

McMaster Divinity College

# Women in Christian Ministry

MS/NT  
Church and Culture  
Pastoral Studies  
Biblical Studies

Cynthia Long Westfall, Ph.D.  
Email: westfal@mcmaster.ca

Spring 2022  
Online Course  
Wednesdays 10–11:35 am, June 1–29

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## Course Description

The debate on the role of men and women in the home, church and society remains one of the major issues among North American evangelicals and there have been some major developments in the conversation and debate in the last five years. The focus of this course is the biblical, theological and social support for women in ministry, as well as their roles as equal partners in the creation mandate and equal heirs in the kingdom of God. Whatever your position, this course can be a vital path for understanding the times. Christian leaders and committed lay people will do well to understand the current situation, work on a coherent biblical theology, and discern their own role and ministry or courses of action in the home, the church and culture. This course will give each student the opportunity and resources to explore this issue in their area of specialization and to benefit from the insights and contributions of the other areas.

This online course relates to the Church & Culture, Biblical Studies and Pastoral Studies. The format of the course will include videos on topics, weekly zoom discussion sessions, online sharing of resources, and major papers. The reading will include current scholarship and encourage book reviews for extra credit in some of the influential (and ground-breaking) recent publications.

## Specializations

### *Pastoral Studies (PS)*

Students taking this as a Pastoral Studies (PS) course are encouraged to explore how a biblical understanding of gender and ministry should be practiced and transmitted in one's target area(s) such as leadership strategies, ethical decisions, and pastoral care as well as worship, teaching and preaching.

### *Church and Culture (CC)*

Students taking this as a Church and Culture (CC) course are encouraged to explore the interface of the Church and the contemporary world with gender in ministry in various contexts such as missions, development, evangelism, the emerging church, cultural context, preaching, or worship.

### ***Biblical Studies (BS)***

Students taking this as a Biblical Studies (BS) course will be encouraged to explore and research biblical content and develop a biblical theology that is exegetically responsible and interacts critically with scholarship that is fundamental in gender and ministry, with applications that embrace the complexity of contemporary culture(s).

### ***Elective***

This is a great elective that is relevant to any and every student! Take this opportunity to further develop your biblical worldview and develop a framework in which you can process the ongoing discussion of the biblical role and the issues of gender in the church, home and society.

### **Course Objectives**

Specific Objectives – Through reading, lectures, discussion and assignments the student will:

#### **Knowing**

- Understand the concept of gender and how it relates to various issues, practices and problems.
- Understand the role gender has played in the student's own story
- Know the key biblical texts that concern gender and work towards understanding their interpretation within a coherent biblical theology

#### **Being**

- Experience a fusion of identity in Christ, calling and community with gender
- Be a proactive participant in the evangelical conversation on gender in a way that is consistent with the student's calling

#### **Doing**

- Process current gender issues and concerns with classmates.
- Research a topic of personal interest concerning gender and ministry
- Produce a portfolio project on gender in the area of specialization
- Specific biblical engagement, application, exercise, realization, or practice

## **Reading Required**

Pierce, Ronald W., Cynthia Long Westfall, and Christa McKirland, eds. *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2021.

Westfall, Cynthia Long. *Paul and Gender: Reclaiming the Apostle's Vision for Men and Women in Christ*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016.

Any material & links distributed online.

## **Recommended**

Barr, Beth Allison. *The Making of Biblical Womanhood: How the Subjugation of Women Became Gospel Truth*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2021.

Du Mez, Kristin Kobes. *Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation*. New York: LiveRight, 2020.

**Course Requirements** (Please note that there will be some adjustments made to Course Requirements)

### **Reading** (10%)

See the Course Schedule at the end of the syllabus for dates and pages.

- Read the scheduled material or passage in DBE and Westfall.
- Read any supplementary papers distributed on Avenue.
- Submit to Avenue the percentage of reading completed on **July 1, 11:59 p.m.**

### **Student Participation** (15%)

Student attendance and participation in the online sessions is necessary to pass the course. Online interaction on Avenue to Learn with posts and participation in Avenue discussion threads are required.

### **Online Videos**

The professor releases videos for topics on the course schedule that combines information and activities that counts as attendance.

### **Written Assignments**

#### **Specialization Paper or Project** (40%)

Each student will choose to write an exegetical or research paper or do a project which reflects their specialization: Pastoral Studies (PS), Church and Culture (CC), Christian Worldview (CW), or Biblical Studies (BS). Those taking the class for an elective can choose between options. The paper/project will be submitted online (or, if necessary, in hard copy) on Avenue to Learn **at 11:59 on July 22** in (Assessments/Assignments/Paper or Project).

1. Exegetical Paper (BS/PS)

- Length & style: It should be no less than 4000 words (about 15 pages) of text, excluding footnotes and bibliography. For all matters of style and form, consult the MacDiv Style Guide (see Style below)
  - Approach:
    - The student will follow the “Steps to Exegesis” posted on Avenue
    - The student will choose one of the key biblical texts that is central to gender and ministry. Guidelines for the exegetical procedure will be given in detail online, but briefly, complete your own preliminary research/study of the text in terms of its big idea, argument and its relationship and contribution to the whole discourse before you interact with secondary sources. Carefully assess the options and state your position on controversial texts.
2. Research Paper (CC)
- Length & style: It should be no less than 4,000 words (15 pages), excluding footnotes and bibliography. For all matters of style and form, consult the MDC Style Guide (see Style)
  - Approach: The student will choose a topic of special interest, or on a topic that equips them with the information to meet their goals for the course and for their specialization.
3. Project (CC)
- The student will complete a paper or project designed to make the research accessible in a specific contemporary context, and discuss the project in a WebEx (at the time of the scheduled exam). No late projects will be accepted. If possible, a copy will also be submitted to Avenue.
  - Length & style: If written, it should be approximately 3000 words (about twelve pages) of text, excluding footnotes and bibliography. For all matters of style and form, consult the McMaster Divinity College Style Guide (see Style). If it is a project, it should be somewhat comparable in time and effort to a 12 pg. research paper.
  - Each project should be discussed in advance with the professor and a written statement describing the appropriateness for one’s specialization, the specific contemporary context targeted, the passage that is being re-presented, the goal of the project and the approach,

Ideal: Apply your research paper to your project! Some suggestions include:

- A sermon on a passage on Gender in Ministry
- A study guide that will assist young adult learners in exploring or understanding a biblical theology of gender. Include questions, explanations, directions and other material that both enlightens the text in its historical context and helps learners to connect the text with life today
- A movie presentation, critical review and discussion which encapsulates a theme of gender within a Christian worldview.
- A parable or allegory that utilizes significant or powerful contemporary imagery, symbols or metaphors that express relevant topics or issues concerning Gender and the Church.
- A collection of poetry or songs that explore thought, themes and/or emotions related to the topics on gender in the course.
- An experience for a small group that simulates situations or experiences relevant to gender and ministry

A description of the connections between the characters, contexts and themes in your life story and Hebrews

### Life Map and Presentation (35%)

Each student will create a Life Map, which **will be due 10 am on June 29** submitted online on Avenue to Learn (Assessments/Assignments/Lifemaps), and presented in class.

1. Format: While it should follow the MDC Style Guide, the format may implement pictures or other more informal features. The length should be a minimum of 2,500 words, but the page number may vary.
2. Approach: Use subtitles for each section:
  - Identify your relationship to gender issues through your life story.
  - Clarify the biblical basis for your understanding of gender.
  - Identify your areas of responsibility, influence and passion in dealing with gender in the church, home and society.
  - Summarize your calling in regards to gender
  - Problem-solve any challenges and barriers to dealing with these areas.
  - Plan to implement plans of action or necessary changes.
  - Write a personal mission statement in regards to gender and ministry

### **Grading Summary**

Reading	10%
Participation in on-line sessions	15%
Paper/Project	40%
Life Map	35%

### **Additional Materials**

- Any handouts for lectures and class discussion will be made available before class online in Avenue..
- Further procedures and guidance for assignments will be given in class and/or online.

## **Classroom Behavior**

### ***Attendance***

- Attendance in the online sessions is required to pass the course
- Watching the course videos is mandatory for the course.
- Missing more than the equivalent of two weekly classes may result in the reduction of grade or failure.
- Students should be on time to class & Zoom sessions or be prepared to offer an explanation to the professor (preferably in advance).
- Students are expected to stay for the entire class session, unless arranged in advance.

### **Participation**

- Please respect the opinions of others without disrespect or ridicule, even if you do not agree with them. However, feel free to respond logically and critically in an orderly manner.
- Students are not expected to be doing work on any other subject except that which is appropriate in the course outline.
- Students who fail to respect these guidelines will be dismissed from the class with consequences.

### **Late Assignments**

Lose 2% each day for 7 days, and then 4% a day up to 30%. However, the projects and all assignments must be turned in by December 11 to complete the course.

### **Textbook Purchase**

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore, 5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, Ontario M9W 6H3: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email [books@readon.ca](mailto:books@readon.ca). Other book services may also carry the texts.

### **Academic Honesty**

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College.

Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/rules-regulations/>

### **Gender Inclusive Language**

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as the following: NRSV (1989), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), TNIV (2005), and the Common English Bible (CEB 2011).

### **Style**

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/resources-forms/mdc-style-guide/>

Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

### **Appointments**

Contact me if I can assist you in any way via E-mail (most effective): westfal@mcmaster.ca  
Friend me on Facebook and send me a message!

### **Office hours**

I will hold office hours in my Zoom personal room from 12–2 p.m. on Wednesdays, 4 May–June 29. The link to my personal room is the same as will be used for on-line sessions.

### **Disclaimer**

This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.

## Women in Christian Ministry Course Schedule, 2022

DATE	Course Outline	Pierce & Westfall	Westfall
Week 1 June 1 Online Session:10– 11:50 am	Intro to Course Life Map Video Gender and the Image of God Gender and the Trinity video Hermeneutics/Interpretation and Gender video Culture and Gender video	282–309, 351–510	
Week 2 June 8	Gal 3:28, Eph 5, 1 Pet 3:1–7 presented & discussed Gender and the Creation video Gender and the Fall video Gender and Eschatology video Women, identity & the Body video	35–52, 108–125, 159–204, 228–46	7–204
Week 3 June 15	1 Cor 11:3–18 & 1 Cor 14:34–35 presented and discussed Women in the OT & Jesus’s ministry video Women’s Calling/Experience video Women and church order video	53–107, 126–58, 310–50	Review Ch 1 205–42
Week 4 June 22	1 Tim 2:9–15, 1 Cor 7: presented and discussed Women and Authority video Discipleship in Marriage, Sex & Celibacy video	108–25, 205–227, 263–81	243–78
Week 5 June 29	Problem-solving and Change video Challenges and problems for women church leadership video <b>Life Map due 10 a.m. June 1</b> <b>Presentations of Life Maps</b>	539–658	279–312
	<b>Papers/Projects due 11:59 pm, July 22</b> <b>Reading Report due 11:59 pm, July 22</b>		



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