



Spring 2015

The College of Bible and Ministry of Harding University seeks to lead all students to know, live and share God's Word and to understand, love and serve God's world through and beyond their chosen vocation.

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Engaging the Art World at Harding University

Kevin J. Youngblood

Tertullian famously posed the question “What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?” by which he meant to suggest that the philosophical categories of ancient Greece were inappropriate vehicles for Christian reflection and truth. In stating it this way, however, Tertullian unintentionally set Christianity on a trajectory of isolationism, of withdrawal from certain cultural activities and academic disciplines that has diminished Christian influence as salt, light, and leaven in certain key areas.

One particular and influential arena where few Christians dare to enter is the art world. Perceived as highly subjective, avant-garde, and even anti-religion, the disciplines of the visual arts are seldom seriously pursued by Christians. Similarly, as artist and theologian Andrew Greely has noted, Protestant churches seldom make use of the visual arts and even display discomfort with the Christian artists in their midst. George Wolff, editor of *Image Journal* recently lamented, “It’s been a catastrophe for the church that we have abandoned high culture, . . . One generation’s high culture has a way of becoming the next generation’s pop culture.” If George Wolff is correct, Christians need to seriously consider the need for Christian influence in the art world if we want to have a significant impact on the direction of our culture.

Harding University is addressing this need by offering a new, team-taught, interdisciplinary course entitled “Visual Arts in Biblical Perspective.” The instructors, Daniel Adams, Professor of Art, and Kevin Youngblood, Associate Professor of Bible engage each other and their students in dialogue regarding art theory, theology, and the potential for fruitful interaction between the visual arts and the Christian faith.

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Sunset ©2015
color reduction woodcut
Daniel Adams

Bible Curriculum Revisions

*By Dr. Daniel B. Stockstill,
Associate Dean of the College of Bible and Ministry*

First consider these words borrowed from Paul in Colossians 2: 2-3

My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Now consider two statements of the College Bible and Ministry from our current catalog:

For every student at Harding and our stated mission...

The College of Bible and Ministry at Harding University seeks to lead all students to know, live and share God's Word and to understand, love and serve God's world through and beyond their chosen vocation.

For students pursuing one of our majors...

The College of Bible and Ministry seeks to partner with its majors to accomplish the college's mission, to make explicit the college's standards of excellence, and to equip students for specific needs of ministry. As a college we recognize the high standards, expectations, and demands that are necessary personally and professionally to work in ministry.

These texts are suitable frames for the discussion of the development and ongoing revision of the curriculum for the College of Bible and Ministry. I have personally been a part of the curriculum committee for about 25 years and believe that the changes and adjustments we have made and continue to make benefit the mission of God through Christ as well as the mission of the college and university.

The study of the Bible for the advancement of the mission of God has been part of the very fabric of Harding since its beginning. In those earliest years the prevailing assumption was that every student and person associated with the college would be intentional and active in both a relationship with God and in relationships with others for the sake of God's mission. The study of the Bible was as much a part of the early years as the daily chapel and required no formal Bible department of college. Teachers from many disciplines taught Bible classes in addition to classes within their fields of study and modeled a daily commitment to Christ and His mission. Over half a century ago that changed as the needs of the congregations and those who serve them required a more focused preparation.

Today's world is even more different. Those attending Harding come from a greater diversity of backgrounds. The needs of today's congregations have changed and are changing, as have the expectations that congregations have toward those who serve in full time ministry. And, although the university is still faithfully committed to be a community of mission where Scripture serves its rightful foundational role in all disciplines of study, the need for ongoing discernment in guiding Harding students makes curriculum adjustments in the College of Bible and Ministry critical.

The voices of Scripture, of our congregations, our alumni, and our disciplines and fields of study provide a rich harmony that informs our development of our curriculums, our assessment of our efforts, and our adjustments to our Bible curriculum for every student.

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Save the Dates!!!

The Office for Church Relations, in collaboration with the College of Bible and Ministry, is excited to announce these exciting, upcoming events.

April 25, 2015 - WINGS Women's Conference (www.harding.edu/WINGS)

June 5-6, 2015 - Ministers Renewal Weekend (www.harding.edu/churchrelations)

July 16, 2015 - "Churchless" Conference with David Kinnaman of The Barna Group

August 25, 2015 - Arkansas Ministers & Wives Day (www.harding.edu/arministers)

September 27-30, 2015 - 92nd Annual Bible Lectureship

"Secrets of the Kingdom : Unlocking the Treasures of the Parables"

www.harding.edu/lectureship

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Our Bible curriculum for every student continues to stress the foundational nature of Scripture, its study, and the proper expression of Christian living through ministry to others. Our curriculum for our non-majors today begins a full introduction and survey of the entire biblical text with an aim of equipping every student with the habits of personal study and an expression of ministry guided by the student's gifts and interests. The College of Bible and Ministry offers minors that build from the foundation of our liberal arts Bible requirements in a number of ministry related directions. And we continue to develop and introduce or revise courses designed for all students that will fulfill the mission of Christ, of our college, and that of the university.

For students majoring in the College of Bible and Ministry, our programs have evolved from a simple choice of a BA or a BS degree, to numerous specialized broad-based independent majors, **then to** numerous broad-based majors sharing a limited common core of classes, **and now** to our current set of five primary broad-based majors built on a larger central core. That core is designed to direct, to guide, and to equip our majors in the study of God's Revelation so that personal faith is capably expressed in ministries that join with God's mission.

The college also offers a secondary major, Leadership and Ministry. This can only be chosen when the student is pursuing a major from another college within the university as his/her primary major. The Leadership and Ministry second major equips students whose financial support will likely be from his/her primary major but whose desire is to be very involved in the life of the congregation and the mission of God.

The primary majors emphasize the central foundation of Scripture in the life of those pursuing ministry more overtly. This is recognized in the name changes of these majors: Bible and Family Ministries, Bible and Ministry (BA), Bible and Missions, Bible and Preaching, and Bible and Ministry (BMIN). The core was expanded to equip every primary major to be God's person, interpret God's Word, and equip every major for multiple ministries. The additional hours of specialization of each of the majors prepares the student for specific aspects of his/her ministry of choice.

As a college, we continue to seek to equip our students for a lifetime of ministry. We know that as the world continues to change that our students will need to be able to adapt, to monitor and adjust. Our curriculum evolves to address both the flexibility that is need in today's world and the stability that comes from being God's person.

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Students are challenged to identify ways that Scripture and their faith encourage and inform human creativity as an aspect of the divine image in humanity. They are further challenged to understand and critique various aesthetic theories from Plato up to the cutting edge approaches of postmodern art.

The course serves as the capstone experience for the Art and Design major at Harding and counts for both Art and Bible credit. In addition to a stringent reading requirement ranging from works on Scripture, philosophy, theology, history of art and art theory, students are also required to produce a work of visual art that pulls together what they have learned about aesthetics, biblical teaching on creativity and beauty, and art as a means of engaging the culture with Christian ideas in a non-threatening manner.

The course has already provoked stimulating conversations not only within the class itself, but also across campus regarding the exciting possibilities of communicating faith through visual art and appropriating visual art for purposes of Christian worship and spiritual formation. As is evident from the interdisciplinary and team-taught nature of "Visual Aesthetics in Biblical Perspective," Harding's mission of integrating faith, life, and learning continues to permeate the curriculum, even the very soul, of the university in new and exciting ways.

Andrew Greely, *The Catholic Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California, 2000), 42.

Mindy Belz, "Art aflame," in *World* (December 17, 2005) accessed at www.worldmag.com/2005/12/art_aflame/page2 on April 8, 2015.



FACULTY NOTES

Our Bible faculty are serving the kingdom all over the world. Here are some examples:



Dr. Ross Cochran was the keynote speaker at the Deeper Youth Ministry Conference in Fayetteville, AR on Saturday, March 14. He also served as a keynoter for the Mid-South Shepherding Summit at the Pleasant Valley Church of Christ in Little Rock, February 27-28 and preached and taught at Bentonville (AR) Church of Christ on Feb. 1 on "Unity," the primary theme of his book, [Not Off Limits: Questions You Wish You Could Ask at Church](#).



Effective July 1, Dr. Monte Cox is appointed to be the William and Doris Fulks Distinguished Chair of the College of Bible and Ministry. William and Doris Fulks, of Apopka, Florida established the chair to enhance the level of teaching and learning of world religions and cults in both the College of Bible and Ministry and the University.



Dr. Dale W. Manor delivered two presentations at the 2015 Freed-Hardeman Bible Lectures. One was on "Religious Practice in the time of David," and the other was "Archaeology and the Historical David." Additionally, Pure Heart Vision, which is overseen by Dr. Randy Willingham, has released a set of 13 video lectures in which Dr. Manor discusses "Archaeology and the Bible." The series is available at www.pureheartvision.org.



Dr. Bill Richardson and his wife Holly traveled to Arequipa, Peru for four days during the Christmas holidays to speak to the church about goal-setting and planning as they are bidding farewell to the missionaries who planted the church and are receiving four new missionary families. The Richardson's have served as mission advisors to both teams of missionaries. Dr. Richardson also traveled to Lander, Wyoming over spring break to present a men's retreat to brothers in Wyoming on the theme "Aliens and Strangers" from 1 Peter 2.



Tim Westbrook was elected for a second term as Recording Secretary for the Council for Distance Learning in Theological Education.



21st Century Christian recently published a book by Dr. Flavil Yeakley entitled [Shepherding God's Flock](#),

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