Course Description

Examination of the literary-rhetorical characteristics of various genres of Scripture; implications for preaching. Practice developing and delivering messages using communication methods such as story, visuals, and discussion.

Course Relationship to the Curriculum

This course provides advanced training in preaching and literary analysis of Scripture. Building on PR 601 and exegesis courses, this course helps students interpret and proclaim Scripture in a way that is true to the text as well as adapted to modern listeners. The course applies literary and rhetorical theory to the actual practice of ministry with a view toward helping students lead and communicate well.

Course Objectives

Knowledge:
• Reflect upon the literary and rhetorical nature of the Bible.
• Master the literary/rhetorical characteristics of biblical narrative.
• Understand the literary/rhetorical characteristics of various genres such as parables, proverbs, law, etc.

Skill:
• Use literary/rhetorical criticism in exegesis.
• Use knowledge of rhetoric when preaching two sermons from those genres:
  A narrative sermon.
  A sermon from another genre.
• Lead a seminar using multiple teaching methods.
• Critique a published sermon.

Attitude:
• Increase both humility and confidence as you preach.
• Support your classmates.
• Enjoy the artistry of the Bible.
• Value rigorous study.
• Value creativity in preaching.
Course Textbooks


*Note: Out of print. Use Amazon, the library, Arthurs, or other sources to secure this book.

Course Requirements

Attendance and Late Work: Attendance required for all sessions. Consult with Dr. Arthurs if this is impossible. Note: *No late work will be accepted for credit*. Late work will receive a 0, but I will be happy to give you feedback on the assignment, if you desire. If you cannot turn in an assignment due to emergency, speak with me.

Reading: See the sources above. These total about 760 pp. In addition, each seminar group will distribute to each member 40-50 pp. on each genre. Reading report is due by the last class session.

Seminar: Research the literary-rhetorical characteristics of a biblical genre from the list below (or clear another choice with me), and suggest how to preach that form of literature. Teach in seminar format—with lecture, discussion, and visuals. Details:

- **Two weeks before your seminar**: Meet with Arthurs. Be prepared to discuss the readings you are doing, the readings you will require, and the main ideas you will present.
- **One week before your seminar**: Distribute a packet of readings (40-50 pages) for each student in class.
- **During the seminar**: Devote one third of your time to lecture, one third of your time to discussion, and one third of your time to vicarious learning (e.g. sample sermons, exercises). PR 728 is a seminar class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Lyric poetry</th>
<th>Proverb</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speeches</td>
<td>Parable</td>
<td>Apocalypse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epistle</td>
<td>Law</td>
<td>Prophecy</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Radical” Wisdom Literature</td>
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</table>

**Sermon 1**: Preach a narrative sermon from narrative literature. Your audience is this class. No notes. Time limit: ________.
Sermon 2: Preach from one of the genres that has been presented in class. Use at least two of the communication methods that have been presented in class seminars. Preach to a hypothetical audience of people you currently minister to or are likely to minister to in the future. Skeletal notes permitted (1/2 page max.) Time limit: _______.

Paper: 12 pp. max. (double spaced, 12 pt. font). Analyze a published sermon (audio or video published is recommended). Exegete how the preacher responded to the literary-rhetorical features of his/her text. Describe both strengths and weaknesses and reflect upon how you can incorporate some of the preacher’s homiletics in your own preaching. Cite sources you have read for this class. Follow this format:

- Introduce the preacher and the context for the sermon (approx. 2 paragraphs).
- Thesis and preview (1-2 paragraphs).
- Describe two to five literary-rhetorical features of the text (approx. 3 pages).
- Describe how the preacher incorporates (or fails to incorporate) those features into the sermon (approx. 5 pages).
- Reflect upon what you learned and can apply to your own preaching (approx. 2 pages).

Sample:

- Don Sunukjian is a well known preacher and homiletician who teaches at Talbot . . . . One of his most famous sermons is entitled “A Night In Persia.” Using first-person monologue, he retells the story of Esther. The recording used for this paper was made at Multnomah Bible College, Portland, OR, in 1993. The audience consisted of . . . .
- By retelling the story Esther through the perspective of a pagan, Sunukjian recreates the dramatic irony and tension of the original story. To explicate that thesis, I will first examine irony in the book of Esther, then . . . .
- One striking literary-rhetorical feature of the story of Esther relates to its point of view. The narrative is told with remarkable dramatic irony. Blah blah defines “dramatic irony” as “blah blah,” and that is exactly what the narrator of Esther does, for the name of God is never mentioned, yet the presence of God pervades the story. The reader knows this, but the characters in the story do not. The rhetorical significance of dramatic irony is blah blah.
- Sunukjian adroitly recreates the impact of the irony in his sermon. By choosing to tell the story through the eyes of a pagan, the preacher prompts the listeners to infer things the pagan narrator does not intend. Thus Sunukjian borrows the text’s own method of communication and brings it into the 21st century. For example, Harbona, the narrator, states “blah blah,” but as listeners, we know blah blah.
- I have learned that preaching does not always have to be deductive, frontal, or “in-your-face.” It can also be inductive, subtle, and cajoling. I need to practice this, especially as I communicate with post moderns since they value story and mystery. Sunukjian clearly has a big idea in mind, but he communicates that idea obliquely.

For Th. M. credit: Read 400 pp. extra on preaching and/or genre. Reading done for your seminar does not count toward this total. Submit a 2 page summary of what you read.
Estimated time invested  Grade Percentage

Seminar    20 hrs.    30%
Sermon 1    18 hrs.    20%
Sermon 2    18 hrs.    20%
Paper       15 hrs.    20%
Reading     20 hrs.    10%

TOTAL       91 hrs.    100%

Grading Criteria

Seminar:

Content
• Has the subject been researched thoroughly?
• Is there a blend of theory and praxis? Is the seminar helpful for the actual practice of ministry?

Format
• Does the presentation use various communication forms such as lecture, discussion, visuals, and activities/experience?
• Is time managed well?
• Is the presentation engaging and clear?

Sermons:

Content
• Is the sermon clear?
• Is it grounded in sound exegesis?
• Does the sermon demonstrate the relevance of the Bible to the needs and interests of the audience?
• Does the sermon use variety to reproduce some of the rhetorical dynamics of the text?

Delivery
• Is the preacher both natural and passionate?
• Does the preacher’s nonverbal communication reinforce the verbal?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 28</td>
<td>Seminar: Variety—Why and How</td>
<td>Arthurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 4</td>
<td>Seminar: Preaching Narrative</td>
<td>Arthurs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 11</td>
<td>Seminar: Preaching Narrative</td>
<td>Arthurs</td>
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<td>Feb. 25</td>
<td>Sermon 1</td>
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<td>March 4</td>
<td>Sermon 1</td>
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<td>March 11</td>
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<td>March 18</td>
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<td>April 1</td>
<td>Seminar:</td>
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<td>April 8</td>
<td>Seminar:</td>
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<td>April 15</td>
<td>Sermon 2</td>
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<td>Papers due</td>
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<td>April 22</td>
<td>Sermon 2</td>
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<td>Paper due</td>
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Evaluation Sheet
PR 728, Preaching With Variety
Sermon 1: Narrative

Name: ____________________________________    Time: _____
Text: ____________________________________  Grade: _____

Structure
Use of intro and/or conclusion (if appropriate)

Plot/organization

______________________________________________________________________________

Exegesis

______________________________________________________________________________

Application (direct or oblique)

______________________________________________________________________________

Use of Language (vivid, concrete, conversational)

______________________________________________________________________________

Delivery
Evaluation Sheet
PR 728, Preaching With Variety
Sermon 2: Other Genre

Name: ________________________________    Time: _____

Text: ________________________________    Grade: _____

Preaching with Clear Development

______________________________________________________________________________

Preaching with Accurate Interpretation

______________________________________________________________________________

Preaching with Creative Communication

______________________________________________________________________________

Preaching with Engaging Delivery
## Reading Report

**Preaching with Variety**  
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Hamilton

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**Name**  
_______________________________________

**Box:** ________

Estimate the number of pages you read:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Total number of pages</th>
<th>Number you read</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arthurs, <em>Preaching With Variety</em></td>
<td>220</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lewis and Lewis, <em>Learning to Preach Like Jesus.</em></td>
<td>155</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ryken, <em>How to Read the Bible as Literature.</em></td>
<td>203</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Day, <em>Preaching With All You’ve Got</em></td>
<td>185</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four seminars (approx 50 each)</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>963</strong></td>
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Your Total