

1-1-2003

WO 510 Worship Leadership in the Church

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Ruth, Lester, "WO 510 Worship Leadership in the Church" (2003). *Syllabi*. Book 2047.
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WO510 Worship Leadership in the Church
Fall 2003
Professor: Dr. Lester Ruth

This syllabus may be amended prior to the beginning of class.

FIRST THINGS

[Horizontal Rule]

Welcome

Welcome to WO510 Worship Leadership in the Church. In a way the course is misnamed, I believe. It could be named, based upon what worship really is, as "How to lead the church in having a dress rehearsal for heaven." What a great opportunity we have in this class: to study leading the church into God's saving presence as we anticipate the quality of life we will enjoy in eternity!

The course will have a Star Wars quality to it as Darth Vader once told Luke Skywalker: "It is your destiny." Perhaps the Orthodox worship scholar, Alexander Schmemmann, said it a little better. According to Schmemmann, we are not primarily homo sapiens (people who know) but homo adorans (people who adore God). Our goal in this class will be to study different ways to fulfill our destiny in the church.

Contacting the professor:

- Email:** always send email by clicking on the "to Office" icon in the WO510X-LR (WO510X2 Office if you are in the second section) folder. If the matter is really urgent, please say so in the subject line.

- Phone:** 859-858-2175

- If on the Wilmore campus:** Beeson Center 218

- Virtual office hours:** I'll be checking in on our class every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

COURSE OVERVIEW

[Horizontal Rule]

Here's what we will examine:

- "looking at the forest": First we will examine large worship issues: biblical roots of Christian worship in the Bible, a theology for Christian worship, developing a vocabulary for assessing worship, different orders for worship services, and having fullness in worship. These will occupy the first several modules.

- "looking at the trees": In the last several modules we will look at specific issues for planning worship services and doing actual worship leadership: time and remembrance, space, music, prayer, the Lord's Supper, Baptism and initiation, and, finally, special services like weddings and funerals.

By the end of the course you should be able to:

- demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of ways of Christian worship, together with self-critical perspective on one's own preferences and commitments in worship;

- enrich congregational worship in prayer, word, and sacraments; and

- make sound worship decisions based on historical, theological, and pastoral considerations;

Contexts and presumptions:

I have designed this course in a way that presumes certain contexts and contains certain presumptions. First, this is a theological course. Its primary goal is Christian worship that is fully honorable to the God who has been revealed in Jesus Christ. In such it is connected to your other theology classes in that we seek to honor what we have been shown of God through Jesus Christ. The theological presumption is that we worship the Father through Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. Worship begins with Christ. In some ways our online discussions and exams will be most central to this concern.

The course is also intended to be related to the practice of ministry. What we do here is what I like to call "poetic theology," with poetic not just meaning the opposite of prose but creating out of theology. Worship and its leadership is where knowledge of God gets turned into prayer, into proclamation, into affections of the heart, and postures of the body. We'll seek to look at the creation and the assessment of these. Your videotapes and creative projects deal most directly with this aspect. Of course, we'll discuss these issues in the discussion center, too, as we walk through the modules.

I also designed the course with the presumption that we are not the only ones doing Christian worship. We've been at this for 2,000 years and there are Christians in a wide variety of cultures, showing a wide variety of pieties. You'll see something of the range of this vision particularly in the material on the CDs. You'll also note that I encourage you in your final project to consider examining a church with which you have little familiarity.

Finally, I'll confess that I'm thoroughly Wesleyan and hope to offer a Wesleyan take on the biblical story. You'll see this seeping through in a variety of points, some less obvious and some more (we'll address specifically Wesleyan concerns in baptism, for example, and the emphasis on a full remembrance of the biblical story will be a recurring theme in this class.

COURSE CONTENTS

[Horizontal Rule]

Here's what we will read:

● These books and pamphlets, some of which are very short. (I will discuss a reading schedule below.)

--[no author], *Authentic Worship in a Changing Culture* (Grand Rapids: CRC Publications, 1997; ISBN 1-56212-257-6).

--Thomas G. Long, *Beyond the Worship Wars: Building Vital and Faithful Worship* (The Alban Institute, 2001; ISBN 1-56699-240-0).

--Timothy J. Mulder, *So You've Been Asked To Lead in Prayer* (Grand Rapids: CRC Publications, 1996.)

--Robert Webber, *Planning Blended Worship: The Creative Mixture of Old & New* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998; ISBN 0-687-03223-7).

--John D. Witvliet, *So You've Been Asked To Plan a Worship Service* (Grand Rapids: CRC Publications, 1999; ISBN 1-56212-393-9).

--John D. Witvliet, *So You've Been Asked To Lead a Worship Service* (Grand Rapids: CRC Publications, 1999; ISBN 1-52212-392-0).

All are available from the Asbury Cokesbury bookstore. Contact them at exlbooks@asburyseminary.edu or 866-855-8252.

● You will also read some additional articles and essays for each module. These will be found on the CDs which have been distributed to you by the seminary.

● **Note! Note! Note! Note!** You will also need to purchase, if you don't already have them, your denomination's worship book (or book with services) and official hymnal.

--For United Methodists, this is the *United Methodist Hymnal* (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1989) and the *United Methodist Book of Worship* (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1992; ISBN 0-687-03572-4).

--For Free Methodists, this is the *Pastor's Handbook* and your current hymnal.

--For Nazarenes, this is the latest edition of the *Manual* and your current hymnal.

--For Wesleyans, this is the latest edition of *The Discipline of The Wesleyan Church* and your current hymnal.

If you have any questions about your denomination's worship book and official hymnal, please contact your denominational publishing house. If you still need help, please contact me (click on the "to Office" icon in the class folder).

Here's what else we will look at and listen to: lots of good stuff on CDs

Every week you will be asked to look at and listen to stuff on the resource CDs sent to you by the seminary. On these CDs you will find stuff like:

- short video clips of different worship services with written guides to tell you what to look for;
- short video clips of Prof. Ruth lecturing;
- longer video clips of Prof. Ruth showing how to do baptisms, Communion, weddings, and funerals;
- additional Powerpoint presentations giving you more data to chew on and think about;
- songs to listen to with written guides to tell you what to listen for;
- some additional reading as noted above.

This material has been compiled and organized in modules (except for the longer video clips about how to do the special services). The material provides the raw data for our online discussions and, therefore should be reviewed/read/listened to before I post the module assignment every Wednesday morning. (I'll talk more about our weekly rhythm below.)

I'll send out a notice every Wednesday morning telling you what you need to look or listen to that week. In the meantime, as soon as you get the CDs, look at the video clip with written guide in Module 1. We will hit the ground running, discussing that Module 1 data beginning Monday, September 1.

You will need to return all CDs at the end of the semester by December 12.

ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH.

A General Plan of the Appointments for 1822-3.

Months.	St. Geo's.			Ebenez'r.			Salem.			Nazareth.			Zoar.			LEADERS' MEETINGS will be held the second Tuesday evening every month.
	Sabbath	Morning	After.	Morning	After.	Evening	Morning	After.	Evening	Morning	After.	Evening	Morning	After.	Evening	
JUNE	9	16	23	10	17	24	11	18	25	12	19	26	13	20	27	Leaders' Meeting at St. George's, at 8 o'clock.
JULY	14	21	28	15	22	29	16	23	30	17	24	31	18	25	1	Leaders' Meeting at St. George's, at 8 o'clock.
AUG.	2	9	16	3	10	17	4	11	18	5	12	19	6	13	20	Leaders' Meeting at Ebenezer, at 7 1/2 o'clock.
SEPTEN.	21	28	5	22	29	6	23	30	7	24	1	8	25	2	9	Leaders' Meeting at St. George's, at 7 o'clock.
OCT.	15	22	29	16	23	30	17	24	31	18	25	1	19	26	2	Leaders' Meeting at St. George's, at 6 1/2 o'clock.
NOV.	8	15	22	9	16	23	10	17	24	11	18	25	12	19	26	Leaders' Meeting at Ebenezer, at 6 o'clock.
DECEM.	6	13	20	7	14	21	8	15	22	9	16	23	10	17	24	Leaders' Meeting at St. George's, at 6 o'clock.
JAN.	13	20	27	14	21	28	15	22	29	16	23	30	17	24	31	Leaders' Meeting at St. George's, at 6 o'clock.
FEB.	3	10	17	4	11	18	5	12	19	6	13	20	7	14	21	Leaders' Meeting at Ebenezer, at 6 1/2 o'clock.
MARCH	10	17	24	11	18	25	12	19	26	13	20	27	14	21	28	2 Leaders' Meeting at St. George's, at 7 o'clock.
APRIL	7	14	21	8	15	22	9	16	23	10	17	24	11	18	25	Leaders' Meeting at St. George's, at 7 o'clock.
MAY	5	12	19	6	13	20	7	14	21	8	15	22	9	16	23	Leaders' Meeting at Ebenezer, at 8 o'clock.
JUNE	12	19	26	13	20	27	14	21	28	15	22	29	16	23	30	Leaders' Meeting at St. George's, at 8 o'clock.

Preachers.

- 1 Wm. Thatcher,
- 2 Thomas Miller,
- 3 Henry T. King,
- 4 Thomas Dunn,
- 5 Gamaliel Bailey,
- 6 Cuth. Landreth.

LOCAL ASSOCIATION.

- 10 Thomas Bogue,
- 11 James Brindle,
- 12 Edward Larkin,
- 13 And. Mccaskey,
- 14 Daniel M'Curdy,
- 15 Samuel S. Sneyd,
- 16 Samuel Hanse,
- 17 Jeremiah Clarke,
- 18 Joseph Barlow,
- 19 F. Schmeiding,
- 20 K. S. Cropper,
- 21 Georges Thomas,
- 22 Joseph Cramer.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be administered in all our Churches as follows: at St. George's, Ebenezer, and Salem, on the morning of the first Sabbath of each month—at Nazareth on the morning of the second, and at Zoar on the afternoon of the last.

J. H. Cunningham, printer, No. 70, South Third-street, Philadelphia.

I thought a picture might break the monotony of the syllabus at this point.

This is a plan of the preaching appointments for the Methodist Episcopal Church congregations in Philadelphia for 1822-3. No congregation had the same preacher two services in a row. Four of the congregations have three services every Sunday. One, Zoar which was an African-American congregation, has two. The first six preachers listed are itinerant preachers. The first three are active itinerants appointed by the bishop and the last three are "superannuated." The preachers numbered 10-22 are local preachers, that is, they earn their living at another trade but have their local preacher's licenses and factor into the rotation of preaching schedules.

You can tell from this plan why Methodists preachers speak of having an "appointment." Originally, it meant literally that one had an appointment to preach in such-and-such a congregation on such-and-such a date.

WHAT YOU NEED FOR THIS CLASS

[Horizontal Rule]

- The books and pamphlets listed above.

- A video tape *recorder*.
 - You will need it to record yourself performing a practice baptism, Communion, prayers, Scripture readings.
 - It would also be useful (but not strictly necessary) for your large semester project. (I will explain the project in more detail below

when I talk about assignments and grading.) A tripod is very useful, too, when videotaping something as long as a worship service. I speak from experience.

- People, furnishings, and the space to perform a practice baptisms and Communion.

- If you can videotape a church's worship service for your large semester project, you will need a church which is willing to let you do so. Do not videotape your own church service. Do a church that is different than your own. Do not be hesitant to cross ethnic and racial lines. If you need suggestions, please let me know. Send me an email by clicking on the "to Office" icon.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

[Horizontal Rule]

Here's what you do for your grade (aka the assignments):

- Weekly participation in the online discussions: during each module week, which runs from Wednesday 9:00 a.m. to Wednesday 8:59 a.m. (Eastern Time), you will need to post one response to my initial question/assignment for that module and one response to a class mate's posting for that module in the discussion center. **At least one of these postings needs to be made in the first four days of the module (Wednesday through Saturday) to satisfy the minimum participation expectations.** Failure to do so will affect the participation grade. One way to do that might be to post your response to my initial question/assignment early in the week, keep monitoring the threaded discussion all week long, and then jumping in again toward the end of the week. These are just the minimum requirements. Additional postings are welcome and encouraged. **Participation is very important and constitutes a significant portion of your grade.**

Note: If you fall behind in a module's discussion, pay attention to the way the message icons are used. There will be hints as to handy places to "latch on" to a discussion that is well underway. Start there, but always remember, too, to make a response to my initial discussion starter.

- 2 tests

--The first test will be distributed online by email post on Friday, September 26 and must be returned to me by 12 midnight (ET) on Friday, October 3, sending it by email to the WO510LR Office (WO510X2 Office if you are in the second section). It will be a comprehensive, thorough test on these books: *Authentic Worship in a Changing Culture*, Webber's *Planning Blended Worship* and Long's *Beyond the Worship Wars*.

--The second test will be distributed online on Friday, November 7 and must be returned to me by 12 midnight on Friday, November 14. It will be a similar test on this material: a section from Bridge and Phyper's *The Water That Divides* (in the course center), Wesley's passages on baptismal regeneration (on CD, module 12), Ted Campbell's essay on Wesley on baptism and conversion (on CD, module 12), and the 3 small booklets by Witvliet and Mulder (see the reading list above).

Note! Note! Note! Note! You can study as long as you would like but, once you start to take the tests, they are closed book. Do not look at a test before you start to take it. Give yourself 2 1/2 hours maximum to take each test.

● A large semester project in which you evaluate a church's worship service, integrating and synthesizing everything covered in the class. The project will have three parts: 1) what did you see; 2) how would you evaluate it; and 3) if you were the pastor or worship leader, what would you keep or change about the worship service and why. More information will be given below. This will be due by midnight on Monday, December 8.

● Development of a worship service, appropriate for a particular congregation in a specific cultural context of your choosing, using Webber's four-fold order of worship. This will be due by 12 midnight on Wednesday, October 8. Post your worship service within your team folder by that time and date. Once distributed within your team folder, you will need to comment on the services distributed by your group members.

● Adaptation of a special service called the Easter Vigil (it's one of the golden treasures from the early centuries of the Church and used to be the main service of the whole year) for a particular

congregational setting of your choosing. What you will need to produce is an outline of the Vigil with a very brief commentary on how the service would be done in the congregational setting you have chosen. This will be due by 12 midnight on Wednesday, October 29. Post this assignment with your team folder. Once distributed within your team folder, you will need to comment on the services distributed by your group members.

● Videotaping yourself performing baptisms (both a child and an adult), Communion, extemporaneous prayers, and Scripture readings as detailed below. You will shoot two tapes, one early in the semester and one later in the semester. The first tape should show you performing baptisms (child and adult), an extemporaneous prayer suitable for the opening of worship, and the reading of Luke 19:28-40. (These are independent items.) You should mail this first tape to me (and only me @ Asbury Theological Seminary--SPO937, 204 N. Lexington Ave., Wilmore, KY 40390) by Monday, October 20 using priority (2-day) mail. After receiving my feedback on this first tape, shoot a second tape of yourself performing a Communion service, an extemporaneous intercessory prayer, and the reading of Isaiah 40:1-8. (These are independent items again.) You should have finishing shooting and duplicating the videotape so that you can mail it to me by Friday, November 21 using priority (2-day) mail. In the course center look at the document describing common lapses made in performing these services. Of particular importance, is what I call the "sound down" test. If you turned the sound all the way down, could someone tell when you are praying, when you are addressing the congregation, and whether your presiding is full of grace?

I know that this seems like a lot of work and hard work at that. It is. I won't fool around with you. But let me tell you why I'm requiring it. It is because worship is so important. It is the church's lifeblood. Like I wrote earlier, it is where we fulfill our destiny as human beings before God. Will you do anything more important as a pastor or worship leader or as a Christian? Let us rise to the challenge and privilege of equipping ourselves to lead God's people in worship that truly honors Him and edifies His people. I'm requiring so much work because this may be the only chance you ever have to systematically reflect on this topic with the help of others as committed to it as you. (Plus it is a complex topic, too.)

Here's how I will allocate grades and assess work:

- Weekly participation in the online discussions with the Discussion Center and your team folder: 20% of your grade; I'll be looking not for the amount of interaction but for insightfulness, inquisitiveness, and the ability to bring readings and other material to the table. I'm looking for more than you offering casual remarks of support or disagreement; I keep track of the following: have you posted the minimum 2 postings per assignment, doing the first within the first four days of a module? how many total postings did you make per module? how many were truly insightful, significant postings? how well did you respond when questions were posed to you by the professor or other students? did your postings show evidence of interacting with the readings and CD materials? A passing grade on this part of the course is not automatic.

- 2 tests: each 20% of your grade making 40% cumulative of your semester grade;

- Large semester project: 40% of your grade; see below for more details about what I'll be looking for;

- Development of a worship service: no actual grade given; failure to complete the assignment and comment on the other services from your other team members will result in the loss of a letter grade for your final semester grade; I'll be looking for your ability to take the ancient four-fold order of worship and make choices/adaptations appropriate for a particular time in the year and for a particular group of people.

- Adaptation of the Easter Vigil: no actual grade given; failure to complete the assignment and comment on the other services within your team will result in the loss of a letter grade for your final semester grade; I'll be looking for your ability to take this service and plan it in a way that is true to the service and appropriate for a particular group of people within a specific cultural context.

- Videotaping yourself: no actual grade given; failure to complete the assignment and comment on the tapes within your team

will result in the loss of a letter grade for your final semester grade; I'll be looking for your performance of these services in a way which is gracious and graceful and which is true to your worship tradition and to yourself as a worship leader.

Here's what the letter grades mean:

See page 28 in the 2000-2001 ATS catalog.

A = exceptional (notice the word) work. Thus this will be an **exceptional** grade.

B = good (notice the word) work. Good is good. Sleep soundly with this grade.

C = acceptable work.

D = marginal work.

+ and - will also be given, e.g., a B+ is a possible grade.

What the grades will mean in the grand scheme of things: not all that much. I am much more interested in the increase of your wisdom than in you racking up a particular grade. The real test of what you gain in this class will be seen in 5 years when you are leading worship someplace. I won't be able to test the quality of your work then (and thus I must give you a grade now) but God can. Take advantage of this course to its fullest given your current life situation, regardless of what your final grade ends up being, in order to show yourself an approved worker down the road.

More information on the large semester project:

● Goals: to give you a chance to integrate everything you have learned, read, and discussed by thoroughly evaluating a single worship service of a church other than your own; to sharpen your skills at pastorally evaluating a church's worship; and to give you a chance to pretend to be the pastor or worship leader, choosing what to maintain as a strength already and where you would try to strengthen its worship.

● Choosing a church: pick a church other than your own and one beyond your normal experience. Try to choose one where you can visit its main worship service.

● When to choose it: I wouldn't wait long. You will want to give yourself time to really chew on what you experienced there. Here's the optimal plan: choose a church early in the semester, videotape its service early, have this service in the back of your mind as you work with the data all semester long, occasionally watch the videotape so the service remains fresh, and then write a wonderful project in December.

● The parts of the project: 1) what did you see?; 2) how would you evaluate it?; and 3) if you were the pastor or worship leader, what would you keep or change about the worship service and why?

● Videotaping the service?: While videotaping the service is not strictly necessary, it would be very useful. It will enable you to view the service several times to get the most accurate "read" of it. If you can't videotape a service, then take very good written notes during the service. You cannot use a service from TV unless you were actually at that service, too. You cannot get the full experience just from a TV telecast.

● The grid to apply: You are responsible for this as you will be when you are a pastor or worship leader someplace. I'm not going to tell you how to do it. Take this as your opportunity to shine by showing how you have digested everything in the course, integrating and synthesizing it into a usable way of evaluating worship. The development of a great evaluative grid is a large part of what I'm looking for in the project. I will also be looking for thoroughness and insightfulness in your project. For example, a project that does not comment on the worship space would be deficient in thoroughness and, for example, a project that limits its evaluation criteria to "it really moved me" will likewise be deficient.

● The length of the project: no more than 30 pages double spaced.

● Formatting: submit as an email attachment sent to the WO510 Office (click on the "to Office" icon in the WO510X-LR folder) by midnight on Monday, December 8. Use 10-12 point type, Times New Roman. Put any notes as footnotes. For questions of citations,

see Carole Slade, *Form & Style*, 11th edition or Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*.

● For examples: two examples of strong projects by former students are available for viewing in the course center (look for 03 examples of final projects).

More information on videotaping yourself:

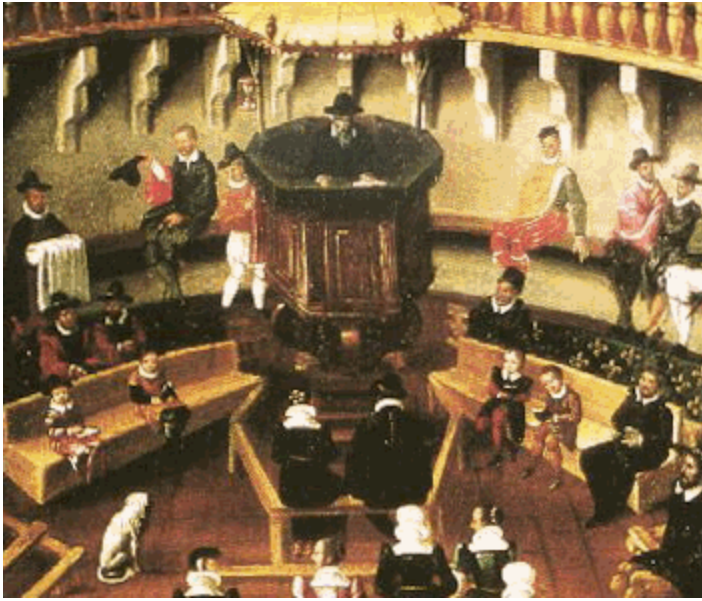
● The assignment: videotape yourself performing a baptism, doing the Lord's Supper according to the services in your denomination's resources or in a way that is appropriate for your tradition, as well as extemporaneous prayers and Scripture readings as noted above. Remember that you will produce two videos both sent only to the professor.

● The baptism: must include both an infant and an adult.

● First watch the video of Prof. Ruth giving instructions on how to do these services .

● The grid for evaluating: does your leadership show graciousness and is graceful? See the document in the course center on common lapses. Don't forget about the "sound down" test. (See above.)

● No sermons are required in any of the services although they will be in real life.



I'm tired of talking. Here's another picture from worship history.

This is a picture of early Reformed worship. Based on what you see in this space, what do you think the key thing in the service was?

This is a cool picture because of the dog. Have you spotted it?

THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF CLASS LIFE

[Horizontal Rule]

A Module, A Module, My Kingdom for a Module

The basic building blocks of the course will be the weekly modules. The module week will begin at 9 a.m. (Eastern Time) on a Wednesday (except for the first module which will begin on Monday, September 1) and will end at 8:59 a.m. (Eastern Time) the following

Wednesday. During that module week the following will occur: 1) I will post the current module assignment first thing on Wednesday morning; 2) I will post a little reminder saying what you should be working on in the background first thing on Wednesday morning; 3) you will make at least two postings, one in response to my initial posting and one in response to a classmate's posting (**one of these should be done within the first 4 days of a module**); and 4) I (and you hopefully) will monitor the discussion and jump in as appropriate.

Trust me to keep everybody and everything on track.

Foreground and Background

A good way to think of the work in the class is to think of foreground and background. In other words, you should be working on stuff for this class that is in the foreground (meaning in immediate view and concern) as well as in the background (meaning behind the scenes).

Always in the foreground will be the posting of the current module assignment and your responses to it. Sometimes in the foreground will be projects you have been working on in the background until their due date, at which time they come into the foreground. An example is you developing an order of worship according to Robert Webber's four-fold pattern. Your background work will begin with you reading Webber's book. I'll start giving you background reminders a few weeks ahead of the assignment due date, giving specific instruction about the assignment as I do. When the due date rolls around, that background work will become foreground work as you post it in your team folder and receive comments from your teammates.

The most basic foreground and background rhythm will be the rhythm of responding to the module assignment based upon what you read/saw/listened to about that module topic on the resource CDs. In the foreground will be your online postings to the assignment; in the background will be your reviewing the materials on the resource CDs for the upcoming module. In other words, in the week we are discussing the topic for module 4, for example, you should be reviewing the materials for module 5. Don't worry. I'll remind you what to do every Wednesday morning.

Reading schedule

There is no precise reading schedule for the books and pamphlets listed as required reading. You will be tested on some of them on certain dates. (See above under grading and assignments.)

Module schedule

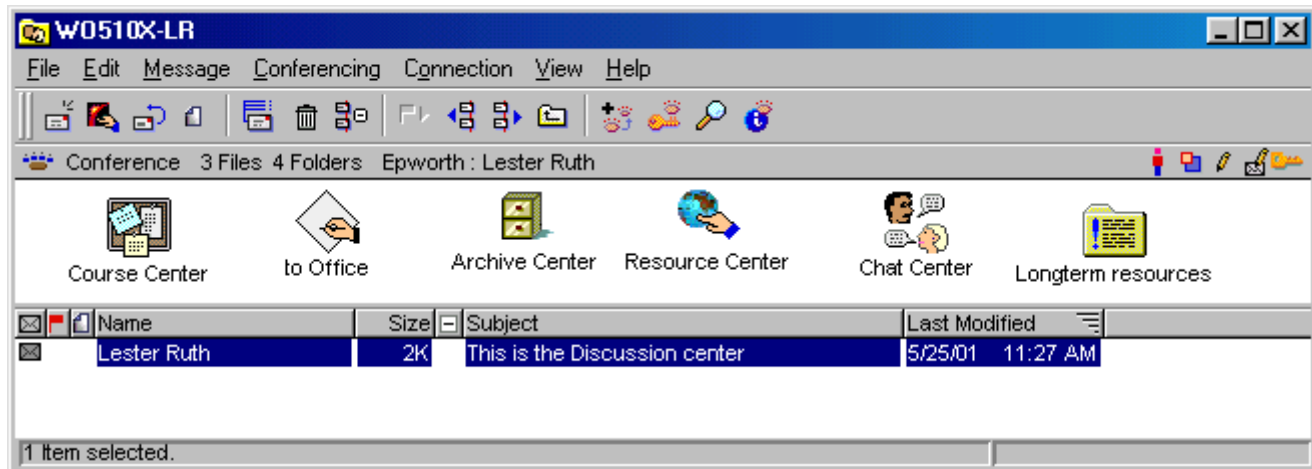
Module #	Module dates	Module topic
1	Sept. 1-10	introductions, responding to first video clip on worship as community activity
2	Sept. 10-17	Worship and the Bible
3	Sept. 17-24	A Theology of Worship
4	Sept. 24-Oct. 1	Developing a Vocabulary for Assessing Worship
5	Oct. 1-8	Ordering different types of worship services
6	Oct. 8-15	Fullness in worship
7	Oct. 15-22	Time and Remembrance in Worship
8	Oct. 22-29	Space
9	Oct. 29-Nov. 5	Music
10	Nov. 5-12	Prayer
11	Nov. 12-19	The Lord's Supper
12	Nov. 19-Dec. 3	Initiation and Baptism (Don't forget that Nov. 24-28 is reading week.)
13	Dec. 3-10	Marriage and Funerals

Teams

During the first week I will organize you into teams. You will have a special team folder icon as discussed below. As I will instruct, some of our work, especially the module discussions will be done in these team folders.

Windows and Icons

Let me tell you how I will use the various windows and icons in the WO510X folder.



The Discussion Center (the bottom part of the screen when you open the WO510X folder) will be used for all public communications for the whole class. Module discussions will take place in the team folders, however, because of the size of the class. Clicking on the new message icon when in the WO510X folder will create a message automatically addressed to this center.

The Course Center will contain a copy of the syllabus as well as any class modules material not contained on the resource CDs.

The WO510X Office is for *private* correspondence between you and me. This will contain items that you do not want to appear publicly before all of your classmates or items that you think may embarrass you if they were to appear publicly. This is also where you will send any papers or projects to be graded by me.

Teams will get you to a discussion center for your team. (You will be assigned to a team for certain projects and discussions.) Use this when you have team-specific discussions or assignments.

The Archive Center will be used for storing conversations that have already taken place during the course of the semester. This keeps the *Discussion Center* from becoming too unmanageable.

The Chat Center is intended primarily for real-time interaction. You can get together with other members to study, ask questions, or to explore topics. We will use it occasionally for real-time chats with authors of some of our reading material. None of the conversations carried on in this location are ever saved.

The Resource Center provides access to a number of specific tools available to all ExL students. These include access to the B. L. Fisher Library, the services in Estes Chapel, ExL Updates, Guidelines for Success, Helpful Hints, Interesting Links, a Powerpoint Viewer as well as a Real Audio player. I encourage you to take advantage of all these resources.

If you need help from the Asbury staff:

Address emails concerning **general concerns, questions, or problems** to ExL Director (type ExL Director or

exl_director@asburyseminary.edu or Extended_Learning@asburyseminary.edu in the address line). This will send the message to Kevin Osborn. Call him at 859-858-2191.

Questions concerning **computer related questions and technical difficulties** should be answered by looking at www.asburyseminary.edu/it/fc. Help beyond what can be offered there can be found by emailing ExL Support (type ExL Support or exl_support@asburyseminary.edu in the address line). This will send the message to Jared Porter. Call him at 859-858-2035.

Address emails concerning **buying books** to Exlbooks (type Exlbooks or exlbooks@asburyseminary.edu in the address line). This will send the message to the Cokesbury bookstore on the Wilmore campus. Call the bookstore at 859-858-4242.

Address emails concerning **library** work to hannah_kirsch@asburyseminary.edu. Call her at 859-858-2189.

LAST BUT CERTAINLY NOT LEAST: SOME IMPORTANT TIDBITS

[Horizontal Rule]

The first week

Hopefully, you will have looked at this syllabus before the first week of class. I will want everyone to introduce themselves to other class members early during the first week of the semester. I'll post a notice for when it is time to do so.

A note on reproducing course materials

*“The development of all extended learning material, whether online or by other media, is intended for distribution to members of the course and others by my permission. It is not intended for general distribution on the internet or elsewhere. Permission to copy, in whole or in part, must be requested from the professor (Lester Ruth).”
Thanks for honoring these instructions.*

Info on contacting the professor, again:

●**Email:** always send email by clicking on the "to Office" icon in the WO510X-LR. If the matter is really urgent, please say so in the subject line.

●**Phone:** 859-858-2175

●**If on the real campus:** Beeson Center 218 on the Wilmore campus

●**Virtual office hours:** I'll be checking in our class every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Final thoughts

The song of the twenty-four elders before the throne of God in heaven: "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created." (Revelation 4:11)

The song offered to the Lamb in heaven: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and might forever and ever!"

The word "worship" comes from combining worthy and -ship. It is all about coming to recognize the worth of God. I pray that God will use our class for that purpose.