Course MS340SW
Public Ministry of the Church

Overview
This class is a study of how the church exists, functions and is viewed in the public square. Emphasis is given to the expression and application of Christian beliefs, doctrines, and values through the practices called “missions”, social ministry, outreach and evangelism. How does the Christian community relate to the state, engage in culture, and address matters of society and culture at large?

Goals
◼ To become knowledgeable of the key concepts of Public Theology
◼ To understand the public role and mission of the Church and its various means of engagement in society
◼ To understand the various and distinctive forms public theology is embodied, expressed and incarnated including worship, discipleship, fellowship, “missions”, evangelism, social ministry and social action
◼ To Identify and gain awareness of the challenges and opportunities the church faces in its engagement in the public square
◼ To develop a personal approach to public theology, understanding what it means to be a public theologian of the church for the sake of the world

Evaluation
1. Attendance – 15%
2. Class participation – 15%
3. Four reflection papers - 40%
4. Final Public Theology position paper – 30%

Required Texts
Hessel, Dieter T., The Church’s Public Role (2002)

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Milestones
Jan 22
Spring 2024 Term Begins

Feb 16
Reflection Paper #1 Due

Mar 9
Reflection Paper #2 Due

Mar 25-29th
Holy Week – no classes

Apr 6
Reflection Paper #3 Due

Apr 27
Reflection Paper #4 Due

May 6
Final Public Theology Reflection Paper due
Course Format and Procedures

This class will consist of a combination of lecture and discussion as designed by the instructor. Lectures will present related course material as well as to review and clarify assigned readings. The instructor will facilitate class discussion of assigned readings and materials. Students are required to complete all assigned readings and assignments prior to class sessions.

Guidelines for Reflection Papers

- Four reflection papers will be assigned to cover specific course material that has been covered.
- Reflection papers should be at least 3 pages typed (double spaced) responses to the reflection paper subject.
- Demonstrate your knowledge of the subject matter, authors, publications and prominent theologians.
- Include lecture notes, reading materials and discussions to support your work.
- Include your “theological perspective” relating to the subject matter.
- Be prepared to present and defend your work.
- Timely submission of reflection paper should be made both by email and by hand in class.

Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan 22th</td>
<td>Course Overview and Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jan 29th</td>
<td>What is Public Theology?</td>
<td>Hauerwas &amp; Willimon: Chapters 1 &amp; 2</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Feb 5th</td>
<td>The Church’s Public Theological and Ethical Claims</td>
<td>Hauerwas &amp; Willimon: Chapters 3 &amp; 4</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Feb 12th</td>
<td>The Mission of the Church in Public Life</td>
<td>Hauerwas &amp; Willimon: Chapters 5 &amp; 6</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Feb 19th</td>
<td>The Church Regaining its Public Impact</td>
<td>Hauerwas &amp; Willimon: Chapter 7</td>
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<td>Hessel: Chapter 1: Making a Public Difference After the Eclipse</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Feb 26th</td>
<td>Does the Church Change the World or Does the World Change the Church?</td>
<td>Hessel: Chapter 2: The Church as Sign and Agent of Transformation</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Mar 4th</td>
<td>Does the Church Change the World or Does the World Change the Church?</td>
<td>Hessel: Chapter 4: Public Theology and the Future of Democratic Society</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Mar 11th</td>
<td>The Church’s Public Witness</td>
<td>Hessel: Chapter 8: Changes in Ecumenical Public Witness</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Mar 18th</td>
<td>The Church and State</td>
<td>Hessel: Chapters 13: The Churches on Church and State</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Mar 25-29th</td>
<td>Holy Week</td>
<td>No Class</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Apr 1st</td>
<td>The Church and State</td>
<td>Hessel: Chapter 14: Church and State Revisited</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Apr 8th</td>
<td>The Church and Social Activism</td>
<td>Hessel: Chapter 12: Mainline Protestants and the Social Gospel Impulse</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Apr 15th</td>
<td>The Church and Social Activism</td>
<td>Hessel: Chapter 3: The Public Role of Black Churches</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Apr 22nd</td>
<td>Public Ministry and the Local Church, Webber Chap 1-6</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Apr 29th</td>
<td>Public Ministry and its Future</td>
<td>Hessel: Chapter 15:</td>
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