



**BIBM 491**  
**Senior Capstone Experience**

**Fall**  
**2012**

---

**Abilene Christian University**  
**Department of Bible, Missions, and Ministry**  
**Course Syllabus**

**Dr. Houston Heflin**

houston.heflin@acu.edu  
ACU Phone: 325-674-3714  
ACU Office: 242  
ACU Box: 29401

**TIME & LOCATION OF COURSE**

Biblical Studies Building Room 103  
Tuesday / Thursday  
12:00pm – 1:20 pm

**OFFICE HOURS**

Mon: 2-4:30pm  
Wed: 2-4:30pm  
Fri: 2-4pm

---

**MISSION OF ACU**

To educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.

**MISSION OF THE COLLEGE OF BIBLICAL STUDIES**

To provide leadership preparation and resources for effective worldwide ministry in the cause of Christ.

**MISSION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF BIBLE, MISSIONS, AND MINISTRY**

To provide preparation for congregational leadership through biblical and theological studies and Christian spiritual formation for effective worldwide ministry in the cause of Christ.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This writing intensive course is the final segment of a three-stage approach for training upper-level majors in the Department of Bible, Missions, and Ministry. It is preceded by BIBM 391, *Ministry in Context*, and BIBM 396, *Field Education*. The course creates a context for practicing theological reflection on ministry, critical thinking, improving writing skills, understanding the minister or missionary as servant and leader, and adding skills for future service.

**COURSE GOALS**

The goal of this course is to develop reflective practitioners of missions and ministry, regardless of vocation. As a result of this course students will gain confidence in their ability to respond reflectively and theologically to ministry situations, write according to the disciplinary expectations of the field, conduct original research, articulate a plan for future Christian service, and they will practice habits that contribute to a healthy relationship with God and healthy relationships with fellow disciples.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

Barton, Ruth Haley. 2009. It begins with you: How the spiritual formation of the pastor effects the spiritual formation of the congregation. *Common Ground Journal*. 7 (1): 26-36.

Brueggemann, Walter. 2011. Prophetic leadership: Engaging in counter-imagination. *Journal of Religious Leadership*. 10 (1): 1-23.

Moore, Mary Elizabeth. 2008. Stories of vocation: Education for vocational discernment. *Religious Education*. 103 (2): 218-239.

Nouwen, Henri J. 1992. *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership*. New York, NY: The Crossroad Publishing Company.

Porter, Steven L; Ortberg, John C., Jr.; Moreland, J.P.; Kapic, Kelly M.; Preston, Aaron; Willard, Dallas. 2009. Book Symposium: Knowing Christ Today: Why we can trust spiritual knowledge. *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care*. 2 (2): 245-285.

## COURSE COMPETENCIES AND MEASUREMENT

| COMPETENCIES                                                                                                  | MEASUREMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Learners will apply theological reflection and critical thinking to everyday living and ministry contexts. | <p>a. Prepare a 5 to 7-minute Internship Podcast Report on your internship experience with emphasis on personal learning and growth. (10%)</p> <p>b. Write an 80 to 100-line case study reflection on a critical incident emerging from field education that articulates the issues of that experience. (20%)</p> <p>c. Attend a Summit lecture by Walter Brueggemann comparing and contrasting the speaker's article and his speech. In addition, write five engaging interview-style questions for the speaker demonstrating theological and critical thought. (This assignment should be 1-page single-spaced). (10%)</p> |
| 2. Learners will conduct original research on an aspect of missions and ministry.                             | Write a 2,000 – 3,000 word article (7 to 8 pages) based on an area of inquiry in your intended profession. (20%)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 3. Learners will articulate a plan for future Christian service.                                              | Write a 750 – 1000 word (3 to 4 page) vocation plan reflection that outlines how you intend to live out your Christian calling. (10%)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

|                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4. Learners will demonstrate writing skills consistent with the expectations of the discipline. | a. Audio Podcast Report on Internship<br>b. Case Study Reflection<br>c. Independent Research Article<br>d. Vocation Plan Projection<br>e. Resume |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS

|                                   |               |       |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-------|
| 1. Field Education Forms          | 30 Aug (R)    | (05%) |
| 2. Internship Podcast Report      | 30 Aug (R)    | (10%) |
| 3. Case Study Critical Reflection | 6 Sep (R)     | (15%) |
| 4. Quizzes (3)                    | 4, 11, 13 Sep | (15%) |
| 4. Summit Report                  | 20 Sep (R)    | (10%) |
| 5. Research Article               | 15 Nov (R)    | (20%) |
| 6. Vocation Plan                  | Finals Week   | (10%) |
| 7. Resume                         | Finals Week   | (05%) |
| 8. Participation                  | Ongoing       | (10%) |

## ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS AND DUE DATES

### 1. Field Education Forms (05%)

**Due: 30 Aug.**

Forms from the Field Education Manual should be completed and submitted to the Director of Field Education or Missions Supervisor by Thursday 30 August. Forms submitted after this date will be subject to a reduction in grade.

### 2. Internship Podcast Report (10%)

**Due: 30 Aug.**

Prepare a 5 to 7-minute report on your internship experience (around 2 single spaced pages). The emphasis of your presentation should be on your personal learning and growth during the internship. Use your time strategically to answer the following questions:

- a. What surprised you?
- b. What experience was most memorable?
- c. What did you learn?
  - 1) about working with others in ministry, including staff, missionaries, chaplains, patients, interns, church members, or people in general?
  - 3) about yourself?
  - 4) about God?

This audio recording can be created in the Learning Studio, with your own computer (using recording software such as GarageBand), or on a mobile device (using software such as Voice Memos). Once created, the file should be submitted to the course files location in the area labeled "Internship Podcasts." The name of the file should be labeled with the word "Internship" followed by your last name. For example, "InternshipHeflin."

### 3. Case Study Critical Reflection (20%)

**Due: 6 Sep.**

Write an 80 to 100-line case study reflection on a critical incident emerging from your field education. Critical does not necessarily mean emergency but can include issues of crisis, theological uncertainty, or relational conflict. Those students whose cases are selected for discussion in class will be required to meet with the instructor about their case. The purpose of this meeting will be to make any necessary edits or revisions prior to sharing the case in class.

**Purpose of Project:** to practice theological reflection and critical thinking about ministry.

### 4. Summit Report (10%)

**Due: 20 Sep.**

After reading Brueggemann's article and attending one of his Summit presentations, write a 1-page single spaced comparison between his writing and his presentation. (What was similar, what was different, what surprised you, etc.). At the conclusion of your paper, create five interview-style questions that you would like to ask Brueggemann. What questions emerge from his comments that need clarification? What questions could you ask that would continue the conversation in new ways?

**Purpose of Project:** to practice critical thinking, theological reflection, and good interviewing as you process the content of the speaker.

### 5. Independent Research Article (20%)

**Due: 15 Nov.**

The Independent Research Article is a 2,000 to 3,000 word (6 to 8 page) paper based on an area of inquiry in your intended profession. It is to be created and submitted as though you were submitting it for publication in a journal. Considering your personal interests and future ministry/mission plans, create two research questions to guide your project. Once you've identified the questions to answer, proceed to search for what others have said in the literature. As you learn from others' ideas, remember that your article should be more than a synopsis of what others have said. It should also incorporate your own perspectives and recommendations for answering the research question(s) and proposing any solutions that might help your peers in missions and ministry. You should expect to engage and incorporate 8 to 10 sources for this project. **Purpose of Project:** to pursue a subject of relevance to ministry and practice writing for publication.

### 6. Vocation Plan (10%)

**Due: Finals Week**

After reading Moore's article write a 750 to 1,000 word (3 to 4 page) paper reflecting briefly on both your personal calling and perceived communal calling, then focus the majority of the paper on your vision for living the Christ-life. How do your perceptions of personal giftedness match the area of missions or ministry you intend to pursue? In what career do you see yourself in 5 years and then in 20 years as you live out your Christian vocation? What is your plan for living out your calling? How will you evaluate that you are successful in living with purpose? **Purpose of Reflection:** to practice theological reflection and thinking critically, globally, and missionally about ourselves as servants of the gospel.

### 7. Resume (05%)

**Due: Finals Week**

Create an updated, crisp, error-free resume that reflects your employment, academic work, service, and extra-curricular activities. This should be a final product, ready for dissemination to prospective employers.

## **8. Class Participation & Attendance (10%)**

**Due: Ongoing**

It is important for our class time to be a collaborative learning environment. In order for this to happen we all must come prepared. It is the responsibility of every student to come to class on time having read the assignments for that day and engaging in the classroom environment through active listening and posing thoughtful questions that contribute to the discussion. Please note that 5% of your participation grade is associated with classroom engagement and 5% is determined by your physical presence in class. Those missing 0 to 1 class periods during the semester will receive all 5 points. Those missing 2 class periods will receive 3 points. Those missing 3 or more class periods will receive 0 points.

### **ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

Course assignments should be submitted at the beginning of the class period on the day they are due. Assignments that are submitted one to seven days after they are due will be subject to one letter grade reduction. Assignments that are submitted eight to fourteen days late will be subject to another letter grade reduction. Assignments will not be accepted after the fourteenth day.

### **LEARNING EVALUATION**

Students' grades will reflect evaluation based on quality and completion of assignments, and active classroom participation. Students are expected to participate in discussions by sharing questions and thoughtful comments that contribute to collaborative learning. The following scale will be used for student grades: A = 100-90, B = 89-80, C = 79-70, D = 69-60, F = 59-0.

### **ASSESSMENT MATRIX**

Assignments will be assessed using the following matrix:

- A (90-100) – Demonstrates each of the following: critical thinking and theological reflection, original work or research, instructions were followed, free of grammatical errors.
- B (80-89) – Contains one or more of the following: biased assumptions and/or theological oversights, over-dependence on others' work or research, instructions were not followed, few grammatical errors.
- C (70-79) – Contains two or more of the following: biased assumptions and/or theological oversights, over-dependence on others' work or research, instructions were not followed, some grammatical errors.
- D (60-69) – Contains the following: failure to reflect critically or theologically, excessive dependence on others' work or research, instructions were not followed, many grammatical errors.
- F (0-59) – Project was incomplete, not submitted, or contains errors that do not reflect the quality of work expected in an upper-level course.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & PLAIGIARISM**

Both your instructor and the university expect you as the student to maintain the highest academic integrity as you study and learn. On individual assignments you should do your own work and research. On team assignments you should collaborate and make significant contributions to the final product.

Plagiarism may be the most frequent cause of academic dishonesty. It occurs whenever you claim someone else's material as your own and may result from simple failure to attribute the original source of words or ideas. It is a form of stealing and a form of lying. For this reason it is important in your education to remember where you encountered the information you use in writing and presentations.

To ensure you do not commit plagiarism in your work, please:

- a. cite all ideas that are not common knowledge or original to you.
- b. use quotation marks around quotes and reference the original author.
- c. paraphrase an author by using your own language and reference the original author.

At no time should you ever cut and paste material off of the internet without quotations and citing the source. You should not borrow the language and wording of another author without citing the original source. You should not borrow other people's ideas and claim them as your own.

To view the full ACU Academic Integrity Policy (including detailed examples of academic dishonesty and the consequences for such actions) please visit the following web site:

<http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/provost>

## **COURSE PROTOCOLS**

### ***Assignment Formatting for Research and Writing***

The following format and style matters apply to the development of course assignments:

1. Include a cover page with assignment name, course title & number, your name and date.
2. Use Times New Roman 12 point font or its equivalent.
3. Paragraphs should be double-spaced and margins should be set to 1 inch on all sides.
4. Use correct spelling and grammar.
5. Staple assignment pages together.
6. Pages should be numbered bottom center beginning with the first page of text.

### ***Attendance***

Students are expected to attend all class meetings and remain in class during meeting times. The school defines excused absences from class as those involving a) a school sponsored trip, b) the death of an immediate family member, or c) illness significant enough to warrant a doctor's note. More than two unexcused absences will significantly affect your grade. Students who must be absent for part or all of a class meeting due to an important commitment should notify the instructors in advance.

### ***Classroom Etiquette***

Cell phones must be set to silent while in the classroom. Accepting phone calls inside the classroom is disruptive to the instructor and fellow students. Texting is also disruptive and not permitted in class. Notebook computers are useful for taking notes but should not be used for accessing email or surfing the internet during class.

### ***Respect for Divergent Viewpoints***

Students are expected to respect other individuals as created in the image of God. This means students will value each other in spite of differing viewpoints. In an academic environment where multiple perspectives are encouraged it is important to respect people when disagreeing with positions.

### ***Special Needs***

Students with special needs should inform the instructors at the beginning of the course.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

| <b>SENIOR CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE</b> |   |         |                                                                                                 |                                                             |
|-----------------------------------|---|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                                 | T | 28 Aug. | Introduction of Course, Participants & Syllabus<br>Internship Reflections / How to Write a Case |                                                             |
| 2                                 | R | 30 Aug. | Personal Spiritual Formation<br>(Goals for the Fall Semester)                                   | <b>Field Ed. Forms Due</b><br><b>Internship Podcast Due</b> |
| 3                                 | T | 4 Sep.  | Temptations of Christian Servants<br>“In the Name of Jesus” Conversation                        | Quiz - Nouwen book                                          |
| 4                                 | R | 6 Sep.  | Small Groups; Sharing & Selecting Cases                                                         | <b>Case Study Due</b>                                       |
| 5                                 | T | 11 Sep. | Cases # 1 and 2: Shared Wisdom                                                                  | Quiz - Barton article                                       |
| 6                                 | R | 13 Sep. | Cases # 3 and 4: Shared Wisdom                                                                  | Quiz - Porter (Willard) article                             |
| 7                                 | T | 18 Sep. | <i>No Class – Attend Summit Presentations</i>                                                   | Read Brueggemann article                                    |
| 8                                 | R | 20 Sep. | Responding to Brueggemann & Willard                                                             | <b>Summit Review Due</b>                                    |
| 9                                 | T | 25 Sep. | Things To Know About Churches                                                                   |                                                             |
| 10                                | R | 27 Sep. | Courage & Calling / Course Evaluation                                                           | Read Moore article                                          |
|                                   |   | TBA     | <i>Internship Interviews</i>                                                                    |                                                             |
|                                   |   | 15 Nov. | <i>No class – submit papers to faculty box</i>                                                  | <b>Research Paper Due</b>                                   |
|                                   | R | 13 Dec. | Final Class Meeting 10am to 11:45am                                                             | <b>Vocation Plan Due</b><br><b>Resume Due</b>               |



## Courseware And Copyright

---

### COURSEWARE

This course syllabus is intended to accurately reflect the learning objectives, course format, assignments, assessments, course protocols, grading scale, policies on assignments, and course schedule that allow students to appraise the course. However, the instructor reserve the right to modify any part of this syllabus as may be necessary at any point due to circumstances that occur.

No part of this course, including the syllabus, presentations, or handouts may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the instructors, except when used for instructional purposes where the instructors are acknowledged as the source of the material.

Copyright © 2012 Houston Heflin

In association with Abilene Christian University