

Course of Study School of Ohio

<https://cosohio.org/>

Term	Class Dates	Registration Deadline	Dorm Availability
2025 Fall (Hybrid)	Sept. 12-13 & Oct. 10-11	7/15/25	Available (1 weekend in-person)
2026 Winter	Feb. 13-14 & Mar 13-14	12/16/25	Online term
2026 Spring	Apr. 17-18 & May 8-9	2/17/26	Online term
2026 Summer	Jul. 10-11 & Jul. 31-Aug. 1	5/12/26	Online term

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Let me welcome all of you, including nine new students and six graduates, to the 2025 Summer Term of the Course of Study School of Ohio (COSSO)!

As people always hunger for evidence of the life of the gospel, the practice of biblical hospitality compellingly embodies the gospel and makes its witness credible and inviting. As Christine Pohl wrote in her book *Making Room*, authentic hospitality reflects and participates in God's hospitality toward humanity in Christ and integrates respect and care.

For the practice of biblical hospitality, an intentional and genuine effort to cross significant racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic boundaries is essential and constitutive. Hospitality to the stranger is both intrinsic to the gospel and crucial to its proclamation. According to Pohl, for the early church, hospitality to needy strangers "became one of the distinguishing marks of the authenticity of the Christian gospel" and "a fundamental expression of the gospel."

The very credibility of our witness to the gospel is at risk when our witness fails to cross boundaries, when it is limited to those who are culturally or racially similar to ourselves. The true nature of the gospel is contradicted when our witness becomes selective and does not reach past cultural and socioeconomic boundaries.

Any church, which is neither multicultural nor seeks to become so, should carefully examine itself and ask why it has become stuck in a monocultural mode. I hope that your theological education at COSSO would help you lead your congregation to grow into a community of hospitality—a community willing to communicate God's redeeming love in Christ across boundaries with genuine welcoming.

Highly valuing the on-campus experience, COSSO continues to offer courses in a hybrid format in the Fall term, with students coming to campus one weekend either in September or in October. I would like to invite you to consider taking some hybrid classes during your COS program for in-person learning experience. You would appreciate the opportunity to engage face-to-face with your instructors and colleagues in the classroom, chapel, and dining hall.

FROM THE DIRECTOR, cont.

All of us on the COSSO staff look forward to journeying with you this Summer term, and pray for God's continued guidance and blessings on you and on your studies and ministry.

Peace,

Joon-Sik Park

Dr. Joon-Sik Park

*Director of the Course of Study School of Ohio
E. Stanley Jones Professor of World Evangelism at MTSO*



2025 SPRING GRADUATES—CONGRATULATIONS!



Top row (L-R): Matt West (Michigan) and Christi Murray (Indiana)

Middle row: John Mansur (Indiana) and Wendy Brown (East Ohio)

Bottom row: Mark Armstrong (West Ohio)

MEET YOUR INSTRUCTORS



Dr. Miranda Zapor Cruz
COS 122: Theological Heritage I: Introduction
Dr. Miranda Zapor Cruz received her M.Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary and her Ph.D. from Baylor University. She is Professor of Theology at Indiana Wesleyan University and Director of the Sacred Alliance Center at Wesley Seminary in Indiana.

Rev. Robin Dillon

COS 223: Worship & Sacraments

Rev. Dillon received her M.Div. from MTSO. An elder in the East Ohio Conference, she is the Lead Pastor at Lakewood UMC and serves as Dean of the East-West Ohio Clergy Licensing School.

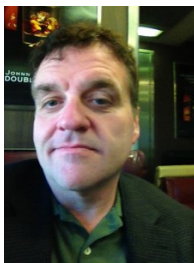


Rev. Dr. Brian White
COS 322: Theological Heritage III: Medieval-Reformation
Dr. Brian K. White received his M.Div. from Asbury Theological Seminary and his D.Min. in Congregational Leadership from Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary. A newly retired United Methodist elder, he serves part-time in the Indiana conference.

Rev. Dr. Paul Kim

COS 421: Bible IV: Prophets, Psalms, & Wisdom Lit

Dr. Kim received his M.Div. and Th.M. from Princeton Theological Seminary, and his Ph.D. from the Claremont School of Theology. A Presbyterian elder, he is Professor of Hebrew Bible at MTSO



Dr. Glen Messer
COS 524: Theological Reflection: Practice of Ministry
Dr. Glen Messer received his M.Div. and Th.D. from Boston University. From 2012-2016 he served as associate ecumenical staff officer for theology and dialogue with the UMC Council of Bishops Office of Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

FINDING HOME

Immigration has been on my mind a lot lately. Well, actually, immigration is always on my mind. My mother was an immigrant from England. She came to this country after WWII as a "war bride." She had served in the Women's branch of the Royal Air Force and met my father who was in the U.S. Army and stationed in England at the time, and the rest is history. I lived in England for a few years and served the Methodist church in the area where my relatives live. It was a blessed experience and I became so attached to the people and the country that I continue to visit every few years. The churches I served still invite me to preach, I reconnect with family and friends again, and it all feels like going home.

It seems like we're always searching for home - sometimes forced to run from it and always seeking after it. It is heart wrenching to leave the place you call home - it will make you homesick and often depressed. My mother was in this country 20 years before she was able to return to her home and visit her family. Many immigrants today are faced with unspeakable hardships of fleeing their homes and being deported to places they never knew or torn from homes they have found among us. But as we all know home is more than just a place. The search for home never ends, until we find our true home with God, on earth and in heaven.

The scriptures and church communities can help us, immigrants and citizens alike, in our search for home and help us find our true home. Jesus himself knew the pain and suffering of leaving home when he cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). He was quoting from Psalm 22, the spiritual psalms or songs of his people. He was in pain and he began to sing, maybe those at the foot of the cross joined him. In Psalm 137, captors asked people exiled from their homes to sing the songs of their homeland, but they were too overcome with homesickness to sing, "How can we sing the songs of the Lord while in a foreign land?"

Church can be a place of home, where together we find our way to our true home with God. The presence and stories of others are invaluable in times of sadness and loss, whether we are a recent immigrant or a person who is lonely and just seeking hope and a place to belong. We may find hope in sermons or prayers or songs, as Jesus did. Music and song touch a place deep inside us and give us a way to be sad without feeling lost. When we sing in community, we know it is okay to suffer. The music tells us, "We know how you feel. We are suffering too. We all are."

As we continue to listen for a voice of hope, I pray our churches will become places of welcome for strangers and friends, where we give each other hope and together we lift our pain and voices to God. May our churches be communities of hope where we all find our way home to the God who is always searching for us.

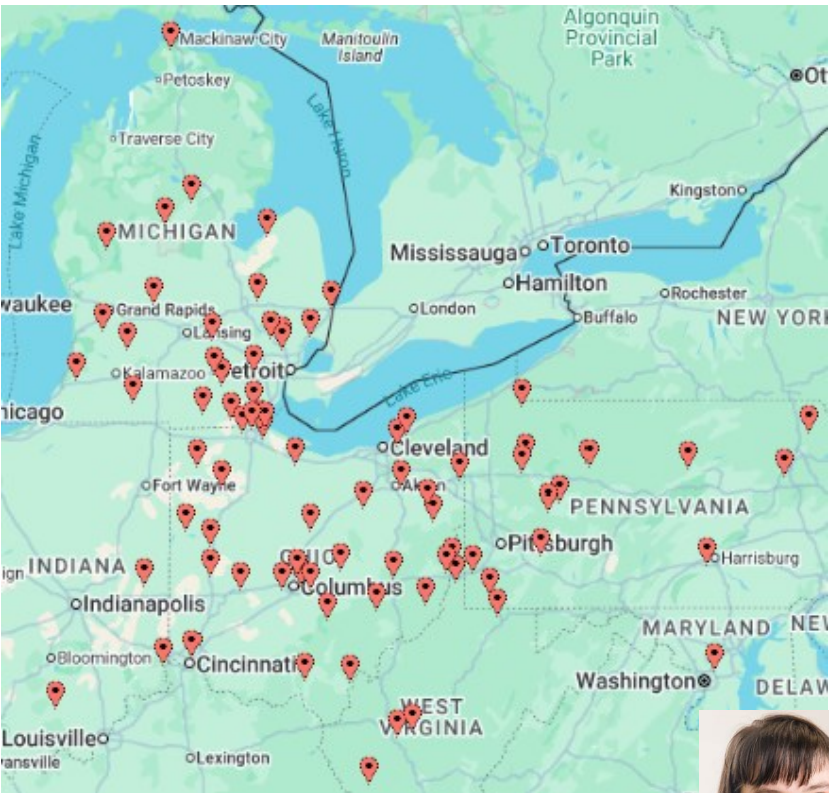
Rev. Dr. Rebeka Maples
Spiritual Formation Director



FROM THE COORDINATOR

Note for **2025 Fall classes**: COS 123, 224, and 321 will meet in-person 9/12-13 and COS 422 and 523 will meet in-person 10/10-11. **Please email me to reserve a room in the dorm for your in-person weekend!**

Students from 8 Annual Conferences are taking classes in the 2025 Summer term:



Grace Wallace
Coordinator



FROM THE CHOIR ROOM

Anyone interested in singing/playing an instrument in the choir when on-campus for 2025 Fall should join [the COSSO Choir group on Populi](#)



Lori Douglas Weaver, MMed
Music Director

