

HT 440/540D What Christians Believe: Christian Doctrine I

Instructor: Rev. Dr. Elmer M. Colyer

3 credits: letter grade only

Prerequisite: HT501D & HT502D, or permission of the professor

This course introduces students to the content of the Christian faith as believed and confessed by the Christian church from the early church to the present day. **Christian Doctrine I** examines the Trinity, revelation, Scripture, authority, method, creation, human nature, and sin. There will be lectures, readings, and discussions. This will include readings and discussions of a variety of contemporary perspectives, such as Third World, feminist, and other theologies.

Course Objectives:

1. To develop a clear understanding of the beliefs of Christian faith in its classical & modern expressions
2. To develop the ability to read and evaluate theological literature
3. To learn to relate the Christian theological tradition to the life of the church & the practice of ministry
4. To understand the tensions and resonances between Christian faith and modern/postmodern culture
5. To articulate one's own theological perspective in relation to classical ecumenical Christian faith

M.Div. Curricular Goals Fulfilled By this Course (emphasis added):

- X *Nurture habits and disciplines of study, prayer, and reflection* that increase their love of God and neighbor and shape their personal and professional lives
- X *Be formed by, live in, & minister out of Scripture & the historical & theological tradition of the Church*
- X Interpret the Christian Scriptures through faithful *exegesis* and in light of the Christian tradition
- X Preach the *Word of God* with faithfulness and clarity
- X Lead worship and administer the sacraments with *theological integrity* and to the glory of God
- X Engage contemporary theological and ethical issues with *insight and humility*
- X Educate and equip individuals and congregations to live and minister joyfully and *faithfully as part of their own denomination and the ecumenical church*
- X Integrate theology and practice in all areas of life and ministry

MAMC Curricular Goals Fulfilled By this Course (emphasis added):

- X *Articulate and reflect critically and constructively* on the biblical and *theological foundations* of God's mission to the world
- X Develop skills and *capacities for faithful* and competent *Christian witness*

Course Requirements:

1. Completion of assigned readings
2. Conscientious class participation, including online assignments
3. A short position paper on theology and method
4. An exam
5. A longer position paper on other theological subjects covered in the course

Required Reading:

- Rosemary Ruether, Sexism and God-talk
 - Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, Women Caught in the Conflict
 - W. Dyrness, Learning About Theology From the Third World
 - J. Leith, Basic Christian Doctrine
 - A. McGrath, Understanding Doctrine
 - A. McGrath, Christian Theology: An Introduction, 5th edition
 - D. Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding 3rd edition
 - D. Bloesch, Essentials of Evangelical Theology, Vol. I
 - T. F. Torrance, The Mediation of Christ
- (there is additional material in the form of articles & chapters)