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 the controversies of the early church.
3. Understand the history and significance of the creeds and ecumenical councils.
4. Appropriate historical theology for pastoral ministry.

Required Textbooks

Course Expectation and Grading
1. Precourse Work [50% of total grade]
2. Class participation and preparation [10%]
3. Reading Reflections [30%]
4. Final “Top Ten” List [10%]

Precourse Assignments

Precourse Work [50% of total grade]

A. Hermeneutical Reflections on History (four typed pages)
Read Parts I-II (pages 1-261) in the Gonzalez book. For each of these two parts of the book, write two one-page reflections on a specific historical event or individual that is covered in that part of the book. (This is four reflections total, four pages total). Each of these four reflections should focus on a specific aspect of early Christian history and its potential meaning for contemporary life and/or ministry in the church. These four reflections must be typed (more than one on a page is okay); pages must be stapled together.

Each reflection must include the following:

a. A brief description, based on your reading, of the event/individual from Christian history that you are considering. (Use your own words, with no quotation from the book.)
b. A citation to a page in the textbook describing the event or individual.
c. Your own assessment of the historical significance of this event or person, based on your reading.
d. A thoughtful and critical reflection on the contemporary significance of this aspect of Christian history within the United Methodist Church, especially in your local church.

Here is a brief example (your assessment and reflection will likely be longer):
“The Donatist-Catholic Controversy, beginning in the fourth century, was an important crisis that centered on the validity and effectiveness of church officials who were somehow unfaithful during persecution (page #).
The book’s description of this controversy is important to contemporary considerations of ethics and penitence among Christian ministers. The size and scope of this historical controversy about the faithfulness of the clergy should make local pastors take all the more seriously the charge “to embody the teachings of Jesus in servant ministries and servant leadership.” (Book of Discipline, ¶ 340.4) . . .”

B. Creedal Statement (two typed pages)

a. 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. The one exception is the Bible, which you may cite by passage, but avoiding extensive quotation.
b. Think of one or more plausible objections to a specific element of your creedal statement. Describe and explain the objection(s) in 1-2 paragraphs, beginning with the following phrase: “It may be objected that . . .”
c. Finally, identify at least one plausible counter-response to this objection, in which you defend and reaffirm your initial statement of belief against the objection (1-2 paragraphs). You must give at least one persuasive reason to believe your initial creedal statement in the face of the objection that you have described. You may cite and use any argument, experience, tradition, or text that you think appropriate.

C. Sermon on Loving as God Loves in the Early Church (six typed pages)

Read all of Roberta Bondi’s book, To Love as God Loves. Bondi states that “being a Christian means learning to love with God’s love,” and that “this is what all that we have talked about up until this point has been about.” (107). Beginning with this focus -- learning from the early Church to love as God loves – write a sermon that functions to inform and inspire your audience to love with the type of love taught and lived by the early Christian monastics described by Bondi. This sermon may use any other source, including the Bible, but must fulfill the following requirements.

a. At least six (6) full pages in length, and no more than seven (7) pages (double-spaced, one-inch margins, standard font type and size)
b. Provide specific and detailed (at least paragraph-length) 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  

As part of the focus and function of your sermon, quote at least two of the monastic sources quoted by Bondi in her book In quoting the source, do three things: 1) name the ancient monastic figure in your sermon, 2) cite the original source in an endnote or footnote (abbreviations and bibliography of sources are listed on pp. 110-11), and, 3) also cite the page in Bondi where the ancient monastic is quoted or described. Here is a footnote, for example: 1 “Epiphanius 4,” in Sayings of the Desert Fathers, trans. Benedicta Ward, S.L.G. (Oxford: A. R. Mowbray, 1981), 57, quoted in Roberta Bondi, To Love as God Loves (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 21. This citation style is Chicago. Your citation may differ based on the citation style that you use; see the “Guidelines for Written Assignments” at the end of this syllabus. You should also include a bibliography at the end of your sermon (not part of the 6-7 page count). You do not need to include the Bible in your bibliography, though you may cite it in your sermon.

[This concludes the Precourse work section of the syllabus. Please bring your printed syllabus to the first class; the instructor will not provide printed copies. Note in the schedule (7/13) below that a one-page reading reflection is due the first day of class, in addition to the precourse work]  

Course Assignments  
A. Reading Reflection [30%]  
There are six online readings assigned in the class schedule. After each reading, prepare a one-page reflection paper that includes the following four elements: 1) the author and title of the reading, 2) a brief, 1-2 sentence summary of the reading, 3) identification of an especially important assertion, attitude, or action that you see present in the reading, and 4) a specific, concrete application of this assertion, attitude, or action within your local church or civic community. Your paper will be graded on your ability to succinctly summarize the main purpose of the reading, to recognize a historically or theologically significant aspect of the writing, and to apply this insight in a practical way to present-day circumstances and challenges in your particular locale. The first of these reading reflections is due on the first day of class. (See class schedule below).

B. Final “Top Ten” List [10%].  
For the last day of class, prepare a “top-ten” list (two-pages) that addresses the following statement in ranked order (with #1 being the most important): The top ten reasons that Early Church History shapes or challenges my theology. You will have the opportunity to present this list to the group during our final class. This top-ten list will be graded based on the extent to which it accurately and specifically refers to aspects of Early Christianity (e.g., 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 classes.
**Course Schedule**

- 7/13 Early Growth and Oppositions
- 7/14 Three Sources of Authority
- 7/15 Christian People and Early Christian Worship
- 7/16 Constantine, The Fourth Century, Early Monasticism
- 7/17 Donatism, Trinitarian Controversies
- 7/20 Augustine, Christological Controversies
- 7/21 Sacraments, Monastics, and Class Review

**Course Reading and Writing Schedule**

### Mon July 13: Early Growth and Oppositions
Assignment due on this date: (PREPARE THIS READING BEFORE THE FIRST CLASS). Read both of the following online texts, but complete a reading reflection for only one of the two readings (your choice). Bring the printed reflection to our first class.
Perpetua & Polycarp: Two Heroic Martyrs
The Epistle of Diognetus

### Tues July 14: Three Sources of Authority
Assignment due on this date: Read the three following texts, but complete a reading reflection for only one of the three readings (your choice):
The Gospel of Thomas (100-200 CE)
http://www.gnosis.org/naghamm/gthlamb.html
The Muratorian Fragment (200-300 CE)
http://www.ntcanon.org/Muratorian_Canon.shtml
From Athanasius’ 39th Festal Epistle of 367 C.E.
http://www.ntcanon.org/Athanasius.shtml

### Wed July 15: Christian People and Early Christian Worship
Assignment due on this date: Complete a reading reflection for one of the texts (read all five pages) contained in:
“Early Glimpses: Historical documents describing Christians at worship.”

### Thurs July 16: Constantine, The Fourth Century, Early Monasticism
Assignment due on this date: Read both of the following texts, but complete a reading reflection for only one of the two readings (your choice):
Eusebius, The Conversion of Constantine:
http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/conv-const.html
John Cassian, On the Method of Continual Prayer:

### Fri July 17: Donatism, Trinitarian Controversies
Assignment due on this date: Complete a reading reflection on the following:
Comparison of Nicaea Creed (325) and Creed of Constantinople (381)
http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Nicene_Creed#Comparison_between_Creed_of_325_and_Creed_of_381

### Mon July 20: Augustine, Christological Controversies
Assignment due on this date: Read the following four texts, but complete a reading reflection for only one of the four readings (your choice). The fifth reading is optional.
Augustine, Excerpts from Confessions
http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/aug-conv.html
Augustine, Excerpts from a Sermon on 1 John 4:2
Pelagius, Extracts from Defense of the Freedom of the Will
http://www.sullivan-county.com/id2/pelagius2.htm
Excerpts from The Chalcedonian Definition of the Faith (451)
Optional Reading: Council of Orange (529 CE): http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/orange.txt

Tues July 21: Sacraments, Monastics, and Class Review
Assignment due this date: Top Ten List (see above under Course Expectations)
The following are required readings for this date, but no reading reflection is due for any of the writings.
Excerpts from the Rule of Saint Benedict:
http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/rul-benedict-excerp.html
Francis of Assisi: Snapshots of a Saint:
Leo the Great, The Petrine Doctrine
http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/leo1a.asp
Various Orthodox authors, “An Exercise in Wonder”
http://www.christianitytoday.com/ch/1997/issue54/54h036.html

Guidelines for Written Assignments
• All papers should be typed, double-spaced, on 8 ½” by 11” paper, unless the instructor has asked for a
different format specifically within the precourse work. Font should be Times New Roman or
something similar and no larger than size 12. Margins are to be 1” on all four sides of each page.
• All papers must include a page number and the last name of the student in either the header or footer
of every page.
• You should note the question you are answering at the beginning of each new section of materials.
• All papers should provide citations for all quoted material. You may use MLA, Turabain, APA or
Chicago Style.
• Punctuation should be consistent; clarity of meaning is the primary purpose of punctuation. Edit and
retype material as needed and check spelling in a standard dictionary.
• All papers should attempt to eliminate discriminatory language—for example: racism, ageism, sexism,
classism, and prejudicial usage concerning handicapping conditions.

Inclusive Language Covenant
The faculty of Emory Course of Study School has adopted a covenant statement encouraging
inclusiveness in the use of language, as follows:
The Inclusive Language Covenant is designed to create a linguistic environment in which all students,
staff, and faculty can grow in understanding and appreciating the rich diversity of God’s people. The
COS faculty commits itself—through continued discussion, reflection, and exploration—to using
language in such a way that we respond to the fullness of God’s presence among us as much by our
choice of words as by our care for one another. Recognizing that our experience with inclusive language
is an integral part of theological formation, we invite students and others to share as partners with us in
this learning process.

We understand “covenant” more in terms of its biblical and theological meaning than in a legal or
contractual context. Covenant signifies the common commitment of a community of faith in response to
God’s revelation and in partnership with one another. The values implied in the covenant have morally
persuaded us to try to generate patterns of speech and behavior that bond the members of the
community in mutual respect. We expect all members of the community to address issues of diversity
constructively. The entire Inclusive Language Covenant can be found on the COS website, and you are encouraged to read the whole covenant.

**Directions to Email Precourse Assignments**

Please read all the directions below before emailing your assignments to the COS Office, any emails received that do not follow the directions below will not be accepted. You will receive an email confirmation of receipt and if your email is not submitted correctly an email indicating you will need to resend your assignments.

1. Email only michelle.levan@emory.edu your precourse assignments, do not email assignments to the instructors. You are encouraged to email the instructors questions about the assignments.
2. Email must be received no later than 11:59pm on the deadline of May 1st.
   a. Please note that the cut off time is EASTERN STANDARD TIME zone, so email your assignments accordingly.
   b. Any precourse work received after May 1st at 11:59pm will be subject to a late penalty.
      • Precourse work received between May 2 – June 1 is 1 letter grade deduction.
      • Precourse work received between June 2 – June 20 is 2 letter grade deductions.
      • You will be drop from any course for which precourse work has not been received after June 20th. No precourse work will be accepted at check-in.
3. The course number and the phrase “precourse work” should be the subject of your email: Example - Precourse Work 113
   a. You will need to send a separate email for each course you are registered to attend.
4. Precourse work must be sent as an attached document and not in the body of the email.
   a. Any version of Microsoft Word will be accepted; PDF, Word Perfect, and Mac-Pages documents will not be accepted. If you are using another type of word processing program please convert your document to a version of Microsoft Word before sending.
   b. All assignments for each course must be in one document, multiple documents are not acceptable. You should send only one attachment with all course assignments; emails sent with multiple documents will not be accepted.
5. Your FULL name, phone number and email, should all be clearly included at the beginning of your email. See Example
6. Plagiarism Policy and Plagiarism Defined
   The plagiarism Policy and Defined paragraphs below must be included in the body of your email (both are below), not within your precourse work. The inclusion of the policy and definition in the body of the email, verifies that you agree to it and your email will represent your signature (which is a requirement). If the email does not include the plagiarism policy and definition it will not be accepted. Your email, with the plagiarism policy and definition will be printed and used as the cover sheet for your precourse assignments, because it has the verification of date and time received, and your agreement to the plagiarism policy and definition.
   **Plagiarism Policy** - I have read the plagiarism definition below and verify that this assignment represents my own work, except where credit is given.
   **Plagiarism Defined**: “You plagiarize when, intentionally or not, you use someone else’s words or ideas but fail to credit that person, leading your readers to think that those words are yours. In all fields, you plagiarize when you use a source’s words or ideas without citing that source. In most fields, you plagiarize even when you do credit the source but use its exact words without using quotation marks or block indentation” (201-202). Booth, Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. The Craft of Research, Second Edition. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
7. If you do not follow the procedure your precourse work WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED! You will receive a confirmation of receipt within 24 hours or notice to resubmit following the process.