

Syllabus for DS 665 United Methodist Doctrine  
Spring 2016  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course will cover the essential elements of Wesley's theology as found in select sermons and the doctrinal standards as they are identified in the UM Book of Discipline. Attention will be given to the development of doctrine in the United Methodist Church and to central theological questions that arise about the use of doctrinal standards.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- 1) To become acquainted with the existence and use of doctrinal standards in the United Methodist Church.
- 2) To understand the process of establishing doctrinal standards in the United Methodist Church.
- 3) To become familiar with Wesley's understanding of the order of salvation.
- 4) To explore some ethical implications of Wesley's theology.
- 5) To continue to develop critical thinking skills
- 6) To continue to develop writing skills

**TEXTS:**

*Required:*

The United Methodist Church. *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2012.*

Edited by Neil M. Alexander, et al. Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 2012. (Cokesbury now offers a free searchable edition of the 2012 BOD at <https://www.cokesbury.com/forms/DynamicContent.aspx?id=87&pageid=920>)

Wesley, John. *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament.* (link provided to web resource)  
<http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/john-wesleys-notes-on-the-bible/>

\_\_\_\_\_. *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology.* Edited by Albert C. Outler and Richard Heitzenrater. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991.

Campbell, Ted. A. *Methodist Doctrine: The Essentials.* Nashville: Abingdon Press, rev. ed., 2011.

"Doctrine and Theology," chapter 4 in *United Methodism at Forty: Looking Back, Looking Forward*, Charles Yrigoyen, Jr., John G. McEllhenny, Kenneth E. Rowe. Nashville, Abingdon Press, 2008.

"What Should United Methodists Do with the Quadrilateral?" William J. Abraham and W. Stephen Gunter, *Quarterly Review* 22:1 (Spring 2002), pp. 85-91 (on Populi)

"Honoring Conference": Wesleyan Reflections on the Dynamics of Theological Reflection, Randy Maddox, *Methodist Review* 4 (2012), 77-116 (on Populi)

*Sacramental Faithfulness: Guidelines for Receiving People From The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons).* Document produced by The General Board of Discipleship. (on Populi, and link provided to web resource)

<http://www.gbod.org/worship/articles/sacramental/default.html>

*Confessing Our Faith Together*  
*Sacramental Life*

*This Holy Mystery*

*By Water and the Spirit*

Some materials and handouts will be available on Populi.

*Recommended:*

Langford, Thomas A., editor. *Doctrine and Theology in the United Methodist Church*. Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1991.

Outler, Albert C. *John Wesley's Sermons: An Introduction*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991.

*The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, 1972, Part II, section 4, "Our Theological Task" (on Populi)

### **ASSIGNMENTS:**

Read in advance of each session the material assigned for each session, and come prepared to discuss the material.

Write one short two- to three-page paper (described below under "Grading") due on Feb. 23.

Write one four- to five-page paper on one set of Wesley's sermons (due at the beginning of class the day of discussion on those sermons). You will have an opportunity the first time we meet to choose which set of sermons you will write on.

Write one final paper (due May 17, for seniors due May 10).

Attend class regularly.

Turn in papers using Assignments on Populi. Graded papers will be returned to Populi.

### **GRADING:**

First short paper (due Feb. 23): 20%

Campbell calls Methodist doctrine "that which Methodists have agreed to teach." What is your understanding of how United Methodists came to agreement about what to teach?

Sermons paper: 25% (See instructions on Populi)

Final paper (due May 17, for seniors due May 10): 45% (see instructions on Populi)

Class participation: 10%

Unless an extension has been arranged in advance, late papers will not be accepted.

### **SCHEDULE:**

#### **February 2:**

Introduction and organization of the course.

#### **February 9:**

Development, establishment, and use of doctrinal standards in the United Methodist Church.

Reading: Selections from *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2012*:

The Historical Statement (read for general orientation)

From the Constitution: the Preamble; Division One; Division Two, section III (Restrictive Rules); Division Five, Article I (Amendments).

In Part II, "Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task" (paragraphs 102 "Our Doctrinal Heritage,"

Paragraph 226.4, regarding instruction of children

paragraph 324.9, regarding requirements for provisional membership and commissioning)  
paragraph 330.5, regarding ordination of deacons and admission into full connection  
paragraphs 335-336, regarding admission of elders into full connection and ordination  
paragraph 347.3, regarding transfer of ministerial membership from other denominations  
paragraph 403.1, regarding bishops  
paragraph 2702.1 and 2702.3, regarding chargeable offenses  
“Doctrine and Theology,” ch 4 in *United Methodism at Forty*, pp. 47-66.  
Campbell, *Methodist Doctrine*, introduction, pp. 11-33.

### **February 16:**

Disciplinary documents: The Articles of Religion, Confession of Faith, General Rules.  
Reading: Selections from *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2012:*  
In Part II, “Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task” (paragraph 103 “Our Doctrinal History”  
Articles of Religion reading 1-3 (on Populi)  
Campbell, *Methodist Doctrine*, ch. 2-7, pp. 43-112

### **February 23:**

True religion.

Question: What is the genuine religion of Jesus Christ, according to John Wesley?

Reading:

Sermon 43• (1765), “The Scripture Way of Salvation,” pp. 371-380 in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology* [Note: page numbers will always refer to the *Anthology*. Sermons may also be found according to number in the critical edition, *John Wesley’s Works*, vols. 1-4: Sermons I-IV, edited by Albert C. Outler (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984-87). An asterisk beside the sermon number indicates that this sermon is one of the forty-four standard sermons. A bullet indicates that the sermon is one of those added to make fifty-three standard sermons.]

Sermon 2\* (1741), “The Almost Christian,” 61-68

Sermon 77 (1780), “Spiritual Worship,” 431-440

Sermon 120 (1789), “The Unity of the Divine Being,” 531-539

Recommended:

Outler, pp. 64-74 (ch. 4 of *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Introduction*)  
*First paper due*

### **March 1:**

The human condition and God’s response.

Question: How was the image of God in human beings affected by the fall and how is it restored?

Reading:

Sermon 141 (1730), “The Image of God,” pp. 13-21

Sermon 9\* (1746), "The Spirit of Bondage and Adoption," pp. 133-144  
Sermon 44\* (1759), "Original Sin," pp. 325-334  
Sermon 62 (1781), "The End of Christ's Coming," pp. 441-450

### **March 8:**

Justification.

Question: What is the nature of the faith which justifies sinful human beings?

Reading:

Sermon 1\* (1738), "Salvation by Faith," pp. 39-48  
Sermon 5\* (1746), "Justification by Faith," pp. 111-122  
Sermon 7\* (1746), "The Way to the Kingdom," pp. 123-132  
Sermon 10\* (1746), "The Witness of the Spirit, I," pp. 145-156  
Sermon 20• (1765), "The Lord Our Righteousness," pp. 381-391

**March 22 and 29: No class Holy Week and spring recess.**

### **March 15:**

Grace and Human Responsibility

Question: What is the relationship of faith and works in the process of salvation?

Reading:

Sermon 110 (1739), "Free Grace," pp. 49-60  
Sermon 35\* (1750), "The Law Established Through Faith, Discourse I," pp. 267-276  
Sermon 36\* (1750), "The Law Established Through Faith, Discourse II," pp. 277-285  
Sermon 85 (1785), "On Working Out Our Own Salvation," pp. 485-492  
Sermon 118 (1788), "On the Omnipresence of God," pp. 523-529

### **April 5:**

Sanctification.

Question: What does Wesley mean by "holiness" or "perfection, and how does one become "holy" or "perfect"?"

Reading:

Sermon 40\* (1741), "Christian Perfection," pp. 69-84  
Sermon 19\* (1748), "The Great Privilege of Those that are Born of God," pp. 183-192  
Sermon 45\* (1760), "The New Birth"  
Sermon 13• (1763), "On Sin in Believers," pp. 359-370  
Sermon 14• (1767), "The Repentance of Believers," pp. 405-418

### **April 12:**

The Christian life.

Proper commitment to doctrine.

Question: What should the life of the "real Christian" be like?

Reading:

- Sermon 16\* (1746), "The Means of Grace," pp. 157-172
- Sermon 24\* (1748), "Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, IV," pp. 193-206
- Sermon 28\* (1748), "Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, VIII," pp. 239-254
- Sermon 50\* (1760), "The Use of Money," pp. 347-358
- Sermon 87 (1781), "The Danger of Riches," pp. 451-464
- Sermon 38\* (1750), "A Caution Against Bigotry," pp. 287-298
- Sermon 39\* (1750), "Catholic Spirit," pp. 299-310

**April 19:**

Reading: Selections in *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*:

- The preface.
- The preface to Matthew.
- The Beatitudes (Mt. 5: 1-12)
- Matthew 27: 25, 28: 19
- Luke 15: 11-32
- Romans chapters 3 and 8
- I Timothy 2: 1-15
- Revelation 1: 1-3 (his first note)

**April 26:**

Doctrine and theology.

Reading:

Langford, pp. 20-25 (ch. 1, Outler), pp. 93-108 (ch. 7, Heitzenrater)

**May 3:**

Our Theological Task

Reading: *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2012*, Part II, Section 4 of "Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task" (paragraph 104)

Campbell, *Methodist Doctrine*, ch. 1, pp. 35-42.

"What Should United Methodists Do with the Quadrilateral?" William J. Abraham and W. Stephen Gunter, *Quarterly Review* 22:1 (Spring 2002), pp. 85-91 (on Populi)

"Honoring Conference": Wesleyan Reflections on the Dynamics of Theological Reflection, Randy Maddox, *Methodist Review* 4 (2012), 77-116 (on Populi)

Recommended reading: *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 1972*, Part II, section 4, "Our Theological Task" (on Populi); Outler, "The Wesleyan Quadrilateral--in John Wesley," ch 6 in Langford, *Doctrine and Theology*.

**May 10:**

Sacramental doctrine:

Reading: *This Holy Mystery* and *By Water and the Spirit* (on Populi)

Recommended: An Open Table: How United Methodists Understand Communion (link on Populi)

**May 17:**

Doctrine in the ecumenical life of the church.

Reading: *Sacramental Faithfulness: Guidelines for Receiving People From The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons)* (on Populi)

*Confessing Our Faith Together* (on Populi)

*Sacramental Life* (on Populi)

**Final paper due May 17 by midnight. (Seniors must turn in final paper on May 10.)**

**ADA**—MTSO seeks to remove barriers to inclusion in its learning communities. Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs at the beginning of the semester. Please contact the Director of Student Services to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Any accommodation must be agreed upon prior to the due date of the affected course requirement.

**Please see Student Handbook for sections providing policy details on the following:**

**Class attendance**—Regular attendance is expected in all classes. During unavoidable absences, students are responsible for missed work. An excessive number of absences may result in grade reduction or course failure, despite successful completion of all assigned work. In most cases, a student will not be allowed credit for a course if he or she is absent for 25% of the class sessions. As it relates to blended courses, students may not be allowed credit if they are absent for 25% of class meetings or if 25% of online course work is not completed. Use of Skype or similar technology is not a substitute for attendance in class.

**Electronic Devices**—Turn mobile devices off or “vibrate only” during class. Browsing the Internet or engaging in email or social network conversations during class is discouraged. Instructors have the right to impose grading penalties for disruptions due to electronic devices.

**Human Subjects Research**—Research by MTSO faculty, students, or affiliated personnel that collects non-public information from and/or about living individuals or contemporary organizations/groups for purposes of publication or public presentation (including class assignments) must be approved by the Human Subjects Research Committee. MTSO faculty, students, or affiliated personnel should err on the side of caution and apply for committee approval of any activity that may fit this description.

**Inclusive Language**—In accordance with MTSO’s policy on inclusive language, all students are expected to use gender inclusive or gender neutral language in their writing and in the classroom discussions when referring to human beings.

**Incompletes**—To receive a course grade of Incomplete, students must submit the petition form from the Registrar with all signatures to the Dean's Office before the last day of regularly scheduled classes. See Student Handbook for intensive term deadlines. Any petition submitted without a due date for outstanding work will be denied. If work is not complete by the due date the Registrar will record the grade of F for the course.

**Pass/Fail**—The decision to exercise this option must be made before the end of the second week of the course by completing the appropriate form available through the Registrar. To receive a grade of "pass" the student must do at least the equivalent of C minus work in the course.

**Plagiarism**—Plagiarism is a serious matter of academic, professional, and personal integrity. All students at the masters level are expected to understand the requirement to provide attribution when the work of others is used. Students are also expected to be familiar with and understand the school's policy on Academic Misconduct found in the Student Handbook. If students have questions about attribution, citation, and how to avoid plagiarism they should consult the course instructor, the school's writing instructor, or library staff. When in doubt it is better to provide attribution even if one is uncertain about the proper citation form. Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct that results in disciplinary actions per the Student Handbook that may range from failing an assignment or course to expulsion.