Abilene Christian University

***College of Biblical Studies***

***Graduate School of Theology***

**Homiletics**

BIBM 604, Fall 2022

Instructor: Tim Sensing, DMin, PhD

[sensingt@acu.edu](mailto:sensingt@acu.edu), (325) 674-3792, ACU Box 29416

Course conducted through Canvas

<http://acu.instructure.com>

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Focuses on rigorous exegesis for preaching and effective delivery of sermons based on the unique styles, problems and themes of diverse biblical genres.

**OUTCOMES**

In keeping with the stated mission of the Graduate School of Theology at ACU (“to equip men and women for effective missional leadership for ministry in all its forms and to provide strong academic foundations for theological inquiry”), this course fulfills the following GST student learning outcomes (SLOs):

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| SLOs | Indicators | Measures |
| Prog 1 – Graduates will have knowledge of the content and theological shape of the Christian Scriptures. | * Express comprehension of basic material in the areas of exegesis and hermeneutics. * Critically analyze a text for the purpose of preparing sermons. | * Model Sermon * Final Project * Discussion Questions |
| Prog 5 – Graduates will have facility in critical thinking, analysis, and in oral and written communication.  MACM 2 – Graduates will have knowledge and skills related to a particular aspect of ministerial practice. | * Propose strategies for preaching various genres. * Demonstrate skills of preaching and sermon preparation. | * Model Sermon * Final Project * Preaching Video * Discussion Questions * Exam |
| MDiv 3 – Graduates will have ability to lead and equip the church for its various ministries. | * Demonstrate familiarity with preaching literature. * Demonstrate skills of preaching and sermon preparation. | * Model Sermon * Final Project * Preaching Video * Reading Assignments * Discussion Questions |

**Textbooks**

1. Thomas H. Troeger and Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, *A Sermon Workbook: Exercises in the Art and Craft of Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2013. <https://www.amazon.com/Sermon-Workbook-Exercises-Craft-Preaching/dp/1426757786/ref=sr_1_fkmrnull_1?crid=2BM78XLIQODNP&keywords=a+sermon+workbook+exercises+in+the+art+and+craft+of+preaching&qid=1551367239&s=gateway&sprefix=a+sermon+%2Caps%2C163&sr=8-1-fkmrnull>
2. For Further Exploration but not required (no Kindle edition):
   1. Mike Graves, *The Sermon as Symphony: Preaching the Literary Forms of the New Testament*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson, 1997.
3. Course Reader:
   1. Various Articles
   2. Class Handouts
   3. Bibliography <http://blogs.acu.edu/sensingt/files/2018/02/Preaching-Bibliography-2018.pdf>

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Students must fulfill the following requirements to receive a passing grade:

1. Discussion Questions: Initial posts on discussion questions are due no later than 11:59 PM Central on Wednesday of the week it is due. Appropriate posts are concise, focused, substantive, well-reasoned, and cite research studies that support arguments or opinions. Each student must respond to the posts of at least two other students prior to the end of the module. Appropriate responses will respectfully engage in dialogue, provide additional insights, and point out areas of agreement or disagreement. Short responses that add minimal value to the discussion such as “I agree” or “nice post” will not fulfill the expectations for participation.
2. Model Sermon Assignments: Each student is required to develop a sermon in various stages for their weekly assignments. The stages of this sermon development include exegetical interpretation of the biblical text, correlating the focus and function of the biblical text to the focus and function of the sermon, and scripting the sermon using the storyboard method. The Model sermon will be the first video sermon in Assignment 3 (below).
3. Preaching Video: Each student is required to produce two videos in which they preach the model sermon they have developed in the course (Assignment 2 above) and a second Old Testament sermon. They will then watch two of their classmates preaching and provide peer feedback.
4. Exam: Students will take an exam that will cover basic content of both readings and mini lectures.
5. Final Project. Each student is required to write five additional sermons based on the format outlined in the handout and copied below entitled “Sermon Script Format.” Additionally, every sermon script must also be mapped using the Storyboard Template.
   1. Students will work on this project throughout the course, and will roughly follow the same development pattern as the model sermon. Each week students will receive suggestions on the steps they should take to complete their final project sermons in a timely manner.
   2. Footnoting makes your sermons academically equivalent to a graduate school research paper. Two types of footnotes:
      1. Pathways Assignment. With your context in mind, for example, “the sermons are addressed to Main Street Church in New Town Texas,” add additional footnotes for each sermon describing concrete points of connection.
      2. Include 4-7 analytical footnotes for each sermon explaining why you do what you do (specifically relating to, theology, exegesis, genre, and homiletical method).

**Summary: How Many Total Sermons Am I Writing?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | Model Sermon (See Assignment 2 above) |
| 1 | OT Video Sermon (See Assignment 3 above) |
| 5 | Additional Sermons (See Assignment 5 “Final Project” above) |
| 7 | TOTAL Number of Sermons for the Course |

**Grading**

1. Preaching Video 10 points
2. Exam 20 points
3. Model Sermon Assignments 40 points
4. Classroom Discussion 20 points
5. Sermon Project
   1. 5 sermons with Scripts 40 points (8 points each)
6. Total: 130 points

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 100-90 | A |
| 80-89 | B |
| 70-79 | C |
| 60-69 | D |
| below 60 | F |

* If a student drops the course during the semester, a “WP” will be given if the student is current with assignments and is receiving a passing grade. A “WF” will be given if assignments have not been completed or inadequate points have been received to attain a passing grade.
* Late assignments will be reduced 10% after the first week and another 10% after the second week. No assignments will be accepted after two weeks unless special permission has been granted due to uncontrollable circumstances.

***Sermon Script Format***

***Sermon Title***

(Sermon Text)

**Rhetorical and Theological Argument of the Text**: Approximately 200–300-word summary. Identify the form and function of the genre. If the pericope has a significant literary device (e.g., parallelisms, inclusio, diatribe, chiasmus, etc.), then describe how the device is working.

**Focus Statement of Sermon**: A theologically oriented subject and an active verb that states what the sermon is all about. Be clear and concise. [OR, see footnote 3 below]

**Function Statement of Sermon**: The sermon’s intent. Naming the “hoped for change.” Format: “To [strong behavioral or affective verb] [identify the audience] to [second active verb] …” Be clear and concise.

**Plot Line of Sermon**: A paragraph consisting of the first sentences of each move. Indicate if the sermon is in the mode of immediacy or the mode of reflection. When writing the plot line, separate the moves using an asterisk (\*). [First sentence from the introduction. \*First sentence from Move 1. \*First sentence from Move 2. \* First sentence from Move 3. \*Etc.].

**Describe**: Mode of Reflection or Mode of Immediacy, Point of Entry, & Point of View

***Script***

Introductions indicate intention toward but do not solve or provide resolution. Makes a promise to the hearer about the nature and focus of sermon. Should indicate the direction the sermon will take. The need for the sermon, the “itch” (antithesis, trouble, or tension) is highlighted. The introduction is a transition from the liturgical setting to Move 1.

**Move/Episode 1** [Do not use a sub-heading to name the Moves].

* The *transition* or connector.1 First sentence of the move [same as the first sentence of your plot line].
* Description of the move indicating development: argument, image, and/or story (50 words). 2
* Closing sentence [an inclusio of the first sentence of the move]. Make sure you affect closure of an episode before transitioning to the next.

**Move/Episode 2**

* *transition*: First sentence of the move [same as the second sentence of your plot line].
* Description of the move indicating development: argument, image, and/or story (50 words).
* Closing sentence [an inclusio of the first sentence of the move].

**Repeat** the pattern for the remaining moves and/or episodes.

* *transition*: First sentence of the move [same as the next sentence of your plot line].
* Description of the move indicating development: argument, image, and/or story (50 words).
* Closing sentence [an inclusio of the first sentence of the move].

Last paragraph of the conclusion: The climax must cohere with the focus and function statements.

1The *transition* is a connector. A connector could be a pause, a repeated refrain, a transitional phrase, a summary statement that completes one move and leads to the next, or a transitional story or example. Often, transitions are the most difficult parts of sermons to write, and if you find that you cannot find an appropriate connector to tie two parts of a sermon together, then the problem may lie in the logical flow of the sermon.

· Make sure there is closure before you transition to something new.

· Transitions point to the path, the direction you are heading.

· Transitions connect to the next (and, but, yet, if, then, reconsider, etc.)

· Transitions anticipate content of the next step in the homiletical journey.

2 Include 4-7 analytical footnotes explaining why you do what you do (specifically relating to, theology, exegesis, genre, and homiletical method).

3 An alternative to the Focus and Function Statement given above: What difference does the Divine action of God make in our world of experience? As an answer to the question, Brown and Powery, *The Ways of the World*, pg. 142, offers the following template for a combined focus and function statement: “*Because God* has acted [is acting/promises to act] in the following way—[therefore]—*we are able* to do the following … (the sentence finishes with a brief description of some faithful action ow made possible for us in the word ‘opened up’ by God’s action).”

  —Tim Sensing, DMin, PhD

***Storyboard Template***

|  |
| --- |
| Title:  Focus: Function: To |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. |  | 2. |  | 3. |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| Notes: |  | Notes: |  | Notes: |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. |  | 5. |  | 6. |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| Notes: |  | Notes: |  | Notes: |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Course Policies**

**Attendance Policy**: Attendance will be required for all sessions. If you have to miss a class due to illness or emergency, you will be responsible for material covered in class and class assignments.

**Participation**: Graduate course work is grounded in active engagement and conversation between students and the instructor. Students are expected to arrive on time for every class session, fully prepared to discuss the topic(s) under consideration that day.

**Inclusive Language**: Every attempt will be made to use inclusive language, as this concern influences not only classroom assignments but also our interpretation of the Bible. Students who persist in utilizing non-gender inclusive language after the instructor’s correction will receive a reduction in grade. While citation from an inclusive language translation of the Bible (NRSV, CEB, TNIV, etc.) is preferred, students will not be penalized for citation from a non-gender inclusive text.

**Academic Integrity Policy:** Violations of academic integrity and other forms of cheating, as defined in ACU’s Academic Integrity Policy, involve the intention to deceive or mislead or misrepresent, and therefore are a form of lying and represent actions contrary to the behavioral norms that flow from the nature of God. Violations will be addressed as described in the Policy. While the university enforces the Policy, the most powerful motive for integrity and truthfulness comes from ones’ desire to imitate God’s nature in our lives. Every member of the faculty, staff, and student body is responsible for protecting the integrity of learning, scholarship, and research. The full Policy is available for review at the [Provost’s office web site](https://cdn01.acu.edu/community/offices/administrative/office-of-the-provost/academic-integrity-policy/overview.html) and the following offices: provost, college deans, dean of campus life, director of student judicial affairs, director of residential life education and academic departments.

Course materials prepared by the instructor (including PowerPoint presentations, study guides, and handouts), together with the content of all lectures and review sessions presented by the instructor, are the property of the instructor. Video and audio recording of lectures and review sessions without the consent of the instructor is prohibited. Unless explicit permission is obtained from the instructor, recordings of lectures and review sessions may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person.

**Style Guide**: All papers shall follow [Society of Biblical Literature’s student guide available online](https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/pubs/SBLHSsupp2015-02.pdf). See also [A Guide for Student Study & Writing](http://blogs.acu.edu/sensingt/cool-stuff/academic-writing-a-beginning/).

**The Americans with Disabilities Act** (ADA) protects individuals with disabilities from discrimination. If a student requests accommodations under ADA, please notify the professor one week prior to the course. If needs arise during the course, please notify the professor as soon as possible. The professor will work with the College of Biblical Studies to accommodate the student’s needs.

# **Anti-Harassment Policy:** As a professor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus.  I also have a mandatory reporting responsibility related to my role as a professor. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep the information you share private to the greatest extent possible. When I am not able to keep your information confidential, I will only share it with responsible administrators on campus who can provide you with services and resources. I am required to share with the **Title IX** Coordinator information regarding sexual misconduct or harassment, dating or domestic violence or stalking that you report to me. If you would prefer to share information in a confidential setting, I encourage you to speak with someone in the [ACU Counseling Center](https://cdn01.acu.edu/community/offices/health-safety/maccc/overview.html)[.](http://./) All of your options are available for review by clicking on the link to ACU's [policy](https://www.acu.edu/community/offices/hr-finance/hr/title-ix/anti-harassment-policy.html).”

**The professor reserves the right to make modifications to the calendar.**

**GST Classroom Virtues**

The GST invites students to participate in a process of theological and spiritual formation.Knowing how to think theologically comes by habit and by imitation, not simply by acquiring isolated facts. The assumption here is that books alone are insufficient for addressing difficulties of life and forming people into the image and likeness of God. Ultimately, we strive to form communities of inquiry, inviting you to inhabit a shared world of learning. Within such an environment, the goal is to cultivate critical skills of reflection, spiritual disciplines, interact authentically with one another, and learn to function as a community of inquiry. A large part of this involves connecting areas of life rather than pitting them against one another. Prayer, study, and other dimensions of life are all integral to the process of formation. Consequently, we invite you to participate in a set of practices; nurtured within this context, you pursue “intellectual, moral, spiritual excellence” the result of which is the formation of the whole person.

* 1. **Desire for truth in the context of love**—the aptitude to discern whether belief-forming processes, practices, and people yield true beliefs over false ones. People motivated by this desire will be more likely to conduct thorough inquiries, scrutinize evidence carefully, investigate numerous fields of study, and consider alternative explanations while respecting and caring for others.
  2. **Humility**—the capacity to recognize reliable sources of informed judgment while recognizing the limits of our knowledge and the fallibility of our judgments. This is not created in isolation, but takes into account feedback and correction from other sources of informed judgment.
  3. **Honesty**—the capacity to tackle difficult questions without seeking simple answers. Ignoring complex and difficult questions only solidifies vices such as intellectual dishonesty, close-mindedness, and rash judgments. These vices preclude the possibility of refining our thinking and of participating in conversations with others.
  4. **Openness**—the desire to engage in an open-ended search for knowledge of God, including receptivity to different ideas, experiences, and people. Listening becomes a discipline that acknowledges the other and respects diversity. The art of being a student and a teacher is an ongoing process that necessitates hospitality, patience, and love.
  5. **Courage**—the ability to articulate one’s position while considering other perspectives. The aptitude to express convictions involves risk yet fosters opportunities for meaningful dialog. Responding to objections entails tenacity but should not be confused with close-mindedness.
  6. **Wisdom**—the capacity to offer a synthetic discernment of knowledge on behalf of the community. The aim is not merely the dissemination of information but a pastoral implementation of faith for the building up of the community. It solidifies various pieces of data, practices, and experiences and aptly applies knowledge and faith to particular situations.
  7. **Stewardship**—the commitment to one’s accountability to the gifts and responsibilities that one brings to the classroom. Classroom engagement includes proactively participating in the course goals, seeking mastery of course competencies, and collaborating with faculty and fellow students in the development of a learning environment. Committing oneself to spiritual and intellectual well-being and growth is a faithful response to the opportunities graduate education affords.
  8. **Hopefulness—**thereceptivity to the future possibilities of God. The cultivation of thankfulness for our heritages and expectation for our future ministries engenders a guard against cynicism and a spirit of perseverance during times of stress and disorientation.
  9. **Prayerfulness**—the making of space to commune with God. The task of learning and teaching so that we are formed into the image of Christ through the Spirit involves our consistent reliance on God’s sanctifying work.

**Course Schedule**

The course calendar below provides a brief overview of the subject(s) to be covered during the week of study. Specific instructions for assignments will be posted in the course site. NOTE: Some of the readings listed here are not in your required textbooks. Links to these readings will be provided in the course site.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Topic** | **READING/ASSIGNMENTS** |
| 1 | Introduction   * Review syllabus * **Mini Lecture 1.1** What is biblical preaching? * **Mini Lecture 1.2** Why preach? * What is the purpose for preaching? * **Mini Lecture 1.3** A Brief Introduction to Hermeneutics * Assign texts for sermons | **Read** syllabus; start reading assignments for this will enrich discussions and generate questions that are more interesting.  East, “What are the Standards of Excellence for Theological Interpretation of Scripture”  Fee, *Short Guide to Sermon Exegesis*  Long, *Biblical Exegesis for Preaching*  Troeger, *A Sermon Workbook,* chapters 1 & 4  **Model Sermon 1**: Preliminary Exegesis |
| 2 | The Form and Argument of the Text   * Dinosaur Exegesis & Fee’s exegetical model for preaching. * **Mini Lecture 2.1** Literary Forms * Audio: Craddock | Tannahill, *Gospels*  Bailey, *Genre Analysis*  Bartlett, *Texts Shaping Sermons*  Willimon, *Square Text in a Round Form*  White, *Preaching Between the Lines*  Wardlaw, *Preaching Biblically*  **Model Sermon 2**: The Form of Your Text |
| 3 | Focus & Function statements   * **Mini Lecture 3.1** Focus and Function Statements * Video: Craddock * **Mini Lecture 3.2** Congregational Concerns * **Mini Lecture 3.3** Illustrations--A Tangent * Video: Lischer | Long, *Focus and Function*  Troeger, *A Sermon Workbook,* chapters 11-12  **Model Sermon 3**: From Exegesis to Sermon |
| 4 | Determining the Form | Classroom Assignment: Troeger, *A Sermon Workbook,* chapter 16 – complete the exercise. |
| 5 | Patterns and Forms of Preaching   * **Mini Lecture 4.1** Models of Preaching * **Mini Lecture 4.2** A NT Example of a Sermon Form | R. Allen, *Puritan Plain Style*  R. Allen, *Thesis-Synthesis-Antithesis*  R. Allen, *The Form of the Text Shapes the Form of the Sermon*  R. Allen, *Four Pages of the Preacher*  R. Allen, *Preaching from Oops to Yeah*  Troeger, *A Sermon Workbook,* chapter 10 |
| 6 | Scripts (part 1)   * **Mini Lecture 5.1** Grady Davis and the New Homiletic * Storyboards * Roadmaps | Barnhard and Bond, *Homiletix*  Buttrick, *Preaching a Parable*  Eslinger, *Moves and Structures*  R. Allen, *Sermon as Plot and Moves*  **Model Sermon 4**: The Form of the Sermon |
| 7 | Scripts (part 2)   * Developing moves by argument, image, and story * Plots * Moves * **Mini Lecture 5.2** Examples | **Model Sermon 5**: Storyboards |
| 8 | Homiletics Review   * Examples * Video: Willimon * **Mini Lecture 6.1** Modes of Preaching * **Mini Lecture 6.2** Mechanics | Troeger, *A Sermon Workbook,* chapters 5, 8, 13, and 14 |
| 9 | “No News is Bad News”  Assign preaching dates for laboratory | Long, *No News is Bad News*  **Model Sermon 6**: Mimesis as a Mode of Preaching |
| 10 | Exam |  |
| 11 | Preaching Laboratory |  |
| 12 | Preaching Laboratory |  |
| 13 | Thanksgiving |  |
| 14 | Preaching Laboratory |  |
| 15 | Preaching Laboratory | Sermon Project due; class evaluations |
|  |  |  |

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

For a comprehensive bibliography on preaching, go to <http://blogs.acu.edu/sensingt/files/2018/02/Preaching-Bibliography-2018.pdf> .