

Spring 2024 Course of Study
COS 222: THEOLOGICAL HERITAGE II: EARLY CHURCH
April 12 & May 3-4, via Zoom

Instructor Information:

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Course Description:

This course focuses on the history and theology of the Church through the first five centuries. Using primary sources, students will reflect on significant individuals, events, and the articulation of the Christian faith during this period.

Students will be able to:

1. Understand and articulate the doctrine of the Trinity, and the historical debates in the early Church around the person and nature of Christ.
2. Understand and articulate a doctrine of salvation in light of controversies within the early church.
3. Understand the history of the creeds and ecumenical councils.
4. Appropriate historical theology for pastoral ministry.

Textbooks:

- Bondi, Roberta. *To Love as God Loves*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1987 (ISBN 9780800620417)
- González, Justo. *The Story of Christianity, Volume 1: The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation*. 2nd ed. New York: HarperCollins, 2010. (ISBN 9780061855887)
- Saint Augustine. *Confessions* (Translated and edited by Albert C. Outler) – This translation is not copyrighted. Dr. White will provide a PDF copy of this book for you.

Reference Book:

- Henry Bettenson & Chris Maunder, Editors. *Documents of the Christian Church*, 4th ed. Oxford University Press, 2011. (ISBN 9780199568987)

How This Course Will Work:

There will be no in-person engagement for this class. There will be two ways of engaging in this class: *Synchronous* and *Asynchronous*. Synchronous is when we interact with one another in real time at the same time. This will be done by Zoom. *Asynchronous* is when you engage in activities on your own time. This will be done through the Populi course website.

It is *important to note* that a Course of Study course is 20 contact hours according to the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM). According to GBHEM, a student may only miss 4 contact hours and still pass the course. Contact hours will be divided across both synchronous and asynchronous learning. In order to complete your contact hour requirement, you must participate in *both* the Zoom *and* Populi portions of the course.

Synchronous Engagement

We will be doing Zoom meetings in lieu of in-person meetings. Don't worry if you do not have a Zoom account, I will invite you to the meeting with a link sent to your email or posted on the course website. Remember that Zoom is like showing up for class. Missing a Zoom meeting is the same as missing an in-person class.

Asynchronous Engagement

The asynchronous portion of our course will involve several activities that you can engage in on your own time and at a time and pace that you wish. Two of the main ways this will take place are through discussion forums and through posted material such as videos, podcasts, and videoed lectures from the professor.

Statement about participation in discussion forums

A discussion forum is a way that students as well as the instructor can interact with one another asynchronously. A discussion forum is akin to an in-class discussion in an in-person setting. As such this is a type of class participation. This takes place through the Populi platform. It involves typing into Populi a response to a question that the instructor poses. Other classmates and/or the instructor can then respond to that initial response. You or other classmates or the instructor can then respond to that response and so on. This gives the effect of a class discussion however it does not take place in real time. You can read responses and post responses on your own schedule, within the confines of the overall deadline of the course. Since it is a form of class participation you are *expected* to participate in a substantive way in the course discussion forums.

Statement about videos and other materials to be posted on the Populi platform

On Populi there may be posted a number of resources and materials for the course. Some of these will be required and some may be supplementary. These may include material such as videos, podcasts, and videoed lectures from the professor, supplementary reading and handouts. It is fairly simple on the Populi platform to engage these resources. It typically involves clicking a link and watching or listening to the video or podcast or downloading the handout, etc. You are responsible for the information in resources that are required for the course and posted on Populi. For example, this information may be discussed in a discussion forum or in a Zoom meeting for the course. These resources can be engaged on your own schedule and that will maximize the efficiency of our time together on Zoom.

Writing and Submission of Assignments:

All assignments for the class should be submitted on Populi in Word format. All assignments should be double-spaced, 12-point font, and margins of 1 inch on all sides. I do not need lots of header content taking up space at the beginning of an assignment either, your name and the name of the assignment is enough. Files should also be named in a similar fashion with last name, assignment title (example: "White, Creedal Statement"). References can be noted by any means of standard practice (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.). I am not specific about the style of formatting as long as all references are made such to avoid plagiarism and formatting is consistent in style.

Grading will follow the Grade Policy in the "Ohio Course of Study Student Manual." You will have a written assignment for each weekend meeting which will be due prior to the weekend. Assignments will count toward your final grade in the following proportion:

- Written Assignment #1 - Creedal Statement30%
- Written Assignment #2 - Sermon on Loving as God Loves.....30%

Written Assignment #3 - Augustine Book Review & Top 10 List.....30%

Class participation, discussion forums, and movie review10%

Class schedule:

April 8

Discussion Forum Assignment – April 8 (200 words)

Introduce yourself and respond to at least two other introductory posts. Other forum discussion assignments may be made during our class meetings.

[Note: Discussion Forum Assignments are non-graded assignments and count toward meeting your asynchronous class participation.]

April 10

Creedal Statement (4 pages) – Due April 10

- After you have completed the assigned reading from the textbook, type a 1-2 paragraph statement of your personal beliefs about either: 1) the relationship between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, or, 2) the relationship between the divine and the human in Jesus Christ. Your textbook and traditions should inform this statement, but avoid explicit citation/quotation of printed sources in this personal statement of your own belief. You may cite the Bible by book, chapter and verse as a reference, **but avoid lengthy quotations from it.**
- Think of one or more objections to a specific part of your creedal statement. Describe and then explain the objection(s) in 1 page, beginning with the following phrase: “It may be argued that . . .”
- Finally, defend and reaffirm your initial statement of belief against the argument(s) that you have raised (1 page). Give at least one persuasive reason for your audience to believe your creedal statement in the face of the objection(s) that you have described.

Assignment #1, part B (2pages) – Due April 10

- Read *The First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians* (PDF supplied by instructor.)
- Give three reasons, with explanation, why this writing would have fit well into the New Testament canon. Give three reasons, with explanation, why it would not.

April 12

Zoom Meetings:

- April 12, 3:00-5:00 PM and 7:00-9:00 PM

Topics:

- The First Century Church
- Persecution and Response in the Second Century
- Early Theologies and Teachers in the Third Century
- Persecution and Response in the Third Century

Read:

- González, Chapters 1-12
- Bettenson, Sections I-V (This is a reference book. Read articles that are appropriate to your interest and as needed for writing papers.)

April 17

Discussion Forum Assignment – April 17 (200 words)

Read the section beginning on page 70 of “Documents of the Christian Church,” “IV. CHRISTIAN WORSHIP IN THE SECOND CENTURY.” How does this description of worship compare and contrast with our worship today?

April 22

Written Assignment #2:

Sermon on Loving as God Loves in the Early Church (6 pages) – Due April 22

Read all of Roberta Bondi’s book, *To Love as God Loves*. Bondi states that “being a Christian means learning to love as God loves and that this is what all that we have talked about up until this point has been about.” (107). With a focus of learning from the early Church to love as God loves, write a sermon that proposes to provide information and inspiration to your audience to love with the type of love taught and lived by the early Christian monastics described by Bondi.

You may use other sources in sermon, including the Bible, but it must satisfy the following requirements.

1. It must be four (4) **full** pages in length, and no more than five (5) pages (double-spaced, one-inch margins, standard font type and size – see above).
2. In addition to the four page sermon, provide a specific and detailed (at least one paragraph in length for each of these terms) discussion of the importance of the following terms and ideas for Christian love as described by Bondi and the early monastics:
 - a. Love
 - b. Humility
 - c. The Passions
 - d. Prayer
 - e. God
3. As part of the focus and purpose of your sermon, quote at least two of the monastic sources quoted by Bondi in her book.
4. Name the ancient monastic in your sermon.
5. Cite the original source in an endnote or footnote (see abbreviations and bibliography of sources cited on pp. 110-11 of Bondi’s book), and also cite the page in Bondi where the ancient monastic is quoted and cited. Also include a bibliography at the end of your sermon (this is NOT part of the 6 -7 page count). The Bible does not need to be included in your bibliography although you may cite it in your sermon but avoid lengthy quotations from it.

May 3-4

Zoom Meetings:

- May 3, 3:00-5:00 PM and 7:00-9:00 PM
- May 4, 9:00-11:00 AM and 1:00-3:00 PM

Topics:

- The Imperial Church
- Persecution and Response in the Imperial Church
- Pillars of the Faith in the Empire
- Augustine

- The End of an Era

Read:

- González, Chapters 13-26
- Bettenson, Sections IV-VI
- Augustine, *Confessions*

May 7

Discussion Forum Assignment – May 7 (200 words)

Read the “The Anathemas of Cyril of Alexandria” from “Documents of the Christian Church beginning on page 49.” How does this document inform your understanding of early Christianity and the role it played in the Roman Empire?

May 3

Video Assignment – Due any time before the last class meeting.

Select a movie from the list on the Populi class page. View the movie and then write a one-page (single spaced) paper. One half page should be a brief synopsis of the movie. The second half page should talk about what you found meaningful or challenging about the content of the movie.

[Note: Video Assignments are non-graded assignments and count toward meeting your asynchronous class participation.]

May 3

Assignment #3:

Part A – Book Review of Augustine’s *Confessions* (4 pages) – Due May 3

Your book review should have the following components:

1. Introduction (one or two paragraphs)
 - Brief overview of the theme, purpose and your evaluation
2. Summary of the content (about two pages)
 - Briefly summarize the key points of the book
 - Paraphrase the information but use a short quote when appropriate.
3. Evaluation and conclusion (about one page)
 - Give your opinion about the book. Is the book easy to read or confusing? Is the book interesting, inspiring, instructive? Does the author support his arguments well? What are the book’s greatest strengths and weaknesses? To whom would you recommend the book?

Part B - (2 pages) – Due May 3

1. Create a list that addresses the following statement in ranked order with #1 being the most important (2 pages):

- The top ten reasons that Early Church History shapes or challenges my theology are: (Include a brief explanation for each item in the list.)

2. This project will be graded based on the extent to which it accurately and specifically refers to aspects of Early Christianity (for example, a person, event, idea, teaching, or action), and explicitly describes the effects on your theology. Additional explanation and instructions will be provided during the first day of class.

COSSO Academic Honor Policy

The Course of Study School of Ohio requires that all material submitted by a student in fulfilling his or her academic requirements be the original work of the student.

Violations of academic honor include any action by a student indicating dishonesty or lack of integrity in academic ethics. Violations in this category include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly passing off work of another as one's own.

Cheating includes seeking, acquiring, receiving or passing on information about the content of an examination prior to its authorized release or during its administration. Cheating also includes seeking, using, giving or obtaining unauthorized assistance in any academic assignment or examination.

Plagiarism is the act of presenting as one's own work with the work of another whether published or unpublished (including the work of another student). A writer's work should be regarded as his or her own property. Any person who knowingly uses a writer's distinctive work without proper acknowledgement is guilty of plagiarism.

A student found guilty of a violation of the academic honor code, after a review of the case, may be subject to one or more of the following sanctions: (1) warning; (2) failing grade for the assignment and/or course; (3) probation; (4) suspension; (5) dismissal from the Course of Study School of Ohio. In severe or repeat cases (regardless of the sanctions) a letter will be sent to the student's District Superintendent and Board of Ordained Ministry representative.

COSSO Attendance Policy

National policy from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) states that a student is expected to attend every class session. Unexcused absences may be cause for loss of credit or dismissal from the school. A student missing 20% or more of the classroom work shall not receive credit for the class. In the event of extenuating circumstances which require the student to miss up to 20% of the synchronous course time (whether in-person or on Zoom), the student should contact both the instructor and the Director prior to the start of the class to get approval and discuss make-up work. (Extenuating circumstances include emergency situations, illness, and dire circumstances, for example. Students are to provide back-up coverage at the local church while attending COS classes.)

Cancellation and Withdrawal: Student must notify the COSSO office if they will be unable to attend class for which they are registered. Although there is no penalty when withdrawing more than two weeks in advance of the beginning of a term, registration fees are nontransferable and nonrefundable. A \$50.00 late withdrawal fee is charged for all withdrawals within two weeks of the start of a class. All tuition and housing payments are applied to a future term.

Students withdrawing after the start of a term will be assigned a grade of AW (Administrative Withdrawal) and will be responsible for the full \$300.00 tuition amount. Any annual conference scholarship applied to the student billing record becomes the student's responsibility and is due by the end of the term. Housing payment is non-refundable.

NO SHOWS: Except in cases of immediate and dire emergencies, if a student misses any class without notifying the COSSO office, tuition and housing fees are due immediately, a \$50.00 no show fee is charged, and the student will receive an "F" in the class.