

COS 222 Theological Heritage II: Early Church

Effective beginning Spring 2019 term

Course Goals - 222 Theological Heritage II: Early Church

This course focuses on the history and theology of the Church through the first five centuries. Using primary sources, students will reflect on significant individuals, events, and the articulation of the Christian faith during this period.

Students will be able to:

1. Understand and articulate the doctrine of the Trinity, and the historical debates in the early Church around the person and nature of Christ.
2. Understand and articulate a doctrine of salvation in light of the controversies of the early church.
3. Understand the history and significance of the creeds and ecumenical councils.
4. Appropriate historical theology for pastoral ministry.

Text Book List

Unless otherwise noted, please use most recent edition.

Required Texts for 222 - Theological Heritage II: Early Church

1. Justo L. González, *The Story of Christianity, Volume 1, revised edition*; Harper San Francisco, 2010
(ISBN 978-0061855887)
2. Roberta Bondi, *To Pray and to Love: Conversation on Prayer with the Early Church*; Fortress Minneapolis, 1991
(ISBN 978-0800625115)

Recommended

1. Roberta Bondi, *To Love as God Loves: Conversations with the Early Church*; Fortress Press; 8/25/04 edition
(September 1, 1987) (ISBN 978-0800620417)

References

None

Advance Assignments

1. Read *The Story of Christianity, vol. 1*, the sections on “The Early Church” and “The Imperial Church,” pp. 1-262.
2. Carefully re-read chapter 8 “The Deposit of the Faith” in *The Story of Christianity, vol. 1*. Read the selection from “The Gospel of Thomas” and the two selections from Irenaeus “Against Heresies” in *Readings in the History of Christian Theology, vol. 1*. Drawing on these readings, write a five-page paper in which you explain the theological conflict between the Gnostics and Marcion, on the one hand, and Irenaeus, on the other. Explain what each side stood for and why their position was important to them. Support your analysis with reference to the secondary text (*The Story of Christianity, vol. 1* and the primary texts, in *Readings in the History of Christian Theology, vol. 1*) Discuss what’s at stake in this conflict, especially from Irenaeus point of view. In a final paragraph, discuss the importance of this theological conflict for faith and ministry today.
3. Carefully re-read chapters 17-19 in *The Story of Christianity, vol. 1*. Read the selections from Athanasius (both selections), from Arius, and the Nicene Creed in *Readings in the History of Christian Theology, vol. 1*. Drawing on these readings, write a five-page paper in which you explain the theological conflict between Athanasius and Arius. Explain what each side stood for and why their position was important to them. Support your analysis with reference to the secondary text (*The Story of Christianity, vol. 1* and the primary texts in *Readings in the History of Christian Theology, vol. 1*). Discuss what’s at stake in this conflict from both Arius and Athanasius points of view. In a final paragraph discuss the important of this theological conflict for faith and ministry today.
4. Re-read chapter 15, “The Monastic Reaction” in *The Story of Christianity, vol. 1*. Read Roberta C. Bondi, *To Pray and to Love*. Write a five-page paper in which you explain Bondi’s view of sin and salvation, that is, the human condition and how grace brings us to new life. Support your explanation with reference to *To Pray and to Love*, particularly chapter 2 “Living into the Image of God,” chapter 4 “Only Myself and God,” and chapter 5 “Our Life and Death is with Our Neighbor.” Having explained Bondi’s view of the human condition and the work of grace in us, discuss what you see to be the strengths and weaknesses of her position and how her understandings might inform your ministry.

Saint Paul Course of Study School Expectations and Preparation

The mission of the Course of Study School is to educate and share in the formation of Local Pastors as effective and faithful spiritual leaders of the ministry of the Church, the body of Jesus Christ in the world.

Our agreement with the Division of Ordained Ministry, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry in Nashville is that we will provide a year-round experiential and classroom learning process. This process assumes cooperation between the instructors, the students and clergy mentors in the annual conferences.

The Division of Ordained Ministry recommends a guideline of 15-20 pages of written work for each course. That translates into 30 to 40 pages of written work for each module. If a student takes four classes (two modules), that individual will write about 80 pages during the year. Those papers are based on the reading of approximately 4-5 textbooks per class.

In order to keep our promise of **year-round learning**, and to keep the assignments from accumulating and overwhelming a student, the book list is available for students so that they can **begin reading** as early as possible. We encourage students to put dates on their calendars and plan for reading days, as well as time for writing. You know the demands of certain religious seasons such as Advent, Lent, and Easter. Work around them.

The writing manual approved by the Saint Paul Course of Study School faculty is: **Turabian's A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 7th edition**. It is recommended that each student have a good collegiate-size American English dictionary of the student's choice in paperback or hardcover and copyrighted since 1998.

Related to Structure

- Use Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th edition. You may find further help at www.eturabian.com.
- Unless otherwise indicated, all papers must be typed, 1" margins on all sides, Arial 11 or Times New Roman 12, double-spaced, with indented paragraphs (no additional line spacing between paragraphs), and page numbers. Cover pages and bibliography are not included in assigned page count.
- Cite any quoted sources with appropriately formatted footnotes (not endnotes or parenthetical notes); list these and other sources within an appropriately formatted bibliography. If you use a scriptural reference, cite the translation you use in a footnote and the actual Bible in the bibliography. Each paper should have a bibliography.
- Do not begin sentences with "and" or "but." Do not use contractions. Do not include parenthetical commentary in your papers.
- Use inclusive language when referring to God and/or humankind.
- Use appropriate formatting for page numbering, book titles, etc.
- Double-check spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence fragments, tense agreement, etc.

Related to Content

- Read the assigned books thoroughly.
- Resist the temptation to write a book report! Instead, focus your writing on what the author(s) have to say about the assigned topic(s), integrating your own thoughts about the topic(s).

Related to Critical Thinking

- Read the assigned books thoroughly, making notes of what resonates within you and what brings up resistance in you.
- Are there other books or resources that would be appropriate? Bring them into the conversation.
- Practice being in dialogue with all the authors and their material. Who would say what? How would you and the other writers respond? This practice dialogue will not be included in your papers, but it will help you to move into critical reflection.
- If you strongly agree or disagree with an author's point of view, offer your own affirmation or disagreement, supporting your view with additional resources.
- Watch for unsupported "leaps" made by a writer. What, in your opinion, is missing? Use additional resources to fill in the gaps.

Related to Timeliness

- Submit all your assignments on time.

In the event of an emergency situation, a student may request an **extension** from the Director (not assigned faculty) to the due date for advance assignments. This request may be made via email, and if granted, may extend to a *three-week maximum*. A student may only receive *two extensions during their tenure* as a Saint Paul Course of Study student – so use them wisely. If assignments are not completed, the policies of the COS are such that the student may be asked postpone participation in a particular session of COS until that individual can complete all of the work.

Learning can be fun! Consider your reading as a dialogue with authors – some will be more interesting than others. All will have something to teach us. Share the learning process with friends or colleagues or interested members of your congregations.

Book List

Each course has **Assigned Texts**. Students are required to read them, use them in their assignments and are accountable in the classroom for any discussion or presentation of materials.

Recommended (Supplementary) Texts (when applicable) are also required; assignments assure the use of the recommended books; they are not classroom texts. Assigned texts and recommended books help the student build their own library.

Reference Texts (when applicable) are valuable, but optional texts if a student wants to pursue an area of ministry.

Students may acquire the books in a variety of ways: Order from Cokesbury.com; order from another vendor; purchase a used book; or borrow from a colleague.

Instructions for sending assignments to COS office at Saint Paul School of Theology

Course of Study Students are to upload their papers through **Moodle**. You will need to set up a Moodle account in order to submit your assignments. If you need assistance in setting up your Moodle account, please contact cos@spst.edu for informational handouts. Additional questions on Moodle can be directed to our IT help desk at helpdesk@spst.edu (hours: M – F 8:00am – 5:00pm).