All precourse assignments should be emailed to the Course of Study Office by May 1, 2014.

Course Description
This course emphasizes the integration of the role of the practicing pastor with the church’s theological heritage and its particular Wesleyan expression. The course also stresses theology as an ongoing task of critical reflection for the purpose of action. Consideration is given to issues, events, and institutions that form the context within which the pastor is required to think, speak, and act with theological clarity.

Course Objectives
- Continued growth of the pastor’s identity as theologian and the development of his or her own credo (a written statement of the pastor’s own understanding of Christian doctrine)
- Focus upon thinking theologically about everyday activities and contemporary events in the political, economic, and social areas of life
- Reflection upon a variety of theological perspectives in order to apply a faithful critique to persons who claim to be God’s voices in our time
- Integration of the pastor’s theological understanding in the practice and evaluation of ministry
- Encouragement of lifelong theological reading, reflection, and growth

Required Text Books and Online Readings
- The Bible (a good, modern translation—the NRV, for instance)

Purpose
This is a class in systematic or constructive theology, which provides an opportunity to reflect upon the major doctrines of the Christian faith and how they are coherently related. Although the course will deal with a variety of theological perspectives, it will suggest theological understandings that are appropriate to the Wesleyan tradition. The class aims at assisting the pastor in developing her or his own credo and in demonstrating how theological reflection is an integral aspect of the practice of ministry.
Precourse Assignments
Assignment 1: Read Shirley Guthrie’s book, taking notes for yourself on the important issues. (These are not to be sent to the instructor.) Notice that Guthrie writes from the perspective of the Reformed tradition. You may ignore his sections on the Reformed creeds.

Assignment 2: Credo: (6-7 typed, doubled spaced pages) Follow these instructions carefully. Credo means “I believe.” A credo is a statement of what one believes and how the beliefs should be understood. Having read Guthrie’s book, write your credo. What is it that you believe and why, not autobiographically but theologically? If someone asked, how would you explain your beliefs and why they are theologically important? Do not give your life-story of how you received your beliefs, but give what you believe and what your beliefs mean theologically. Do not merely quote the Apostles’ Creed or other creeds; develop your own credo. Begin your credo with the doctrine that you believe is the most important (is it incarnation, the Trinity, resurrection, special revelation, atonement, etc.?), explaining it and why it is so central. Then select the other doctrines that are important for your faith, again explicating the doctrines and why they are significant. Be sure to give an account of how God is known (General and Special Revelation), who God is (Trinity, Attributes), the significance of Jesus (Incarnation, Atonement, Resurrection), and the work of the Holy Spirit (Justification, Sanctification). (The doctrines in parenthesis do not all need to be used, but are doctrines related to the different areas of the assignment.)

In writing your credo, reflect what you hold as central but also be sure to demonstrate extensive engagement and explicit dialogue with Guthrie’s book. I need to see clearly that you have read and comprehended Guthrie’s suggestions and insights. So, do not only give a quote or two from Guthrie, rather show how his explanations of the doctrines have helped your understanding of the doctrines. Be sure to document your use of Guthrie by placing the page number of the book in parentheses in your essay.

Assignment 3: Reflection on doctrines in the context of ministry: (2 typed, double-spaced pages) Ministry is a theological work. Our theology leads us to ministry, and ministry compels us to reflect theologically on what we are doing. Take your central doctrine from #2 and one other doctrine you used in #2, and write a reflection on how your work in ministry has confirmed, transformed, strengthened, challenged, and/or deepened your understanding of the doctrines. Have you seen God at work in your congregation in concrete situations, or where have you witnessed resurrection or justification in such a way that what you believed before has been confirmed, strengthened, deepened, or challenged? Again, be sure to demonstrate your use of and/or agreement or disagreement with Guthrie, and document your use of him in your essay.

Write using your own words in dialogue with Guthrie, but don’t merely quote from Guthrie. In your own language deal with the doctrines you are using. When you do quote, paraphrase, or allude to Guthrie’s book, please use internal documentation, giving the page number of the material. Please type your work. Staple both assignments in one group in the top left corner. Be sure to make a copy of your work before you send it in.
**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, do not email instructors precourse assignments.
2. Email must be received no later than 11:59pm on the deadline of May 1st.
   1. Please note that the cut off time is EASTERN STANDARD TIME zone, so email your assignments accordingly.
   2. 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
   1. 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.
   1. Any version of Microsoft Word will be accepted; PDF and Mac-Pages documents will not be accepted.
   2. 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.
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
7. If you do not follow the procedure your precourse work WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED!