

CN568: THEOLOGICAL & PASTORAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE CONTEMPORARY FAMILY (4 Units).

John Drane, Visiting Professor of New Testament & Practical Theology, and

Olive M. Fleming Drane, Adjunct Instructor in Evangelism

DESCRIPTION:

This course examines perceptions of the family within the Christian tradition, and their relationship to wider cultural concerns in a variety of different historical and contemporary settings.

COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES: Students will

- reflect on their own family stories;
- understand Christian perspectives on the family, within the context of postmodern culture;
- acquire pastoral skills for supporting families in the church and in the wider community;
- develop skills in theological reflection in partnership with other people of both genders and diverse ethnicities.

RELEVANCE FOR MINISTRY:

Understanding our own experience of family and empathizing with the experience of others is a fundamental part of effective Christian life and ministry.

COURSE FORMAT:

The class will be conducted on the Internet using a 10-week lesson program aligned with Fuller's academic calendar. Each week, students and the instructor will interact with the material and each other through journaling, threaded discussions, web-based research, and other assignments.

REQUIRED READING:

- Anderson, Herbert, and Don Browning et al. *The Family Handbook*. Westminster John Knox, 1998.
- Balswick, Jack O., and Judith K. Balswick, *The Family: a Christian perspective on the contemporary home*. Baker Academic, 3rd ed 2007.
- Drane, John, and Olive M. Fleming Drane. *Family Fortunes: Faith-Full Caring for Today's Families*. Darton, Longman & Todd, 2004.
- Fleming Drane, Olive M. *Spirituality to Go: Rituals and Reflections for Everyday Living*. Darton, Longman & Todd, 2006.
- Thatcher, Adrian, *Theology and Families*. Blackwell, 2006.
- Course Reader available in the online course.

RECOMMENDED READING:

- Barton, Stephen C., ed. *The Family in Theological Perspective*. T & T Clark, 1996.
- Garland, Diana R. *Family Ministry: A Comprehensive Guide*. InterVarsity Press, 1999.
- Hess, Richard S., and M. Daniel Carroll R, eds. *Family in the Bible*. Baker Academic, 2003.
- Ruether, Rosemary Radford. *Christianity and the Making of the Modern Family*. Beacon Press, 2000.
- Westerhoff, John H. *Will our Children have Faith?* 2nd ed. Morehouse, 2000.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Weekly threaded discussions (25%) and personal journaling including reflections on students' own family of origin (10%)
2. A report on personal experiential processing of course material undertaken throughout the course (15%)
3. A paper or field-work study of 12-15 pages on a subject relevant to the concerns of the course (50%). All assignments must be submitted to gain a grade.

PREREQUISITES: None.

RELATIONSHIP TO CURRICULUM: Elective. Fulfills concentration requirements in Family Life Education in MDiv and in MA in Family Life Education: Ministry Focus Elective in MA in Global Leadership degree

FINAL EXAMINATION: None.

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