administration and the use of UM polity within my local church for the purpose of greater ministry effectiveness? What did I find to be the most helpful insight for service in my current appointment? Why? What did I find to be the least helpful insight for service in my current appointment? Why?” – **20 Points/Due July 27, 2020**
- 3) Prepare an Order of Worship and a sermon for a Stewardship Sunday. These will be processed in small groups. Please provide an order of worship for each person in your groups and be prepared to preach your sermon. - **25 Points/Due June 26 or 27, 2020**
- 4) Create a group presentation to be used in your local church explaining some facet of United Methodist polity from one of these following sections of the *Book of Discipline*: Chapter 1, Chapter 2, Chapter 6 OR one resolution from the *Book of Resolutions*. Be mindful of your local context and potential impact to your church and community by choosing a facet which addresses particular local concerns, activities, mission or outreach. Be prepared to present in class. – **25 Points/Due July 16 or 17, 2020**

5) Be an active participant in class. – **5 points**

### **Grading**

75% of each grade = accuracy of knowledge/analysis, clarity of expression and care in writing/expression

25% of each grade = creativity

## **Academic Honor Policy**

The Course of Study School of Ohio requires that all material submitted by a student in fulfilling his or her academic requirements be the original work of the student.

Violations of academic honor include any action by a student indicating dishonesty or lack of integrity in academic ethics. Violations in this category include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly passing off work of another as one's own.

Cheating includes seeking, acquiring, receiving or passing on information about the content of an examination prior to its authorized release or during its administration. Cheating also includes seeking, using, giving or obtaining unauthorized assistance in any academic assignment or examination.

Plagiarism is the act of presenting as one's own work with the work of another whether published or unpublished (including the work of another student). A writer's work should be regarded as his or her own property. Any person who knowingly uses a writer's distinctive work without proper acknowledgement is guilty of plagiarism.

A student found guilty of a violation of the academic honor code, after a review of the case, may be subject to one or more of the following actions:

- (1) Warning
- (2) Probation
- (3) Suspension for the remainder of the course
- (4) Dismissal from the Course of Study School of Ohio
- (5) Grade of Fail for the course

Regardless of the outcome, a letter will be sent to the student's District Superintendent and Board of Ordained Ministry representative.