

Advanced Course of Study: United Methodist History

Pre-Class Assignment

Contact Information:

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Learning Goals:

1. Context: To be familiar with the background and continuing context (social, historical, cultural, and religious) within the tradition originated and developed in England and America.
2. Content: To examine the formative events, person, issues, and movements.
 - a. Origins: to understand formative factors in the rise of various facets of the tradition.
 - b. Organization: to understand the development of religious societies and local churches, leadership and governance, connectionalism and itineracy dissent and reform, divisions and unions.
 - c. Church Life: to understand patterns of personal piety, public worship, sacramental practice, ministry of laity and clergy, and forms of Christian witness in faith and action.
 - d. Outreach: to understand the rationale and programs developed for missions, education, evangelism, and social action.
 - e. Scope: to understand Methodism as part of global and ecumenical Christianity.
3. Interpretation
 - a. Critical Analysis: to develop an appreciation for critical historical methodology (questions of “how?”, “why?”, and “what does it mean?”).
 - b. Resources: to be familiar with the various interpretations of the tradition and the basic bibliography (historic and current).

Required Texts:

Carder, Kenneth. *Living Our Beliefs: The United Methodist Way*. Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2009.

Maddox, Randy and Jason Vickers, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to John Wesley*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Vickers, Jason, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to American Methodism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Before Coming to Perkins:

Because our time in class will be limited, all of the reading assignments and the following essays must be completed *before* the beginning of the course. Your pre-class assignment must be submitted to the instructor via Canvas as a Microsoft Word Document by **Wednesday, June 26**,

2019. Students will be given the opportunity to revise each essay and resubmit them by **Friday, August 16, 2019.**

Formatting:

Each essay should be double-spaced with one-inch margins and type-twelve, Times New Roman font. Citations are necessary following every quotation and when information is discussed that is not considered common knowledge. Students are not required to use a specific citation style, so long as they are consistent.

A Note on Plagiarism:

Do not plagiarize. If you are struggling to complete your pre-class assignment on time, please contact the professor and explain the situation. Persons caught plagiarizing will receive a zero on the assignment and be reported to the Director of the Course of Study program.

Grading Criteria:

Every pre-class assignment will be graded according to the following criteria:

1. The student has answered the prompt to the best of their ability.
2. The student has demonstrated that they have read and engaged with the assigned material.
3. The student has sought to fix every typographical and grammatical error.
4. The student has properly cited their sources, thus avoiding intentional and unintentional plagiarism.
5. The student has written the required number of sentences and/or paragraphs for each prompt.

Pre-Class Assignment

Essay 1: After reading *John Wesley*, write a 1,500-word essay on 1 of the 3 following questions.

1. What are some of the formative events and experiences in John Wesley's life before Aldersgate? How did these events and experiences shape his ministry and the Methodist movement in England? How are they still evidenced in The United Methodist Church and your local church?
2. What opposition did John Wesley and the Methodist movement encounter during the 1730s and 1740s? How did their responses impact his ministry and the Methodist movement? How do The United Methodist Church and your local church still reflect these disagreements?
3. What was the relationship between the Methodist movement and the Church of England? How did this relationship change during John Wesley's lifetime? What can this relationship teach United Methodists as they consider division?

Essay 2: After reading *The Cambridge Companion to American Methodism*, write a 1,500 word essay on 1 of the 3 following questions.

1. What were some of the defining features of early American Methodism? Which of these features remain central to The United Methodist Church? Which have been relinquished? What impact have these transitions had on the denomination and your local church?
2. What important events and disagreements shaped American Methodism during the nineteenth century? How might these events and disagreements help United Methodists as they face declining membership and the possibility of division?
3. What types of reform, redefinition, and renewal did American Methodism experience during the twentieth century? How are they still evident in The United Methodist Church and your local congregation? What new reforms, redefinitions, and renewals do you believe have occurred since the twentieth century?

Essay 3: After reading *The Cambridge Companion to American Methodism*, write a 1,500 word essay on 1 of the 3 following questions.

1. Briefly summarize Chapter 5, 6, or 7. Does The United Methodist Church remain committed to the distinctive doctrines, practices, and/or polity described in your summary? How does your local church reflect and/or deviate from these distinctives?
2. Briefly summarize Chapter 8, 9, 11, or 13. How does The United Methodist Church maintain this aspect of its religious culture? How has it changed? How have these decisions impacted the ministry of the denomination and your local church?
3. Briefly summarize Chapter 14, 15, 16, 17, or 18. How has this intersection between Methodism and American society impacted the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church? How can the denomination and your local church further address this intersection?

Essay 4: In preparation for your examinations by District Committees and Conference Boards of Ordained Ministry, write two to three paragraph descriptions of each of the six following doctrines (2-3 paragraphs on each doctrine). Each essay should draw on *Living Our Beliefs* and your experience as a pastor and theologian.

1. Repentance
2. Prevenient Grace
3. Justifying Grace/Justification
4. Regeneration (or the New Birth)
5. Sanctification/Sanctifying Grace
6. Christian Perfection