DR301X

THE THEOLOGY & PRACTICE OF PREACHING

15 credits - 11 weeks
First Half-Session

PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY:
The full set of school regulations and procedures is contained in the Undergraduate Student Handbook which is available online at your MyAberdeen page. Students are expected to familiarise themselves not only with the contents of this leaflet but also with the contents of the Handbook. Therefore, ignorance of the contents of the Handbook will not excuse the breach of any School regulation or procedure.
You must familiarise yourself with this important information at the earliest opportunity.

COURSE CO-ORDINATOR/COURSE TEAM

Dr. Katie Cross (Course-co-ordinator)
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Discipline Administration:
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Room CB001
01224 273986
divrs@abdn.ac.uk
Students are asked to make themselves familiar with the information on key institutional policies which been made available within MyAberdeen (https://abdn.blackboard.com/bbcswebdav/institution/Policies). These policies are relevant to all students and will be useful to you throughout your studies. They contain important information and address issues such as what to do if you are absent, how to raise an appeal or a complaint and how seriously the University takes your feedback.

These institutional policies should be read in conjunction with this course guide, in which School specific policies are detailed. Further information can be found on the University’s Infohub webpage or by visiting the Infohub.

TIMETABLE
The course is offered online via the Blackboard Collaborate function of MyAberdeen. We meet online fortnightly for six real time / synchronous class sessions as detailed below.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This is a course in homiletics which engages students in critical reflection on the theory, practice, and theology of the art of effective and responsible preaching in the context of Christian ministry. This course explores the discipline of homiletics, the artful verbal communication of the Christian gospel in the context of public worship and beyond. Topics to be considered include the theology of preaching, the role of biblical exegesis in sermon preparation, the forms and aims of the sermon, the place of preaching within the context of Christian worship and the question of effective communication to diverse audiences. We will engage these topics through a combination of directed reading, formative exercises, web-facilitated seminar discussion and summative assessments.

INTENDED AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES
At the end of this course students will be able to . . .

✔ Demonstrate an informed and critical understanding of the nature and task of preaching in the context of the Christian community
✔ Demonstrate a critical awareness of what is involved in the conception, preparation and delivery of the sermon
✔ Demonstrate an enhanced ability to analyse sermons with a view to their scriptural basis, theological commitments and rhetorical forms
✔ Demonstrate improved skills in academic writing and the critical exchange of ideas in scholarly conversation and debate

READING LIST
We take as our core texts:


Both should be accessible as e-books via the University Library and as such can be read fully on-line. Students are, however, strongly encouraged to purchase both in affordable paperback editions from a vendor of their choice.

These will be supplemented by additional readings as well as audio / video recordings of sermons for discussion and analysis made available to students via MyAberdeen.

**CLASS SCHEDULE AND PROGRAMME**

1/ Week Two—19h00-21h00, Wednesday, September 19th,
   What the Word Says—Understanding
   Wilson, *The Practice of Preaching*, section 1, pp. 1-54

2/ Week Three—19h00-21h00, Wednesday, October 3rd
   What the Word Means—Explanation
   Wilson, *The Practice of Preaching*, section 2, pp. 55-82

3/ Week Five—19h00-21h00, Wednesday, October 17th
   The Word Comes to the World—Context
   Brownlee, *Preaching Jesus Christ Today*, pp. 71-86.

4/ Week Seven—19h00-21h00, Wednesday, October 31st
   The Preached Sermon—Intention
   Wilson, *The Practice of Preaching*, section 4, pp. 131-184
   Brownlee, *Preaching Jesus Christ Today*, pp. 87-107

5/ Week Nine—19h00-21h00, Wednesday, November 14th
   The Form(s) of Proclamation—Communication
   Wilson, *The Practice of Preaching*, section 5, pp. 185-226

6/ Week Eleven—19h00-21h00 Wednesday, November 28th
   Preaching and Teaching the Gospel —Doctrine & Theology
   Wilson, *The Practice of Preaching*, section 6, pp. 227-262
   Brownlee, *Preaching Jesus Christ Today*, pp. 165-168
ASSESSMENT

PLEASE NOTE: In order to pass a course on the first attempt, a student must attain a Common Grading Scale (CGS) mark of at least E3 on each element of course assessment. Failure to do so will result in a grade of no greater than CGS E1 for the course as a whole.

If you submit your work on time, you can expect that feedback will normally be provided within three working weeks (excluding vacation periods) of the submission deadline.

On the first attempt, the course is evaluated entirely by continuous assessment involving both formative exercises and summative essays.

I/ FORMATIVE EXERCISE—
1. Read and reflect on the following passage from the Book of Acts which rehearses an early ‘sermon’ of the apostle Peter. In no more than 500 words explain and assess the following statement: ‘This passage makes clear that claims about the communication of the Gospel are inextricably bound up with the substance of the Gospel message itself.’

Then Peter began to speak to them: “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”—Acts 10:34-43

This exercise is due on Wednesday, October 3rd

II/ SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT—
1. Reflective Essay on the Place of Preaching—750 words (10%)
This exercise is due on Wednesday, October 31st

Article 7 of the Confessio Augustana (1530) famously defined the church as ‘the assembly of all believers in which the Gospel is preached purely and the sacraments rightly administered according to the Gospel’. Must preaching still be a defining mark of the existence of the church in the 21st century? Concisely set out your reasons for the answer you give. Answer in no more than 750 words.

2. Critical Analysis and Explication of a classic Sermon—2500-3000 words (40%)

This assignment is due Wednesday, November 28th

Listen and Read: Martin Luther King, The Drum Major Instinct (4 February 1968) on Mark 10:35f. Analyse MLK’s sermon in terms of Wilson’s scheme that identifies the rhythm and pattern of ‘trouble’ and ‘grace’ in both text and world as ‘deep structure’ and ‘grammar’ of the gospel (see especially chapter 9). Identify and analyse in detail how this sermon is constructed, its themes developed, and its delivery shaped. How is the biblical text interpreted in terms of the movement ‘from trouble to grace’? How is the world into which the sermon is preached ‘interpreted’ in the same terms? Describe the sermon’s central plot and movement, and explain how it is achieved. Reflect on the usefulness and limitations of Wilson’s scheme and categories for understanding MLK’s sermon.

3. Preparation of a Sermon and Reflective Commentary—3000 words (50%)

This assignment is due Wednesday, December 12th

You may take as your sermon text ANY ONE of the following from the Revised Common Lectionary cycle for the season of Advent 2018—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advent Year C</th>
<th>First reading</th>
<th>Psalm</th>
<th>Second reading</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Third Sunday of Advent</td>
<td>Zephaniah 3:14-20</td>
<td>Isaiah 12:2-6</td>
<td>Philippians 4:4-7</td>
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You should prepare your sermon by making full use of the approaches set out in the textbooks (Wilson and Brownlee) and discussed throughout the course. The submission involves three elements:

(a) The sermon itself should be written out in full (12 point, double spaced) and should run to approximately 1500 words.

(b) In an appendix of approximately 1500 words (12 point, double spaced) explain the approach you followed in composing the sermon with explicit reference to materials considered in the course generally, and the works of Wilson and Brownlee in particular.

(c) A concise list of all sources used in preparation of the sermon—e.g., the exegetical tools and resources used, other sources of material to which reference is made. Please use normal bibliographical form and present your paper in accordance with a standard academic style guide, preferably the current edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Overly long, unduly short and poorly presented essays are unwelcome and will be marked down.

In sum, assignments are to be submitted to the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First formative exercise</td>
<td>500 words</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Wednesday, October 3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short reflective essay on the place of preaching</td>
<td>750 words</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Wednesday, October 31st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First summative course essay (sermon analysis)</td>
<td>2500-3000 words</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Wednesday, November 28th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second summative course essay (sermon writing and reflection)</td>
<td>3000 words</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Wednesday, December 12th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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To view the CGS Descriptors please go to MyAberdeen- Organisations-Divinity, History, & Philosophy Student Information for Undergraduates. The link to the CGS Descriptors is on the left hand menu.

**SUBMISSION ARRANGEMENTS**

- Submit a .doc or .docx and include the word count.
- Submit by the due date, no hard copy will be required unless directly requested by the course coordinator through MyAberdeen.
- In advance of uploading, please save the assignment with your student id number listed in the filename, i.e. 59999999 DRXXXX Essay 1.
- When asked to enter a title for the assignment, please enter a title identical to the name of your saved assignment, i.e. 59999999 DRXXXX Essay 1.
- Please note: failure to submit by the due date (unless a prior arrangement has been made) will result in a deduction of marks. Where no submission is received, this will result in a mark of zero.
- Please note: Safeassign text matching software will be used, however the School of Divinity, History and Philosophy reserves the right to also submit material to TurnitinUK when deemed necessary.

**RESIT INFORMATION**

Second resit attempts will involve resubmission of relevant failed elements of continuous assessment at acceptable standard. Access to the resit which is provisional on:

- All submitted coursework having been submitted and graded at CGS E3 or higher.
- Student having a valid Class Certificate. Students with C7’s are not eligible for resits.