



B490/P490 Biblical Communication

3 credits. Prerequisites: P302 Preaching and Public Speaking

 Directed Study

January 11–April 16, 2027
Winter Semester

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When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. ... My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God. (1 Cor 2:1-5, NRSV)

Course Goals

Course Description

Biblical Communication focuses on the teaching and preaching of scripture. Students will develop skills in the sound interpretation and application of the Bible, as well as the effective preparation and delivery of biblical messages. This course also emphasizes the importance of lifelong reading to support a teaching and preaching ministry. This directed study course is normally completed during the internship and contains occasional cohort meetings where students reflect on their learning and discuss their ministry experiences together.

Relationship to Horizon and MCS's Missions

Clear and effective public communication—whether teaching or preaching—is an important skill for Spirit-empowered leaders. This course facilitates the learning and practice of effective public communications skills in real ministry settings.

Core Competencies and Learning Outcomes



To demonstrate competency in biblical and theological literacy students will

1. Interpret a selected passage of Scripture in light of its literary and socio-historical context and distinct theological perspective with the assistance of relevant secondary literature.

- *Assessment:* Biblical Teaching Part One and Two; Biblical Preaching Part One and Two
- 2. Apply a selected passage of Scripture to contemporary situations in a way that is relevant and logically related to its original meaning.
 - *Assessment:* Biblical Teaching Part One and Two; Biblical Preaching Part One and Two



To demonstrate competency in skilled communication students will

3. Identify principles and practices for effective Bible teaching and preaching.
 - *Assessment:* Reflective Notes One; Reflective Notes Two
4. Create and teach a Bible lesson using principles for effective Bible teaching.
 - *Assessment:* Biblical Teaching Part Two
5. Prepare and preach a sermon using advanced homiletical principles.
 - *Assessment:* Biblical Preaching Part Two
6. Identify how a reading plan contributes to effective preaching.
 - *Assessment:* Reflective Notes Three

Course Work

Required Readings

Alcántara, Jared E. *Practices of Christian Preaching: Essentials for Effective Proclamation*. Baker Academic, 2019. ISBN: 978-0801098666.

[DTL](#)

Duvall, J. Scott and J. Daniel Hayes. *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*. 4th Edition. Zondervan Academic, 2020. ISBN: 978-0310109174.

[DTL](#)

* Review Part 3, Meaning and Application, and the relevant sections of Parts 4 and 5 for the passages chosen for your Bible Study and Sermon.

Plantinga, Cornelius. *Reading for Preaching: The Preacher in Conversation with Storytellers, Biographers, Poets, and Journalists*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013. ISBN: 978-0802870773.

[DTL](#)

Richards, Lawrence and Gary Bredfeldt. *Creative Bible Teaching*. Revised and Expanded Edition. Chicago: Moody, 2020. ISBN: 978-0802419590.

[DTL](#)

**While students have the benefit of accessing many of their textbooks online through the [Digital Theological Library](#), they will not have access to the Digital Theological Library upon

graduation. Therefore, we encourage students to purchase select textbooks to build their personal library.

Course Assignments and Activities

1. *Reflective Notes One: Creative Bible Teaching* – 20%

Read selected chapters from *Creative Bible Teaching* by Richards and Bredfeldt:

- All of chapters 4–11: “Rightly Divided”–“The Means”
- Chapter 13: “Teaching Principles”
- One relevant chapter from 15–18:
 - 15: “Teaching Adults”
 - 16: “Teaching Youth”
 - 17: “Teaching Children”
 - 18: “Teaching Preschoolers”

Make notes on each chapter using the following guidelines: (i) Identify key teaching principles and practices from each chapter, and (ii) identify how you might implement those principles and practices in your own teaching. Devote approximately 200–250 words to each chapter. The notes may be completed in point form. Ten chapters require a reflection of 2000–2500 words.

- To complete this assignment, students will follow these guidelines:
 - Follow the Horizon & MCS Format Guide.
 - For this assignment, page numbers in parenthesis are preferred to footnotes.
 - Discuss your learning at the first cohort meeting.
- Related learning outcome: #3.
- **Assignment length:** 2000–2500 words.
- **Due date:** Monday, January 25.
- **First Cohort Meeting:** Thursday, January 28, 11 a.m.

2. *Biblical Teaching* – 25%

- a. *Part One: Hermeneutics Assignment* – 5%
- b. *Part Two: Teach! Video & Evaluation* – 20%

Part One: Hermeneutics Assignment:

Review Part 3 (“Meaning and Application”) and the chapter that suits your text from Parts 4 or 5 (“The Interpretive Journey”) from *Grasping God’s Word* by Duvall and Hayes. In addition, read the appropriate section of an academic commentary. Prepare a 400–500-word paper identifying primary interpretive and application principles relevant to your chosen passage of Scripture. This is not a commentary on the passage but a review of interpretive principles to use when interpreting your chosen passage.

- To complete this assignment, students will follow these guidelines:
 - Follow the [Horizon & MCS Format Guide](#).
 - Include the commentary you read and any additional sources in the bibliography.
- Related learning outcomes: #1, 2.
- **Assignment length:** 400-500 words.

- **Due date:** Two weeks before the delivery of the Bible study or Monday, February 1, whichever is earlier.

Part Two: Teach! Video and Evaluation

Prepare and present a Bible study of 20 to 30 minutes using the methodology presented in Richards and Bredfeldt's book with particular attention to the material on your specific age group (chapters 15 to 18).

Ideally the intern will have an opportunity to teach during their internship. If this does not work out, the student should gather a group of at least four people to teach either in person or on Zoom. If any recipients will be shown in the recording, the student should gain their consent prior to recording. Do not use YouTube if recipients are shown in the recording.

- To complete this assignment, students will follow these guidelines:
 - Record the lesson on video. The video file should be uploaded to a cloud service of the student's choice (e.g., OneDrive, Dropbox, etc.) and the link to the completed video submitted as an assignment comment on Populi.
 - View the recording.
 - Complete the self-evaluation of your Bible study.
- Related learning outcomes #1, 2, and 4.
- **Assignment length:** 20 to 30 minutes.
- **Due date:** Tuesday, February 16.

3. *Reflective Notes Two: Preaching* – 20%

Read *The Practices of Christian Preaching* by Jared E. Alcántara. Make notes on all six chapters (excluding the introduction) using the following guidelines: (i) Identify the key preaching practices from each chapter, and (ii) suggest ways you could implement each of the 5 'C's in your own preaching. Devote approximately 200–250 words to each of the six main chapters. The notes can be made in point form. The assignment length is 1200–1500 words.

- To complete this assignment, students will follow these guidelines:
 - Follow the [Horizon & MCS Format Guide](#).
 - For this assignment, page numbers in parenthesis are preferred to footnotes.
 - Discuss your learning at the second cohort meeting.
- Related learning outcome: #3.
- **Assignment length:** 1,200–1,500 words.
- **Due date:** Tuesday, February 23.
- **Second Cohort Meeting:** Thursday, February 25, 11 a.m.

4. *Biblical Preaching* – 25%

- Part One: Hermeneutics Assignment* – 5%
- Part Two: Preach! Video & Evaluation* – 20%

Part One: Hermeneutics Assignment:

Review Part 3 (“Meaning and Application”) and the chapter that suits your text from Parts 4 or 5 (“The Interpretive Journey”) from *Grasping God’s Word* by Duvall and Hayes. In addition, read the appropriate section of an academic commentary. Prepare a 400–500-word paper identifying primary interpretive and application principles relevant to your chosen passage of Scripture. This is not a commentary on the passage but a review of interpretive principles to use when interpreting your chosen passage.

- To complete this assignment, students will follow these guidelines:
 - Follow the [Horizon & MCS Format Guide](#).
 - Include the commentary you read and any additional sources in the bibliography.
- Related learning outcomes: #1, 2.
- **Assignment length:** 400–500 words.
- **Due date:** Two weeks before the delivery of the sermon or Monday, March 22, whichever is earlier.

Part Two: Preach! Video & Evaluation

Prepare and preach a 20–30-minute sermon that incorporates what you’ve learned about the 5 ‘C’s of Christian preaching.

Ideally the intern will have an opportunity to preach during their internship. If this does not work out, the student should gather a group of at least four people to teach either in person or on Zoom. If any recipients will be shown in the recording, the student should gain their consent prior to recording. Do not use YouTube if recipients are shown in the recording.

- To complete this assignment, students will follow these guidelines:
 - Record the lesson on video. The video file should be uploaded to a cloud service of the student’s choice (e.g., OneDrive, Dropbox, etc.) and the link to the completed video submitted as an assignment comment on Populi.
 - View the recording.
 - Complete the self-evaluation of your Bible study.
- Related learning outcomes #1, 2, 5.
- **Assignment length:** 20 to 30 minutes.
- **Due date:** Monday, April 5.

5. *Reflective Notes Three: Reading for Preaching – 10%*

Read *Reading for Preaching* by Cornelius Plantinga. Make notes on each chapter using the following guidelines: (i) Identify a key quote from each chapter, (ii) indicate why the selection is important to you, and (iii) indicate what implications the quote might have on your practice as a communicator. Devote approximately 200–250 words, including the quote, to each chapter. The notes can be made in point form. The assignment length is 1200–1500 words. At the end of your notes, identify three book titles you would be interested in reading.

- To complete this assignment, students will follow these guidelines:

- Follow the [Horizon & MCS Format Guide](#).
 - For this assignment, page numbers in parenthesis are preferred to footnotes.
 - Discuss your learning at the third cohort meeting.
- Related learning outcome: #6.
 - **Assignment length:** 1200-1500 words.
 - **Due date:** Tuesday, March 23.
 - **Third Cohort Meeting:** Thursday, March 25, 11 a.m.

Estimate of Time Investment (individual time investments may vary)

Assignment	Hours	Due Dates	Weighting
1. <i>Reflective Notes One: Creative Bible Teaching</i>	18 hrs	Monday, January 25	20%
2a. <i>Biblical Teaching Part One: Hermeneutics Assignment</i>	5 hrs	Two weeks before the delivery of the Bible study or Monday, February 1	5%
2b. <i>Biblical Teaching Part Two: Teach!</i>	21 hrs	Tuesday February 16	20%
3. <i>Reflective Notes Two: Preaching: The Art of Narrative Exposition</i>	15 hrs	Tuesday, February 23	20%
4a. <i>Biblical Preaching Part One: Hermeneutics Assignment</i>	5 hrs	Two weeks before the delivery of the sermon or Monday, March 22	5%
4b. <i>Biblical Preaching Part Two: Preach!</i>	18 hrs	Monday, April 5	20%
5. <i>Reflective Notes Three: Reading for Preaching</i>	8 hrs	Tuesday, March 23	10%
Total	90 hrs		

All assignments are due at 8pm **ET**, unless otherwise indicated.

Assessment Rubrics

Assignment rubrics can be found on Populi. Click on the name of the assignment to access each rubric.

- Revision week is April 12–16. Students are encouraged to submit revised assignments soon after they receive their marked assignments.
- No assignments will be accepted after the course end date: *April 16*.

Academic Policies

General Assignment Guidelines

Please see the [Horizon](#) & [MCS](#) Format Guide for assignment submission, grammar, and formatting guidelines. The length of papers should fall within +/- 10% of the stated length.

Papers that fall outside the length guidelines may not be graded. Assignments should be submitted via Populi under *Submissions* (not *Comments*). The resource at this [link](#) explains how to submit assignments on Populi.

Extensions

To submit extension requests, students must submit the *Request Extension Form* on the [MCS](#) or [Horizon](#) website and *before the due date*. Professors reserve the right to deny extensions.

Generally, the sooner that a student asks for an extension, the more willing faculty tend to be in granting extensions. Furthermore, no extensions will be granted beyond the final day of a term or semester unless approval is granted by the Associate Academic Dean (MCS) or Assistant Academic Dean (Horizon).

Late Assignments

Students are expected to submit work by the assigned or extended due dates, as part of their development of the Leadership and Administration competency. A late penalty will be assessed for all overdue assignments: 1-3 calendar days late, penalty of 10%; 4-6 calendar days late, penalty of 20%; after 6 calendar days late, an assignment receives a grade of 0 and no opportunity for revision. Any late penalty incurred on a first submission will be applied regardless of if the student chooses to continue learning through the revision process.

Assignment Completion

Professors usually will not accept assignments that have not been completed according to the instructions given in the syllabus. If a professor informs a student that a submitted assignment is incomplete, the student will be given the opportunity to complete and resubmit the assignment quickly. If this is not possible, the assignment will be regarded as submitted late.

Competency Assignment Revisions

After each assignment has been marked, students have the opportunity to continue learning in response to feedback they receive on assignments. Students can submit one revision for each assignment, although a professor may accept more revisions if the professor determines the student is addressing all of the professor's instructions and making significant progress toward demonstrating competency. Revised assignments may be submitted up to the course end date, although students are encouraged to submit them soon after they receive their marked assignments. Assignments submitted later than one week before the course end date are ineligible for revisions.

Horizon and MCS's College Assessment of Student Work

The goal of courses is to help students develop their competency, rather than solely earn letter grades. Assignments are the means by which instructors evaluate development of competency by assessing learning outcomes as outlined in the syllabus and each assignment. Once a student's assignment has met all assignment completion requirements, the professor will assign a grade for that assignment. The opportunity for revisions exists according to the "Assignment Revisions" policy.

Horizon and MCS Competency Scale		Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point	U of S Equivalency
E	Exceeding expectations	Student demonstrated exceptional achievement of the learning outcomes.	A+	4.0	90-100
		Student demonstrated excellent achievement of the learning outcomes.	A	4.0	85-89
			A-	3.7	80-84
M	Meeting expectations	Student demonstrated good achievement of the learning outcomes.	B+	3.3	77-79
			B	3.0	73-76
			B-	2.7	70-72
BTM	Beginning to meet expectations	Student demonstrated satisfactory progress in achieving the learning outcomes.	C+	2.3	67-69
			C	2.0	63-66
			C-	1.7	60-62
		Student demonstrated minimal progress in achieving the learning outcomes.	D+	1.3	57-59
			D	1.0	53-56
			D-	0.7	50-52
NYM	Not yet meeting expectations	Student made insufficient progress toward meeting learning outcomes.	F	0.0	0-49

Academic Integrity

Students learn best when practicing academic integrity. A lack of integrity is displayed in acts such as deception, abuse of confidentiality, cheating, inappropriate collaboration, or plagiarism. Plagiarism occurs when a student presents the words or ideas of another person or an artificial intelligence (AI) tool in such a way as to give others the impression that it is their own words or ideas. In academic writing, there should be no doubt which words or ideas are the student's and which are drawn from other sources or AI. Students are expected to submit their own original work and give due recognition to sources from which all substantial phrases, sentences, or even ideas are drawn. Note also that you may not submit work done in one course to satisfy the requirements of another course (unless both instructors agree beforehand to accept such work). See [here](#) for examples of plagiarism and further guidelines in the Student Handbook.

Horizon and MCS have a subscription to software that ensures the originality of academic writing, verifies the proper citation of all sources, and detects AI-generated content. When you submit an assignment, you will automatically receive a summary on Populi that includes your submitted files along with an originality score (a high originality score is positive).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage

In keeping with the Academic Integrity policy above, students must disclose on the title page of all assignments whether or not they have used AI and how they have used it. If the assignment has no title page, the student must disclose this to the instructor by some other means, such as in a comment on Populi. Students are expected to follow the policy for acceptable use of AI that is published in the [Horizon](#) and [MCS](#) Student Handbooks.

Accessible Learning Services Information

Horizon and MCS are committed to provide safe and inclusive learning environments which equalize the opportunity for students with disabilities to meet the requirements of the institutions, programs, and courses. The application for Academic Accommodations begins with a student disclosing a medical diagnosis or professionally documented learning disability during the application process. Enrolled students may contact Accessibility services personnel (at MCS, the Director of Academic Success, Wendy Holmes at wendy.holmes@mcs.edu; at Horizon, the Academic Accommodations Coordinator, Richelle Bekkattla at rbekkattla@horizon.edu). All Academic Accommodations will adhere to the Guiding Principles listed in the Student Handbooks. Students with documented accommodations on file pertaining to accessing course readings in alternate formats are encouraged to contact the librarian for assistance with as much advanced notice as possible.

Class Attendance

Students should attend all classes in order to facilitate competency development. Students are expected to be present through the delivery method that they registered for. Students registered to attend on-campus or via livestream must be present for the full duration of a class period to be marked as present for the class. Students registered to attend by VOD must submit their VOD reports on time to be marked as present for class. In the case of illness or other unforeseen circumstances, students may miss up to twenty percent of the total class time (e.g., one day of a module course, two 3-hour classes, etc.) without academic penalty. Students who are absent for more than this will automatically fail the course. Students wishing to be exempted from this policy due to extenuating circumstances may make an academic appeal, where they will need to document and verify those circumstances. Students who miss a class are responsible to get missed notes or handouts from another student, rather than from the professor.

Livestreaming Etiquette

Students taking the course through livestreaming are required to indicate this during their course registration. While livestreaming access is available for on-campus students who are unable to attend class due to illness, on-campus students are expected to attend class in person following the class attendance policy.

If attending class online via livestream, in order to be marked present for class, you must keep your camera on and stay present and attentive throughout the class session, extending the gift of engagement. Access your class with a computer (preferably) or tablet, not a cell phone. Arrive to class on time, and dress as you would if you were attending class on campus. Join the class from a quiet space with minimal background noise and mute your microphone until you wish to speak to the class.

Use of Technology

Horizon and MCS encourage the use of electronic devices in the classroom to enhance learning. Careful consideration must be given to privacy issues, copyrighted materials, and the general care and concern for others. Please respect the following classroom policies:

- Please use online access for course learning only. This is a matter of respect for the instructor's teaching, your own learning, and fellow students who may be distracted by other uses.

- Students should secure permission from the instructor to record any teaching material. This includes PowerPoint slides, white board illustrations, notes, and any form of audio or video.
- Student feedback is a valuable input for course improvements. Please resolve any classroom grievance about the instructor or course with the instructor personally, through the grievance procedures, or the Populi-based course evaluations. It is inappropriate to air classroom grievances on a social media platform.
- When instructors use recording mechanisms in the classroom, recorded materials will be used for the sole purpose of instruction (potentially including future online video courses) and cannot be released to any social media outlet without the written consent of the students whose images have been recorded.
- In general, it is not acceptable to share photographs or videos of students in the classroom setting without permission from those whose images appear in such media.

Library Support and Research Assistance

Library staff are available to meet with students (online or in person) who need assistance with

- citing sources and identifying credible resources;
- developing research and information literacy skills;
- searching DTL and other library resources.

Bibliography

On Teaching

Carr, Nicholas. *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2011.

Lang, James M. *Small Teaching: Everyday Lessons from the Science of Learning*, 2nd Ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2021.

Palmer, Parker. *The Courage to Teach. Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*. Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, 20th ed., 2017.

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On Preaching

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- Stanley, Andy. *Communicating for a Change: Seven Keys to Irresistible Communication*. Colorado Spring: Multnomah Books, 2006.

Vines, Jerry and Adam Dooley. *Passion in the Pulpit: How to Exegete the Emotion of Scripture*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2018.