

1-1-2009

DO 670 United Methodist Theology

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Syllabus

Course: DO670 W1 (JA 2009)
Title: United Methodist Theology
Hours: 2.00
Published: Yes, on 12/15/2008
Prerequisites:

None

Department: Doctrine
Faculty: Dr. Steve Seamands



Email: steve.seamands@asburyseminary.edu

Office: AD

SPO: 926

Meetings:

During 01/20/2009 to 01/23/2009 on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 9:00a to 3:00p in SH230.

Maximum Registration: 50

Catalog Description: A survey of Methodist theology after Wesley to the present with a special focus upon its American developments. Assuming an understanding of Wesley's thought, the course traces doctrinal distinctions in both its Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren heritages. Theological transitions will be studied through representative theologians in the Wesleyan tradition. ST501 is a recommended preparatory course.

Objectives:

Dr. Stephen Seamands DO 770
Dr. Stephen Seamands
Email: steve.seamands@asburyseminary.edu
Office phone 859-858-2107

DO 670
2 Hours

United Methodist Theology

January 20-23, 2009

Getting Ready for the Intensive

When you come to class on Tuesday, January 20 at 9:00 am, make sure you have done five things (in the order that follows):

- a. Read *Methodist Doctrine: The Essentials*
- b. Read Part II (“Doctrinal Standards and our Theological Task”) of the 2004 United Methodist *Discipline*. **Bring your *Discipline* to class with you on Monday & Tuesday.**
- c. Read *United Methodist Beliefs: A Brief Introduction*.
- d. Read *Waking from Doctrinal Amnesia*
- e. Read *Mainline or Methodist?*

If you want to get ahead, write the five page response paper described below (see IV.B) before class begins.

The reading of the remaining texts is to be completed by Thursday, January 22 (*Straight and Narrow*) and Friday, January 23 (*Practical Divinity, Vol 1.*)

I Purpose: The course seeks to introduce students to the content and development of Methodist Theology from the time of Wesley to the present. Following an assessment of the current state of Methodist Theology as it is reflected in the 1972 and 1988 Doctrinal Statements and current theological issues such as God-language, baptism, and homosexuality which United Methodists are wrestling with, we will move back to Wesley to determine the character of Methodist theology, and then forward through Methodist history to show how its character is reflected in its major movements and principal figures. We will also consider the possibility of theological and spiritual renewal within Methodism.

II. Objectives: By the end of this course students will:

- A. Understand the current state of Methodist theology and some of the major theological issues United Methodists are wrestling with today.
- B. Be able to identify the major figures and themes in the development of Methodist theology since Wesley.
- C. Have examined, evaluated, and used a reasonable range of literature relating to the study of Methodist theology.
- D. Be able to better understand and dialogue with United Methodists adhering to various theological viewpoints.

III. Textbooks:

William Abraham, *Waking from Doctrinal Amnesia*

Ted Campbell, *Methodist Doctrine: The Essentials*

Thomas Langford, *Practical Divinity, vol 1.*

Thomas Schmidt, *Straight and Narrow: Compassion and Clarity in the Homosexuality Debate*

Scott Kiser, *Mainline or Methodist?*

William Willimon, *United Methodist Beliefs: A Brief Introduction*

By Water and the Spirit (download at http://www.gbod.org/worship/articles/water_spirit/)

IV. Requirements:

A. Regular **ATTENDANCE** and active participation in class sessions.

B. A 1250-word (5 page double spaced typed) **RESPONSE PAPER (40%)**.

This response paper will be based on your reading of *Methodist Doctrine: The Essentials, Waking from Doctrinal Amnesia, United Methodist Beliefs: A Brief Introduction, Part II of the UM Discipline,* and *Mainline or Methodist?* This response paper is **due on Friday**, the last day of class.

You are attending a meeting of the local ministerium in the community where you are serving either as a pastor or a staff member of a local UM church. Sitting around the table with you is (a) Moe, a Southern Baptist pastor with a passion for evangelism, (b) Michael, a Roman Catholic priest with a deep appreciation of the institution of the Church and the Christian tradition, (c) Martin, a Church of God in Christ (African American Pentecostal) pastor who often talks about the work of the Holy Spirit, (d) Markus, a Lutheran pastor who has a deep appreciation for the sacraments, and (e) Marilyn, a Social Activist Female Presbyterian pastor who is always emphasizing that Christians must be involved in ministries of mercy and justice. Based on your reading of the above materials, engage in a conversation with each of these local ministerial colleagues (one page each). In your conversation spend half your time (1/2 page) telling your colleague what you have in common with or appreciate about his or her theological tradition or emphasis. Spend the other half (1/2 page) telling them where you have differences with or reservations about their theological tradition or emphasis. You are, of course, representing the Methodist point of view in each case.

C. A final **ESSAY (60%)** (8 pages, 12 font, double spaced typed) to be returned on Thursday of the following Week (January 29) in which you answer the following question:

Given what you've learned this week about (1) UM's '72 and '88 Theological Statements (2) Methodism's Theological Legacy since Wesley (3) Contemporary issues like homosexuality, god-language, and baptism that UM's are wrestling with:

a) What are five enduring characteristics of UM theology? (5 pages)

b) What are the strengths and weaknesses of UM theology? (2 pages)

c) What is your formula for theological renewal in the UM church? (1 page)

V. Course Outline:

A. The Current State of UM Theology : The 1972 and 1988 Doctrinal Statements.

B. Current Theological Issues United Methodists are Wrestling With: God-language; Baptism, Homosexuality.

C. Wesley's Theological Legacy.

1. Theological and Spiritual Renewal in Methodism

Online Section Descriptions and Communication Guidelines

The Virtual Classroom is built upon the open-source Moodle platform. By logging into <http://one.asburyseminary.edu> and clicking on the Virtual Campus tab (upper right corner) you will have access to this course and be able to collaborate with participant-colleagues and me throughout the course. The following are functions with which you should familiarize yourself:

1. The **Course Information Center** contains many features to be used throughout the semester:
 - a) **Course News and Announcements**, where I will post items important for the entire class;
 - b) **Syllabus**, where a copy of the syllabus is provided;
 - c) **To Professor**, which is a way for you to post a message directly to me and we can discuss an issue privately;
 - d) **Course Questions**, which is a public forum where you can publicly post any questions you have regarding the course so others may see your message and respond. Anytime you have a question or comment about the course, the schedule, the assignments, or anything else that may be of interest to other participants and me you should post it to the Course Questions Forum;
 - e) **Prayer Forum**, which is a public forum where you can post prayer concerns and praises for all to see. This is a way for us to build community;
 - f) **Open Forum**, which is a public forum where you can post anything that is not course-related for all to see. Examples include someone getting married, an upcoming birthday, discussions on topics not course-related, etc. This is a way for us to build community.
2. **Modules**, which are located below the Course Information Center, will contain forums where group discussions will take place, documents or other files to download or view online, and assignment links where you will post your assignments to me. Modules will be clearly labeled so you can follow along during the semester.

Virtual Support Contact Information

For **technical support, library research support, library loans, and Virtual media** contact Information Commons:
Info_Commons@asburyseminary.edu Phone: (859) 858-2233; Toll-free: (866) 454-2733

For **general questions and administrative assistance regarding the Virtual program**, contact Dale Hale:
ExL_Office@asburyseminary.edu Phone: (859) 858-2393

Accessing Information Commons Materials

1. General Questions:

a. The Information Commons is a "one-stop shop" for all student research, circulation and technical needs. The Information Commons hours are posted here: <http://www.asburyseminary.edu/information/hours.htm>

2. Materials Requests:

a. To search the library catalog for available materials, click here:
<http://www.asburyseminary.edu/information/index.htm>

b. Virtual Students may request books, photocopies or emailed attachments of journal articles/portions of reference books from Asbury Seminary's Library. Please allow 3-10 business days for all requests to be filled. Contact the Information Commons for costs and instructions on how to make requests.

c. Virtual students are encouraged to make use of local library resources. Students who live within a 50 mile radius of either the Florida or the Kentucky campus should come to campus to obtain their materials.

3. Research Questions:

a. Virtual students are encouraged to contact the Information Commons for research assistance including help determining the best sources to use for a paper, finding book reviews, or research questions about using the online databases or any other library materials.

4. Online Databases:

a. To access the online library resources including the library catalog and full-text journal databases, go to <http://www.asburyseminary.edu/information/index.htm> and enter your 10-digit student ID# number in the login box. Your student ID# is provided on the biographical information section of the student registration webpage. Add a 2 and enough 0's to the front to make a 10-digit number (20000XXXXX where XXXXX = your student id).

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DO 670 UM Theology

Response Paper Evaluation Sheet

Name:

This response paper will be based on your reading of *Methodist Doctrine: The Essentials*, *Waking from Doctrinal Amnesia*, *United Methodist Beliefs: A Brief Introduction, Part II of the UM Discipline*, and *Holiness of Heart and Life*. This response paper is **due on Thursday**, the fourth day of class. You are attending a meeting of the local ministerium in the community where you are serving either as a pastor or a staff member of a local UM church. Sitting around the table with you is (a) Moe, a Southern Baptist pastor with a passion for evangelism, (b) Michael, a Roman Catholic priest with a deep appreciation for the institution of the Church and the Christian tradition, (c) Martin, a Church of God in Christ (African American Pentecostal) pastor who often talks about the work of the Holy Spirit, (d) Markus, a Lutheran pastor who has a deep appreciation for the sacraments, and (e) Marilyn, a Social Activist Female Presbyterian pastor who is always emphasizing that Christians must be involved in ministries of mercy and justice. Based on your reading of the above materials, engage in a conversation with each of these local ministerial colleagues (one page each). In your conversation spend half your time (1/2 page) telling your colleague what you have in common with or appreciate about his or her theological tradition or emphasis. Spend the other half (1/2 page) telling them where you have differences with or reservations about their theological tradition or emphasis.

1. **Quality of Writing.** Concise, linguistically, grammatically and stylistically correct, coherent and clear.

0 ----- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9 ----- 10

2. **Conversation with Moe, a SB pastor.** Clearly articulated points of commonality and points of difference.

0 ----- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9 ----- 10

3. **Conversation with Michael, a RC priest.** Clearly articulated points of commonality and points of difference.

0 ----- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9 ----- 10

4. **Conversation with Martin, a COGIC African-American Pentecostal pastor.** Clearly articulated points of commonality and points of difference.

0 ---- 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 ---- 8 ---- 9 ---- 10

5. Conversation with Markus, a Lutheran pastor. Clearly articulated points of commonality and points of difference.

0 ---- 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 ---- 8 ---- 9 ---- 10

6. Conversation with Marilyn, a Social Activist Female Presbyterian. Clearly articulated points of commonality and points of difference.

0 ---- 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 ---- 8 ---- 9 ---- 10

7. Overall Quality of Content. Clearly focuses on the assignment. Evidences depth of insight and perception. Able to make connections and discern relationships between issues.

0 ---- 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 ---- 8 ---- 9 ---- 10

Grade for Paper:

DO 670 UM Theology

Final Essay Evaluation Sheet

Name:

Write an 8 page (12 font, double-spaced typed) paper based on the following:

Given what you've learned this week about (1) UM's '72 and '88 Theological Statements (2) Methodism's Theological Legacy since Wesley (3) Contemporary issues like homosexuality, god-language, and baptism that UM's are wrestling with:

- a) What are five enduring characteristics of UM theology? (5 pages)
- b) What are the strengths and weaknesses of UM theology? (2 pages)
- c) What is your formula for theological renewal in the UM church? (1 page)

1. Quality of Writing. Concise, linguistically, grammatically and stylistically correct, coherent and clear.

0 ---- 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 ---- 8 ---- 9 ---- 10

2. Choice of Five Enduring Characteristics. Focuses on five enduring characteristics that are *central* and not *peripheral* to UM theology.

0 ---- 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 ---- 8 ---- 9 ---- 10

3. Substantiation of Five Characteristics. Demonstrates how these characteristics endure through time. Includes a significant range of examples.

0 ---- 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 ---- 8 ---- 9 ---- 10

4. Strengths and Weaknesses. Perceptive analysis of UM's theological strengths and weaknesses. Probes beneath the surface and reflects profound grasp of issues..

0 ---- 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 ---- 8 ---- 9 ---- 10

5. Formula for Theological Renewal. Offers a concise workable formula for renewal relevant to the UM context.

0 ---- 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 ---- 8 ---- 9 ---- 10

6. Overall Quality of Exam. Evidences depth of insight and perception. Able to make connections and

discern relationships between issues. Clearly and compellingly reasoned and communicated.

0 ----- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9 ----- 10

Grade for Final Exam:

Grade for Course: