The following syllabus is the teaching and learning guide for the last time this course was taught. It will give you a good idea of the descriptions of the course, how it was taught, the reading, the papers and other assignments, the intended outcomes, and the workload. By examining this syllabus and others, you will be able to form an impression of what graduate theological education at Phillips Theological Seminary requires of students.

Due to periodic curriculum revisions, course names and/or numbers may be different on this syllabus than what the name and/or number of the current offered course may be.

This syllabus is provided for your information only. The faculty reserves the right to revise the curriculum, and each professor reserves the right to decide how best to meet the learning goals of the curriculum. Therefore, the following syllabus is an historical artifact rather than a promise of how the course will be taught in the future, or that the course will be taught again.

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PW 540 Theology and Practice of Public Worship

Rm 305/Chapel
Fall 2014
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Description This course offers an introduction to liturgical theology, a discipline of theological reflection on the origins, meanings and practices of Christian worship. It will serve as preparation and reference point for students who will minister as worship leaders, planners, presiders, and critical thinkers. The methodology of the course includes lectures by the instructor and guest presenters, readings and discussion, communal worship, and full participation in class activity.

Learning Goals When this course ends, you should be able to:

- clarify key elements in your own liturgical theology for planning and leading worship
- have a basic understanding of the history of Christian worship (in the West) and its place in contemporary culture
- critically assess worship of a particular congregation other than your own
- engage in constructive conversation about worship in one’s own denominational tradition
- apply what you have learned in a congregation
- project some ideas for the future of Christian worship in a postmodern culture

Methods of Teaching The student will aim for our learning goals through:

- Attentive and critical reading of assigned and recommended texts
- Participating in class discussions
- Listening to the instructors’ oral presentations
- Creative and critical reflective writing on the theology and practice of public worship
- ‘Workshop’ some new worship material and resources

Evaluation and Assessment Students will be evaluated on their progress and achievement of learning goals by means of:

- Feedback from the instructor and peers
- The traditional grading system in place at PTS
- Work that is late will be penalized unless a reasonable excuse is offered (health, family emergency, church crisis). I urge you to exercise your ‘incomplete’ option
if you do not think you can finish the final assignment on time. **The deadline for filing for an incomplete is December 5th!**

**List of Assignments**

- **Classwork:** readings done prior to and during progress of the class, weekly attendance, discussion of reading, preparation for role plays, and written exercises such as pastoral prayers, brief reflections, etc.
- **Three graded written assignments each will count towards 1/3 of your final grade.**

Paper 1: A reflection paper on the topic “Why We Worship” that uses resources for the first part of the course. Further instructions will be given in the class and models for the papers will be posted online. **DUE: Friday October 10 (before Concentrated Weeks).** The reflection will include—as an appendix—a finished collect that you will prepare for class on October 9.

Paper 2: An essay built upon the questions taken from Appendix I in Susan White’s *Foundations of Christian Worship* (pp. 204-205). Your analysis will include ONE of the suggested hymn texts and ONE of the prayer texts. You may also choose a hymn or prayer text on your own with the permission of the instructor. Your analysis need not cover all the suggested questions. Select the questions that are most important to your developing theology of ministry and worship. (Models of papers will be provided) **DUE: Friday November 21**

Paper/Worship Design 3: Write out a design for ‘new’ worship service for either a ‘settled’ congregation in your own tradition, a new ‘emergent’ congregation, or for a congregation that you hope to serve in the future (a worshipping community for the ‘unchurched’, e.g.). The service must be recognizable as a baptismal service (or service of initiation), a Holy Meal (holy communion, love feast, agape, etc.) a Daily Prayer, a ritual that acknowledges some transition in the community, OR for a worship experience for an activist community (that prepares for civil disobedience, e.g. or bears some witness on a justice issue). Use the services in *Brim: Creative Overflow in Worship Design* (one of the texts for the class on reserve—see below) as examples but be prepared to write out the prayers and any instructions you might have for the worshippers. (Models of ‘designs’ will be provided) **DUE: Monday, December 15**

**Attendance Policy** The PTS policy reads: “Class attendance and participation are important. Any student who misses 20% or more of the class contact hours for a course, for any reason, cannot pass or successfully audit that course. The intention of the policy is not to be punitive, but to recognize that students should retake courses for credit if they miss a significant number of the class contact hours” (PTS catalogue)

**Disability Policy** Phillips Theological Seminary is committed to providing equal access to its programs of graduate professional education for all qualified students with learning, physical, medical, and/or psychological disabilities. The Seminary aims to provide
reasonable accommodation for qualified individuals (based on clinical documentation) to ensure their access and participation in Seminary programs.¹

**Resources and Texts**


Recommended (and on reserve)


**Schedule of Topics:**

**Week 1 August 28th Why Study Christian Worship?**

Introduction to the Course and to One Another

Review of syllabus, assignments and requirements

Group exercises, sharing our experiences in worship

**Week 2 September 4th “Why Aren’t They Coming?”**

To prepare: Read Ramshaw, chapter 1; White, chapter 1; Doran/Troeger, chapter 1; Long chapter 1

Prepare a brief monologue portraying someone who doesn’t come to church anymore; write a pastoral prayer for such a person (no acting skill required!)

**Week 3 September 11th “Why They Come Anyway”**

¹ For details, see ‘Disabilities Policies and Procedures” in the Student Handbook, pp.17-18
To prepare: “Why I Make Sam Come to Church” (on Moodle); Long, chapter 2; be prepared to share why you are where you are on Sunday morning (see Ramshaw, exercise 5 on page 12); bring in some sort of worship material (a song or hymn, a prayer, a poem, symbol, etc.) that you would use for a worship service for ‘seekers’ and explain why

Week 4 September 18th Symbols and Rituals: Performance and Display
To prepare: Read Ramshaw chap. 2 and 3; White chapter 2; a personal object made ‘sacred’ by its use in a ritual; an account of a personal, familial, or communal ritual that is meaningful to you

Week 5 September 25 “How Can I Keep From Singing?”
To prepare: Read Doran/Troeger, chapter 2; Long, chapter 5; denominational hymn or song book; (Hint: this would be a good time to work with a hymn you plan to use for your second paper)

Week 6 October 2 “Creating Space/Telling Time”
To Prepare: Read Ramshaw, chapter 5 (be prepared to discuss items 4 and 5 on page 85); Long, chapter 6.

Week 7 October 9th “Worship and Spirituality”
To Prepare: Ramshaw, chap 10; Stookey, 11-91
Bring in a ‘collect’ (see Stookey pp 20-21) to “workshop” in class using the guidelines that Stookey proposes; the final form of the collect will be turned in with your first paper as an appendix on Friday, October 10th

Week 8 Concentrated Course Week 1 (October 13th-17th)
Week 9 Concentrated Course Week 2 (October 20-24th)

Week 10 October 30 “Jewish, Orthodox, Protestant, Catholic: All One Big Happy Family?”
To prepare: Read Ramshaw, chapters 4, 6
Over the concentrated course weeks, attend (if at all possible) a service at an Orthodox, Catholic, or Jewish community of worship. If none are available, then attend some other Protestant service—if that is not possible, watch a service online (there are online services offered by lifechurch.tv; All Souls Unitarian; a virtual community of Christian Church Disciples of Christ) Be prepared to report on your experience. (see #9 in Ramshaw, p. 120)

Week 11 November 6 “What’s It Like to Be Protestant?”
To Prepare: Read White, chapter 3 and 4; Ramshaw, chapter 7
Week 12 November 13 “How Do We Make Sense of Our Experience in Worship?”

To prepare: Read Doran/Troeger, chapter 3; Ramshaw, chapter 8

Week 13 November 20 “Baptism is God’s Tattoo”
We will participate as a class in a ‘remember your baptism’ service; details to follow
Read: Ramshaw, chapter 9 (reread White, chapter 3); World Council of Churches statement on baptism (online); Acts 8:26-39; John 3:1-21.

Second paper due: November 21 (Friday)

Thanksgiving Break

Week 14 December 4 “Take this Bread . . . “

Guest presenter, Professor Ellen Blue

To prepare: research and participate in an online communion service and be prepared to report on it; review Susan White’s chapter 3 on ‘the Lord’s Supper”; Stookey, exercise 21

Week 15 December 11 “Contemporary Challenges to Christian Worship”

Read: Doran/Troeger, chapter 4; White, chapter 6

Final Work Due: Monday, December 15