

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Course ID: | Course Title: | Spring 2022 |
| BT 601 | Biblical Theology of Justice | Prerequisite: none |
| | | Credits: 3 |

Spring Week 3-4 MODULE FORMAT CLASS

| Class Information | | Instructor Information | | Important Dates | |
|-----------------------|--|------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| Delivery: | Blended Hybrid: in-person and online synchronous | Instructor: | Beth M. Stovell, Ph.D. | First day of classes: | May 16, 2022 |
| Days: | May 16-27, 2022 | Email: | bstovell@ambrose.edu | Last day to add/drop, or change to audit: | Midnight of the first day |
| Time: | 9am-12:30pm | Phone: | 403-410-2000 ext.3995 | | |
| Room: | RE 110 | Office: | L2077 | | |
| Lab/ Tutorial: | n/a | Office Hours: | By appointment only via e-mail | | |
| Final Paper: | Monday, July 18, at midnight via Moodle | | | Last day of classes: | May 27, 2022 |

Course Description

A central theme of Scripture is God’s desire for justice in the world, yet our world is plagued by continued injustice from ancient times to today. How does Scripture help us to understand the nature of justice and how to respond to injustice? How is the Christian hope understood in light of justice and how do we live out this hope in concrete actions today? This course will explore how Scripture addresses these questions. Examining the powerful message of the Old and New Testaments will demonstrate the continuing impact of the Bible’s picture of justice for the Church today, for our spiritual lives, and for the world.

This course is part of the Climate Change Pilot Program grant funded by American Association for the Advancement of Science. The project helps a diverse group of seminaries integrate climate change science into their core curricula. Two sessions of this course will include discussions with a science advisor about explorations of climate change science in relation to a biblical theology of justice. The goals of these sessions are to help students faithfully engage with climate change science in their faith communities.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have:

1. Nurtured theological depth and breadth by identifying and examining the theological themes associated with justice in the Old and New Testaments with an awareness of historical, social, and literary backgrounds.

2. Cultivated a heart after God by evaluating the impact of these themes for students' own spiritual journeys and for the Church.

3. Been inspired towards redemptive action by examining how these themes impact the world, **have grown in their knowledge of climate change science, its relation to biblical justice, and how to discuss it in their ministry contexts,** and have proposed responses that lead toward redemptive action.

Textbooks

Required:

Bethany Hanke Hoang and Kristen Deede Johnson, *The Justice Calling: Where Passion Meets Perseverance*. Brazos, 2016.

John R. Donahue. *Seek Justice that You May Live: Reflections on Resources on the Bible and Social Justice*. Paulist Press, 2014.

Recommended:

Brenda Salter McNeil. *Roadmap to Reconciliation: Moving Communities into Unity, Wholeness, and Justice*. IVP, 2016.

Tim Conder and Dan Rhodes. *Organizing Church: Grassroots Practices for Embodying Change in Your Congregation, Your Community, and Our World*. Chalice Press, 2017.

A modern English translation of the Bible is required reading. Students may use the following translations: NRSV, NASB, NIV 2011, ESV. Students may also use modern translations like the NLT and the Message to complement their reading.

Course Schedule

The readings for the "Reading for Session" should be read prior to the modular week. The readings are spread out to connect with the specific topics that we will discuss, but the assumption is that this reading will be in advance not during the week of the modular course. References to parts of Scripture indicate sections from the Old and New Testaments to be read (e.g., Genesis, Exodus, etc.). "Donahue" refers to John R. Donahue. *Seek Justice that You May Live*; "Hoang and Johnson" refers to Bethany Hanke Hoang and Kristen Deede Johnson, *The Justice Calling: Where Passion Meets Perseverance*.

| Date | Topics | Reading for Session | Discussion Questions |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Day 1: Monday, May 16 | Introduction to the course; What is Justice? Exploring Social Justice, the Justice of God, and Righteousness | Hoang and Johnson, 1-78 (adjust to fit) Donahue, 1-44 | Discussion Question #1: Why are you interested in studying the concept of justice in Scripture? |
| Day 2: Tuesday, May 17 | Creation and Exodus: Stories of Justice | | Discussion Question #2: How do you see the Exodus story relating to justice? What is the impact for us today? |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| Day 3: Wednesday, May 18 | Covenant and Law: Community Formation and Justice | Hoang and Johnson, 79-110 Donahue, 45-100 | Discussion Question #3: What is the relationship between law and justice in Scripture? What about today? |
| Day 4: Thursday, May 19 | The Prophets and Justice: A Renewed Vision of Shalom Guest Lecturer: Dr. Stephen Jeans, Creation Care and justice in the biblical prophets | Donahue, 101-139 | Discussion Question #4: What were the roles of the prophets in relation to justice? Who are prophets today? How does prophetic justice relate to our treatment of the land itself? |
| Day 5: Friday, May 20 | The Psalms and Justice: Lament and Hope | Hoang and Johnson, 111-164 Donahue, 140-223, 251-264 | Discussion Question #5: How might the psalms of lament help us with justice today? |
| Day 6: Tuesday, May 24 | Wisdom and Justice | | Discussion Question #6: How is wisdom related to justice (then and now?) |
| Day 7: Wednesday, May 25 | Synoptic Gospels: Jesus the Spirit-Filled Prophet of Justice | Hoang and Johnson, 165-194 Donahue, 224-250, 266-293 | Discussion Question #7: How do the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) depict Jesus like a prophet? How does this impact our view of justice in the Gospels? |
| Day 8: Thursday, May 26 | John's Gospel: Jesus the Just Shepherd-King | | Discussion Question #8: How does the depiction of Jesus as "the Good Shepherd" in John 10 impact our view of justice in John's Gospel? |
| Day 9: Friday, May 27 | Paul's Letters and Justice Revelation: God's Ultimate Justice and Hope Guest Lecturer: Dr. Stephen Jeans, renewing of all creation and justice in Revelation | | Discussion Question #9: How do Paul's letters connect with the theme of justice? What is their significance for today? Or What aspects of justice in the Old Testament continue in the picture of final justice in Revelation? How does Revelation's final picture of justice relate to Creation care today? What impact does |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | Revelation's vision have on our actions today? |
| Post-Class Assignment deadlines: Reflection Paper: Due Monday, June 6 at midnight, via Moodle Draft of Final Paper: Due Monday, June 20 at midnight, via Moodle Final Paper: Due Monday, July 18 at midnight, via Moodle | | | |

Requirements:

- **Course Participation: (10%):** During the week-long modular course, credit students will be required to participate in course discussion, in-class exercises, and small group work. For this course, this also includes a “justice in action” component that students are required to attend on Saturday afternoon. This course participation will count for 10% of the students grade and is required alongside course attendance as a key component of the course. If students will be absent or unable to participate for any reason, they should inform the professor in advance.
- **Exegetical Reflection Papers (1 paper at 30%) Due Dates: Monday, June 6, midnight. Submitted online via Moodle**
 - Students will write a 3-5 page exegetical reflection paper by choosing one of the discussion questions from the class syllabus and writing a reflection on this question. **For example, a student may choose to explore climate change science further in their exploration of the role of prophetic justice and its relationship to ecology today by using Discussion Question #4.** Students may choose any of the discussion questions to engage further.
 - This exegetical reflection paper will have two parts: Part 1: students will answer the question exegetically based on their biblical texts and their course materials. Part 2: Students will explore the impact of the answer of the second half of the question on three spheres: 1. the student’s own spiritual journey, 2 their ministry (current or future), and 3. the modern world. **Students should engage with the course notes and readings as they answer all parts of the question.** (For information on how to cite electronic books or course notes, see “Citation of Digital and In Class Sources” in your “Writing and Research Skills” folder under “Course Overview” in Moodle).
 - Thus, these papers demonstrate a student’s awareness of their course readings and course notes and their reflection upon these course materials.
 - Because these papers are “reflection papers,” they should use the 1st person (“I”) to describe the student’s personal journey during that section of the paper. However, the style of the paper should remain academic in all other aspects.
 - These papers need to use Times New Roman, 12 point font, double spaced. The formatting should be in Chicago Manual of Style in the footnotes and bibliography style. See http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html
- **Final Paper and Draft Paper: %)** (Final Paper 30% + Draft of final paper: 30%=Total 60%):
- Writing your final paper is a two-stage process-**Draft of final paper due Monday, June 20, midnight; Final paper due Monday, July 18, midnight. All papers are due by midnight. Both stages are required for an optimal grade in this course. Submitted online via Moodle**
- Draft of Final Paper (30%): Students will turn in a draft of their final paper on **June 20** to gauge their progress. This draft may be a full paper, an outline with a clear thesis, or whatever stage of notes the paper is currently in. More comprehensive drafts will be easier to gauge progress and likely provide higher overall grades compared to less

comprehensive drafts. This draft will receive an initial grade, which will be 30% of their overall grade for the course. However, if the student's overall grade on the final paper exceeds this draft paper grade, the draft paper grade will be replaced with their final paper grade.

- Based on the feedback from the draft of their final paper, students will revise their draft and complete their final paper.
- These papers need to use Times New Roman, 12 point font, double spaced. The formatting should be in Chicago Manual of Style in the footnotes and bibliography style. See http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html
- Final paper (30%): **Due by midnight on July 18, Submitted online via Moodle**
 - Each credit student will write a final paper. This paper may take one of two forms: either an interpretive essay or a sermon/ministry presentation paper. Both kinds of assignments will still cover the same basic material and involve solid academic research, but are constructed in different formats. **All of these final papers will be between 15-18 pages in length (roughly 4500-5400 words, including footnotes and bibliography), will be in Times New Roman, 12 pt font, will use Chicago Manual of Style for formatting, and will include footnotes and bibliography. All will be submitted via Moodle.**

Option 1: The Exegetical Essay: The "Exegetical essay" will examine either a specific passage or focus on a particular theme covered in class related to justice in Scripture. Students may choose to **focus on the theme of ecological justice in relation to climate change** or any other theme developed in the class. A knowledge of Hebrew is not required to write these papers and it will not be expected that students will have these language skills. However, if students have taken Hebrew language courses, they are encouraged to use these skills on their papers. **The biblical text or theme must be approved by the instructor.**

- Whether focusing on a specific text or theme, these papers should set their discussion of the biblical passage or theme in terms of its original historical and cultural background. Discussion should include a variety of different positions on the specific passage or topic from academic articles and books. To ensure this engagement with other scholars, the paper should include at least 10 solid academic sources (course materials, when used, should exist in the bibliography, but will not count to this total).
- Each paper must include an "application" or "significance for the church and society today" section. This section needs to explore the significance of their biblical passage or biblical theme for the same three areas as their reflection papers: 1. the student's own spiritual journey, 2. their ministry (current or future), and 3. the modern world. This application section should propose ways that their theme or passage could move towards redemptive action. (See instructor if clarification is needed).

OR

- **Option 2: Sermon or Ministry Presentation Paper:** The sermon or ministry presentation paper is between **15-18 pages in length (roughly 4500-5400 words, including footnotes and bibliography)**, will be in Times New Roman, 12 pt font, will use Chicago Manual of Style for formatting, and will include footnotes and bibliography. This paper will examine either a specific passage or focus on a particular theme covered in class related to justice in Scripture in the style of a sermon or a presentation in a ministry context (see examples below). Students may choose to **focus on the theme of ecological justice in relation to climate change** or any other theme developed in the class. A knowledge of Hebrew is not required to write these papers and it will not be expected that students will have these language skills. However, if students have taken Hebrew language courses,

they are encouraged to use these skills on their papers. **The text or topic must be approved by the instructor.**

- The analysis of the passage or theme should explore the historical, social, and cultural background of the passage/theme to set the stage for its connection to the modern world.
 - **Examples of types of presentations/sermons:** The paper may be a sermon or a ministry presentation which may include a teaching session for a Bible study, a small group study, a Sunday School course, or a ministry conference/gathering/retreat, etc.. **When student discusses the topic/theme with instructor, the format for this delivery should be discussed as well.**
 - **Short Context Abstract:** Students must specify in a short abstract at the top of the document who the real or imagined target audience is for this project (e. g., urban church, multi-cultural, low-income, para-church organization such as InterVarsity, a service organization, etc.) as well as any other pertinent information (e. g., a sermon for a special occasion such as a communion service, or a Bible study for a three day women’s retreat, etc.) This counts towards the total word count/page count for the paper.
 - This course is not a homiletics course, but rather a Scripture course. The purpose of this assignment is to assess each student's ability to move from “doing theology” in an academic setting to “applying theology” in a pastoral setting. While I will *not* be assessing this assignment for homiletic prowess, I still expect each student to practice sound homiletic and teaching principles.
 - All papers include application and this is particularly true in the sermon/ministry presentation paper: Application should include these three areas: 1. the student’s own spiritual journey, 2. their ministry (current or future), and 3. the modern world. This application should propose ways that their theme or passage could move towards redemptive action. (See instructor if clarification is needed).
 - Discussion should include a variety of different positions on the specific passage or topic from academic articles and books. To ensure engagement with other scholars, the paper should include at least 10 solid academic sources (course materials, when used, should exist in the bibliography, but will not count to this total).
 - **These papers will follow the guidelines listed above and below for all final papers.** Students may use a more colloquial style of discourse in their writing for this paper, but rules of grammar, syntax, and other general writing principles will still be required. If there are any questions, please contact your instructor.
- **For all final papers:** Students will be provided with a rubric identifying the major components of these two paper types and how they will be graded. The rubric and checklist for this assignment will be included in the folder “Rubrics for Course Assignments” in the “Course Overview” section of Moodle. **All of these final papers will be 15-18 pages in length (roughly 4500-5400 words, including footnotes and bibliography), will be in Times New Roman, 12 pt font, will use Chicago Manual of Style for formatting, and will include footnotes and bibliography. All will be submitted via Moodle.**

All assignments will be turned in via Moodle. See discussion of individual assignments above for more details.

Attendance:

Due to the short duration of the course, it is important students arrive on time and remain for the entire class session each day of the modular course. This also contributes to their course participation requirements listed above. If students will be missing from class for any reason, they need to discuss this with their professor.

Grade Summary:

| Assignment | Percentage |
|----------------------|------------|
| Course Participation | 10% |
| Reflection Paper | 30% |
| Draft of Final Paper | 30% |
| Final Paper | 30% |
| TOTAL: | 100% |

The available letters for course grades are as follows:

| <u>Letter Grade</u> | <u>Description</u> |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| A+ | Excellent |
| A | |
| A- | |
| B+ | Good |
| B | |
| B- | |
| C+ | Satisfactory |
| C | |
| C- | |
| D+ | Minimal Pass |
| D | |
| F | Failure |

Because of the nature of the Alpha 4.00 system, there can be no uniform College-wide conversion scale. The relationship between raw scores (e.g. percentages) and the resultant letter grade will depend on the nature of the course and the instructor's assessment of the level of each class, compared to similar classes taught previously.

Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system. Printed grade sheets are not mailed out.

Ambrose University Academic Policies:

Communication

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions. If students do not wish to use their Ambrose accounts, they will need to forward all messages from the Ambrose account to another personal account.

Registration

During the **Registration Revision Period** students may enter a course without permission, change the designation of any class from credit to audit and /or voluntary withdraw from a course without financial or academic penalty or record. Courses should be added or dropped on the student portal by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees.

Students intending to withdraw from a course after the Registration Revision Period must apply to the Office of the Registrar by submitting a "Request to Withdraw from a Course" form or by sending an email to the Registrar's Office by the **Withdrawal Deadline**; please consult the List of Important Dates on the my.ambrose.edu website. Students will not receive a tuition refund for courses from which they withdraw after the Registration Revision period. A grade of "W" will appear on their transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

Exam Scheduling

Students, who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a Revised Examination Request form to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; 2) the student has three final exams within three consecutive exam time blocks; 3) the scheduled final exam slot conflicts with an exam at another institution; 4) extenuating circumstances. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Electronic Etiquette

Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to use electronics for purposes unrelated to the course during a class session. Turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops should be used for class-related purposes only. Do not use iPods, MP3 players, or headphones. Do not text, read, or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. Some professors will not allow the use of any electronic devices in class. The professor has the right to disallow the student to use a laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the

session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a course Extension from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."

Appeal of Grade

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Registrar's Office in writing and providing the basis for appeal within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Note: Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.