

**SUNSET GRADUATE SCHOOL**  
**Course Reference Number: 502**  
**SHORT COURSE: PREACHING IN THE 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

**Instructor:** Kerry W. Williams, M.A., M.S., PH.D (in-progress)

**Meeting day/time/place:** Short-Course and/or Online

**Cell:** 313-515-1099 (Call or Text)

**Email:** kww71@hotmail.com

**Textbook and Materials (Required for Credit):**

Johnston, Graham, *Preaching to a Postmodern World*, (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001). Available in print or Kindle format.

Dean, Kenda Creasy, *Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers in Telling the American Church*, (Oxford Press, 2010). Available in print or Kindle format.

Schultz, Thom & Joani, *Why Nobody Wants to Go to Church Anymore*, (Loveland, Group, 2013). Available in print or Kindle format.

**Course Description:**

*Preaching in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* seeks to address the unique challenges that ministers face in the current cultural climate of the western world. The challenge to be both biblical and relevant is becoming more and more difficult. Generations in the Church often have opposing ideas and worldviews. These obstacles demand that preachers periodically reevaluate their methods.

Biblical truth cannot be compromised, yet we must also strive to, “be all things to all men.” Relativism and other postmodern ways of thinking present challenges that ministers may not be prepared to address. This course seeks to equip preachers for that purpose; to better prepare them in knowledge, strategy, and sermon delivery.

**Course Requirements:**

**Note: All written submissions are to be in Microsoft Word, 12-point font, Times New Roman, double-spaced text, with footnotes rather than endnotes. The citation style should be either MLA or Turabian (which is preferred by the instructor) following Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. A summary guide to this style may be found at [http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian\\_citationguide.html](http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html). All written submissions are due by email on Saturday night at 11:59 p.m. of the week the assignment is due.**

- Short course students must attend class and participate in discussions. Online-only students must compile and submit a 5-page paper entitled, “Unique challenges of preaching to a 21<sup>st</sup> century audience” citing at least five sources.
- All students must submit a 5 page paper reviewing the class slides (available on Moodle) that answers the following questions:
  1. What is your personal calling for ministry (why are you in ministry)?
  2. What major points presented in the slides apply to you and your ministry? Why?
- Three background and analysis papers on the assigned texts (student’s choice regarding which order they complete them) are required for credit. Each paper may be no more than 750 words in length.
- A final paper 8-10 pages in length on one of the following topics selected by the student. The paper is to be written for the intelligent, uninformed reader and should include a minimum of ten sources, with not more than five online sources. Choose one of the following:
  - “Sermon Preparation to Reach Post Moderns”
  - “Preaching to those in their 80s and in their 20s within the same Congregation”
  - “Reaching out to Post Moderns Without Compromising Truth”
  - “An Analysis and Comparison of Expository, Textual, and Topical Preaching for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century ”

**Grading System:**

Class Participation/“Unique Challenges” Paper	30%
Background/analysis/historiography papers	30%
Slides Reflection Paper/Final paper	40%

**Grading Scale:**

90 and above	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
60 and below	F

**COURSE OUTLINE:**

**Specific due dates are listed on the course Moodle page.**

Week 1	Course Begins.
TBD	Short Course in Lubbock. “Unique Challenges” paper due for online-only students.
Week 3	“Unique Challenges” Paper Due (online-only students)
Week 4	Slides Paper Due (online-only students)
Week 7	1 <sup>st</sup> Analysis Paper Due

Week 9                      2<sup>nd</sup> Analysis Paper Due

Week 11                     3<sup>rd</sup> Analysis Paper Due

Week 13                    **Final Paper Due**

**Instructor:**

Kerry W. Williams, M.S., M.A., joined the SIBI graduate faculty in 2014 and became in Interim Dean in 2017. Kerry holds bachelor degrees from Bethany Divinity College (Pastoral Ministry- 2002), and Amridge University (Ministry and Bible- 2005). He earned the Master of Science degree from Lubbock Christian University (Bible and Ministry- 2006), Master of Arts from Arkansas State University (Heritage Studies- 2016), and completed extensive graduate coursework (24 hours) in philosophy and humanities with California State University at Dominguez Hills. He is currently finishing the Ph.D. program in Heritage Studies at Arkansas State University, where his dissertation topic will address the origin and function of Preaching Schools within the Churches of Christ. In addition, he is a 1994 graduate of Sunset School of Preaching. Kerry taught philosophy courses for Heritage Christian University and Northwest Shoals Community College. He is the author of several books, including Fishers of Teens (PowerSource, 2005), and I Want to Draw Closer to God, But I Don't Know Where to Begin (Sunset, 2014). Kerry's articles have appeared in most issues of Power for Today since 2005. He has preached for 25 years and is currently the pulpit minister for the Waterford Church of Christ in Waterford, Michigan.