

MAS 523 Creating Special Services
2 Cr. Hrs./3 CEUs
Monday, Wednesday 8:00-9:30 AM
Summer, 2008

Instructor Name	Robert Fish, Ph.D.
Office Hours	Tuesday, Thursday, 2:00 to 4:00 PM, other times by appointment. Rm. 230
Telephone	816-251-3535, ext. 2110
E-Mail	FishRS@unityonline.org
Required Texts	Sacred Ceremonies and Heartfelt Rituals for the 21st Century, Unity CD, 2002; Farmer, Steven. Sacred Ceremony. Hay House, 2002.
Other Required Reading	
Recommended Reading	Plum, A. (1993) An Interfaith Minister's Manual. Alexander, North Carolina; Pollack, R. (2000) The Power of Ritual. New York, NY; Williamson, G. and D. (1994) Transformative Rituals. Deerfield Beach, FL.

Course Description

Creating Special Services (2 cr hr or 3 ceu)

This course examines the various elements of a spiritual service to create organic, dynamic and holistic experiences of God. The class will also include the study of rituals and special services in the liturgical year, such as Christmas, New Year, and Easter Unity traditions. Part of this class will be spent creating wedding, funeral, christening and other individual special services as well as integrating creative art forms. Each student will have, as a result of this class, his or her own personal service manual.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the ability to design, integrate, and facilitate the elements of a worship experience. This includes church services, rituals, and ceremonies.
2. Demonstrate the ability to integrate creative art forms into a worship experience. This includes music, liturgical dance, readers theater, and other art forms.
3. Explain how the elements of the service work together to create the whole experience of God.

The above objectives partially fulfill the following outcomes for the Master of Divinity and Certificate programs:

MD-2 and C-2. Describe and integrate administrative and leadership abilities to create a productive and growing ministry.

The above objectives partially fulfill the following outcomes for the Master of Arts in Religious Studies program:

MA-1. Demonstrate mastery in the study of religion.

Class Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Reading Assignment	Paper/Exam/Activity
1a	July 14	1. Introduction to the course 2. Experience of ritual	Farmer, part I	Lecture, discussion, experiential
1b	July 16	Elements of the traditional service, part 1	Farmer, part II	Discussion, handouts
2a	July 21	Elements of the traditional service, part 2		Discussion, handouts
2b	July 23	Elements of the emerging service, part 1		Discussion
3a	July 28	Elements of the emerging service, part 2	Farmer, part III	Discussion
3b	July 30	Class ritual		Experience
4a	Aug. 4	Weddings, memorials, christenings: preparation and creation		Handouts, discussion
4b	Aug. 6	Preparation for weddings, memorials, christenings		Discussion, handouts
5a	Aug 11	Weddings		Student led ceremonies
5b	Aug 13	Memorials		Student led ceremonies

Week	Date	Topic	Reading Assignment	Paper/Exam/Activity
6a	Aug 18	Christenings		Student led ceremonies
6b	Aug 20	Preparation for group ritual		Discussion
7a	Aug 25	Additional special celebrations	Farmer, part IV	Handouts, discussion
7b	Aug 27	Additional special celebrations	Farmer, part V	Handouts, discussion
8a	Sept. 1	Labor Day--holiday		
8b	Sept. 3	Group ritual		Student led ceremonies
9a	Sept 8	Group ritual		Student led ceremonies
9b	Sept 10	Group ritual		Student led ceremonies
10a	Sept. 15	Group ritual		Student led ceremonies
10b	Sept. 17	Closure		Discussion

Assignments for the Master of Divinity program:

1. Create and lead a wedding
2. Create and lead a funeral or memorial
3. Create and lead a christening
4. Participate in a special celebration
5. Create and co-lead a group ritual
6. Write a reflection paper

Grading

Assignment	Possible Points	Meets Learning Objective
------------	-----------------	--------------------------

Wedding, funeral/memorial, christening	15-15-15	MD-2
Group ritual	45	MD-2
Reflection paper	10	MD-2

Final Grade Determination:

- 90-100% = A
- 80-89% = B
- 70-79% = C
- 60-69% = D

Assignments for the Certificate program:

1. Create and lead a wedding
2. Create and lead a funeral or memorial
3. Create and lead a christening
4. Participate in a special celebration
5. Create and co-lead two group rituals
6. Write a reflection paper

Grading

Assignment	Possible Points	Meets Learning Objective
Wedding, funeral/memorial, christening	15-15-15	C-2
Group ritual	45	C-2
Reflection paper	10	C-2

Final Grade Determination

- 90-100% = A
- 80-89% = B
- 70-79% = C
- 60-69% = D

Assignments for the Master of Arts in Religious Studies program:

1. Create and lead a wedding
2. Create and lead a funeral or memorial
3. Create and lead a christening

4. Participate in a special celebration
5. Create and co-lead a group ritual
6. Write a reflection paper

Grading

Assignment	Possible Points	Meets Learning Objective
Wedding, funeral/memorial, christening	15-15-15	MA-1
Group ritual	45	MA-1
Reflection paper	10	MA-1

Final Grade Determination

- 90-100% = A
- 80-89% = B
- 70-79% = C
- 60-69% = D

Expectations of Students

Students are expected to come to class having read the assigned material and being prepared to discuss it.

Classroom Protocol

Late Assignment Policy

Ceremonies and rituals must be performed when scheduled. No make-ups will be given except for emergencies when the faculty member is contacted by the student in advance. Term papers are due on the day scheduled. A late paper will be assessed a 5% penalty per day (weekends/holidays included).

Attendance Policy

Because this class focuses on student led activities, attendance is a factor in grading. If students miss a class, they are responsible for obtaining lecture notes and any information from another student. Should students decide to quit attending this class, they should officially drop it at the Registrar’s Office. Failure to do this will result in an F for the course no matter how many days the student has attended.

Academic Honesty

Unity Institute assumes that all students desire to pursue their academic and transformational work with honesty and scholarly integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, facilitating academic dishonesty and misrepresentation of self or other students are prohibited. For further information about academic honesty, students are directed to review the Unity Institute Catalog and Student Handbook.

Special Concerns

If students have any special concerns and/or challenges that may affect their performance in this course, they are encouraged to speak with the instructor immediately so that any accommodations, if necessary, may be made.

Selected Bibliography

To be added