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DO 670 United Methodist Theology

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PURPOSE/DESCRIPTION

This course provides 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.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will seek to equip students:

1. To explain the United Methodist doctrinal standards and theological task as articulated in the Book of Discipline.
2. To identify the formative theological trends, movements, and theologians that have shaped the United Methodist theological heritage;
3. To articulate the central vision of the various theological movements within the life of the tradition as they have been forged by cultural and historical forces;
4. To engage in healthy dialogue with theological texts in the context of intentional community and assess them on the basis of doctrinal standards;
5. To analyze the theological insights of a particular Methodist theologian and apply them to their contexts of ministry.

SCHEDULE/OUTLINE

Thr  Feb 14  Introductions and Wesleyan Foundations
Thr  Feb 21  Doctrinal Standards and the Theological Task
  Reading:  Yrigoyen, Belief Matters
          Book of Discipline 2000, pp. 41-86 (¶101-4)
Thr  Feb 28  The Wesleyan Successors
            (Fletcher/Watson/Hughes)
            Americanization of Wesleyan Theology
            (Bangs/Fisk/Palmer)
  Reading:  Langford, Chapters 3 & 4
Thr Mar 07  Seeds of Classical Liberalism  
(Whedon/Miley)  
Boston Personalism  
(Bowne/Knudson/Harkness)  

Reading: Langford, Chapters 5, 8, & Chapter 9 (197-207)

Thr Mar 14  Methodist Holiness Theology  
(Palmer/Wiley/Wynkoop)  

Reading: Langford, Chapter 6

Thr Mar 21  Methodist Existentialist and Process Theologians  
(Michalson/Cobb/Ogden/Succhocki)  

Reading: Langford, Chapter 10 (220-23, 229-36)

Thr Mar 28  Contextual Methodist Theologies  
(Cone/Oduyoye/Banana/Gonzalez/Tamez/Chopp)  

Reading: Langford, Chapter 10 (225-28)  
Chapter 11 (250-56)

SPRING READING BREAK

Thr Apr 11  Methodist Homiletical Theology  
(Sangster/Weatherhead/Soper/Jones)  

Reading: Langford, Chapter 7 (147-63)

Thr Apr 18  NO CLASS

Thr Apr 25  Methodist Ecumenical & Liturgical Theology  
(Niles/Wainwright/Young)  

Reading: Langford, Chapter 7 (164-68)  
Chapter 11 (239-49)

Thr May 02  Methodist Lyrical Theology  
(Crosby/Tindley/Green)  

Reading: Langford, Chapter 12
Thr May 09  Neo-Wesleyanism  
   (Rattenbury/Lewis/Outler/Cushman/Oden)  
   Reading: Langford, Chapter 9 (208-16)  
   Chapter 10 (223-24)  
Thr May 16  The Future of the Methodist Theological Heritage  
   Reading: Chilcote, *The Wesleyan Tradition*  
Thr May 23  Final Examination  
   Closing Eucharist  

**RESOURCES**  

**Required Texts:**  
*Book of Discipline 2000*  
Paul W. Chilcote, *The Wesleyan Tradition*  
Thomas A. Langford, *Practical Divinity*, Volume 1  
Charles Yrigoyen, Jr., *Belief Matters*  

**Recommended/Collateral Texts:**  
One book selected from the following resources (and not read for DO671):  
   William Abraham, *Waking from Doctrinal Amnesia*  
   Ted Campbell, *Methodist Doctrine*  
   Robert Chiles, *Theological Transition in American Methodism*  
   James Cone, *Black Theology of Liberation*  
   Georgia Harkness, *Understanding the Christian Faith*  
   Henry Knight & Don Saliers, *The Conversation Matters*  
   Justo Gonzalez, *Mañana*  
   Thomas Langford, *Doctrine and Theology in the UMC*  
   Thomas Oden, *Agenda for Theology*  
   Thomas Oden, *Doctrinal Standards in the Wesleyan Tradition*  
   Mercy Oduyoye, *Hearing and Knowing*  
   Phoebe Palmer, *Entire Devotion to God*  
   Elsa Tamez, *The Amnesty of Grace*  
   Dwight Vogel, *By Water and the Spirit*  
   Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology*  
   David Watson, *God Does Not Foreclose*  
   Mildred Wynkoop, *The Theology of Love*  

Or any one volume in the Kingswood Book series related to United Methodist Theology or Doctrine upon consultation with the instructor.
REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

1. **Reflection Report** (30%). Each student must complete a reflection report on each of the two following books: Yrigoyen, *Belief Matters* (due Thr., Feb. 21) and Chilcote, *The Wesleyan Tradition* (due Thr., May 16). The purpose of this assignment is for you to reflect on how each of these readings has shaped your understanding of Christian vocation and ministry with regard to the doctrinal inheritance of United Methodism. Each report must be at least **two pages** (typed and double-spaced). These assignments need not conform to any particular format. Each paper is valued at 15% of the final grade.

2. **Book Report or Class Presentation** (30%). Each student must complete **one** book report on a work related to Wesleyan theology (a book of at least 200 pages or combination of books from the “Recommended Texts” list above or a book approved by the instructor) or make a presentation in class on one of the theologians under study. The report must be **four pages** (typed and double-spaced); **completed no later than Thursday, Apr. 11**. The in class presentation will fall at the appropriate time in the syllabus and in consultation with the instructor.

3. **Final Examination** (40%). A comprehensive final examination will be administered on **Thursday, May 23**. An examination study guide is appended to this syllabus so that students can be working on the areas to be covered by reading and lecture from the outset of the course.

From John Wesley’s life and thought, a tradition was born. By him, a past was reshaped. From him, a stream still flows, seeking to express, in changing contexts, his concern for practical