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

SAKAI

Course documents and other supporting materials can be accessed on SAKAI Learning Management System at https://sakai.gcts.edu. Students are to use their GCTS login information and password to access SAKAI. It is expected that students will utilize both the required textbook and SAKAI to gain an understanding of course content. Pre-work and assignments prior to the first class meeting are required and expected to be completed on the first night of class.

Course Description

This course is designed to enable the student to construct an expository sermon utilizing exegetical skills. Students will gain experience with two main activities: (1) explaining a biblical passage and (2) delivering a biblical sermon without notes. One 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 to modern day congregants’ lives, is essential in developing mature followers of Christ.
Course Relationship to the Curriculum

This course is required for Master of Divinity students and 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, with the professors’ critique, for later reference and self-analysis.

Course Objectives

The high-level goal of this course is for students to understand the principles of preparing relevant biblical sermons. This course focuses on providing a step-by-step process for students to gain experience explaining the main concept of a biblical passage, and delivering a biblical sermon without notes. Based on the vision and mission statements of Gordon-Conwell, it is expected that students will achieve the following outcomes upon completion of this course:

1. Gain skills to develop a basic procedure that moves from the biblical text to a sermon, based on the content of the text (articles 1, 2, 5, 6 of the mission statement).
2. Develop a working definition of expository preaching (articles 1, 5).
3. Explain a term or the meaning of a segment of scripture, or explain how a passage fits into its context, or explain the implications of a particular text for theology or action (articles 1, 2, 5, 6).
4. Develop skill in constructing a clear outline consisting of full, declarative sentences that relate to the basic idea of a text. This includes transitions between major points as well as optional supporting points (articles 1, 2, 5, 6).
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the basic elements in sermon construction and what those elements should accomplish (articles 1, 2, 5, 6).
6. Develop the skills to use the sermon outline to write a sermon manuscript based on how the concepts of how audiences listen (articles 1, 2, 5, 6).
7. Critique and analyze four (4) sermons to determine the effectiveness of a sermon (article 3).

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>
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<tr>
<td>Explanation Exercise</td>
<td>25 hours</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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</table>

**Course Textbooks and Resources**

**Required:**

5. DVD Recordings of Sermons for PR601 (GCTS Bookstore)

**Recommended:**


**Course Requirements and Assignments**

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 if you read it section by section as it is discussed in class.
   a. Read pages 1 – 72 before the first class.
   b. Select the text for your sermon. Attend the first class having starting your exegesis on the text you chose.

3. Read Stott, *Between Two Worlds*. A report is due on or before **September 28 in SAKAI**. 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 or before October 26 in SAKAI.**

5. **Reading and Actual Time reports are due on December 12, 2013.** Load into SAKAI.

6. Prepare an *outline* for the explanation exercise. See the sample in SAKAI.

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. Print them and bring a copy to class. **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. **Print them and bring them to class.** Deliver your sermon the last weekend of class. Come to class prepared to preach on Friday, November 8.

9. Read four (4) articles from Part 5: Structure in *The Art & Craft of Biblical Preaching* that focus on Introductions, Conclusions, and Outlines. Read two (2) on Introductions, one on Conclusions, and one on Outlines. Complete an annotated bibliography of each article that – for the complete assignment – is no more than 1.5 pages. Submit in SAKIA on the due date.

10. Listen to three taped messages and answer the questions provided in the syllabus.
Criteria for Grading—Your Sermon Will be Judged on the Following:

1. 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?

2. 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?

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, and 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 not intended to curtail anyone’s freedom in an academic community, but to provide a wholesome atmosphere for learning as befits Christian leaders.

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 is to be done.
Questions to Consider When Listening to or Reading a Sermon

For the assignment: Write out each question followed by your response. Be specific and 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. Make every effort to be at class on time.

Due Dates and Late Penalties

No work will be accepted after the due date required.

Assistance

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

| September 13 | Introduction to each other and the Course  
The Worlds of the Expositor  
What is Expository Preaching?  
**Read:** Robinson pp. 1-32. |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| September 14 | What's the Big Idea?  
**Read:** Robinson pp. 33-46.  
**Due:** Questions on pp. 47-50.  
The Essentials of An Effective Sermon  
**Be prepared to discuss your sermon text.**  
**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  
**Read:** Robinson pp. 101-113.  
**Before next time:**  
✓ Complete reading for lectures before the class.  
✓ 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. |
| September 28 | Submit Report on Stott in SAKAI. |
| October 11  | The Shapes Sermons Take  
**Read:** Robinson pp. 115-137.  
Making Dry Bones Live  
**Read:** Robinson pp. 139-164. |
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 12</td>
<td>Getting Off to a Good Start</td>
<td>Read: Robinson pp. 165-175.</td>
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<td>All’s Well That Ends Well</td>
<td>Read: Robinson pp. 175-182; 229-245.</td>
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<td>Words on Target</td>
<td>Read: Robinson pp. 183-199.</td>
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<td>Dynamics of Delivery</td>
<td>Read: Robinson pp. 201-224.</td>
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<td><strong>Ten Minute Explanation Exercise</strong></td>
<td><strong>Before next time: Sermon Critique and Analysis. Three (3) recorded and questions answered. Upload to SAKAI.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>October 26</td>
<td>Report on Willhite and Gibson, <em>Big Idea</em>.</td>
<td>Upload in SAKAI</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 8</td>
<td><strong>Fifteen Minute Sermons</strong></td>
<td>✓ Upload outline and manuscript to SAKAI and bring a copy of your sermon outline and manuscript to class.</td>
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<td><strong>Note:</strong> You are to bring a blank thumb drive to class to download your recorded sermon.</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 9</td>
<td><strong>Fifteen Minute Sermons</strong></td>
<td>✓ Upload outline and manuscript to SAKAI and bring a copy of your sermon outline and manuscript to class.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ Annotated bibliography of articles from <em>Art &amp; Craft</em></td>
<td>✓ Final date for Critique and Analysis of recorded sermons due. These will not be accepted after today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 23</td>
<td><strong>Student’s Actual Time and Reading Reports due.</strong> Load into SAKAI.</td>
<td>✓ Rowell – This is not a written report.</td>
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NAME_________________________________  Student ID______________________

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary  
PR601  
Preaching Principles and Practice  
in Preparing Relevant and Biblical Sermons  

Fall 2013  
Dr. Rodney L. Cooper, Ph.D. and Dr. Octavia Baker  

ATTENDANCE  
(Check all that apply. Indicate partial attendance.)  
How many class sessions did you attend?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weekend 1</th>
<th>Weekend 2</th>
<th>Weekend 3</th>
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READING REPORT ON TEXTBOOK  
(Circle one.)  
Did you read Robinson’s *Biblical Preaching*?  
YES NO  

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Points)</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5% = 50 pts</td>
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READING REPORT ON ADDITIONAL TEXTS & ARTICLES  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report</th>
<th>(% you read)</th>
<th>(Points)</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Willhite and Gibson, <em>Big Idea</em></td>
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<td>4% = 40 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stott, <em>Between Two Worlds</em></td>
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<td>5% = 50 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rowell, <em>Deep Preaching</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>4% = 40 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Articles, <em>Art &amp; Craft</em></td>
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<td>2% = 20 pts</td>
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COMMUNICATION DELIVERY  

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<tr>
<th>(Points)</th>
<th>20% = 200 pts</th>
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<tr>
<td>Explanation Exercise and Manuscript</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outline for Explanation Exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sermon Analysis Exercise</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fifteen Minute Sermon, Outline &amp; Manuscript</td>
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</table>

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.