STMA 592-02 UNITED METHODIST POLITY

Winter 2006: January 5-March 9; Thursdays 1:30-4:20pm

**HUNT 150** 

Jack M. Tuell

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## **Course Description**

Students should gain a working knowledge of the Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church. This will include becoming familiar with the nature of connectionalism and itinerancy, understanding the annual conference as the basic body in the Church, the covenantal relationships among clergy, and acquiring a theological and ecclesiological grasp of the organizational structures of the church. The course will seek to inculcate certain connectional principles into the consciousness of students so they will know the answer to basic polity questions without having to "look them up." It will explore the "skein of accountabilities" at every level of church organization. The course will incorporate the history of the UMC as it relates tot eh development of polity.

## Competencies to be Achieved

Students should acquire a knowledge and appreciation of the way in which ministry is practiced in the ethos of United Methodism. They should be knowledgeable enough to articulate criticism if they feel that particular structures or provisions are theologically unsound or detract from the mission of the Church. They should come to understand that structure is not simply inert or neural, but may profoundly affect the mission itself.

### Methodologies

There will be a mixture of lectures by the instructor, field observation and report, assignment to students for reading and report back, role playing, and lots of opportunities for discussion, questions and interchange. We will focus on the Book of Discipline (2004), and "The Organization of the United Methodist Church," 2005-2008 edition, Tuell.

I will assign 2 or 3 papers for the quarter and will grade them on the students' (1) ability to deal with the issues; (2) understanding of the content; and (3) capacity to articulate a point of view. I will observe students' participation in class discussion and evaluate their grasp and articulation of issues. I will expect regular attendance (no unexcused absences) and this will have a bearing on evaluation.

## **Required Texts**

Tuell, Jack M. *The Organization of the United Methodist Church*. Abingdon Press, 2005-2008 edition. *Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*. United Methodist Publishing House: Abingdon Press, 2004.

# **Schedule**

Thursdays, 1:30-4:20pm

First Day of Class: January 5, 2006 Last Day of Class: March 9, 2006

### General Outline of Course

January 5	Get acquainted, share backgrounds, lift up areas of concern regarding polity, outline course
	requirements. Discuss polity, its meaning, and the relative importance or non-importance of it.

January 12 Ch. 1, Tuell, and related Book of Discipline Ch. 2&3, Tuell, and related Book of Discipline

January 26 Ch. 4, Tuell, and related Book of Discipline

February 2 Ch. 5, Tuell, and related Book of Discipline Ch. 6, Tuell, and related Book of Discipline

February 16 Ch. 7, Tuell, and related Book of Discipline

February 23 Ch. 8, Tuell, and related Book of Discipline March 2 Ch. 9&10, Tuell, and related Book of Discipline

March 9 Review

There will not be a final exam.

JACK M. TUELL