

MN553 UNITED METHODIST STUDIES: POLITY

J-Term, 2021

Instructor: Rev. Dr. Elmer M. Colyer – Severance 211

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is a basic study of the *Book of Discipline 2016* of the United Methodist Church with special attention to UM Polity in theory and practice. MN553 fulfills the polity educational requirement of Paragraph 324.4a for candidates who are preparing for ordination in the UMC.

COURSE GOALS:

A. To examine the development of UM Polity from a historical and theological perspective:

1. To understand the implicit and explicit structural expressions of ecclesiology.
2. To become familiar with the nature of connectionalism and itineracy for ministry.
3. To understand the annual conference as the basic unit of the United Methodist church.
4. To understand the covenantal relationship between ministers United Methodist Church.

B. To use the Discipline and the Book of Resolutions as handbooks for mission and ministry:

1. To understand the process by which leaders are selected.
2. To gain a knowledge of the selection, deployment, evaluation, and discipline of clergy.
3. To become familiar with the decision-making process at all levels of the church.
4. To become aware of the required structure and alternative organization of the local church.
5. To examine connectionalism in relationship to church property.
6. To understand the judicial structures, the appeal and review process.
7. To gain an awareness of the role and functioning of the general boards and agencies.
8. To understand the role and caucuses and special groups.
9. To perceive the nature of ecumenical relationships.

CURRICULAR GOALS:

- Be formed by, live in, and minister out of Scripture and the historical and theological tradition of the Church
- Educate and equip individuals and congregations to live and minister joyfully and faithfully as part of their own denomination and the ecumenical church
- Integrate theology and practice in all the areas of life and ministry

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Book of Discipline 2016 (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House)

The Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church 2012 (Nashville: UM Publishing House)

Thomas E. Frank, *Polity, Practice, and the Mission of the United Methodist Church* (Abingdon, 2006)

ASSESSMENT:

Two Exams (60%)

Paper Project (20%)

Reading (10%)

Class Participation/Accountability Group (5% + 5%)