GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
EV 701 HA: EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP IN THE LOCAL CHURCH
Fall Term, 2017
Tuesday- Thursday, 9:35-11 a.m.

Professor: Jim Singleton
Office: Library, #119
Tel.: Office, 978/646-4093;
E-mail, jsingleton@gcts.edu; jsingleton56@gmail.com
Office Hours: Sign Up Sheets Outside My Office Door
Byington Scholar: Ben Crelin (bcrelin@gcts.edu)

Catalog Description: Practical theological foundation for the practice of evangelistic and discipleship leadership in the church. This course will examine both the content and communication of the gospel within various cultural contexts.

Introduction
This course is at the very heart of preparation for ministry, because evangelism is near to the heart of God. Jesus declared that he came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10). Our evangelistic witness is one reflection of our vital relationship with God. The Apostle Peter reminds us (I Peter 2:9), “you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” Prior to his ascension, Jesus clarified his heart’s desire as he described the priority to win the lost, to make disciples through Spirit-empowered witness (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).

Christian witness in the early church was more spontaneous and contagious than strategic, a natural outflow of the love and passionate devotion to Jesus Christ that the believers shared in common. Their love for one another was shared, in turn, with their own surrounding communities, thus fulfilling the Lord’s “new commandment” (John 13:34-35). Gospel witness was both “taught” and “caught,” and “the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47).

Unfortunately, today the topic of evangelism in our own country often evokes dread rather than delight and guilt rather than gratefulness. Many seminarians and pastors confess that they feel woefully inadequate to lead God’s church in evangelistic witness and disciple-making. Many have engaged in personal witness, but are at a loss to know how to lead a church to become an intentional witness to their own community and to the world.

This course is designed to guide students to gain insight in the evangelistic mission and the practice of discipleship in the context of the local congregation. Knowing personal evangelism and discipleship is vital, but also knowing how to lead these visions in a local congregation is a large calling.

EV 701 in Relation to the Seminary’s Mission Statement
This course addresses the Seminary’s Mission Statement as follows:

Mission Statement #1: Examining God’s Word regarding the meaning and practice of evangelism-discipleship.

Mission Statements #3 & #5: Learning to become skilled in the practice of evangelism-discipleship personally and to provide resources for the local church to be an effective evangelistic and disciple making presence in the larger community.

Mission Statements #4 & #6: Working toward growing maturity in evangelism-discipleship and leading the church toward maturity in evangelism-discipleship for redemptive influence in the world.

**EV 701 Objectives**

In this introductory course you will:

1. Read some of the best current representative works in the field of evangelism-discipleship, to be followed by class discussion and constructive critique in order to become familiar with the lively debate among Evangelical scholars on how best to understand and to communicate the biblical gospel.

2. Articulate a theology of evangelism-discipleship that is faithful to Scripture in content and consistent with our larger historic evangelical heritage across the millennia.

3. Verbally communicate the gospel in language that is unambiguously clear to your own identified audience(s) without religious jargon, and express the gospel personally with appropriate vulnerability.

4. Gain skill in understanding the context for implementing plans of evangelism and discipleship in the local church.

**CLASS OVERVIEW & REQUIREMENTS**

Due Dates for Individual Assignments as Indicated Below

Deadline for Submitting Final Work is Tuesday, December 19, 2017 (Registrar’s Deadline, 4:00pm)
Graduating Seniors, Friday, December 15, 2017 (4 p.m.)

As you work this semester do not allow yourself to get behind each step of the way, you will discover the satisfaction of your learning in process and of the culmination of your learning at the end of the term.

I. **READING** (30% of the Final Course Grade)

The texts provide a practical foundation for the ministry of evangelism and discipleship in a local church. My desire is to entice you to a life-long love of reading in these fields.

You will verify your reading of required texts on the Reading Report Sheet (Appendix A), and there is also opportunity for you to indicate optional extra credit reading of your own choice.

Further, each student will write an annotated bibliography for each work read, first describing the central thesis of the book, followed by a critical analysis of what in this book was helpful in crafting your ministry. There are more than 1800 pages are on the required list.

There is an option of doing the reading in pairs within the class. This option would require each student to be responsible for only 1000 pages of reading, but it would add a weekly discussion of the books in pairs. Then you would jointly write the annotated bibliography together, usually writing on separate books, but occasionally noting differences in how you found each particular book to be helpful. That would necessitate also deciding which books you both read, and which books one or the other would read. May graduates should likely be paired with other May graduates if you take this option. This option is to promote the practice of being in reading groups as local pastors. You will never be able to read everything in life – but with partners you
can cover more ground. The risk of this approach is that you will receive the same grade because the project is jointly done. The first half of the bibliography will be turned in on October 17, 2017. The rest is due by the last day to turn in written work, December 19 (4 p.m.) December graduates due on December 15, 2017 (4 p.m.)

**Required Reading**

**Books**


**Alternative List:**


II. REFLECTION-DISCUSSION PAPERS (30% of the Final Course Grade)

Significant time is spent in class in the development of these papers to prepare you for your work outside of class. Each of the reflection-discussion papers requires your submitting your work to an “Editor” (family member, friend, someone in the community) who to the best of your knowledge is not a Christian, for their candid comments about your work. These respective papers may be submitted to the same Editor or to different individuals, or even multiple editors, as you wish.

Write each paper with an “audience of one” in mind, i.e. the individual with whom you will be sharing the paper. Keep foremost in your thinking his/her interests and needs.

For the reflection-discussion papers you provide (for me) a paragraph about the person to whom you will send the paper. In the appendix there is a guide for how to prepare this paper (Appendix B).

1) Personal God Story. This is a true autobiographical story of how God evidently intervened in your life, and includes your own conversion story. It is okay if you do not have a specific date and date for your conversion per se. As we work on this assignment in class we will discover that each story is unique in the way God has drawn us to saving faith. Be “personal,” i.e. open and vulnerable. This is your “God Story” by virtue of God’s work in your life.

2) What Has Gone Wrong? – This question addresses arguably the greatest challenge in sharing the gospel with this generation, for it involves the doctrine of the Fall and Sin and Evil. What are sin and evil? Who cares? (1) Introduce the topic so your Editor cares enough to listen and to engage in conversation with you. (2) First talk about yourself and be appropriately vulnerable to take pressure off your Editor while at the same time guiding him/her to reflect seriously on the topic. (3) Finally, gently ask whether your Editor believes sin and evil are relevant to his/her own life and invite them to talk about it if they would be interested in doing so.

3) What Does Good Friday Mean? The culture tries to tell us what Christmas and Easter mean. But explain to your reader why the crucifixion happened. Focus on the fullness of this event and in language that connects to your reader. What did the Cross accomplish? Help the reader think through your own growth in understanding this central Christian festival.

4) The Resurrection of Christ – Who Cares? Does the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ over 2,000 years ago have any relevance for our own day and age? Any relevance for me personally? Introduce the topic so your Editor cares enough to listen and to engage in conversation with you. Then talk about yourself and be appropriately vulnerable to take pressure off your Editor while at the same time guiding him/her to reflect seriously on the topic. Finally, gently ask whether your Editor
believes the resurrection of Christ is relevant to his/her own life and invite them to talk about it if they would be interested in doing so.

**GRADING SUMMARY**

*All Work Due No Later than December 19, 2017 4:00pm; Senior Due December 8, 2017 at 4 p.m.*

All grading, including final course grade, is based upon the grading scale given in the seminary Catalog: A+=4.0; A=4.0; A-=3.7; B+=3.3; B=3.0; B-=2.7; C+=2.3; C=2.0; C-=1.7; D+=1.3; D=1.0; D-=0.7; F=0.0.

**Point Scale:** 98 - 100 A+; 94 - 97 A; 91 - 93 A-; 88 - 90 B+; 84 - 87 B; 81 - 83 B-; 78 - 80 C+; 74 - 77 C; 71 - 73 C-; 68 - 70 D+; 64 - 67 D; 61 - 63 D-; below 60 F.

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<tr>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Report Completion (Appendix A)</td>
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<tr>
<th>FOUR REFLECTION PAPERS</th>
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<th>FINAL EXAM</th>
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Make copies of all of your work or “Save” on your computer since materials occasionally become lost.

**Class Schedule – Tuesday-Thursday (9:35-11)**

Subject to Change if Necessary

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<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Topic:</th>
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Prior to Class: Begin reading – Keller, *Center Church* (Part 1)

**Week 1 - September 12-14, 2017** - Introduction to the Course and to One Another.

Biblical Reflection – Matthew 9:35-38

What is Evangelism?

What is the Gospel?

*Read:* Kreider, *Patient Ferment*
**Write:** “Personal God Story” Paper (**Due: September 19, 2017**)

**Week 2 - September 19-21** – How Did Christianity Spread?  
**Biblical Reflection** – Acts 9 and Acts 26:12-18  
**Share in Class** - “Personal God Story” with two partners for evaluation  
**ReWrite** paper for your Reader/Editor  
**Read:** Keller, *Center Church* (Part 2)

**Week 3 – September 26-28, 2017** – What is the Grand Narrative of Salvation?  
**Biblical Reflection** – John 4  
**Read:** Peace, *Holy Conversations*  
**Begin Reading:** Lewis (Looking for metaphor and similes)  
**Write:** “What Went Wrong?” Paper (**Due: October 3, 2017**)

**Week 4 – October 3-5, 2017** – Review the Grand Narrative and Sharing the Story  
**Biblical Reflection** - John 4 (cont’t)  
**Read:** Stiles, *Evangelism*  
**Share in Class** - “What Went Wrong?” with two partners for evaluation  
**ReWrite** paper for your Reader/Editor  
**Write:** First half of Annotated Bibliography (**Due: October 17, 2017**)

**Week 5 – October 10-12, 2017** – Reading Week  
Just read!

**Week 6 - October 17-19, 2017** - The Process of Evangelism  
**Biblical Reflection** – John 5  
**Inside and Outside Conversions**  
**Relationship of Christian Nurture and Borrowing/Owning the Faith**  
**Read:** Lewis, *Mere Christianity*  
**Write:** “Good Friday” paper (**Due October 24, 2017**)  
**Turn In:** First Half of Annotated Bibliography

**Week 7 – October 24-26, 2017** - The Process of Evangelism: Doubts and Struggles  
**Biblical Reflection** - John 20  
**Teaching Evangelism to a Congregation**  
**Reformation Conference (Thursday)**
Share in Class – “Good Friday” papers
ReWrite paper for your Reader/Editor
Read: Rawson, Crossing Cultures with Jesus
Write: “Why Resurrection?” paper (Due: November 2, 2017)

Week 8 – October 31-November 2, 2017 - Creating a Congregational Culture of Evangelism
Biblical Reflection – Acts 17-19
Leadership Issues in Leading Change
Christendom, Attractional, and Missional
Understanding Cross-Cultural Contexts Nearby

Read: Ogden, Discipleship Essentials

Week 9 – November 7-9, 2017 – 2nd Reading Week

Week 10 – November 14-16, 2017 - Building the Model of Discipleship in the Local Church
Biblical Reflection – Matthew 28:16-20; II Timothy 2:2
Realms of Discipleship

Share in Class “Why Resurrection?” papers

Read: Keller, City Church, Part 3
Read: Harrington and Absalom, Discipleship That Fits

Week 11 – November 21, 2017 - Discipleship and Disciple-Making in the Local Church
Biblical Reflection- Colossians 1:28-29; Hebrews 5:7-11

Read: Sistrunk, Mentoring for Life

Week 12 – November 28-30, 2017 – Discipleship and Disciple-Making – Creating a Culture

Week 13 – December 5-7 2017 - Obstacles to Discipleship
Summary
Biblical Reflection – Acts 20:25-32
APPENDIX A
READING REPORT SHEET

REQUIRED READING:

READ:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Copyright Date</th>
<th># Pages</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Keller</td>
<td>Center Church</td>
<td>(382 pp.)</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Kreider</td>
<td>Patient Ferment of the Early Church</td>
<td>(321 pp.)</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Stiles</td>
<td>Evangelism</td>
<td>(126 pp.)</td>
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<td>Peace</td>
<td>Holy Conversation</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Lewis</td>
<td>C.S. Mere Christianity</td>
<td>(175pp.)</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Rawson</td>
<td>Crossing Cultures with Jesus</td>
<td>(208 pp.)</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Harrington and Absalom</td>
<td>Discipleship That Fits</td>
<td>(238 pp)</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Ogden</td>
<td>Discipleship Essentials</td>
<td>(232pp.)</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Sistrunk, Nell</td>
<td>Mentor for Life</td>
<td>(272 pp)</td>
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TOTAL PAGES READ: ________ (out of 2081 or 1000 pp).

% OF REQUIRED READING: ________%

ADDITIONAL/ALTERNATIVE READING COMPLETED:

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TOTAL ADDITIONAL PAGES READ: ________ p
APPENDIX B – GROUP REVIEW

Sharing Papers – PRELIMINARY APPROVAL

1. Is your work interesting / attention-getting for the listener?
   
   ____ Develop your LEAD SENTENCE [LEAD QUESTION] to be OF MORE INTEREST TO THE LISTENER. Introduce your story in a way that can RELATE TO THEM. (e.g., “Have you ever wondered…?” e.g., “What would you say to someone who…?”)
   
   ____ INTRODUCE YOUR PRIMARY THEME(S) more evidently. (e.g., loneliness, or fear, or boredom, or doubt, or rejection, or…IN YOUR OWN WORDS AND WITH YOUR OWN EXPRESSIONS.)
   
   ____ CARRY THROUGH WITH YOUR PRIMARY THEME(S) FROM BEGINNING TO END. There should be a thread from the first paragraph to the last.
   
   ____ Transition (segue) from one paragraph to the next.
   
   ____ Reduce the length without taking from the substance.

2. Is your work inviting the listener to dialog?
   
   ____ Write in a way so that the listener will want to have conversation with you. Your invitation may be direct, or you may be indirect but with an inviting style.

3. Is your God Story free of jargon meaningless to the listener?
   
   ____ All “religious” or “Christianese” words or phrases are circled. Either eliminate them and replace with meaningful alternatives, or define/explain/illustrate them.

BRIEF description of your Editor’s Religious / Church Background and Any Other Pertinent Information: