



From The Director's Desk

Course of Study School of Ohio at the Methodist Theological School

Winter

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It was with surprise and sadness that the COSSO students registering for the Fall, 2006 session read the letter from Dean John Kampen. Robin Knowles Wallace had decided to resign as Director of the Course of Study of Ohio. During her four year tenure, she introduced many significant elements into the program from which we will continue to benefit. Chief among these:

- Eliminated the distinction between Part Time Local Pastors and Full Time Local Pastors. Beginning in the summer of 2003, PT Local Pastors and FT Local Pastors alike could sign up for the two week Intensive. Beginning in the fall, 2003 everyone could participate in the two weekend sessions. (Prior to that FT Local Pastors met three weekends a session.)
- Recognized the unique administrative skills of the Auxiliary Program Manager, and increased her responsibilities and visibility in and for the COSSO.
- Introduced a Spiritual Formation program for all students and hired a Director of Spiritual Formation.
- Hired a Director of Music to help plan and accompany all worship services and offer time before each by playing meditative music for refectation.
- Initiated the practice of recording the contributions of the students to the Spiritual Formation program on the grade sheets so that Registrars and District Superintendents could gauge their pastors' participation in the program. (Membership in Covenant groups, sacristan tasks, design and/or leadership of prayer services, Communion servers, choir membership.)
- Added additional students on the Advisory Board which meets twice a year and includes the Registrars for the Conferences from which the COS students come. Identified those students (4) so that the student body could share their concerns with them and in turn represent them at Board Meetings.
- Introduced regularly scheduled workshops on pastoral skills at no additional cost to the students. (Funerals, Visitations, Choosing Hymns, Administration of each of the Sacraments, Weddings, Evangelism, Bible Studies)
- Hired a writing coach to give workshops and be available by e-mail or snail mail to offer suggestions on papers prepared for classes and submitted for review before their due date.
- Began the COSSO Choir in the spring of 2006 in which interested students sign up for the choir on the first weekend and come early on the second weekend to prepare an anthem for graduation.
- Distributed rigorous evaluation of professors by their students in the program. These evaluations are shared with the teachers after they have submitted their grades and very much influence their rehiring or not.
- Supported the publication of a quarterly Newsletter.



Robin will continue as a tenured professor in The Taylor Chair of Worship and Music on the full time faculty of The Methodist Theological in Ohio. She will also continue to teach in the Course of Study, and is, in fact, scheduled to teach COS 412 (Theological Heritage: Wesleyan Movement) in the winter session of 2008. She intends to devote more time to her scholarly and publishing interests. Not that she has not studied and published while she was Director. During that time, she published articles in *The Quarterly Review*, *The Circuit Rider*, *Journal of Theology*, *The Hymn*, several Chapters in books and two books in the "Just in Time" series published by Abingdon. Her most recent book length manuscript, *Worship in the Small Membership Church* (with Rev. Terry Heck) will be published this year by Discipleship Resources. For a complete list of Dr. Knowles Wallace's publications go to www.mtso.edu/wallace/publications. Undoubtedly, however, the most exciting news about Robin is that she is working toward being a candidate for commissioning toward elder's orders in the Detroit Annual Conference.