2023 Advanced COS Course Descriptions

Session 1: January 2 – February 11

Adv Theology: Theology of Leadership
Synchronous sessions: Mondays, 6:30-8:30pm
Instructor: Jon Tschanz

This course will attempt to answer the question, "What is Christ-like leadership?" through the three-fold offices of Christ, also called the munus triplex. The munus triplex - the priestly, prophetic, and royal offices of Christ - will help guide us theologically as we look at our own witness as Christian leaders. When we start here, our work as leaders will open us up to ways where we can participate in the vulnerable, imaginative and transformative life of Christ.

Session 2: February 27 – April 15 (no classes Holy Week Apr 2-9)
Residential Weekend required: April 14 and 15; details to follow

Adv Worship: Cosmic Child’s Play for Real – The Art of Leading Worship & the Sacraments Well
Synchronous sessions: Mondays, 6:30-8:30pm
Instructor: Lester Ruth

To learn the art of leading corporate Christian worship playfully serious is the goal of this course. Through exercises, memorization, readings, and practice, this workshop-type course seeks to equip leaders of worship with the perspective and capacities to assist worshipers in discerning the wonders of God’s realm even now on earth as experienced in worship. The course starts with an emphasis upon a student’s formation as a worship leader and then transitions to opportunities to practice leading worship well, playfully, and seriously. One focus in the course will be upon the administration of the Lord’s Supper and Baptism across both traditional and contemporary styles.

Session 3: May 15 – June 24

Adv Preaching: Preaching the Powers and Principalities
Synchronous sessions: Wednesdays, 10am-noon
Instructor: Megan Pardue

This course will examine what the New Testament calls the powers and principalities. We know that there are material and spiritual systems and structures (powers and principalities) that hold people captive at work in the world. But what are they? How do they work? In this class, we will explore the powers and principalities, the hold that they have on us, and how preaching opens a space for resistance in our world today.

Adv Church History/Adv Women’s Studies: Women in Early Christianity (choose one for credit)
Synchronous sessions: Wednesdays, 1-3pm
Instructor: Elizabeth Schrader
In this course, students will be given an in-depth look at some of the most influential women in Christianity during its first four centuries. We will begin with women in the Gospels (Mary, the mother of Jesus; Mary Magdalene; and Mary and Martha) and will then move on to learn about women who were very influential in early Christianity (Thecla, Perpetua and Felicitas, and Macrina). The goal of the course is for students to understand the manifold ways that women were portrayed in early Christianity, and also to see how women shaped the movement that would eventually become the world's most popular religion.

Session 4: July 10 – August 19

Adv Church History/Adv Black Church Studies: American Christianity and Our Future’s Formation (choose one for credit)
Synchronous sessions: Mondays, 6:30-8:30pm
Instructor: Cameron Merrill

How do we do theology today inside something called “American Christianity”? This course will do a deep dive on American civil religion in the 20th and 21st centuries, listening for how we got to where we are and to those who have criticized—internally and externally—the “gospel” proclaimed in these lands. This exploration will be done while thinking critically about our work in the local church and how we should imagine Christian formation into the future.

Session 5: September 4 – October 14

Adv Church History/Adv Pastoral Care: Caring for the Soul: Models and Methods of Pastoral Care in Early Christianity (choose one for credit)
Synchronous sessions: Tuesdays, 6-8pm
Instructor: Nathan Tilley

This course explores how early Christians understood and practiced the task of guiding others on the path to holiness. We will read the writings from priests, bishops, monks, laypersons, and others who served as spiritual guides to see how they approached caring for souls and guiding their congregations. We will focus especially on preaching, teaching, spiritual direction, and friendship. Looking at these topics will give us not only insight into models of pastoral care but also an encounter with classic writings of early Christian spirituality. We will read sources with a historical approach and also consider how these earlier Christian periods might offer renewal for pastoral ministry today.

Session 6: October 30 – December 16 (no classes Thanksgiving Week Nov 20-24)

Adv TBD
Synchronous sessions: TBD
Instructor: TBD