

**Alabama Course of Study School
Birmingham-Southern College
Spring 2019 Session
March 15-16 and April 5-6
Assignments and Course Requirements**

Course: COS 524 – Theological Reflection on the Practice of Ministry
Instructor: Dr. Stephen Sours
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Please submit this entire assignment stapled to an “Alabama Course of Study Cover Sheet” to the instructor listed above.

At the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Articulate a Trinitarian theology for the practice of ministry.
2. State clearly the nature and mission of the Church and its relation to pastoral ministry.
3. Demonstrate the ability to reflect theologically.
4. Develop a plan for lifelong theological reading, reflection, and growth.

Textbooks may be ordered through Mary Cook the Birmingham Cokesbury Resource Consultant (205) 821-2030, mcook@cokesbury.com or through Cokesbury online at www.cokesbury.com

Texts:

Cahalan, Kathleen A. *Introducing the Practice of Ministry*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2010 [ISBN 978-0-8146-3169-0]

Willimon, William H. *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2002 [ISBN 0-687-04532-0]

Wood, Charles M. and Ellen Blue. *Attentive to God: Thinking Theologically in Ministry*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2008 [ISBN 978-0-687-65162-7]

Your Bible.

Pre-work Assignment: (Due on the **first** weekend of class, March 15, 2019):

Read Cahalan, *Introducing the Practice of Ministry* and pay special attention to some of the main themes in her book: missio dei and discipleship (chapter 1); vocation (chapter 2); leadership and ministry (chapter 3); the practice of ministry (chapters 4-5). Write a paper (3-5 pages) that reflects on these themes with respect to your ministry: i.e. where are some areas where Cahalan can deepen your own ministry, and where are some areas where you are already in concert with her theology? Make reference to her book.

Pre-work Assignment: (Due on the **second** weekend of class, April 5, 2019) Read Willimon, *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry*. Write a short paper (3-5 pages) that engages some of his main ideas: identify three areas where you see your ministry reflected in his theology of ministry, and three areas where his theology challenges or corrects your practice of ministry. Make reference to his book.

In Class Questions for Discussion - First Weekend: The following questions derive from vignettes described in Wood and Blue, *Attentive to God: Thinking Theologically in Ministry*. These questions are intended to help us to reflect on the meaning of our creedal statements, and to assist us in engaging in everyday tasks of ministry with greater theological sensitivity and depth. Bring pencil, pens and paper and be prepared to write out your answers in class. In class assignments will be graded and contribute toward the participation grade.

1. How does the economy of God inform our ministry? (“Paying Your Dues”, pp. 41-44)
2. How can congregations be both inclusive, and pluralistic? (“Paper Chase”, pp. 95-98)

In-Class Questions for Discussion - Second Weekend: The following questions derive from vignettes described in Wood and Blue, *Attentive to God: Thinking Theologically in Ministry*. These questions are intended to help us to reflect on the meaning of our creedal statements, and to assist us in engaging in everyday tasks of ministry with greater theological sensitivity and depth. Bring pencil, pens and paper and be prepared to write out your answers in class. In class assignments will be graded and contribute toward the participation grade.

1. How can a church use its resources fairly for all its members? (“Why Can’t They Just Levitate?” pp. 51-53)
2. How can we live with differences in the Body of Christ? (“Thin Ice”, pp. 99-102)

Final Average Grading Weights:

Pre-work Papers 60%, Class Participation and Discussion 40%

In-class Assignment Grading Scale:

√- = 65, √ = 80, √+ = 95

Paper Grading Scale:

A+ = 98, A = 95, A- = 92, B+ = 88, B = 85, B- = 82, C+ = 78, C = 75, C- = 72, D+ = 68, D = 65, D- = 62, F = 55, Plagiarized = 0

Final Average Grading Scale:

100-97=A+, 96-93=A, 93-90=A-, 89-87=B+, 86-83=B, 82-80=B-, 79-77=C+, 76-73=C, 72-70=C-, 69-67=D+, 66-63=D, 62-60=D-, 59-0=F

PreCourse / MidCourse / PostCourse Work Policy

We all have deadlines that govern our lives. It is crucial that you take seriously your commitment to complete the pre-work assignments by the deadline. Extensions are granted only for extenuating circumstances. Normal pastoral duties do not constitute extenuating circumstances. Late work will be penalized. Any extension must be granted by the instructor of the class. For your protection, please keep copies of your pre-work assignments.

- All PreCourse and MidCourse work must be submitted to the professor by the date indicated on the syllabus or assigned by the professor on the first weekend. Late PreCourse/midcourse work will be accepted for two weeks following the due date (but not beyond) with the following penalties:
 1. **PreCourse/midcourse** work submitted within one week of the due date will receive a **one letter grade deduction**
 2. **PreCourse/midcourse** work submitted after one week of the due date but within two weeks will receive a **two-letter grade deduction**
 3. **No assignments** will be accepted after two weeks from the due date and a grade of “F” will be given in the course.
 4. **In cases where the student has registered late the same policy applies.**
- **PostCourse** work may be assigned in some courses. Post course work will be due no later than two weeks after the completion of the second weekend of the course. **No** late submissions will be accepted.