

Christian and Jewish Seminary Study & Dialogue Program



Hosted by
The Institute for Christian & Jewish Studies and
Washington Theological Consortium



- ◆ June 16-20, 2013, Sunday evening through Thursday afternoon
- ◆ The Pearlstone Conference and Retreat Center, Reisterstown, MD
- ◆ Participants: 20 students – 10 Christian Seminarians & 10 Rabbinical Students with distinguished faculty from ICJS, WTC and rabbinical schools. Available for 3 credits through the Consortium schools.

The future of our religious communities depends upon developing clergy who will be able to provide leadership in a religiously plural world. To advance this goal, the ICJS and the Washington Theological Consortium have partnered to offer a summer study program that brings together Christian seminarians and Jewish rabbinical students to engage in textual study and conversation at an overnight retreat center. The Jewish-Christian relationship is paradigmatic for understanding both the possibilities of religious pluralism, and the dangers of religious conflict, ignorance, and misunderstanding.

This intensive course will raise up the commonalities of our traditions, but more importantly it will focus on the particular ways our respective communities read, interpret and embody their traditions. The participants will have an opportunity not only to listen to brief lectures throughout the five days, but also to engage in small group study of sacred texts. Jewish and Christian seminarians will also have ample opportunity to get to know one another, and we hope they will develop lasting relationships that will go beyond their five days together. We want to promote rigorous interreligious learning as well as interreligious friendship.



Proposed Curriculum

While the details of the curriculum will be fully developed in conjunction with Washington Theological Consortium (WTC) faculty, below is a preliminary outline of topical units for the summer program.

- I. **Sacred Texts:** Sacred texts are foundational to both Jewish and Christian identity. This unit will focus on several core areas that will give participants a deeper knowledge of their own interpretative reading traditions, as well as introduce the texts and reading traditions of the religious other.
- II. **Homiletics:** An essential part of clergy life is the preaching of sacred texts. In this unit we will assist seminarians in the crafting of sermons, particularly sermons on sacred texts that have been identified as problematic in the history of Jewish-Christian relations.
- III. **Liturgy and Prayer:** Recognizing that our religious communities are not only reading communities, but communities of worship and prayer, in this third unit we study the liturgical and prayer practices that shape the religious imaginations of Jews and Christians. This unit will comprise both an experiential component as well as the more traditional academic discussion.
- IV. **Pluralism and American Religious Identity:** Religious pluralism has been a feature of the American experience since the nation's beginnings, and as we head into the 21st century, the American religious landscape will only become more diverse. We invite the students to explore challenges religious pluralism can bring to one's own religious identity and theological beliefs, as well as consider how clergy should engage political issues in their ministry.