

**GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**  
**Jacksonville Campus**  
**EV 510: EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP IN THE LOCAL CHURCH**  
**July 29-August 2, 2019**  
**M-F, 8:30-4:30**

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**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 a 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 gave his unambiguous last will and testament to his church: 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 spontaneous and contagious instead of 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 some places 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. Some have never themselves led another person to saving faith in Jesus Christ. Others 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. Beginning with a biblical and theological foundation, students experience the meaning of evangelism in their own lives.

**EV 510 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 Statement #2: Constructively critiquing current theologies of evangelism-discipleship in the best tradition of Christian scholarship.

Mission Statements #3 & #5: Learning to become skilled in the practice of evangelism 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 and leading the church toward maturity in evangelism-discipleship for redemptive influence in the world.

### **EV 510 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-discipleship in the local church

## **CLASS OVERVIEW & REQUIREMENTS**

**Due Dates for *Individual Assignments* as Indicated Below  
Deadline for Submitting *Final Work* is August 19th**

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 (25% of the Final Course Grade)**

The texts provide a practical foundation for leading an individual to become a true follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, and will prepare you for the praxis components of the class. If you have read any of the books prior to class you may request a substitute from the professor.

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 1900 pages are on the list.

There is an option of doing the reading with a partner from within the class. This option would require each student to be responsible for only 1000 pages of reading, but it would add a discussion of the books in pairs. To do this best you would need to discover the partner even before the class begins, but it is possible to do this even if you find the person the first day of class.

Then you would **jointly write** the annotated bibliography together, including comments on what the non-reader learned about a book from the reader. This 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 at the beginning of class. The rest is due by the last day to turn in written work, **August 19, 2019.**

## Required Reading

### Books

Allin, Dana. *Simple Discipleship: Equipping Your Church for Individual Growth and Community Transformation.* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2018) (ISBN: 978-1-63146-713-4) (181 pages)

Everts, Don. *The Reluctant Witness: Discovering the Delight of Spiritual Conversations.* (Downers Grove, Ill: IVP, 2019) (ISBN: 978-0-8308-4567-5) (81 pages)

Harrington, Bobby and Alex Absalom. *Discipleship That Fits: The Five Kinds of Relationships God Uses to Help Us Grow.* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016) (ISBN: 978-0-310-5226-4) (238 pages)

Keller, Timothy. *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City.* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012) (ISBN: 978-0-310-49418-8) (382 pages)

Kreider, Alan. *The Patient Ferment of the Early Church: The Improbable Rise of Christianity in the Roman Empire.* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2016) (ISBN: 978-0-8010-4949-4) (321 pages)

Lewis, C.S. *Mere Christianity.* (New York: Macmillan Touchstone, 1996, 1943) (ISBN: 0-684-82378-0) (175 pages)

Rawson, Katie J. *Crossing Cultures with Jesus: Sharing Good News with Sensitivity and Grace.* (Downers Grove, Ill: IVP, 2015) (ISBN: 978-0-8308-4438-8) (205 pages)

Robinson, Natasha Sistrunk. *Mentor for Life: Finding Purpose through Intentional Discipleship.* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016) (272 pages)

Stiles, J. Mack. *Evangelism: How the Whole Church Speaks of Jesus.* (Wheaton, Ill: Crossway, 2014) (ISBN: 978-1-4335-4465-1) (126 pages)

## **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) Good Friday and Easter – What Happened and Why?** Does the death and 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. (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 the death and 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.
- 4) What a Restored Life Looks Like?** What changes begin to happen in the life of a Christian – even in your life? Describe the “from and to” that can be expected when the process of restoring us and re-clothing us gets under way? What might change in the reader’s life if they were to decide for Christ? How do Christians hope the world will change under the influence of Christ? Paint a picture of what is possible. Finally, consider how, or if, to ask your Editor to continue the discussion.

## **GRADING SUMMARY**

**All Work Due No Later than August 19, 2019**

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.

### **READING**

Annotated Bibliography	<b>20%</b>
Reading Report Completion (Appendix A)	<b>5%</b>

**25%**

### **FOUR REFLECTION PAPERS**

**30%**

**ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION**

**5%**

**FINAL EXAM**

**40%**

**Note Well: Make copies of all of your work or “Save” on your computer since materials occasionally become lost.**

### Class Schedule

Subject to Change if Necessary

**Date:      Topic:**

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June-July – Pre-course work

**Write:** “Personal God Story” Paper (**To Share in class on July 29**)

**Write:** “What Went Wrong?” Paper (**To Share on July 30**)

**Read:** Kreider, Everts, Lewis, and Keller prior to class

Write – One half of the Reading Report (**Turn in July 30**)

July 29, 2019 - Introduction to the Course and to One Another.

Biblical Examples – John 1: 35-42

What is Evangelism?

How Did Christianity Spread?

What is the Grand Narrative of Salvation?

Continue the Grand Narrative of Salvation Discussion

Biblical Examples – John 3 – Nicodemus

**Share in Class** - “Personal God Story” with two partners for evaluation

**ReWrite** paper for your Reader/Editor

**Share in Class** - “What Went Wrong?” with two partners for evaluation

**ReWrite** paper for your Reader/Editor

Read: Rawson

July 30, 2019 - The Process of Evangelism - Sharing the Story

Biblical Examples – John 4 (Woman at the Well)

Doubts and Struggles

Teaching Evangelism to a Congregation

Creating a Congregational Culture of Evangelism

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Christendom, Attractional, and Missional Paradigm

**Write:** “Good Friday and Easter” paper (**To Share on July 31**)

**Write:** “What is Restored in our Faith?” papers (**To share – August 1**)

**ReWrite** paper for your Reader/Editor

**Read:** Stiles

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July 31, 2019 - Leadership Issues in Leading Change

Understanding Cross-Cultural Contexts Nearby  
**Share** – Good Friday and Easter

Review of Evangelism Issues

Rewrite – Good Friday and Easter

**Read:** Harrington/Absalom, Allin, and Sistrunk

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August 1, 2019 – **Share in Class** “What is Restored?” paper

What is Discipleship?  
Is it a Lost Art in the Local Church?  
What does Discipleship Cover?  
What part does Disciple-Making Entail?

August 2, 2019

Building the Model of Discipleship in the Local Church  
Discipleship and Disciple-making in the Local Church

Discipleship and Disciple-Making – Creating a Culture  
Obstacles to Discipleship in the Local Church  
Leadership Challenges  
Take Home Exam (Due, August 19, 2019)

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Box # \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Box # \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX A  
READING REPORT SHEET**

**REQUIRED READING:**

**READ:**

(cite # pp.)

**# OF PAGES**

“All” (check)      Partial

- |  |       |       |
|--|-------|-------|
| 1. Kreider, <i>The Patient Ferment of the Early Church</i> (321 pp.) | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Keller, <i>Center Church</i> (382 pp.)                            | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Everts, <i>Reluctant Witness</i> (81 pp)                          | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Lewis, C.S. <i>Mere Christianity</i> (175pp.)                     | _____ | _____ |
| 5. Stiles, <i>Evangelism</i> (126 pp.)                               | _____ | _____ |
| 6. Rawson, <i>Crossing Cultures with Jesus</i> (208 pp.)             | _____ | _____ |
| 7. Harrington and Absalom, <i>Discipleship That Fits</i> (238 pp.)   | _____ | _____ |
| 8. Allin, <i>Simple Discipleship</i> (181 pages)                     | _____ | _____ |
| 9. Robinson, Natasha, <i>Mentor for Life</i> (272 pp)                | _____ | _____ |

TOTAL PAGES READ..... (out of 1984 pp. or 1000 pp).

% OF REQUIRED READING \_\_\_\_\_%

**ADDITIONAL/ALTERNATIVE READING COMPLETED:**

- |    | <u>Author:</u> | <u>Title:</u> | <u>Copyright Date:</u> | <u># Pages</u> |
|----|----------------|---------------|------------------------|----------------|
| 1. | _____          | _____         | _____                  | _____          |
| 2. | _____          | _____         | _____                  | _____          |
| 3. | _____          | _____         | _____                  | _____          |

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.

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