

2022 Advanced COS Course Descriptions

Session 1: Jan 10 – Feb 19

Adv UM History

Synchronous sessions: Tuesdays, noon-2pm

Instructor: Lacey Warner

This course focuses on the early Methodist movement beginning in eighteenth-century England. The course content explores characteristics and practices of the movement including its transition to North America. This course also helps to prepare students to participate in the life and leadership of The United Methodist Church and other Wesleyan/Methodist churches.

Session 2: Feb 28 – April 9

Adv UM Polity

Synchronous sessions: Tuesdays, noon-2pm

Instructor: Lacey Warner

The course focuses on United Methodist polity and governance including its doctrine, mission, ordination, and connectional structure. The course will explore roots of these practices from predecessor Methodist movements. This course also helps to prepare students to participate in the life and leadership of The United Methodist Church.

Adv Mission: Creative Theology for Mission

Synchronous sessions: Thursdays, 6-8pm

Instructor: Uday Balasundaram

Historically, the concept of the missio Dei has reinforced the essential nature and identity of the church as being “missionary by its very nature.” More recently, the rapid reconfiguration of cultural boundaries due to globalizing processes along with the ongoing disruption of ministry “as we know it” due to COVID-19 has revealed several gaps as well as opportunities for fresh approaches to the creative engagement of the world for mission.

A creative theology for mission invites a paradigm shift in our understanding of mission as participation in the creativity of God. Participants will individually and collaboratively engage in missiological reflection of their personal and collective ministry experiences and contexts, critically evaluate particular systemic and structural issues shaping mission currently, and thematically explore missional being, design, beauty, community, and performance as part of a missiological framework for creative engagement with the world in such a time as this.

Session 3: May 2 – June 11

Adv OT: Exegesis of the Book of Judges

Synchronous sessions: Mondays, 9:30-11:30am

Instructor: Daniel Stulac

This advanced COS seminar introduces students to the narrative rhetoric of the book of Judges and its contribution to the overall Christian canon. Class discussions will focus especially on the text's literary qualities and theological horizon. Supplemental readings will familiarize students with both the text's history of reception within the Christian church and the current critical landscape in biblical studies—the significant scholars and works, vocabulary, and concepts at the heart of the discussion.

Session 4: June 27 – Aug 6

Adv UM Doctrine

Synchronous sessions: Thursdays, 10am-noon

Instructor: Cullen McKinney

This course approaches Methodist Doctrine with two core goals. First, this course offers a historical and theological survey of the doctrinal convictions that develop through the hymns, writings, sermons, and lives of John and Charles Wesley and form what might be referred to as the United Methodist “standards of doctrine.” The course will survey different trajectories the Wesley’s theological and doctrinal convictions take as early Methodism emerges and encounters shifting social, political, and ideological movements in the American context from the late 18th century through the 20th century. Thus, the first goal of this course is to ground students’ appreciation for the United Methodist “standards of doctrine” within the context of a historically unfolding tradition that has informed – and continues to inform – creative theological inquiry through the various embodied forms Methodism has taken. The second goal of this course is to equip students to participate in the traditions of hymnody, preaching, writing, and practices embodied through the Methodist movements, as a way of forming Christ-shaped leaders in the Wesleyan tradition today. Overall, this course will equip students with both skills and historical knowledge to resource multiple trajectories within the Methodist tradition in order to think and preach from a Wesleyan perspective with confidence to lead the United Methodist Church in the 21st century.

Adv NT: Exegesis of Mark

Synchronous sessions: Tuesdays, 10am-noon

Instructor: Chris Blumhofer

This course is a study of the Gospel of Mark and its distinctive witness to the good news of Jesus Christ. Each week, we will give our attention to the theological vision and literary shape of selected texts from the Gospel. We will consider Mark's rootedness in a particular historical, cultural, and theological context, how it has been read and interpreted throughout its long history in the church, and its implications for Christian faith today.