Course Description and Outcomes
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

A Note about the Hybrid Format
This course is offered in a hybrid format. That means that 14 of the 20 contact hours will occur in class and the remaining 6 hours will occur online (before the class meets). Please note that the 6 hours of online work is in addition to a normal amount of pre-class work that is required of non-hybrid classes. If you have any problems with the technology aspect of this course, please call Amy Walker at 404.727.4587. She’s here to help!

There are two phases in this particular hybrid class:
- The **PRE-CLASS PHASE** is meant to set the foundation for our time together in person. In advance of class, students will view the online video lectures, complete short writing responses, and read selections from required textbooks.
- The **IN-CLASS PHASE** will be devoted to digging into the course material through lecture and discussion.
Pre-Class Assignments

Pre-Class Assignment A – Online Pre-Class Videos

Six hours of this course are completed through viewing six online videos prior to the beginning of face-to-face courses in Atlanta, and participating in related online discussions of the videos. Six percent (6%) of your total grade will depend on your viewing these videos and participating in the discussion threads related to each video. You will find below a listing of videos with dates by which the videos and their discussion threads must be completed in the Canvas learning management system. All videos will become available for viewing on Monday, April 3, 2017. Students will not receive additional notice of these dates and are responsible for timely viewing and participation in online discussions by the four due dates listed below.

Your contribution to the online discussion in Canvas should occur after you have watched the entire video and read all the previous posts to the discussion “forum” that corresponds to the assigned video. You are to post a 1-2 paragraph comment (no less than three sentences). This post should either comment on previously posted threads/comments in the discussion, or should use the “create thread” button on the discussion board to include a new discussion idea regarding the video. All comments should be focused on the video content and be respectful of other viewpoints. Opportunity to earn credit for watching the video and contributing to the discussion will be closed at the four dates indicated below.

**Video 1**
Title: The Nature of Early Church History
Access Video and contribute to online discussion through the Canvas site by **May 15, 2017**

**Videos 2-3**
Titles: 1) Perpetua and Persecution  
2) Gospel of Thomas and Defining Christianity  
Access Videos and contribute to online discussion through the Canvas site by **May 29, 2017**

**Videos 4-5**
Titles: 1) Apologetics and the Relationship of Christ to Culture  
2) Heresy and Orthodoxy in the Early Church  
Access Videos and contribute to online discussion through the Canvas site by **June 12, 2017**

**Video 6:**  
Title: Three Sources of Authority in the Early Church  
Access Videos and contribute to online discussion through the Canvas site by **June 26, 2017**
Pre-Class Assignments B, C & D should be emailed to amylizabith.walker@emory.edu by **June 1** in one Word document with the start of each new assignment clearly marked.

**Pre-Class Assignment B**

**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. (These are 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 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.)

- A citation to a page in the textbook describing the event or individual.

- Your own assessment of the historical significance of this event or person, based on your reading.

- 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) . . .”
Pre-Class Assignment C
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.
Pre-Class Assignment D
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
c. 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 Pre-Class Assignment section of the syllabus. Please bring your printed syllabus to the first class; the instructor will not provide printed copies. Note in the schedule (7/10) below that a one-page reading reflection is due the first day of class, in addition to the pre-class work. Don’t be confused by this: in addition to the pre-class work described above, you are to complete and bring one, one-page reading reflection to the first day of class.]
Course Reading and Writing Schedule

7/10 Introduction and Review of Pre-Class Work
Assignment due on this date: (PREPARE THIS READING BEFORE THE FIRST CLASS). Read both of the following texts, available in Canvas, 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 Gospel of Thomas (100-200 CE)

7/11 Christian People and Worship in the Early Church
Assignment due on this date: Complete a reading reflection for one of the texts (read all five pages) contained in this reading, available in Canvas:
- “Early Glimpses: Historical documents describing Christians at worship.”

7/12 Constantine and The Fourth Century
Assignment due on this date: Read the following text, available in Canvas, and complete a reading reflection.
- Eusebius, The Conversion of Constantine:

7/13 Early Monasticism and Trinitarian Controversies
Assignment due on this date: Read the three following texts, available in Canvas, but complete a reading reflection for only one of the three readings (your choice):
- John Cassian, On the Method of Continual Prayer:
- Excerpts from the Rule of Saint Benedict:
- Comparison of Nicaea Creed (325) and Creed of Constantinople (381)

7/14 Augustine
Assignment due on this date: Read the following three texts, available in Canvas, but complete a reading reflection for only one of the three readings (your choice).
- Augustine, Excerpts from Confessions
- Augustine, Excerpts from a Sermon on 1 John 4:2
- Pelagius, Extracts from Defense of the Freedom of the Will

7/17 Christological Controversies and the Early Middle Ages
Assignment due on this date: Read both of the following texts, available in Canvas, but complete a reading reflection for only one of the two readings (your choice):
- The Symbol of Chalcedon
- Leo the Great, The Petrine Doctrine
- 7/18 Review and Top Ten List

7/18 Review and Top Ten List
Assignment due this date: Top Ten List (see “Course Assignments”)
Course Assignments

Class participation and preparation [16%]. In addition to one point of your total grade (1%) for completing each precourse online video and discussion contribution (6% total), students will be asked on the final day of class to assess their reading of course materials. This and the instructor’s assessment of class participation and preparation will contribute to this portion of the total course grade.

Reading Reflection [24%]. There are six readings (linked in Canvas) 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 above).

Final “Top Ten” List [10%]. For the final 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.

How Your Final Course Grade Is Determined
50% Pre-Class Work
24% Reading Reflections
16% Class Participation and Preparation
10% Final “Top Ten” List

COS Grading Scale

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<th>Grade</th>
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<td>A</td>
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<td>90-92</td>
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**Guidelines for Written Assignments**

- All papers should be typed, double-spaced, and on 8.5x11” paper.
- The font should be Times New Roman, 12 point.
- Margins should be 1” on all sides.
- All papers must include a page number and the student’s last name in the header or footer.
- Note the question you are answering at the beginning of each new section or page.
- All papers must be properly cited. Please use MLA formatting. This is the best website for learning more about MLA format: [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/1/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/1/)

**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 participation 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 Pre-Class Assignments

DEADLINE – Email must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. EST on June 1, 2017.
Pre-class work received after the deadline will be subject to the late penalty schedule below:
  • Pre-class work received between June 2-8 will receive a one-letter grade deduction.
  • Pre-class work received between June 9-15 will receive a two-letter grade deduction.
  • Students who have not turned in pre-class work by June 15 will be dropped from the class.

EMAIL SUBJECT LINE – The subject of your email should be “Pre-Class Work – COS 222”

THE EMAIL – Your full name, phone number, and email address should be included at the beginning of your email. Pre-class work must be sent as an attachment and not in the body of the email.
  a. Only Microsoft Word documents will be accepted.
  b. All assignments for each class must be in one document. You should send only one attachment with all class assignments; emails sent with multiple documents will not be accepted.

PLAGIARISM – The “Plagiarism Policy” and “Plagiarism Defined” paragraphs below (in red) must be included in the body of your email, not within your pre-class 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.

  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.

You will receive a confirmation of receipt within 72 hours of submitting your pre-class work.