

COS 423 – Mission

Course of Study School of Ohio at Methodist Theological School in Ohio

Instructor: Dr. David W. Scott

Dates: Aug. 2–6 and 9–12, 2021; 9:30–11:00am daily synchronous sessions

Overview

This course introduces the theology and scope of mission, and the pastor's role in leading congregations in their mission as agents of God's transforming redemption.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

1. Articulate a biblical and theological framework for Christian mission.
2. Explain the Wesleyan relationship of personal piety and social holiness.
3. Examine and reflect on unjust social realities and the response of the church locally and globally.
4. Analyze their ministry context and develop strategies for transforming mission.

Requirements/Grading System

- Engagement in asynchronous discussions and learning activities (10% of total grade)
- Engagement in synchronous learning sessions (15% of total grade)
- *Grace Upon Grace* commentary paper (20% of total grade)
- Mission and global issues paper (20% of total grade)
- Ministry context analysis paper (35% of total grade)

Required Texts

- David W. Scott, *Crossing Boundaries: Sharing God's Good News through Mission* (Nashville, TN: Wesley's Foundry Books, 2019).
- Dana L. Robert, *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).
- *Grace Upon Grace Commentary: A UM & Global Collection* (available online at https://drive.google.com/file/d/14E5EiOxzCWqxIWiyb_fQWTfppX8wwVRX/view).
- Michael Mather, *Having Nothing, Possessing Everything: Finding Abundant Communities in Unexpected Places* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 2018).

Friday, July 30

Assignment:

- *Grace Upon Grace* commentary paper due
Choose one passage (of between one paragraph and one section) from *Grace Upon Grace*. Write a 3–5-page paper analyzing that paragraph according to your understanding of mission. Address questions such as: What are the passage's strengths, and what does it get right about mission? Where should the passage be altered or amended? In your analysis, you may (but are not required to) respond to or incorporate the commentaries included in the UM & Global *Grace Upon Grace Commentary*.

Monday, August 2

Reading (to be read before synchronous session):

- Scott, Chapter 1

Asynchronous work (to be completed before synchronous session):

- Read and discuss definitions of mission

Synchronous session:

- Introductions; Defining Mission

Tuesday, August 3

Reading (to be read before synchronous session):

- Scott, Chapters 2–3

Asynchronous work (to be completed before synchronous session):

- Read and discuss Bible verses related to mission

Synchronous session:

- The Bible and Mission; Mission and Good News

Wednesday, August 4

Reading (to be read before synchronous session):

- Robert, Chapters 1–3

Asynchronous work (to be completed before synchronous session):

- Read and discuss Methodist missionary biographies

Synchronous session:

- Historical Background of Mission

Thursday, August 5

Reading (to be read before synchronous session):

- Robert, Chapters 4–5

Asynchronous work (to be completed before synchronous session):

- View and discuss Five Marks of Mission Video

Synchronous session:

- The Components of Mission; Holistic Mission

Friday, August 6

Reading (to be read before synchronous session):

- *Grace Upon Grace Commentary*

Asynchronous work (to be completed before synchronous session):

- Read *Grace Upon Grace* commentary papers of two or more other students
- Read Global Ministries' Theology of Mission statement

Synchronous session:

- United Methodist Mission Theology

Monday, August 9

Assignment:

- Mission and global issues paper
Choose a significant global issue of injustice, conflict, or suffering (gender oppression, colonialism, racism, war, forced migration, climate catastrophe, poverty, etc.). Write an approximately 5-page paper addressing the following questions: How does this issue impact the practice of mission? What do you see as the good news of God for or within that situation? How is the church as a corporate body and/or individual Christians called to respond to that issue as part of the mission of God? In your analysis, you should refer to class readings and may (but are not required to) draw on other writings on the topic.

Synchronous session:

- Discussion of global issue papers

Tuesday, August 10

Reading (to be read before synchronous session):

- Scott, Chapters 4–5
- Robert, Chapter 6

Asynchronous work (to be completed before synchronous session):

- Discuss identity and interactions across difference

Synchronous session:

- Mission, Relationships, and Community

Wednesday, August 11

Reading (to be read before synchronous session):

- Mather, Chapters 1–6

Synchronous session:

- Mission, Abundance, and Assets

Thursday, August 12

Reading (to be read before synchronous session):

- Mather, Chapters 7–8
- Scott, Chapter 6

Asynchronous work (to be completed before synchronous session):

- Mission and global issues papers of at least two other students

Synchronous session:

- Mission in your context

Friday, August 20

Assignment:

- Ministry context analysis paper due
Reflecting on the mission practices in your current ministry setting, write a 10–12-page paper that draws upon what you have learned in this class to EITHER
1) Critique (positively and negatively) those practices and propose changes to them; OR

- 2) Propose new practices of mission appropriate for that setting.
In your analysis, you should refer to the class readings and may (but are not required to) draw on other writings on the topic.

Class Attendance and Expectations for Learning Engagement

Regular attendance is expected in all classes. Students are expected to show their faces the entire class time, otherwise they will be considered “absent”. Students are expected to attend class as they would in a face-to-face classroom (not driving, cooking, folding clothes etc.). During asynchronous class time, faculty will monitor time used in the posting and responding to colleagues to track students’ participation. A student missing 20% or more of the classroom work will not receive credit for the class. In the event of extenuating circumstances which require a students to miss up to 20% (4 hours) of a course, the student should contact the instructor and the Director prior to the start of the class to get approval and discuss make-up work. (Extenuating circumstances include emergency situations, illness, and dire circumstances, for example). Students are to provide back-up coverage at their local church while attending COS classes.

Interacting with others is an important means by which learning occurs. Thus, students are expected to be prepared to engage with other students and the instructor on the assigned topics. Students come from a variety of backgrounds with regard to gender, class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, (dis)abilities, political views, citizenship, family backgrounds, and theology. Such diversity can add significantly to discussions. Students are therefore encouraged to speak out of their experiences during discussions, but they are also expected to respect and seek to understand others’ perspectives, experiences, and values, even with they differ from or disagree with their own. As part of this practice, students are expected to refrain from personal attacks or derogatory comments made about groups or individuals because of their membership in a particular group. Students should also avoid displaying inappropriate or offensive visuals during their virtual engagement with other students.

Electronic Devices

As an institution dedicated to the advancement of learning, MTSO is firmly committed to a philosophy of mutual respect. When students’ use of electronic devices violates that respect, instructors have the right to impose appropriate grading penalties. The use of such devices should be restricted to course-related purposes. General browsing of the Internet or engaging in email or social networks during class time is inappropriate. Unless there is an emergency requiring immediate attention, phone calls should be returned during classroom breaks (even if students are at home) in an area that is not disruptive to others.

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 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.