

January Interim 2021 – “VIRTUAL EDITION”

Opportunities as of 16 September 2020

Wartburg Theological Seminary

Due to the on-going COVID-19 Pandemic, all courses offered for January 2021 by Wartburg Theological Seminary are being taught only as “virtual” courses, with either via Zoom web conferencing as remotely taught, real-time courses, or as purely online/asynchronous courses. No actual in-person contact or travel is allowed in classes taught at this time for January 2021.

We are currently also listing several summer 2021 activities (that can be registered for as “J-Term” courses for purposes of one’s degree) for which we are praying might still take place as actual (“normal”) on-site, person-to-person courses. The plans for these activities can be subject to change as they will depend on COVID conditions at the time in the summer of 2021, and so students registering for these summer courses may need contingency plans if this happens.

NOTE: This J-Term Catalog is a “work-in-progress” as new opportunities are added and those already proposed are subject to change.

This particular document is still in preliminary form, and brief in the information it provides. Please contact the faculty leader/advisor listed for each J-Term opportunity for more information about that particular J-Term course, including questions of tentative dates and anticipated costs.

Updates to this catalog will be periodically provided throughout the fall of 2020 as changes occur and more detail becomes known about each course offering.

See the summary list below (Part B, starting at the bottom of Page 2) for courses planned for this coming January (or arranged to have travel in May or June, but can still be registered for in January). Please follow all e-mailed instructions from the WTS Registrar on submitting the needed preference form to request for your particular J-Term course(s). January courses can normally be taken by all Masters students (both degree students and Discovery non-degree students), as well in the case of some cross-cultural courses possibly including spouses of students.

PART A – J-TERM REQUIREMENT

The January Interim Requirement: All WTS degree students must complete one or more January Interim (aka “J-Term”) courses, one for each year of primary coursework as defined for their program. Master of Divinity degree students currently must complete three (3) J-Term courses. Master of Arts in Diaconal Ministry degree students currently must complete two (2) J-Term courses. Students in the earlier two-year Master of Arts degree (prior to Fall Semester 2019) must complete two (2) J-Term courses, whereas students in the new one-year Master of Arts degree program (Fall 2019 and following) need to complete one (1) J-Term course.

The Cross-Cultural “January” Requirement: For students in the Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in Diaconal Ministry degree programs, as well as students in the older two-year Master of Arts degree program (but not students in the new one-year degree program), one of your J-Terms currently must be reserved for completing the Cross-Cultural requirement. Normally the means of fulfilling the cross-cultural requirement is by completing a designated course that is designed as a group-based course that involves immersion activities (and often travel of some form). Most of these eligible cross-cultural courses are January courses. Independent studies are normally not allowed for meeting the cross-cultural requirement except in situations approved ahead of time by the Academic Dean upon petition. Students must designate by December (when J-Term registration is finalized) whether this particular J-Term course is being completed for one’s required Cross-Cultural requirement, or instead being taken as an elective course. This is because in “normal” (non-pandemic) times, there are travel subsidies available to students completing their cross-cultural requirement to help offset the higher travel costs involved, especially with international travel. Students can receive this cross-cultural travel subsidy **only once** in their time as a student, and so therefore must be requested, which is done by making this cross-cultural designation to the Registrar. This travel money is tied to the J-Term course meeting a student’s cross-cultural requirement. Obviously with the COVID-19 situation, and no travel allowed, there are also no travel subsidies this year as there is no travel to subsidize.

J-Term Course Grading: All J-Term courses are graded with Credit/No-Credit grading only.

Limits to January Registration – One “J-Term” Course Per Year. Due to financial aid restrictions (by the U.S. Department of Education and their Title IV program), only one course per year can be registered for in each January Interim. This includes courses where travel occurs outside of January (such as in August or May) if they are considered meeting the January course requirement and/or the cross-cultural requirement. This restriction includes independent studies. January courses have their own tuition fee.

PART B – 2020-2021 COURSE OFFERINGS

I. CROSS CULTURAL COURSES – Taught in January

The following courses all meet the MDiv/MADM (and older MA degree) cross-cultural degree requirement when completed as a cohort, including pre- and post-January meetings. The faculty person named is the local contact for the course, and in most cases the person you will work with in completing the pre- and post-January requirements for the cross-cultural requirement, as well as sign off on the final grade. Please see that person for more information about the

specific course. All these cross-cultural courses are numbered MN 398W unless noted otherwise.

- **Pine Ridge Indian Reservation (South Dakota)**—Up to 18 students, taught January 4-15 by the director and staff at the Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center (a Lutheran-Lakota Shared Ministry), with “virtual” (recorded and live) trips to sites and to meet and learn from people on the reservation. Local WTS Faculty Contact person: Craig Nesson
- **Texas/Mexico Borderlands**—Up to 15 students, a joint course offered by our extension site, the Lutheran Seminary Program of the Southwest (LSPS, Austin, Texas, Prof. Javier (Jay) Alanis), and their next-door neighbor, the Seminary of the Southwest (Prof. Jennifer Owens-Jofre). Includes virtual conversations with folks who are involved in ministry to asylum seekers at the border and other social justice ministries. Local WTS Faculty Contact person: Troy Troftgruben
- **Islam in America**— Up to 18 students, taught by Ann Fritschel.
- **“Un/Civil Disobedience in Hong Kong”** – Up to 15 students, taught by Man Hei Yip. Will include “virtual” (recorded and live) travel to Hong Kong and meeting people from the city.
- **“Dismantling Racism: A Process of Introspection and Attaining Awareness toward Faithful Action”** – Up to 20 students, taught by Jan Schnell, along with Itonde Kakoma, Director for Global Strategy at The Crisis Management Initiative in Finland. Currently scheduled for January 13-26, 2021.

II. Other J-Term Courses that can meet other degree (or concentration) requirements:

- **MN 397 Rural Ministry “Immersion” (Virtual Edition)** – Up to 10 students, taught by Mark Yackel-Juleen. Virtually visit the rural areas in the Upper Midwest that Dr. Yackel-Juleen is familiar with, meeting the people and seeing the sights, and reflect on how to conduct ministry in rural parishes; Meets the WTS rural ministry requirement with the MDiv degree program in addition to counting as a J-Term requirement.

III. Other J-Term Courses that are elective in nature:

A. Those Taught During January

- **“Ecojustice: Biblical, Theological, Ethical, and Scientific Perspectives”** – a January course being taught remotely/virtually in conjunction with the Spirit in the Desert Retreat Center (Carefree, Arizona). WTS faculty instructor: Craig Nesson. Tentative enrollment limit set at 12 students. The course will meet from January 25-28, 2021 with required readings to be completed prior to the intensive and a written assignment due following the intensive. Teaching and learning methods will include lectures, interactive discussion, video materials, and group discussion.
- **“Ministry in a Digital World”** –: For many church leaders, ministry is becoming increasingly reliant upon, enhanced by, and expanded by digital resources. Many leaders struggle not just to keep up with new technologies, but also to find opportunity for critical reflection on the ethical implications to their use. In this class, we will reflect on the benefits (and downsides) of various forms of technology in ministry, learn about some best practices, and get a sense of where we as church might go from here. WTS faculty instructor: Troy Troftgruben. Available potentially as both a synchronous-Zoom and asynchronous online course (TBD, based on interest amount in each format). Tentative enrollment limit set at 15 students overall.

B. Those Taught At A Time Outside of January (e.g., May/June 2021)

NOTE: These following courses are all tentative as actual face-to-face learning opportunities, dependent on what is allowable for safe activities according to the status of COVID-19 at that future time. All can potentially count as one of your required J-Term courses if registered for in January 2021.

- **Ministry For and With People with Disabilities (MN 387) – tentatively May 2021**—coordinated by Craig Nesson. An immersion in Omaha and Eastern Nebraska in conjunction with MOSAIC. Development of this course is still in progress as a possible partnership with LSTC and the staff of MOSAIC that would take place in May.
- **Rural Immersion in Nebraska** – Being coordinated by Mark Yackel-Juleen in partnership with LSTC. Current dates and enrollment limits are unknown. (Will meet the WTS MDiv rural ministry requirement).
- **HT 237H Hispanic Ministry Summer Term** – a three-credit, three-week immersion at our extension site, the Lutheran Seminary Program in the Southwest (LSPS) in Austin, Texas, and designed for ELCA seminary students to develop leadership skills in Hispanic Ministry and build a network of colleagues who share this commitment. This immersion usually takes place in the last week of May and two weeks in early June. Special scholarships are usually available for ELCA students to cover the tuition portion of the overall expense for the experience. See Registrar or Craig Nesson for further details.
- **Lutheran Church of Hope** (Des Moines, Iowa, and surrounding communities) – Open to 4 students at a time. The Lutheran Church of Hope is a multi-campus large church of the ELCA. This opportunity is a short pastoral practicum to learning how a large, multi-campus, multi-program church functions in current times. To be held June 13-27, 2021. Contact Craig Nesson for more details.
- **IN 264W The Forming Spirit: Sustaining Spirituality** – a new summer course that is still being developed that would take place in Byron, Nebraska, for two weeks (optionally three weeks) to explore a variety of aspects of spiritual formation in an intentional rural setting. (Note: this course is separate and different from the other Nebraska rural ministry opportunity mentioned above.) Contact Craig Nesson for more details. This does not take place in January, but one that is currently scheduled for June 7-18, 2021 (with option to extend to the 29th). [NOTE: There is also currently scheduled a second opportunity from July 12-23, 2021 (with option to extend to the 30th), but according to U.S. Department of Education rules, completion of this opportunity must apply instead to January 2022, and cannot count toward the January 2021 requirement.]

IV. Known J-Term Opportunities that are offered by/through another ELCA seminary:

Each year there are courses are shared between the ELCA seminaries. Often times courses are shared through a long-standing cross-registration agreement between these seminaries that the student normally pays their home seminary the expected J-Term tuition fee, and then the student only pays the other host seminary any additional expenses needed for their local onsite participation.

AS OF SEPTEMBER 16, 2020, THERE ARE NO KNOWN OPPORTUNITIES BEING SHARED YET BY THE OTHER ELCA SEMINARIES. These courses usually become known later in the fall semester and will be announced at that time.

V. Asynchronous (online-only) Course Opportunities

In addition to the courses listed above that involve face-to-face learning at scheduled times or in “normal times” require the ability to travel, we anticipate offering at least two or more courses that can be completed asynchronously (i.e., online only, according more to one’s schedule to work around daily work or other restrictions). Last year (January 2020), we had two such courses that could handle 15 students in each, for a total of 30 students. Please anticipate similar courses being announced in the fall semester for January 2021, after we have a clearer idea of demand and availability of instructors to teach such courses. Expect each course to last typically three weeks, with assignments due every few days as the course is taught.

VI. INDEPENDENT STUDY or PASTORAL PRACTICUM

For those students who do not complete one of the cross-cultural courses or specified organized activity courses listed above, your remaining option is to complete an independent study. *For students in the new curriculum (Fall 2016 and newer) MDiv, MA, and MA in Diaconal Ministry degree programs, all J-Term independent studies are expected to meet the requirements for a 2-credit course (which equates to a minimum of 90 to 95 hours of work).* There is an Independent Study Contract Form to be completed in conjunction with the faculty member who will oversee your independent study, and the form is also signed by your faculty advisor. These contracts need to be finalized by the December registration week.