STMA 588- UNITED METHODIST POLITY
Winter Quarter, 2009
Credits: 3
Hunthausen Hall, Room 100
Thursdays, 1:30pm-4:20pm (January 8-March 12)

Instructor
Jack M. Tuell
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Office Hours: By advance appointment

Required Reading:
The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church. United Methodist Publishing House, 2004.
Tuell, Jack M. *Organization of the United Methodist Church, 2005-2008.* Abingdon Press.

*IF POSSIBLE: Please obtain the 2008 editions of *The Book of Discipline* and *Organization of the United Methodist Church 2009-2012*, both currently in the process of publication.

Course Description
Students should gain a working knowledge of *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*. This will include becoming familiar with the nature of connectionalism and itinerancy, understanding the annual conference as the basic body in the Church, the covanental relationships among clergy, and acquiring a theological and ecclesiological grasp of the organizational structures of the Church. The course will seek to inculcate certain connectional principles into the consciousness of students so they will know the answer to basic polity questions without having to "look them up." It will explore the "skein of accountabilities" at every level of church organization. The course will incorporate the history of the UMC as it relates to the development of polity.

Competencies to be Achieved
1. Students will acquire a knowledge and appreciation of the way in which ministry is practiced in the ethos of United Methodism.
2. Students will be knowledgeable enough to articulate criticism if they feel that particular structures or provisions are theologically unsound or detract from the mission of the Church.
3. Students will come to understand that structure is not simply inert or neutral, but may profoundly affect the mission itself.

Methodologies
There will be a mixture of lectures by the instructor, field observation and report, assignment to students for reading and report back, role playing, and lots of opportunities for discussion, questions and interchange. We will focus on the *Book of Discipline* (2008), and *The Organization of the United Methodist Church 2005-2008*, by Tuell.

Course Requirements: *Attendance and Class Participation.*
I will assign two or three papers for the quarter and will grade them on the students'
1. Ability to deal with the issues;
2. Understanding of the content; and
3. Capacity to articulate a point of view.

I will observe students' participation in class discussion and evaluate their grasp and articulation of issues. I will expect regular attendance (no unexcused absences) and this will have a bearing on evaluation

Academic Honesty
The School of Theology and Ministry strictly adheres to the Academic Policy concerning Academic Honesty as published in the Seattle University Student Handbook. (see the Seattle University website).

Students with Disabilities
If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an "invisible disability' such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to discuss your needs and arrange support services and/ or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff in the Learning Center, Loyola 100, (206) 296-5740.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Jan 8: Session 1
Get acquainted, share backgrounds, lift-up areas of concern regarding polity, outline course requirements. Discuss polity, its meaning, and the relative importance or non-importance of it.

Jan 15: Session 2
Chapter 1. Tuell, and related Discipline.

Jan 22: Session 3
Chapters 2 & 3. Tuell, and related Discipline.

Jan 29: Session 4
Chapter 4. Tuell, and related Discipline.

Feb 5: Session 5
Chapter 5. Tuell, and related Discipline.

Feb 12: Session 6
Chapter 6. Tuell, and related Discipline.

Feb 19: Session 7
Chapter 7. Tuell, and related Discipline.

Feb 26: Session 8
Chapter 8. Tuell, and related Discipline.

Mar 5: Session 9
Chapter 9 & 10. Tuell, and related Discipline.

Mar 12: Session 10
Review.

There will not be a final exam.

JACK M. TUELL