

**Course of Study School at MTSO**  
**Online July 10-11 and July 31-August 1, 2026**  
**Assignment and Course Requirements**

**Course:** COS224 Administration & Polity

**Instructor:** Philip Jamieson

**Cell:** see syllabus on Populi

**Email:** [philipjamieson16@gmail.com](mailto:philipjamieson16@gmail.com)

**Zoom Class Meeting Times:**

Friday July 10 3-5 pm

Saturday July 11 9-11 am and 1-3 pm

Friday July 31 3-5 pm

Saturday August 1 9-11 am and 1-3 pm

Your prework for Session One is to be submitted by noon on the first Friday of the course (July 10). Please submit it to me via email. Additional work will be due on the second Friday of the course (July 31).

**Course Description and Objectives:**

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

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. <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>
3. Articulate the nature of stewardship biblically and theologically.
4. Identify techniques and develop skills as effective administrators of local churches, <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>including financial management.

**Texts:**

Janet and Philip Jamieson, *Ministry and Money: A Practical Guide for Pastors*

Lacey Warner, *The Method of Our Mission*

Lovett Weems, *Leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit*

Reference: 2020-2024 *Book of Discipline*

**Course Expectations:**

In order to foster a creative and effective learning community, you are expected to engage with the course material and participate in all class discussions. Please come to class having read the material and completed the pre-class written assignment for each session, and be ready to share your reflections with the class. Class participation counts for 20% of your final grade.

**Assignments:**

Class participation: 20%

First session pre-class writing assignment: 20%

Second session pre-class writing assignment: 20%  
 Populi Discussion Posts and Responses: 20 %  
 Post-class reflection assignment: 20%

### **A Note on Writing and Promptness**

Please write in clear and effective prose. Be mindful of spelling and grammatical issues. Also, be mindful to turn your assignments in on time. If a situation arises that will cause you to complete an assignment late, please alert Dr. Jamieson before the due date. Failure to do so will incur a late penalty. Please submit all work via the Populi course website.

### **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 online resources and 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 sanctions:

- (1) warning;
- (2) failing grade for the assignment and/or course;
- (3) probation;
- (4) suspension;
- (5) dismissal from the Course of Study School of Ohio.

In severe or repeat cases (regardless of the sanctions) a letter will be sent to the student's District Superintendent and Board of Ordained Ministry representative.

## **Course Schedule & Assignments**

### **Pre-Class Writing Assignment**

Write a 3-4 page paper describing your over-all understanding of the Book of Discipline and how the United Methodist Church orders our common life (polity) under it. In doing so, review the Constitution (Discipline, part I). What is most important to whom we are as a community of

Christ's disciples? (Due on July 10)

**Weekend 1: United Methodist Polity**

**Read:** *The Method of Our Mission* by Lacey Warner.

**Friday afternoon**

Introduction to Class

*Watching Over One Another in Love*

**Saturday morning**

UM Polity, Part 1

**Saturday afternoon**

UM Polity, Part 2

**Online Portion of the Course on Populi**

Between our two live course sessions, you will engage in discussion with the class community online via Populi. Each week there will be a discussion question based upon your reading.

Please provide a thoughtful response to the question each week (at least 500 words) by Wednesday evening, and respond to two other students' discussion posts (at least 200 words) by Sunday evening each week.

--Week 1 (July 13-17):

Discussion Question:

After reading *The Method of Our Mission*, how do you understand the implications of the statement in the Discipline that "annual conferences are the fundamental bodies of the Church." (Paragraph 12) How does that statement affect your ministry and your congregation's self-understanding?

--Week 2 (July 20-24):

Discussion Question:

In the light of your reading (particularly chapters 4-5), how do you understand itineracy and your relationship to the bishop?

--Week 3 (July 27-31):

Discussion Question:

In the light of your reading (particularly chapters 2-3), how would you summarize the relationship between our doctrine and polity? What is unique about this aspect of United Methodism?

**Weekend 2: Church Administration**

**Read:** *Leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit* by Lovett Weems and *Ministry and Money: A Practical Guide for Pastors* by Janet and Philip Jamieson.

**Write:** Pre-class reflection paper

Due: Friday, July 31 at 8:00 am on Populi course site

In the light of your reading, write a 4–5-page paper on what you believe to be the distinctive nature of leadership in the United Methodist Church.

### **Friday afternoon**

The Pastoral Nature of Church Administration

### **Saturday morning**

Ministry and Money, Part 1

### **Saturday afternoon**

Ministry and Money, Part 2 and Course Wrap-Up

### **Post-Class Reflection Paper**

Due: Friday August 7 at 8 am via the Populi course website

Write a 1,000-word reflection paper in which you discuss what you learned in this course relevant to your pastoral ministry. Engage at least 3 of the following questions:

- In what areas did you feel affirmed?
- In what areas did you feel most challenged?
- Where are you experiencing personal or professional growth?
- What new concepts or ideas did you encounter?
- What are your major take-aways?
- What new ideas or strategies do you have for ministry?
- How is God speaking to you through the readings and conversations of this course?

Note that while these questions ask for personal reflection, this is an academic paper so make sure your answers draw on (and properly cite) course readings, lectures, and discussions.

### **COSSO Attendance Policy**

National policy from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) states that 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 20% or more of the classroom work shall not receive credit for the class. In the event of extenuating circumstances which require the student to miss up to 20% of the synchronous course time (whether in-person or on Zoom), the student should contact both 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 the local church while attending COS classes.)

Students attending online are required to show their faces the entire class time in order to be considered present, unless internet bandwidth issues or emergency circumstances (e.g., a power outage) necessitate turning off one's camera or calling in to class by phone. You are expected to attend class as you would in a face-to-face classroom (e.g, not driving). During asynchronous class time, faculty may monitor time used in posting and responding to colleagues to track your participation.

Cancellation and Withdrawal: Student must notify the COSSO office if they will be

unable to attend class for which they are registered. Although there is no penalty when withdrawing more than two weeks in advance of the beginning of a term, registration fees are nontransferable and nonrefundable. A \$50.00 late withdrawal fee is charged for all withdrawals within two weeks of the start of a class. All tuition and housing payments are applied to a future term.

Students withdrawing after the start of a term will be assigned a grade of AW (Administrative Withdrawal) and will be responsible for the full \$300.00 tuition amount. Any annual conference scholarship applied to the student billing record becomes the student's responsibility and is due by the end of the term. Housing payment is nonrefundable.

**NO SHOWS:** Except in cases of immediate and dire emergencies, if a student misses any class without notifying the COSSO office, tuition and housing fees are due immediately, a \$50.00 no show fee is charged, and the student will receive an "F" in the class.