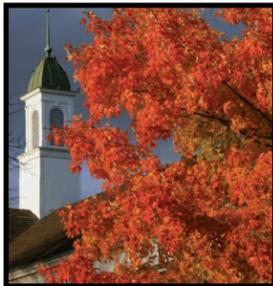
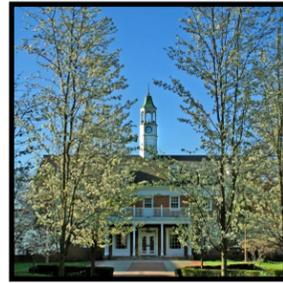


FROM THE DIRECTOR

FROM THE WRITING LAB



Let me welcome all of you, including four new students and fifteen graduating students, to the 2021 Fall Term of the Course of Study School of Ohio (COSSO)!

In January 2019, nine MTSO students and I traveled to Vietnam and Cambodia for two weeks as part of a cross-cultural immersion course. With God’s grace, we had an enriching learning experience and life-changing encounters. A beauty and challenge of a cross-cultural trip was that we had to depend on the hospitality of our hosts and even strangers. Yet, more than a few times, we witnessed moments of grace during which strangers became friends who got genuinely concerned about our well-being and willing to go the second mile to help us learn about their people and culture.

The Vietnam War ended in 1975, yet its scars still remain deep and affect the lives of the people in Vietnam. People are routinely killed or maimed by landmines and unexploded ordnance. There are still people suffering from the effects of Agent Orange, a small number of whom we were able to meet during our trip. In Cambodia, we visited places that commemorate the genocide which killed 1.7 million people, 25 percent of the total population, between 1975 and 1979. The memories of the genocide are still haunting the people in Cambodia and they have a long way to go to reach national reconciliation.

In both countries, we grappled with questions concerning the gospel: “What should be the message of the gospel in this particular context? And how should the gospel be communicated?”

In 2 Corinthians Ch. 5, Paul stresses that reconciliation is the burden of the gospel message. Reconciliation is the defining act of God in Christ, yet God has entrusted to us the message of reconciliation: “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us” (vv. 18–19).

Reflecting recently on the 20th anniversary of the September 11 terror attacks, I was acutely reminded that our ministry of reconciliation and peacemaking, our witness to the Prince of Peace, is central to the gospel and integral to the mission of the church. And it is God who appeals through us even in our ministry of reconciliation.

Our classes will be offered fully online at least through the Winter Term in 2022 due to the pandemic. All of us on the COSSO staff look forward to journeying with you this Fall term!

Grace and peace,

Joon-Sik Park

Dr. Joon-Sik Park
Director of the Course of Study School of Ohio
E. Stanley Jones Professor of World Evangelism



When friends or family asked how he was doing, my grandfather was wont to reply: “I feel more like I do right now than I did a while ago.” It amused him to see how long it took people to realize that, despite using a lot of familiar words, he wasn’t saying anything at all. It was not amusing to me, however, when one of my college professors commented on a paper I had submitted: “You write so beautifully, it’s a shame you have nothing to say.” Researching our topic is what gives us the substance to our paper. Without substance, then there is no paper. It is like trying to cook Duck à l’Orange without a duck. The sources we consult can give us that substance (or duck). Of course, crafting a great essay requires critical thinking, creativity and some finesse, but it all begins with something to say. This is why researching our topic thoroughly before we begin writing is so essential. The more we understand about the text we are reflecting upon or analyzing, the more freedom and confidence we gain to think critically and creatively about the ideas presented. Freedom and confidence can do wonders for our writing, which is why research and critical thinking about our topic is so important *before* we start to write.

Dr. Trad Noguiera-Godsey
Writing Instructor



Course of Study School of Ohio

www.cosohio.org

Term	Class Dates	Registration Deadline	Dorm Availability
2022 Winter 323 is FULL	Feb 11-12 & Mar 4-5	12/13/2021	Meeting fully online
2022 Spring 324 is FULL	April 1-2 & May 6-7	1/31/2022	Available
2022 Summer	June 24-25 & July 15-16	4/25/2022	Available
2022 Summer 2-Week	Aug 8-12 and 15-18	6/9/2022	Available
2022 Fall	Sept 16-17 & Oct 14-15	7/18/22	Nearly full

2021 SUMMER GRADUATES— CONGRATULATIONS!



Top row: Kima Cunningham, Bob Fuchs, Sheri Kernik, George Price
Bottom row: Nate Starkey, Terry Stone, Lori Douglas Weaver

MEET YOUR INSTRUCTORS



Rev. Dr. Paul Barton
COS 122: Theological Heritage I: Introduction

Dr. Paul Barton received his M.Div. from Perkins School of Theology and his Ph.D. from Southern Methodist University. He serves as pastor of Casa Emanuel-El UMC in Dallas, TX and the director of Hispanic-Latino/a Church Ministries Program at Perkins.

Rev. Cara Stultz-Costello

COS 224: Administration and Polity

Rev. Stultz-Costello received her M.Div. from Wesley Theological Seminary. She serves as District Superintendent of the Tuscarawas district of the East Ohio conference.



Rev. Dr. Mark Powell

COS 321: Bible III: Gospels

Dr. Mark Allan Powell received his M.Div. from Trinity Lutheran Seminary and his Ph.D. from Union Theological Seminary in Virginia. He is retired Professor of New Testament at Trinity Lutheran Seminary.

Dr. Glen Messer

COS 422: Theological Heritage IV: Wesleyan Movement

Dr. Glen Messer received his M.Div. and Th.D. from Boston University. From 2012-2016 he served as associate ecumenical staff officer for theology and dialogue with the UMC Council of Bishops Office of Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships.



Rev. Dr. Daniel Flores

COS 422: Theological Heritage IV: Wesleyan Movement

Rev. Dr. Daniel Flores received his M.Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary and his Ph.D. from Drew University. An ordained UM elder, he is Library Director at Texas Lutheran University.

Rev. Dr. Jason Vickers

COS 524: Theological Reflection: Practice of Ministry

Dr. Jason Vickers received his M.Div. from Nazarene Theological Seminary and his Ph.D. from Southern Methodist University. He is Professor of Theology at Asbury Theological Seminary.



SPIRITUAL FORMATION

PRAISE GOD, THEN BEHOLD AND BEHELD

As for me, I shall *behold* your face in righteousness;
when I awake I shall be satisfied, *beholding* your likeness. (Psalm 17:15)
So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,
beholding your power and glory. (Psalm 63:2)

It seems the Psalms are full of words like “behold” and “beholding” that give praise to God. When we look at something beautiful, we are invited to “behold” it and see the face of God, in scenery that takes our breath away, magnificent pieces of art, a newborn baby, the smile on the face of an elder friend. Many verses include “behold,” as a sort of command or way to get our attention, to stop and “be held” in the moment. Richard Rohr calls this “beholding,” because it’s more about being held than holding something. It’s a sort of announcement to get ready to experience something amazing.

On many retreats I have gone into the woods to experience God in nature. On one particular retreat we were asked to draw a line on the ground and to expect things on the other side to be different, expect to “behold” the power and glory of God. I remember Sister Joan Marie Smith, saying something similar in our spirituality class at MTSO. She told us to go outside and read a passage or verse in the Bible, slowly, over and over, until God spoke to us. She said God always speaks, you just have to listen for as long as it takes, and she said don’t come back until God speaks to you. I did not have much faith in this process, but I did it and to my surprise it somehow worked. I “beheld” the glory of God in the words that came to me from those few Bible verses, and I knew I was in the presence of something holy and greater than me. These are moments that cannot be manipulated, but we can open our hearts and eyes and “be held” in them, according to Rohr.

We live in a culture that tells us to hold on to what we’ve got and to take hold of what we want. It might change our perspective as we continue to go through this Covid crisis, if we try to do more “beholding” and a little less “beholding.” And so, I invite you to “beheld” in your daily devotions. Choose a scripture passage or find something of beauty—in your home, outside or online—read it or stare at it until you see or feel the presence of God. Allow yourself to “behold” the beauty of God, and then slowly move into “being held” by the holy presence of God. Somehow it works, for God is greater than we are and God opens us to the experience of “being held” wherever we are.

Adapted from Richard Rohr, Just This (CAC Publishing: 2017: 99–101).

Rev. Dr. Rebeka Maples
Spiritual Formation Director



FROM THE COORDINATOR

Students from 10 Annual Conferences are attending COSSO this term:



COURSE PLANNING NOTES:

- 2022 Winter COS 323: Congregational Care and 2022 Spring COS 324: Preaching are **full**; both are next offered in the 2022 Summer 2-Week.
- You can find the course planning grid [here](#) to help you plan your classes.



FROM THE CHOIR ROOM

As the old saying goes, “*the one who sings prays twice.*” We look forward to singing together again when we can safely meet in person.



Lori Douglas Weaver, MEd
Choir Director

