All precourse assignments should be emailed to the Course of Study Office by June 20, 2013.

Course Description
This course examines the polity of The United Methodist Church, with attention to the way polity evolves historically and expresses the church’s ecclesiology and engagement with contemporary issues.

Course Objectives
The purpose of this course is to enable students to examine the polity of the United Methodist Church in order: 1) To enhance familiarity and facility in usage of The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church; 2) To gain a working knowledge and understanding of the polity of the United Methodist Church in its various forms as practiced in the life of congregations, conferences, and the connection; 3) To explore the theology, history, disciplines, and social principles of United Methodism in relation to the ministry and mission of the church in the world, with particular attention to ecclesiological and missiological opportunities, changes, challenges, and issues.

Required Textbooks
- “The Character of a Methodist” (available at http://new.gbgm-umc.org/umhistory/wesley/character/?search=character%20of%20a%20methodist)
- This Holy Mystery: A United Methodist Understanding of Holy Communion (available at gbod.org/worship)
- By Water and the Spirit: A United Methodist Understanding of Baptism (available at gbod.org/worship)

Recommended Textbooks

Pre-course Assignments:
Complete the following assignments. All papers should be typed, double-spaced, 12 pt., and done in the acceptable writing style for ACOS.

1. Based upon your reading of Dietrich Bonheoffer’s Life Together, define what he means by the following:
   1. Community
   2. The Day With Others
   3. The Day Alone
   4. Ministry
   5. Confession and Communion
2. Utilizing Parts II, III, IV, V, VI (Chapter One) of the Book of Discipline (2012), develop a “detailed Outline” for an introductory course in United Methodism that you would teach in your local church. Be sure to include the essential elements (ie., history, theology, organization, etc.) that Methodist people should know about the UMC? Use your creativity. (Write two pages)

3. Explain licensed and ordained ministry (Deacon and Elder) in United Methodism, Part VI (Chapter Two) of the Book of Discipline. (Write a paragraph for each)

4. Read the “The Rhetoric of Crisis and United Methodist Polity” in Tom Frank’s Polity, Practice, and the Mission of the United Methodist Church. Respond to the following. (Write one paragraph for each question)
   1. What does Tom Frank identify as the “rhetoric of crisis?”
   2. What is the significance of “Change as Loss?”
   3. How does “A Broader View of Denominational Change” provide perspective on the United Methodist Church’s ministry and mission?
   4. Define the elements comprising the “Outlines of a New Church.”
   5. What is meant by “A Connection of Vital Congregations?”
   6. In light of your reading, in a final paragraph argue for or against Tom Frank’s analysis of the “rhetoric of crisis.”

5. Based upon your reading of the Book of Discipline and Polity, Practice, and the Mission of the United Methodist Church, how do you understand polity? (Write one page)

6. Read “The Character of a Methodist.” What does John Wesley identify as the character of a Methodist? How is this understanding of Christianity significant for what constitutes our life together in the United Methodist Church? (Write one paragraph)

7. Create a simple, detailed outline of the following documents.
   - “By Water and the Spirit”
   - “This Holy Mystery”
   - “Renewing the Episcopal Initiative” on Children and Poverty, Council of Bishops”
DIRECTIONS FOR EMAILING PRECOURSE WORK

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, do not email the instructor your assignment.

2. Emails must be received no later than 11:59pm on the June 20, 2013 deadline.
   a. Please note that the cut off time is EASTERN STANDARD TIME zone, so email your assignments accordingly.
   b. You will be drop from any course for which precourse work has not been received after June 20, 2013. No precourse work will be accepted after the June 20th deadline.

3. The course number and the phrase “precourse work” should be the subject of your email:
   Example - Precourse ACOS Hebrew Bible
   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 or WordPerfect documents will be accepted; PDF and Mac-Pages documents will be accepted.
   b. All of your assignments for each course must be in one document, multiple documents are not acceptable. You should send only one attachment with course all assignments.

5. Your FULL name, phone number and email, should all be clearly included at the beginning of your email:
   Example: Michelle Levan
   404.727.4587
   michelle.levan@emory.edu

6. Plagiarism Policy and Plagiarism Defined paragraphs 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. 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 cover sheet for your precourse work, because it has the verification of date and time received, and your agreement to the plagiarism policy and definition, and your contact information.

   **Plagiarism Policy**
   I have read the plagiarism definition below and verify that this assignment represents my own work, except where credit is given. I have also made copies of this assignment and I will bring them with me to class in the event that any of my work is misplaced.

   **Plagiarism Defined**
   “You plagiarize when, intentionally or not, you use someone’s words or ideas but fail to credit that person. You plagiarize even when you do credit the author but use his exact words without so indicating with quotation marks or block indentation. You also plagiarize when you use words so close to those in your source, that if your work were placed next to the source, it would be obvious that you could not have written what you did without the source at your elbow. When accused of plagiarism, some writers claim I must have somehow memorized the passage. When I wrote it, I certainly thought it was my own. That excuse convinces very few.” From page 167 of The Craft of Research by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, published in 1995 by The University of Chicago Press in Chicago.

7. If you do not follow the procedure your precourse work WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED!!!!!!!!