

**Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary—Hamilton**  
**PR 602, Preaching for Modern Listeners**  
**Syllabus: Spring, 2011**  
**Mondays, 9:15-12:15; 1:15-4:15**

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### **Course Description**

As a result of this course, the student should be able to analyze and adapt to audiences by preparing messages that are both biblical and relevant. Students will speak multiple times and be recorded on video. They will also analyze sermons, reflect on their own experience, and read.

### **Course Relationship to the Curriculum**

Building on PR 601 and exegesis courses, this course helps students interpret Scripture for modern listeners. The focus is on audience analysis and adaptation.

### **Course Objectives**

#### **Performance:**

- Analyze audiences.
- Prepare and deliver messages that are both biblical and relevant.
  - Explain how to become a Christian to a particular audience.
  - Preach expository sermons which address the real needs of particular audiences.
- Form accurate and thorough exegetical ideas.
- Outline clearly.
- Become more skilled at speaking for the ear, esp. in using purposeful redundancy.
- Employ variety by experimenting with sermon forms.
- Critique five recorded sermons.
- Memorize a passage of Scripture related to preaching.

#### **Knowledge:**

- Review Robinson's ten stages of sermon preparation giving special attention to issues of exegetical idea, outlining, and relevance.
- Comprehend how to analyze and adapt to an audience.
- Reflect upon how God has used preaching in your spiritual growth.

#### **Attitude:**

- Value expository preaching.
- Gain confidence in your ability to bridge the gap between the text and a modern audience.
- Value the use of variety in preaching.
- Depend on the Lord who uses his Word to transform hearts.

### Course Textbooks

- Sunukjian, Donald R. *An Invitation to Biblical Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007.
- Chapell, Bryan. *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005.
- Gibson, Scott M., ed. *Making a Difference in Preaching: Haddon Robinson on Biblical Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.
- “Reading packets 1 and 2,” PDF on CAMS.
- “PR 602 Sample Sermons” (CD Rom), purchased in the Book Center.

### Attendance

Ten lectures and/or exercises. Students are expected to be *on time*. If you cannot attend a session, or if you miss one because of emergency, please talk to me.

### Description of Assignments

**Reading:** Complete the reading and turn in “Reading Report” by the last class session. Either hard copy or e-copy is fine.

**Reflection Papers (2):** (Non graded assignment). Due as noted in schedule. Both papers are one page maximum (12 pt. font, double-spaced).

- **Paper One, The Ministry of a Recent Sermon:** In the last few months have you heard a message which was particularly relevant to your life? Did God speak to you by encouraging, rebuking, reminding, or guiding you? The purpose of this paper is not merely to summarize the sermon but to reflect upon how it ministered to you.
- **Paper Two, The Blessing of Your Own Sermon:** As you prepare for your final sermon consider why you have chosen your topic and text. Has the preparation warmed your heart, enlightened your mind, or moved your will as you have studied? Do you have a burden to declare the message to others? How has God used your preparation in your own life?

### **Oral Presentation: Explain How to Become a Christian.**

- Choose a particular audience from the list below, and adapt your presentation to that audience. You may create another audience, if you confer with me.
- Fill out the “Audience Analysis Worksheet” as the first step in your preparation. Turn in your worksheet when you speak.
  - Clearly explain how to become a Christian. At the end of your presentation, listeners should understand well enough to summarize the topic to someone else.
  - Use any communication methods/channels such as discussion, visuals, story, and lecture which help you achieve the goal.
  - No notes.
  - Time limit = 4 minutes. Three point penalty for every 30 seconds over. Note: this is a very rigorous time limit. You will have to be extremely efficient and simple to accomplish the goal within the time limit.
  - See samples on CAMS.

Note: for the best communication, and thus the best grade, strive for *simplicity*. Do not use jargon (or explain unfamiliar terms as needed), and do use restatement. Use brief forms of support such as analogies and examples.

**Audiences:**

- Public high school, Saugus, world religions class.
- Third grade public school, Hamilton, “exploring religions” unit in social studies.
- Retirement village (senior citizens), Beverly, weekly chapel.
- Rotary club (business people), North Shore, monthly meeting.
- Youth group, Unitarian church, predominantly Caucasian.
- Youth group, Roman Catholic church, predominantly Hispanic.
- Prison, minimum security, men.
- Prison, minimum security, women.
- Hospital staff, part of a lecture series on the work of chaplains.
- Funeral, non-believing uncle.
- Funeral, believing uncle.
- Harvard Univ., campus crusade monthly meeting.
- Coffee house, Boston, part of a Christian band’s performance.
- Harvard Univ., Korean student association.
- Salem softball league, pre-game chaplain’s speech.
- Women’s retreat, Mt. Zion Baptist Church, predominantly African American.

**Sermon 1:**

- From the list below, choose a problem or question faced by people you minister to, and choose a passage of Scripture which directly addresses that problem. Preach to that audience, not to your classmates.

\*Note: You may choose another problem/text if you gain Dr. Arthurs’ approval first. You may also modify the texts below if you think they are not a thought unit.

\*Note: You may do topical exposition for this sermon, using multiple passages rather than just a single passage.

Topic and Text(s)	Topic and (Texts)
<b>Alcohol abuse</b> Eph. 5:15-20	<b>Conflict</b> Matt. 18:15-20
<b>Divorce</b> Matt. 19:1-12 1 Cor. 7:8-24 Malachi 2:12-16	<b>Worry</b> Matt. 6:25-34 Phil. 4:4-7 Psalm 23
<b>Sexual immorality</b> 1 Cor. 6:12-20 2 Sam. 11	<b>Suffering</b> 2 Cor. 4:7-18 Job Hab. 3:16-19 1 Peter 1:3-9
<b>Death</b> John 11 1 Thess. 4:13-18	<b>Materialism</b> 1 Tim. 6:6-10 Eccles. 5:8-20
<b>Taming the Tongue</b>	<b>Selfishness, feeling “entitled”</b>

Pure Speech Eph. 5:1-7 Complaining Phil. 2:12-18 Gossip Proverbs Flattery Proverbs Talking too much Proverbs	John 13:1-17 Phil. 2:1-11
<b>Homosexuality</b> Romans 1:18-32 or topical exposition.	<b>Debt</b> Prov. 22:7 Rom. 13:8

- Inform Dr. Arthurs of your topic and text(s) by date in syllabus.
- Preach to a hypothetical audience of people you currently minister to or are likely to minister to in the near future.
  - Spend 10-15 mins. gaining feedforward from that group or from people who know them well.
- Time limit = 18 minutes. Three point penalty for every 30 seconds over.
- No notes.
- Bring DVD-R (not RW). Watch yourself within one week following your sermon.

**Outline for Sermon 1:** Due one week before you preaching date. Send to Arthurs as a Word doc. See sample in CAMS. Include:

- Your text.
- Exegetical idea (subject and complement).
- Homiletical idea.
- Purpose—state in three brief phrases what you want the listeners to Think, Feel, and Do as a result of your sermon.
- Audience.
- Skeletal outline:
  - Main points/moves. No outline points beyond the level of capital letters.
  - Complete sentence.
  - One sentence per point.
  - Indicate what portion of the text each main point covers.
- Write out transitions word for word. Use *italics*. I suggest using rhetorical questions and restatement.
- Indicate at least one issue of relevance per point—things that need to be explained, proved, or applied—and briefly suggest what kind of support material you will use how you will do that (example, analogy, self disclosure, statistics, etc.). Mark these with a double \*\*asterisk.
- Write out intro and conclusion word for word.
- Fill out two checklists (CAMS): Application, Speaking for the Ear.

**Sermon 2:**

- Inform Dr. Arthurs of your topic and text(s) by date in syllabus.
- Preach a relevant expository sermon to *your classmates*. Do not create a hypothetical audience.
- Employ at least two methods of variety covered in class. Note: If you plan to use visual aids, it is imperative that you practice with those aids in the classroom.

- Communication breakdown often occurs because preachers are not prepared with technology and equipment.
- Time limit = 18 minutes. Three point penalty for every 30 seconds over.
  - Limited notes permitted: no more than ½ page.
  - Bring a DVD-R (not RW). Watch yourself within one week following your sermon.

**Discussion, Sermon Analysis:** (Non graded assignment). Due by date in syllabus. Watch five sermons on CD Rom. Meet with a small group from your class to discuss them. Spend a minimum of 1½ hours in discussion. Use the questions below to guide your discussions. Dig deep.

Not: “The preacher had good delivery. I liked it, and it was easy to listen to.”

But: “The preacher’s delivery was captivating because of her expert use of the pause. She used silence to rivet attention at two crucial points: x and y. Besides the expert use of silence, the preacher’s voice reinforced the content very well. When she described her childhood joys, her voice was lively and quick. When she expressed anger, I could hear it in her flat pitch and harsh tone.”

Not: “I couldn’t figure out the preacher’s big idea.”

But: “I was confused as I listened and am still confused as I try to state the preacher’s big idea. It seems that the preacher had two big ideas, x and y, but he did not demonstrate how they relate to each other or how they arise from the text. The intro ‘funneled’ nicely into x, but then the conclusion stated y.”

**Sermon: Dr. Jeffrey Arthurs, “The Truth Is Our Friend.”**

- What is the homiletical idea? Analyze and comment. E.g. is it biblical? Does the preacher demonstrate how it arises from the text? What techniques does the preacher use to communicate it?

**Sermon: Dr. Rodney Cooper, “Barnabas, the Encourager.”**

- Does this sermon edify? That is, does it build up believers, prompting them to be more like Jesus? If so, how does it do this? If not, what hinders?

**Sermon: Haddon Robinson, “The Broken Heart of David Jessison.”**

- Did the form of the sermon (first person narrative) help or hinder the reception of the message? Describe strengths and weaknesses of this form.

**Sermon: Dr. Alice Mathews, “The Wise ~~Woman~~ Person.”**

- Is this sermon rooted in exegesis? Is it also relevant? Provide examples and suggestions (if necessary) on how to improve exegesis and/or relevance.

**Sermon: Rev. Ken Shigematsu, “Journey to Jesus.”**

- How did the preacher use support material—to explain, prove, or apply? Analyze and comment. Provide examples.

## Grading

100-94=A      93-90 = A-  
 89-87 = B+    86-84 = B      83-80 = B-  
 etc.

***Late work will receive maximum 50%.*** If you experience illness or emergency, please speak to me personally and these assignments will not be penalized. At the end of the semester borderline cases will be determined on the basis of class participation, but no grade will be raised more than 4 points.

Assignment	Percent of Report Card Grade	Points Possible
Reading report.	10%	100
Explain how to become a Christian.	20%	200
Sermon 1	30%	300
Outline for Sermon 1	10%	100
Sermon 2	30%	300

### Criteria for Grading Oral Assignments

	The “C: Presentation	The “B” Presentation	The “A” Presentation
<b>Central Idea</b>	Present.	. . . plus accurate, reinforced through repetition, restatement, and illustration.	. . . plus intriguing, memorable.
<b>Content</b>	Conforms to requirements, accurate exegesis (if appropriate).	. . . plus shows depth of research and audience analysis; interesting.	. . . plus keen insight; rivets involuntary attention; includes moving exhortation.
<b>Organization</b>	Intro and conclusion present; transitions present; drives home one central idea.	. . . plus transitions are crystal clear through use of repetition and restatement; main moves are logically linked; no “rabbit trails.”	. . . plus arrangement (whether inductive or deductive) is psychologically effective.
<b>Language</b>	Clear.	. . . plus appropriate to material and context.	. . . plus vivid and articulate.
<b>Delivery</b>	Does not distract.	. . . plus reinforces the verbal content.	. . . plus displays genuine passion.

### Course Schedule

Date	Assignments Due	Lecture/Discussion
Jan. 31		Intro to the Course.  Review Exegetical Idea and Outlining.
Feb. 7	<b>Writing due:</b> Reflection paper #1.  Sign up for “Explain How to . . .” (audience).	Audience Analysis and Application.
Feb.14	<b>Speaking due:</b> Explain how to become a Christian.  Sign up for Sermon 1 (topic, text, and date).	
Feb. 28		Speaking for the Ear.
March 7	<b>No Class:</b> Outline for Sermon 1 for students preaching next week.	
March 14	<b>Speaking due:</b> Sermon 1  <b>Writing due:</b> Outline for Sermon 1 for students preaching next week.	
March 28	<b>Speaking due:</b> Sermon 1  <b>Writing due:</b> Outline for Sermon 1 for students preaching next week.	
April 4	Sign up for Sermon 2 (date, topic, text)	Preaching with Variety
April 11	Open for private consultation on Sermon 2.	Christ-Centered Preaching.
April 18	<b>Speaking due:</b> Sermon 2	
April 25	<b>Speaking due:</b> Sermon 2 <b>Writing due:</b> Reflection paper #2. <b>Analysis due:</b> Meet with your discussion group by 5:00 p.m. today. <b>Reading Report due</b> by the end of class today.	

**Attendance and Reading Report**  
**PR 602**  
**Arthurs**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Box:** \_\_\_\_\_

Number of classes attended: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you (or will you) watch yourself on video for each assignment? \_\_\_\_\_

Did you turn in two Reflection Papers? \_\_\_\_\_

Did you meet with your group to discuss the sermons on CD Rom? \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Text</b>	<b>Pages possible</b>	<b>Pages you read</b>
Sunukjian, <i>Invitation to Biblical Preaching</i> .	368	
Gibson, ed. <i>Making a Difference</i> .	154	
Chapell, <i>Christ-Centered Preaching</i> .	386	
Reading Packet in CAMS	68 (8 ½ x 11 sheets)	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>976</b>	

**Audience Adaptation Worksheet**  
**For use with “Explain How to Become a Christian” assignment**  
**PR 602, Arthurs**

1. Briefly summarize the demographics of your audience:

Age

Gender

Race

Nationality

Educational level

Socio-economic standing

Special interests/membership

2. Estimate audience’s *knowledge of your topic* with a mark on the line. Describe briefly on other side.

None

Partial

Expert

3. Estimate audience *attitude toward your topic* and mark on the line. Describe briefly on other side.

Hostile

Neutral

Favorable

4. Estimate audience *attitude toward you* and mark on the line. Describe briefly on other side.

Hostile

Neutral

Favorable

5. *Spiritual condition* of audience (circle terms that apply). Explain briefly on other side.

Conscious unbeliever (e.g. genuine skeptic, member of cult, etc.)

Nominal Christian (e.g. can be churched or unchurched, assent to basic doctrine, but no living relationship with God).

Awakened sinner (e.g. seeker, convicted but not repented, not understanding gospel).

Apostate (e.g. repudiated faith without regret).

New believer (e.g. may have doubts, misunderstanding, questions, overzealous).

Immature believer (e.g. not growing, undisciplined, contentious, proud)

Mature believer (e.g. progressing in faith, able to teach others, responsive to Word).

6. *Communication strategies and adaptations* you will make. Describe briefly on other side.

**Evaluation Sheet: How to Become a Christian  
PR 602, Arthurs**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Box: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Is there evidence of audience adaptation?

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Is the teaching clear?

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Does the delivery reinforce the content?

**Evaluation Sheet: Sermon 1**  
**PR 602, Arthurs**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Box: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Intro

Gain Attention  
Surface Need  
Introduce Idea

---

Exegesis

---

Relevance

Adapted to the audience  
Application

---

Central Idea

Clear  
Repeated

---

Arrangement

Clear/logical  
Transitions

---

Support Material

---

Conclusion

Summarize  
Reinforce

---

Language and Delivery

---

**Evaluation Sheet: Sermon 2**  
**PR 602, Arthurs**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Box: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Intro

Gain Attention  
Surface Need  
Introduce Idea

---

Exegesis

---

Relevance

Adapted to the audience  
Application

---

Central Idea

Clear  
Repeated

---

Arrangement

Clear/logical  
Transitions

---

Support Material, Preaching with Variety

---

Conclusion

Summarize  
Reinforce

---

Language and Delivery