Instructors: Rodney L. Cooper, Ph.D. and Octavia Baker, D.Min.
Office Phone: 704-940-5832
Class Schedule: 7:00 -9:30 p.m. Fridays and 9-4 pm. Saturdays
Chapel: 6:30-7:00 p.m. Fridays
Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Description

This course is designed to enable the student to construct an expository sermon based upon the skills of exegesis. In addition, students will gain experience explaining a biblical passage and delivering a biblical sermon without notes. A year of a Biblical language and/or NT 502 Interpreting the New Testament are prerequisites for the course.

Gordon-Conwell Mission

PR601 relates to the mission of Gordon-Conwell by equipping the student to think biblically about the purpose of expository preaching. The literal, grammatical, historical and practical interpretation of the text with its application into the modern day congregant’s life is essential for the development of mature followers of Christ.

Course Relationship to the Curriculum

This course is an introduction to the principles of preparing relevant biblical sermons. Lectures and exercises cover a stage-by-stage explanation of how preachers think as they prepare to preach. The aim of the course is to help students understand what is required to preach effectively and to practice what they understand. Practice sessions provide opportunity for students to preach and have their efforts recorded on video for playback and critique by the professor.

Course Objectives

As a result of this course students should be able to deliver a sermon without the use of notes derived from the biblical text. In order to accomplish this, the student will: (A) Have a basic procedure that moves one from the biblical text to a sermon based on that text. (B) Give an explanation of a term or the meaning of a segment of scripture; or be
able to explain how a passage fits into its context; or the implications of a particular text for theology or action. This will be measured by an exercise in class. (C) Develop skill in constructing a clear outline consisting of full, declarative sentences that relate to a basic idea. The outline should also show transitions in parentheses between the major points and if necessary the supporting points. This will be measured by handing in an outline of the explanation exercise and the final sermon for grading. (D) Have a working definition of expository preaching.

(E) Understand the basic elements in sermon construction and what they should accomplish -- introduction, central idea (based on an exegetical idea), transitions, illustrations, development of the sermon, and conclusion. (F) Begin to develop a skill in writing a sermon manuscript geared to the way audiences listen. (G) Listen to three [3] taped sermons and determine what makes an effective sermon.

Course Requirements:

Achievement of the course objectives will be measured through a variety of assignments and activities described below. The successful completion of these activities will require each student to spend approximately 135 hours devoted to coursework both in class and out of class. The following break-down of assignments indicates how these hours are distributed across various course assignments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Expected Time</th>
<th>Students Actual Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading of Texts &amp; Articles</td>
<td>30 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation Exercise</td>
<td>25 hours</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>35 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sermon Analysis</td>
<td>15 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Time</td>
<td>30 hours</td>
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Course Textbooks

Required:


Recommended:


Course Requirements and Grading

1. Attendance at lectures and exercises. Students are expected to be on time for class.

2. Read Robinson, Biblical Preaching. Rather than read the book in a single sitting or two, you will profit more through reading it section by section as it is discussed in class.

3. Read Stott, Between Two Worlds. A report is due on November 10. Please consider the following: a. What is the central idea of the book? b. What did you find in the book that was new to you? c. With what do you disagree? Why? The assignment should be no more than five (5) pages.

4. Read Willhite and Gibson, The Big Idea of Biblical Preaching. Write a three (3) page (maximum) review using the following questions: a. Do you think the book has a central idea? What do you think it is? b. Summarize the thrust of the editors’ argument. In light of this, why did Willhite and Gibson select the chapters from other authors to be included in the book? c. What have you learned from reading the book? d. Discuss at least three things you learned from reading the book. Report is due on December 8.

5. Reading report is due on January 4th, 2013.

6. Prepare an outline for the explanation exercise.

7. Prepare a manuscript for an explanation exercise. You will explain a passage or aspect of a passage so that the audience understands it. This will be a ten (10) minute explanation without notes. The manuscript & outline are due the day you speak. NOTE: This exercise is NOT a sermon. It is a clear lecture. You will explain something from your text. Typical topics (examples are from Luke 19:1-10) include:

   a. A word or phrase (what does “Son of Abraham” mean?)
   b. A cultural practice (how did the Romans collect taxes?)
   c. The arrangement/flow of the text (why did Luke include Jesus’ statement at the end of the periscope?)

   d. The context (how does an understanding of the context help us feel what is taking place in Luke 19.
   e. A literary feature (who is a protagonist?)

8. Prepare a manuscript and an outline for a complete sermon that both explains and applies to the passage. This will be a fifteen (15) minute message without notes. The manuscript and outline are due the day you preach.

9. Listen to three taped messages and answer the questions provided in the syllabus.
Criteria for Grading

Your Sermon Will be Judged on the Following:

A. Content

a. Is the sermon clear? Is it well organized? Does it flow easily? Does the audience understand you?

b. Does the sermon have effective content? Is it based on sound exegesis? Does it have good supporting material and relevant illustrations?

B. Delivery

a. Does your delivery sound as though you really want to communicate? Does your voice have variety? Are you enthusiastic?

b. Does your body support what you are saying? Do you have eye contact that is direct and personal? Do you use gestures?

c. Do you want to be heard? Do you demonstrate conviction and sincerity?

IX. Classroom Conduct

Students are expected to attend class, be on time, and not leave early unless absolutely necessary. Sloppy deportment (such as wearing of caps in the classroom, sleeping, reclining, eating loudly, distracting behavior) is to be avoided. Respect for the professor and students is expected. Examples of disrespect include lateness for class, talking as an aside to someone, even in quiet tones, whenever someone else is speaking as part of the classroom discussion, demeaning remarks towards others, and rudeness. These guidelines are intended not to curtail anyone’s freedom in an academic community, but to provide a wholesome atmosphere for learning as befits Christian leaders.

X. Taping of Class Sessions

Students may tape a given class for use by a fellow student who may be absent at that class or for their own personal use only. No duplication of the tape or distribution to others are to be done.

XI. Questions to Consider When Listening to or Reading a Sermon

For the assignment: Please write out each question followed by your response. Please
be specific — give examples for what is asked.

1. What do you think is the main idea or concept the preacher was trying to get across? Can you state it? Y/N Analyze and comment.

2. When through with the introduction, did you want the preacher to go on? Y/N Did it capture interest so that you would want him/her to continue? Y/N How did he/she do? Analyze and comment.

3. Did he/she illustrate? Y/N If so, what did he/she do? — to explain, prove or apply? Did he/she succeed? Y/N Why or why not? Analyze and comment. Please provide specific examples of how the preacher explained, proved, or applied the text.

4. Do you think the conclusion drove home the main idea of the sermon in a way that caused you to want to respond? Analyze and comment.

5. What do you think that you as a listener might do, think or change as a result of hearing the sermon?

6. Do you think the delivery helped or hindered the presentation? What were its strengths? What about weaknesses? Analyze and comment.

7. Do you think that the sermon grew out of the biblical text? Or was it imposed on it? Analyze and comment.

**Course Administration**

**Attendance Policy**

Attendance is required for the class. If a difficulty arises, please see the professor. Please make every effort to be at class on time.

**Due Dates and Late Penalties**

No work will be accepted after the due date required.

**C. Assistance**

Please come to see me with your questions. Call to make an appointment.
Course Calendar

Oct. 12
Introduction to each other and the Course
The Worlds of the Expositor
What is Expository Preaching?
Read: Robinson pp. 1-32.

Oct. 13
What's the Big Idea?
Read: Robinson pp. 33-46.
Due: Questions on pp. 47-50.

The Essentials of An Effective Sermon
Read: Robinson pp. 51-72.

Due: Select one passage for your two exercises to be preached. Hand in the passage on a 3 x 5 card with your name on the card.

Do I Have Anything to Preach?
Read: Robinson: pp. 73-100 on the developmental question.
Due: Exercises on pp. 97-100.

The Exegetical and Homiletical Idea

Before next time: Prepare an outline and manuscript for an explanation exercise. You will explain a portion or element of a biblical passage. The outline should be in proper form and should be as detailed as necessary for a ten (10) minute exercise.

Please note: The exercise will be no more than ten (10) minutes in which you will explain an element of your biblical passage. Be sure that you communicate a clear idea and the structure of the passage. Deliver the exercise without notes. Be as enthusiastic as possible as you deliver the message.
November 02  The Shapes Sermons Take  
**Read:** Robinson pp. 115-137.

Making Dry Bones Live  
**Read:** Robinson pp. 139-164.

November 03  Getting Off to a Good Start  
**Read:** Robinson pp. 165-175.

All’s Well That Ends Well  
**Read:** Robinson pp. 175-182; 229-245.

Words on Target  
**Read:** Robinson pp. 183-199.

Dynamics of Delivery  
**Read:** Robinson pp. 201-224.

**Report on Stott**

**Ten Minute Explanation Exercise**

**Before next time:**
Three (3) recorded sermons 
and questions answered.

December 07  **Fifteen Minute Sermons**

**Note:** You are to bring to class a blank VCR tape. 
Please place your name and box number on the tape 
and sleeve. Thank you.

**Due:** Sermon Tapes Analysis

December 08:  Attached Record Sheet  
Reading Report  
Report on Willhite and Gibson  
Report on Ed Rowell
How many class sessions did you attend? _______________ (check if all)

Have you read Robinson’s *Biblical Preaching*? _______________ (yes/no) (5%)

Report on Willhite and Gibson, *Big Idea* _______________ (grade). 5%

Report on Stott's *Between Two Worlds*: _______________ (grade). 5%

Report on Ed Rowell _______________ (grade). 5%

Explanation Exercise and manuscript _______________ (grade). 20%

Outline for Explanation Exercise _______________ (grade). 10%

Sermon Tapes Exercise _______________ (grade). 10%

Fifteen Minute Sermon, Outline & Mss. _______________ (grade). 40%

(Late work will be penalized.)

Course Grade _______________
Syllabus Addendum

Academic Standards
Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of personal and academic integrity. Cheating involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination or the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors. Plagiarism involves the use of another person’s distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one’s own instead of giving proper credit to the source. Plagiarism can also involve over dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one’s writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures. For more information, please consult the Student Handbook.

ADA Policy
The seminary complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student with a qualifying and authenticated disability who is in need of accommodations, should petition the seminary in accordance with the stated guidelines in the Student Handbook.

Cancellation of Class
In the event the seminary has to cancel a class meeting (impending storm, professor illness, etc.), the Registration Office will send out an email (via the GCTS email account) notification to all students registered in the respective course. If the cancelation occurs the day of the scheduled meeting, the Registration Office will also attempt to contact students via their primary phone contact on record. The professor will contact the students (via GCTS account) regarding make-up. If a weekend class is cancelled, the class will be made up during the scheduled Make-Up weekend (see the academic calendar for the designated dates). For more info, consult your Student Handbook.

Extension Policy
Arrangements for submission of late work at a date on or before the “last day to submit written work,” as noted on the seminary’s Academic Calendar, are made between the student and professor. Formal petition to the Registration Office is not required at this time. This includes arrangements for the rescheduling of final exams.

However, course work (reading and written) to be submitted after the publicized calendar due date, must be approved by the Registration Office. An extension form, available online, must be submitted to the Registration Office prior to the
“last day to submit written work.” Requests received after this date will either be denied or incur additional penalty. For a full discussion of this policy, please consult the Student Handbook.

Grades
Faculty have six weeks from the course work due date to submit a final grade. Grades are posted on-line within twenty-four hours of receipt from the professor. Students are expected to check their CAMS student portal in order to access posted grades (unless instructed otherwise). Those individuals who need an official grade report issued to a third party should put their request in writing to the Registration Office.

Returned Work
Submitted hard-copy course work will be returned to the students if they provide a self addressed and postage-paid envelope with their final work. Work submitted without the appropriate envelope will be destroyed after the grade has been assessed and issued.