

**SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AND MINISTRY  
SEATTLE UNIVERSITY  
901 12<sup>TH</sup> AVE  
SEATTLE, WA 98122  
WINTER QUARTER, 2006**

**STMM 503—THEOLOGY IN AN ECUMENICAL CONTEXT**

HUNTHAUSEN HALL 100

Credits: 3

Dates: Wednesdays, 1:30-4:20pm

**Instructors**

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**Course Description:**

This course invites students to approach theology from an ecumenical perspective. It includes an overview of the major denominational traditions within the Christian Church and an introduction to interfaith dialogue. The course explores the work of the modern ecumenical movement to overcome divisions among and within churches and to make more visible the God-given unity of the Church through dialogue, advocacy, and action for the common good. Students learn through readings, lectures, discussion, papers, and interaction with one another, faculty, and guests from a variety of faith traditions.

**Course Objectives:**

To help students

1. gain an understanding of the unity of the church; the goal of ecumenism is to make this unity more visible.
2. locate their own faith tradition within denominational Christianity and to deepen their understanding and critical appreciation of this faith tradition.
3. increase their openness for receiving the gifts of other traditions.
4. model the skills of ecumenical conversation and dialogue in class interactions.
5. celebrate Christian diversity and also understand that divisions within churches threaten Christian unity today.
6. explore the implications of churches reconciling their diversity as a witness to and hope for reconciliation in the wider community.
7. gain familiarity with the history and goals of the modern ecumenical movement.
8. study models of interfaith dialogue and understanding.
9. grow in awareness of ecumenism in practice locally and globally.

**Texts (required):**

Mary Boys, *Jewish-Christian Dialogue: One Woman's Experience*. New York: Paulist, 1997.

Ted Campbell, *Christian Confessions: A Historical Introduction*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1996.

Michael Kinnamon, *The Vision of the Ecumenical Movement and How It Has Been Impoverished by Its Friends*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice, 2003.

*Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*. Geneva: WCC, 1982.

Other articles will be made available in a Readings Coursepak available for purchase at Super Copy, Seattle University.

**Assignments:****Written:****1. The first paper** is due on **WEDNESDAY, February 15.**

Please submit a 10 to 15 page double spaced paper that includes:

- ✚ description of your ecclesial location (we will work on this aspect of the paper during the first two class sessions)
  - ✚ summary of how your ecclesial location reflects the theology of your denomination as explored in class and through Campbell's theological analysis.
  - ✚ theological reflection on how your ecclesial location embodies the theological agreement articulated in one of the three sections of the "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry" (BEM) document.
    - Some resources for the final part of this paper include: six volumes of Church responses to BEM on reserve in the library; articles in the course reader (*Why It Matters* by Kinnamon is especially important).
- 2. The second paper** (10-15 pages double spaced) is due **MONDAY, March 6.**
- ✚ This paper will build on the first paper by acknowledging your denominational identity - your identity theologically as related to your ecclesial context.
  - ✚ Note and reflect on the "idols" of your particular ecclesial context as they have been exposed to other images, metaphors, and practices. (This will include the dialogue practice of acknowledging "holy regret.")
  - ✚ Note and reflect on the gifts your ecclesial context offers the church universal.
  - ✚ Summarize how doing theology in an ecumenical context affirms, expands, challenges, and/or unsettles you as minister/leader in your ecclesial context, geographic location, and socio-political reality.
- 3. Prepare questions for the guests invited** during weeks 4, 5, and 6 and post them on the Angel server.

**Oral:**

1. Work with one or two others to prepare **a brief prayer (no more than 8 minutes) for the opening of one of our class sessions.** The prayer should reflect the gifts of some particular Christian theological/spiritual tradition—for instance, a hymn from the Methodists—but no prayer text or ritual should need more than one side of a page or five minutes. Be sure to allow for silent time before the actual prayer experience. We will offer you a sign-up chart for the quarter, and you will sign up for one session.
2. Demonstrate **dialogue competencies** throughout the course:
  - a. Deep listening to the other;
  - b. Ability to paraphrase, summarize, articulate another's position with clarity and understanding; with no blame or judgment;
  - c. Seek to understand, not to be understood;
  - d. Use "I" statements in describing your own viewpoint;
  - e. Encourage others to listen deeply to you by allowing them to restate your positions; hearing their summaries, gently offering new words or images to illumine; etc;
  - f. Evidence an openness to other viewpoints as valid.

### Class Sessions

#### **Class one: January 4, 2006: Introducing the Course**

- ✚ meeting the participants
- ✚ toward understanding the Other and rules for dialogue
- ✚ how to use the syllabus and other resources
- ✚ assignments
- ✚ beginning to articulate our own theologies as embedded in our ecclesial contexts

#### **As soon as possible, begin reading:**

Michael Kinnamon, *The Vision of the Ecumenical Movement*, pp. 1-7, 9-22, 109-119.  
*Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry* (this reading needs to be incorporated into Paper #1).

#### **Class two: January 11, 2006: Exploring Ecumenical Theology**

- ✚ introducing the “gift exchange” (*holy envy / spiritual regret*)
- ✚ are there limits to acceptable diversity?
- ✚ biblical and theological bases for ecumenism
- ✚ brief history of the ecumenical movement

#### **Readings for this week’s class:**

Mary Boys, *Jewish-Christian Dialogue*, all.

Ted Campbell, *Christian Confessions*, Introduction and Chapter 1 or 2 or 3 or 4.

Read only the Chapter from Chapters 1-4 that pertains to your denomination. Note areas of comfort and discomfort as you compare your experience as a Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Baptist, etc., with Campbell’s historical and theological description.

Kinnamon, *The Vision of the Ecumenical Movement*, pp. 123-126, 137-138, 143-151, 159-169.

Martin Van Elderen, “The Ecumenical Movement.” *Coursepak*, pp. 13-26.

#### **Class three: January 18, 2006: Interreligious Encounter and Christian Ecumenism**

- ✚ attending to religions of the East
- ✚ Jewish and Christian relationships
- ✚ Christian and Muslim relationships

#### **Readings for this week’s class:**

Mary Boys, *Jewish-Christian Dialogue*.

Kinnamon, *The Vision of the Ecumenical Movement*, pp. 23-35, 99-108.

Sandra Bearsdall, “Talking to Strangers: Dilemma and Promise for Women in Ecumenism.”

*Coursepak*, pp. 3-13.

Phyllis Anderson, “Formation of an Ecumenical Consciousness.” *Coursepak*, pp. 107-115.

#### **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: January 18 - 25, 2006**

#### **Worship Celebration on January 24, 4:30 pm in the Ecumenical Chapel**

#### **Class four: January 25, 2006: Encountering Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism**

- ✚ Guest presenters.
- ✚ Have your questions ready - post them on the Angel server

#### **Readings for this week’s class:**

Campbell, *Christian Confessions*, Chapters 1 and 2.

CTSA Research Team, “A Global Evaluation of Baptism, Eucharist & Ministry.”

*Coursepak*, pp. 121-136.

“The Notion of the Hierarchy of Truths.” *Coursepak*, pp. 179-183.

**Class five: February 1, 2006: Encountering Reformation and Union Churches**

- ✚ Guest presenters.
- ✚ Have your questions ready - post them on the Angel server

**Readings for this week's class:**

Campbell, *Christian Confessions*, Chapter 3.

"Justification by Faith – Lutheran and Roman Catholic Joint Agreement." Coursepak, pp. 67-76.

Rena Karefa-Smart, "Challenge of Union Churches." Coursepak, pp. 41-44.

Daniel Migliore, "The Presbyterian Gifts." Coursepak, pp. 45-54.

**Class six: February 8, 2006: Encountering Evangelical and Free Churches**

- ✚ Guest presenters.
- ✚ Have your questions ready - post them on the Angel server

**Readings for this week's class:**

Campbell, *Christian Confessions*, Chapter 4.

Douglas Jacobsen, "Pietism..." Coursepak, pp. 57-66.

Iva Caruthers, "Black Theology and Ecumenism." Coursepak, pp. 27-34.

**Class seven: February 15, 2006: Making Unity Visible****PAPER #1 Due at the beginning of class!**

- ✚ discuss Campbell's argument for a center
- ✚ class sharing of your **first papers**
- ✚ How does BEM enable convergence among different Christian traditions?

**Readings for this week's class:**

Campbell, *Christian Confessions*, Chapter 5.

Kinnamon, *The Vision of the Ecumenical Movement*, pp. 65-74.

Michael Kinnamon, *Why It Matters*. Coursepak, pp. 137-177.

Michael Kinnamon, "We Have Come This Far by Faith . . . Churches Uniting in Christ." Coursepak, pp. 35-40.

**Class eight: February 22, 2006: Issues Dividing Church and Society**

- ✚ dealing with issues as theologians in an ecumenical context: racism; gender; identity; ability; diversity

**Readings for this week's class:**

Kinnamon, *The Vision of the Ecumenical Movement*, pp. 37-49, 51-64.

John Thomas, "Contemporary Commitment and Catholic Substance." Coursepak, p. 55.

Chung Hyun Kyung, "Come Holy Spirit." Coursepak, pp. 77-84.

Mercy Amba Oduyoye, "The African Family as a Symbol of Ecumenism." Coursepak, pp. 85-90.

"Ten Affirmations on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation." Coursepak, pp. 91-98.

**Class nine: March 1, 2006: The Ecumenical Movement Today****NO WEDNESDAY SESSION. THIS WEEK ONLY- CLASS MEETS ON FRIDAY!!****Readings for this week:**

Kinnamon, *The Vision of the Ecumenical Movement*, pp. 75-97.

**Class nine: FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 2006: "Another World is Possible."**

We are asking you to attend the March 3, "Great Theologian" lecture in Pigott Auditorium from 7-9pm. Rev. Bernice Powell Jackson, North American President of the World Council of Churches, will speak on the 9<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the World Council of Churches held in Brazil during February 2006.

**Monday, March 6: PAPER #2 DUE in STM Office by 4:30 pm**

**Class ten: March 8, 2006: Ecumenism: Living in Paradox (rooted and adaptive; clear and ambiguous)**

- ✚ naming symbols and metaphors of our vision
- ✚ the role of prayer and worship together with everyday spirituality
- ✚ sharing final papers, class evaluation

**Readings for this week's class:**

Douglas Hicks, "Taizé Community." Coursepak, pp. 99-105.

Kinnamon, *The Vision of the Ecumenical Movement*, pp. 109-119 (again!).

Stephen Sundborg, "IETS and the Mission of Seattle University." Coursepak, pp. 117-120.