



NORTH PARK
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

MNST 5115 Preaching the word
North Park Theological Seminary
May 19–July 11, 2025
Intensive meeting dates June 2–6
3 credit hours

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Rev. Dr. Catherine W. Gilliard, Adjunct Faculty
cgilliard@northpark.edu |
Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The student will learn basic skills in oral communication fundamentals of expository sermon preparation, and develop sensitivity to the liturgical, social, and cultural contexts in which preaching takes place.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

1. Identify their personal hermeneutics and compare it to a variety of hermeneutical models
2. Demonstrate ability to analyze scripture for the development of a preaching outline
3. Create a systematic approach to formulating an exegetical and homiletical outline
4. Recognize the basic steps in composing an expository, topical, and textual sermon
5. Understand the foundation for sermon delivery

REQUIRED TEXTS

Fry Brown, Teresa L. *Delivering the Sermon: Voice, Body, and Animation in Proclamation*, Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 2008

Wilson, Paul Scott *The Practice of Preaching Revised Edition*, Nashville, Tennessee, Abingdon Press, 2007

Thomas, Frank A. *They Like to Never Quit Praisin' God: The Role of Celebration in Preaching*, Cleveland, Ohio: The Pilgrim Press, 2013

McKenzie, Alyce M. *Novel Preaching: Tips from Top Writers on Crafting Creative Sermons*, Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010

Hulst, Mary S. *A Little Handbook for Preachers: Ten Practical Ways to a Better Sermon by Sunday*, Downers Grove, Illinois, InterVarsity Press, 2016

ASSESSMENTS AND GRADING SCALE

1. Read required class books before class begins - 25 points per book - **Total 100 points**
2. Write book reflections before class begins – 20 points per book – **Total 100 points**
3. Post and engage w/classmates online on an assigned question – **Total 100 points**
4. Complete a final paper based on lectures and books - **Total 150 points**
5. Preach four sermons - two in class, two recorded post intensive – 50 pts each - **Total 200 points**
6. Provide written assessments of sermons preached by classmates - **Total 100 points**
7. Daily Comprehension Quizzes - 30 points each - **Total 150 points**
8. Class Attendance and Participation – **Total 100 points**



GRADING SCALE

A: Superior work (**A** = 95–100; **A-** = 93–94)

This grade applies to exceptional work, the quality achieved through excellence of performance, not merely the fulfillment of the course requirements.

B: Above average (**B+** = 91-92; **B** = 88-90; **B-** = 86-87)

This grade applies to meritorious work, definitely above average, applied to more than the fulfillment of requirements.

C: Average (**C+** = 84-85; **C** = 80-83; **C-** = 78-79)

This grade applies to average work that still fulfills the course requirements.

D: Unsatisfactory (**D+** = 76-77; **D** = 72-75; **D-** = 70-71)

This grade, while indicating the student has completed a course, is to be understood as reflecting below average work. Course work receiving this grade will not be counted toward a degree.

F: Failure (69 and below)

To receive credit in the subject, the course must be repeated.

I: Incomplete

This course is counted as an F in the calculation of GPA until the student's work is completed and submitted. A grade of incomplete or **I** is granted only when a student can demonstrate sufficient cause for not completing the course work on time. Such cause includes illness, disability, emergency and/or unforeseeable circumstances. Incompletes are not intended as ordinary extensions of time to complete a course, but granted only under extraordinary circumstances. The professor is not obligated to grant the request for an incomplete.

AU: Audit

Students not taking a course for academic credit will receive an AU.

P: Pass

This grade is based on evidence of completed assignments, regular attendance, and participation activities required by the instructor. A grade of P does not affect one's Grade Point Average (GPA).

F: Failure

A failing grade in a pass/fail course is calculated in a student's Grade Point Average. Pass/fail courses become part of the student's permanent record and will be taken into account in assessing the student's level of achievement.

1000 Total points

1000 – 960 points	A
959 – 901 points	A-
870 - 900 points	B+
830 – 869 points	B
801 – 829 points	B-
770 – 800 points	C+
730 – 769 points	C
701 – 729 points	C-
670 - 700 points	D+
630 – 669 points	D
601 – 629 points	D-
600 – below	F



ADDITIONAL COURSE GUIDELINES

1. Attendance & participation.

This course is being offered as a 5 day intensive in the classroom. Attendance credit means being present for a full day of instruction. Exceptions can be granted in case of an emergency but only with proper and prior communication with the instructor.

2. Submission

- Submit all work through Canvas as Word files. Include your last name and page number on each page of the document.
- All submissions are due by 11:59 p.m. on the date indicated. Work submitted late without prior arrangement with the instructor will receive a grade reduction for each day (e.g., an A grade would receive an A- after one day late, and a B+ after two days late, etc.). Work submitted over two weeks late will not receive credit.

3. Communication

- Email any questions and concerns you have prior to class. I will only respond on M–F. Before emailing a question, please be sure the answer isn't already contained in the course syllabus or assessment guidelines (Canvas).
- Students are to communicate verbally and in written form using the inclusive language policy found in the [Student Writing Handbook](#).

4. Preparation for class

- Prepare for each class session by reading the assigned texts and completing the pre-work assigned for each class
- Read these five books, in this order, before the class begins on Monday, June 2, 2025. **Fry Brown, Teresa L.** *Delivering the Sermon: Voice, Body, and Animation in Proclamation* | **Wilson, Paul Scott** *The Practice of Preaching Revised Edition* | **Thomas, Frank A.** *They Like to Never Quit Praisin' God: The Role of Celebration in Preaching* | **McKenzie, Alyce M.** *Novel Preaching: Tips from Top Writers on Crafting Creative Sermons* | **Hulst, Mary S.** *A Little Handbook for Preachers: Ten Practical Ways to a Better Sermon by Sunday*
- Complete a separate 3-page double spaced (max. 750 words) book reflection on each of the five books by June 2, 2025. Include reflections on these questions: 1) What practices were new for you? 2) Which practices do you now want to try? 3) What questions remain with you about the author's suggestive practices? 4) Which practices would be difficult for you to incorporate? 5) What did the author offer to you that would be helpful going forward? Print each of these five book reflections and bring them to class.
- Bring a Bible (Old and New Testament) to each class – Translation of your choice – inclusive language required
- Record one sermon on Monday, June 16, 2025 and record a second sermon on Monday, June 30, 2025
- In-class sermons given on Wednesday, June 4, 2025 and Friday, June 6, 2025. Bring your cell phone to record your in class sermon.
- Final paper due Wednesday, July 9, 2025 – Six pages – doubled spaced (max. 1500 words) incorporating how course readings and class presentations influence your oral communication fundamentals of expository sermon preparation. Include how you will develop sensitivity to the liturgical, social, and cultural contexts in which your preaching takes place. A minimum of 10 references from the required class texts, cited correctly, is required. Also include how proper hermeneutics drive the sermon to produce a clear exegetical idea from the biblical text to lay the foundation for the development of the homiletical idea for the sermon. Clearly explain how your preparation and delivery have been influenced by the resources provided in this class.



- Come prepared for a short comprehension quiz each day during the J-term class
- Participation in small group in-class activities counts towards attendance points
- A daily online post in response to the sermon question is required and your response to two of your classmates' posts. Each response should be a minimum of 250 words and contain substantive content, an inquiry, and your reflection on what is being shared by your classmate.

ACADEMIC HONESTY¹

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park University is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating will receive a failing grade on the assignment and are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion. Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

1. Plagiarism – the use of another's work as one's own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet.
2. Copying another's answers on an examination.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one's answers or work.
4. Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present.
5. Use of ChatGPT or other AI composition software to impersonate individual assignments.

For additional information, see the Seminary Academic Catalog.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Your experience in this class is important to me. North Park is committed to creating inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have already established your accommodations, please share your accommodation letter with me so we can discuss how your accommodations will be implemented in this course. If you have not yet established services and have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations, please email the Disability Access Specialist or contact by phone (773-244-5737). Student Engagement facilitates the interactive process that establishes reasonable accommodations.

TITLE IX & EQUITY

In accordance with Title IX, North Park employees who become aware of any incident of discrimination, harassment or retaliation based on sex, gender, including pregnancy or related medical conditions, and other protected classes are required by law to notify North Park University's Title IX & Equity Team by submitting a report [here](#). The Title IX Coordinator will respond and manage concerns about students. The Senior Director of Human Resources and Deputy Title IX Coordinator will respond and manage concerns about employees. More information can be obtained here: [NPU's Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#).

INCOMPLETE GRADES

If, due to extenuating circumstances (specifically, pregnancy, illness, personal and family issues, military assignment, etc.), a student anticipates they will be unable to complete course work within the allotted time, that student may request a grade of incomplete from the course instructor before



the last week of class clearly stating the reason(s) for this request. Overscheduling and/or lack of self-discipline are not considered extenuating circumstances. If the request is timely and meets the criteria, student and instructor will submit the incomplete grade form and the grade for that class will be listed as “I” until the last day of the following semester. If coursework is not submitted by the last day of the following semester the listing of “I” will automatically be changed to “F.” For the full policy, see the Seminary Academic Catalog.

COURSE SCHEDULE

In-class Schedule	Due Dates	Assignments
Pre-class work	June 1, 2025 June 1, 2025	Read five books for J-term in-the order listed on the syllabus Write five book reflections due one per book 750 word max
Day 1 - Monday	June 2, 2025	<i>Delivering the Sermon</i> by Brown Book Reflection Review Sensitivity to liturgical, social, and cultural contexts Small group activity Short Comprehensive Quiz
Day 2 - Tuesday	June 3, 2025	<i>The Practice of Preaching</i> by Wilson Book Reflection Review Daily Development of a Preaching Outline Short Comprehensive Quiz
Day 3 - Wednesday	June 4, 2025	<i>They Like to Never Quit Praisin’ God: The Role of Celebration in Preaching</i> by Thomas Book Reflection Review The foundation for sermon delivery In-class sermons Short Comprehensive Quiz
Day 4 - Thursday	June 5, 2025	<i>Novel Preaching: Tips from Top Writers on Crafting Creative Sermons</i> by McKenzie Two Book Reflection Review Basic steps in an expository, topical, and textual sermon In class sermons Small group activity Short Comprehensive Quiz
Day 5 - Friday	June 6, 2025	<i>A Little Handbook for Preachers: Ten Practical Ways to a Better Sermon by Sunday</i> Explore a variety of hermeneutical models In-class sermons Small group activity Short Comprehensive Quiz
Post Summer Intensive Class Assignments	June 16, 2025 June 30, 2025 July 9, 2025	First recorded sermon due Second recorded sermon due Final paper due 1500 word max.