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DO 670 United Methodist Theology

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Attachments: **DO 670XL: UNITED METHODIST THEOLOGY (2 Hours)**
ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Summer 2005
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I. WELCOME

Hello, from the great state of Indiana! I extend a warm welcome to you and look forward to developing our relationship as we examine United Methodist Theology. I am amazed that I can lead this class in Marion, Indiana through Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky with you living somewhere else in the United States or world. Wow!

It is my privilege to serve as your guide on this ExL journey. I have a passion for theological thought. Theology shapes every aspect of ministry. One of the primary reasons I am a United Methodist pastor today is because of The United Methodist Church's doctrinal teaching. With your help and insights, we will deepen our understanding, as well as our appreciation, of Methodist thought and make connections to parish ministry.

I am excited about being apart of this venture with you. However, I know there may be times when my instructions and directions are unclear. Please do not hesitate to seek clarification and offer periodic feedback on how the class is going. We will be making our journey together.

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION

At Asbury Theological Seminary, there are four classes designed to meet the denominational requirements of The United Methodist Church for ordained ministry.

They are DO 628 - The Theology of John Wesley; CH 623 - United Methodist History; PM 604 - United Methodist Polity; and this class DO 670 - United Methodist Theology.

The purpose of this class is (1) to examine what constitutes United Methodist doctrine as well as its standards and norms, (2) to survey Methodist theology after John Wesley to the present with a special focus upon its American developments, (3) and to study a variety of theological perspectives existing presently within the denomination.

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES

As a result of this course, our class both individually and corporately should be equipped to do the following:

- (1) We will be able to appreciate, articulate and explain United Methodist doctrinal standards.
- (2) We will be acquainted with some of the representative theological trends, movements, and theologians within United Methodism.
- (3) We will be acquainted with some of the representative theological trends, movements, and theologians outside the United Methodist tradition that are impacting the United Methodist Church.
- (4) We will be able to critically assess past and present theological trends in light of United Methodist doctrinal standards.
- (5) We will be able to recognize the relationship of United Methodist Theology to all spheres of parish and denominational life and make applications.
- (6) We will be prepared to address the doctrinal questions, stated in The Discipline of the United Methodist Church, which are a part of the Church's ordination requirements.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The success of our class is dependent on the timely completion of all assignments, in active participation in class discussion, and in building relationships with one another. During the semester you will be required to do the following for individual grades:

- (1) Assigned Readings: You will be responsible for all reading assignments specified in each module. Reading must be completed during the two - week period assigned in the syllabus. This will be the key to your participation in the Discussion Center. (10% of final grade)
- (2) Research Paper: You will select a topic from those covered during the semester and write a 10-15 page research paper (typed, doubled spaced) on that topic. The research paper will be due the last day of class. On questions of style with regard to paper

organization and references, see Carole Slade, *Form and Style: Research Papers, Reports, Theses* (10th ed.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997). (30% of final grade)

(3) Reflective Essays: You will be given a reflective question in modules 02 - 06 (a total of five questions) to help you critically process course materials and connect it to the local church. These essays (700-900 words) will be done individually and in groups and posted in the Discussion Center for group response. (40% of final grade)

(4) Class Participation: You will actively and thoughtfully participate as a member of a learning community. DO670XL is not an independent study. We will be interacting with and learning from one another. Expectations will be spelled out in each module. (20 % of final grade)

During the semester you are asked and encouraged to do the following:

(1) Pray Daily for All Participants in Our Course: I encourage you to pray for everyone in our class and for our ExL office. Please feel free to share prayer requests through out the semester. Know that I will pray daily for you individually and as a group.

(2) Enjoy and Go Deeper: God has given us the awesome ability to know each other and to know Him. This semester in our work, in our discussions, in our readings, and in our chats we will have an opportunity to deepen our connection to Christ and to deepen our relationship with each other.

V. ASSIGNED TEXTS

These textbooks may be obtained from the Asbury Theological Seminary Cokesbury Bookstore. You may e-mail your request to exlbooks@asburyseminary.edu or call (859)-858-4242.

- *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*, 2000.
- Abraham, William J. *Waking from Doctrinal Amnesia: The Healing of Doctrine in The United Methodist Church*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995.
- Chiles, Robert E. *Theological Transitions in American Methodism: 1790-1935*, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984.
- Campbell, Dennis. *United Methodism and American Culture Vol. III, Doctrines and Disciplines*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999.

VI. COURSE OUTLINE

The following is a broad outline of the seven modules for the course. A detailed outline with specific instructions, assignments, and a complete list of assigned reading will be given when the class begins.

Our course will begin on Monday, June 6 at 12:00 noon (ET). On that day the first complete module will be accessible within the Course Center. A new module will be accessible every 11 days by 12:00 noon (ET) on the dates specified. Each module will close at 11:00 p.m. (ET) on the dates specified.

Module 01: Introduction and United Methodist Doctrinal Standards

- Module begins June 6 and ends June 16.
- Assigned Reading:
The Book of Discipline 1996, pp. 39-83.
Waking from Doctrinal Amnesia, entire book.

Module 02: UM Doctrinal Standards and Theological Task

- Module begins June 17 and ends June 27.
- Assigned Reading:
United Methodism and American Culture: Doctrines and Disciplines, entire book.

Module 03: Theological Developments in American Methodism from 1790 to 1935

- Module begins June 28 and ends July 8.
- Assigned Reading:
Theological Transition in American Methodism, pp 13-114.

Module 04: Theological Developments in American Methodism from 1790 to 1935

- Module begins July 9 and ends July 19.
- Assigned Reading:
Theological Transitions in American Methodism, pp. 115-213.

Module 05: Contemporary Trends in United Methodism

- Module begins July 20 and ends July 30.
- Assigned Readings:

A. Mary Daly

Mary Daly and her controversial teaching style

<http://www.deltabravo.net/custody/daly.htm>

Mary Daly “Beyond God the Father” <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/wlm/after/>

A review of Mary Daily’s books <http://www.awakenedwoman.com/daly.htm>

B. Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza

An introduction to Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza, a feminist Biblical theologian

<http://www.crosscurrents.org/essays.htm#Sabin>

Major Excerpts from Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza’s book *In Memory of Her*. Please take

the time to read through this entirely.

<http://www.pinn.net/~sunshine/book-sum/sf1.html>

C. Letty Russell

An article by Letty Russel <http://gbgm-umc.org/Response/articles/quilting.html>

An article on the fundamental principles of Feminist theology

<http://www.pinn.net/~sunshine/book-sum/russell1.html>

D. Rosemary Radford Ruether

An editorial by Rosemary Radford Ruether

http://www.natcath.com/NCR_Online/archives/061600/061600r.htm

An editorial by Rosemary Radford Ruether

<http://www.pinn.net/~sunshine/whm2000/reuther2.html>

E. Feminist Hermeneutics

An interesting Editorial <http://www.crosscurrents.org/alliaume.htm>

F. Evangelical Feminists

Go to the website of Christians for Biblical Equality at <http://www.cbeinternational.org/> and read four articles of interest to you in their free on-line articles section.

H. A Response to the Sophia Controversy

Sophia and God Language by John Oswalt

<http://www.goodnewsmag.org/library/articles/oswalt-ma94.htm>

Module 06: Contemporary Trends in United Methodism

- Module begins July 31 and August 10.
- Assigned Readings:

(A) A Synopsis of Process Thought: <http://ctr4process.org/Process/CPSSynopsis.htm>

(B) About Alfred N. Whitehead: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/whitehead/>

(C) About Charles Hartshorne: <http://ctr4process.org/Process/CPSHartshorne.htm>

(D) A Historical Overview of the Development of Process theology:

<http://www.mb-soft.com/believe/txn/process.htm>

(E) A Short Overview of Process Theology's Treatment of Theodicy:

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/3443/whatispr.htm>

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/3443/whatisth.htm>

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/3443/asolutio.htm>

(F) A more Detailed Look at Process Theology's Treatment of Theodicy:

<http://members.optusnet.com.au/~gjmoses/proevil.htm>

(G) An Interview with David Ray Griffin:

<http://www.context.org/ICLIB/IC24/Griffin.htm>

Module 07: Contemporary Trends in United Methodism and Conclusion

- Module begins August 11 and ends August 22.
- Assigned Readings:

(A) Liberation Theology

(1) A short history of liberation theology by two of the world's leading liberation theologians: Leonardo and Clodovis Boff : <http://www.landreform.org/boff2.htm>

(2) An assessment of the future of liberation theology:

http://www.umich.edu/~iinet/journal/vol2no2/v2n2_The_Future_of_Liberation_Theology.html

(3) A summary and Evangelical critique of Latin America liberation theology:

<http://home.earthlink.net/~ronrhodes/Liberation.html>

(B) Historical/Critical Work on the Historical Jesus

(1) An interview and discussion with Marcus Borg, N.T. Wright, Elaine Pagels, John Dominic Crossan, Karen King, and Richard Hayes:

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/bc/9b2/9b2038.html>

(2) A review of Marcus Borg's understanding of Jesus Christ:

<http://www.united.edu/portrait/>

(You do not have to read, but if you get the time, a wonderfully helpful site) The best web site on the New Testament and scholarship: <http://www.ntgateway.com/>

- **Term paper due by Thursday, August 25.**

VII. GRADING

Asbury Theological Seminary uses the 4.00-point system for grading and evaluation. The grading system is:

A 4.00

Exceptional work: outstanding achievement of course objectives

A- 3.70

B+ 3.30

Good work: substantial achievement of course objectives

B 3.00

B- 2.70

C+ 2.30

Acceptable work: essential achievement of course objectives

C 2.00

C- 1.70

D+ 1.30

Marginal work: minimal or inadequate achievement of course objectives

D 1.00

D- 0.70

F 0.00

Unacceptable work: failure of course objectives

VIII. CONTACT AND INTERACTION WITH YOUR GUIDE

During the course of the semester, as your guide, I want to be available to you. Here are some of the ways you can depend on me to be there for you.

(1) As specified earlier, I will have all of your materials and assignments on-line by 12:00 noon (ET) at the starting date for each of our seven learning modules.

(2) I will also check my e-mail most weekdays in case of a question or an "urgent" message (simply write URGENT in caps in the subject line).

(3) I will offer, as far as possible, prompt feedback to your essays and questions.

(4) If you can afford the phone call, I would be glad to talk to you in person or you can leave a voice mail with me at (765)-677-0972 and I will return your call.

(5) While I might not participate in all the discussions, I will monitor our group conversations and participate as needed.

(6) I will be praying for you and thinking of you as we study and grow together through this experience.

IX. WINDOWS AND ICONS

While you have been instructed in the use of the items in the DO670XL folder, I will review their uses for this class.

The Course Center: The Course Center will contain a copy of the final official syllabus

for our class as well as all our class modules.

The Discussion Center: The Discussion Center will be used for all group communications. Anytime you have a question or comment about the course, the modules, assignments, or anything else of interest to all of us you should post it to the Discussion Center.

The DO670XL Office: The DO670XL Office is for private correspondence between you and me. Items you do not want to appear before your fellow participants or items you think may embarrass me need to be posted here.

The Archives Center: The Archive Center will be used for storing correspondence that has already been explored during the semester in the Discussion Center. This will be done after the completion of each module and at my discretion.

The Chat Center: The Chat Center is intended primarily for real-time interaction among participants. You can meet with other members to study, ask questions, or explore topics. None of the conversations in this location are ever saved.

The Resource Center: The Resource Center provides access to a number of specific tools available to all ExL participants. These include access to Asbury Theological Seminary's B. L. Fisher Library, the services in Estes Chapel, ExL Updates, Guidelines for Success, Helpful Hints, Interesting Links, a PowerPoint Viewer, and a Real Audio player.

X. TECHNICAL AND LIBRARY SUPPORT

When you have questions about the technical and logistical aspects of this course, please consult a staff member on the campus of Asbury Theological Seminary. These staff members are unfailingly helpful, and I urge you to contact any of them if you need assistance. Here are some of the key personal and locations.

ExL Contact Information:

For **general questions regarding the ExL program**, email
ExL_Office@asburyseminary.edu

For **technical support**, email ExL_Office@asburyseminary.edu

For **library research support**, contact Information Commons at
Information_Commons@asburyseminary.edu

For **library loans**, contact Dot James at Dot_James@asburyseminary.edu

Obtaining Library Materials and Reference Assistance

Email: Ats_Reference@asburyseminary.edu

Toll-Free Reference Help Line: 1-866-454-2733

ExL students are encouraged to make use of local libraries, if possible. However, library services are always available to students through Asbury's B. L. Fisher Library. All requests for books and journal articles should be e-mailed to the Reference Desk (ATS_Reference@asburyseminary.edu). The Reference workers (Hannah, Robbie, and Nina) will also assist ExL students with reference requests, using various online databases, or doing research on a specific topic.

To request material from the B.L. Fisher Library, begin by searching the library catalog (for books available in the library) or one of the restricted journal databases available on the library's website (www.asburyseminary.edu/library - choose "library catalog" or "restricted databases"). Then send an email to the reference desk citing the sources that you would like to request. If you need help searching the databases, do not hesitate to call (1-866-454-2733) or email the reference desk. Students who live within a 50 mile radius of either the Florida or the Wilmore campus should come to campus to obtain their materials.

Please allow 5-10 business days for all requests to be filled. ExL students are billed for the cost of photocopies (5 cents per page); however, shipping via media rate is free. (Media rate normally takes 5 business days for shipping, but it can take two weeks to addresses in the West). Express mail services (prices vary according to weight) and scanning (10 cents per page in pdf format) are also available. Requests generally require 1-2 business days to be processed. Plan ahead and make your requests early enough to allow for shipping and processing!

Questions relating to the syllabus or course assignments should be directed to me in the DO 670XL Office (open only to me) or the DO670XL Discussion Center (open to me and to all the members of the class). Sometimes, a sentence that is clear to me might not be clear to you. If something in the course is not working, let me know as soon as possible. I desire to make this internet course as helpful to you as possible.

God bless and enjoy the journey!

Chris Bounds