LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary—Charlotte
Spring 2016

Instructor: Dr. Mary B. Havens

Contact Information:
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Schedule of Class Meetings: January 26- April 27, Monday, 6:00 pm-9:00 pm

Office Hours: By appointment

Catalog Course Description: An in depth reading and reflection upon the Lutheran Confessions, contained in The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, in their historical context and as contemporary witnesses of the church’s faith.

Relation to Curriculum: This is an elective course that can satisfy the requirement for a CT elective in the M.Div. and M.A.C.T. programs. This course is a required course for the concentration in Lutheran studies program. It has no formal prerequisites.

Course Objectives: This course is designed to offer intensive exposure to the Confessional documents of Lutheranism. The Confessions will be studied as authoritative norms in their historical context and for the contemporary expressions of Lutheranism. Beyond the 16th century confessions, class time will be devoted to the Barmen Declaration and the Common Confession. In keeping with Gordon-Conwell’s mission statement and the stated learning outcomes that grow out of each article, I intend that upon completing this course, students will:

1. Understand the way in which the Lutheran Confessional documents are true expositions and faithful witnesses to God’s Word in Holy Scripture. (Article 1)
2. Understand the importance of the historical and cultural context for the development, articulation and application of Lutheran confessional theology. (Articles 2, 6)
3. Acquire knowledge of the breadth, depth, and variety of ways in which world-wide Lutheranism understands itself as a confessional movement. (Article 3)
4. Gain experience in urtication of confessional orthodox Lutheran doctrine. (Article 1)
5. Critique, refine, and augment their own understanding of particular identity of Lutheranism as an ecumenical movement within the church catholic. (Articles 3, 5, 6).

Course Requirements: Achievement of the course objectives will be measured through a variety
of assignments. The successful completion of these assignments will require each student to spend at least 130 hours devoted to coursework, both in class and outside of class. The following chart indicates how these hours are distributed across the various course assignments. More specific descriptions of the assignments are given later in this syllabus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Assignment</th>
<th>Expected Time Commitment</th>
<th>Student’s Actual Time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading for class discussions</td>
<td>40 hours</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Class lecture/discussion</td>
<td>30 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation of “stained glass” image of justification</td>
<td>5 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written Exam</td>
<td>20 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>15 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>20 hours</td>
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Required Textbooks and Materials:

Gassmann & Hendrix. *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*

Gritsch, Eric. W. *Fortress Introduction to Lutheranism*

Kolb, Wengert & Schaffer. *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*

Course Assignments:

1. **Reading (20 points, approximately 40 hours):** You must complete the assigned readings according to the schedule at the end of this syllabus. Before coming to class, you must have read the material and be prepared to engage in dialogue about the reading.

2. **Presentation of “stained glass” image of justification (5 points, approximately 5 hours):** Each student will present in class a non-verbal image of justification by faith apart from works of the law.

3. **Written Exam (20 points, 20 hours)**

4. **Oral Exam (20 points, approximately 15 hours)**

5. **Final Paper (30 points, approximately 20 hours):** Each student will write a 12-17 page paper on a topic related to our study of the Lutheran Confessions.

Grading Scale: The point values listed above mean that the total number of points available for the course is 100. Final letter grades will be applied with cutoffs as follows: A 95, A- 90, B+ 87, B 83, B- 80, C+ 77, C 73, C- 70, D+ 67, D 63, D- 60, F below 60. A grade of A+ will be given
very rarely, when the student’s work is truly exceptional. (At Gordon-Conwell, a grade of A+ and a grade of A are both counted the same way in calculating the student’s GPA. Thus, a GPA above 4.0 is not possible.)

Late work: All late work will be penalized the equivalent of one letter grade per week beyond the due date, unless arrangements are made ahead of time. Extenuating circumstances will be considered as appropriate. Work turned in later than May 25 (one month after the last class meeting) will normally require that an extension be approved by the Seminary. If you anticipate a problem, contact me as soon as possible.

Attendance Policy: Class attendance and participation are a central part of this course. Students who must miss a class period should notify me in advance to justify their absence. If a student has more than one unexcused absence from class, he/she will receive a penalty of three points per additional unexcused absence on his/her final grade.

Document Formatting and Citation Style Requirements: All written assignments should be submitted as MS-Word or PDF files. (If you use a word processor other than MS-Word, convert the file to a PDF before submitting it.) Assignments should be double spaced with 1” margins on all sides of each page, and should be printed in Times New Roman 12 point type or another font of similar size and appearance. Citations should preferably follow Turabian style, although APA style is also acceptable. Assignments must be submitted electronically by posting on the Sakai site. Hard-copies will not be accepted.

Syllabus Addendum: For other Seminary policies, refer to the attached Syllabus Addendum.

Class Schedule and Assignment Due Dates:

1/25 Overview of Course and Historical Context

2/1 History of the Confessional Documents; Confessional Subscription
To be read before class meeting:
“Introductions to Confessional Documents”
SC—pages 345-347
LC—pages 377-379
AC—pages 27-29
AP—pages 107-109
SA—pages 295-296
TR—pages 329-330
FC—pages 481-485, 525-526
BC—pages 5-17
“Three Ecumenical Creeds” pages 19-25
“Binding Summary, Rule and Guiding Principle”, FC, Page 486-487, 526-531,
Gassmann & Hendrix, Chapters 1-3, Chapter 4, “The Norm”

2/8 Justification By Grace Through Faith Alone
To be read before class meeting:
AC, Article 4
AP, Article 4
SA, Article 1, Part 1 and 2, pages 300-301
Gassmann & Hendrix, Chapter 4, “The Center: Justification of the Sinner”

2/15 NO CLASS

2/22 Christology, Triune God, Original Sin, Predestination
To be read before class meeting
AC, Articles 1,2,3,17, 18,19
AP, Articles 1,2,3,17, 18,19
SA, Article III, Part 1-4, 13, pages 310-319,325
SC, Creed
LC, Creed
FC, Articles 1,2, 8, 9, 11
Gassmann & Hendrix, Chapter 4: “The Framework” “The Basis”

2/29 Ministry; Sanctification, Christian Life, Discipleship
To be read before class meeting
AC, Articles 5, 14, 23,26,27,28
AP, Articles 5,14,23,26,27, 28
SA, Article II, pages 301-310, Article III, part 10-11, pages 323-324, part 14-15, pages 325-326
TR
AC, Articles 6,16,18, 20
AP, Articles 6,16, 18, 20
FC, Articles 3-6
Gassmann & Hendrix, Chapter 5, “The Ministry and Church Order” “The Nature of the Church”

3/7 AND 3/14 Church; Sacraments
To be read before class meeting:
AC, Articles 7,8, 21
AP, Articles 7,8, 21
SA, Article III:12, pages 324-325
“Baptismal Booklet” pages 371-375
LC, “Concerning Baptism,” pages 456-467,
“Exhortation to Confession,” pages 476-480
AC, Articles 9, 13
3/21  Relationship to other churches, to governments; Adiaphora
To be read before class meeting:
AC, 7, 16
AP, 7, 16
FC, 12

AC, 15
AP 15
SA, III:15, page 326
FC, 10
Gassmann & Hendrix, Chapter 6

DUE: Stained Glass Project (to be presented in class)

3/28  NO CLASS.
Take Home Exam  (due by 4/11)

4/4  NO CLASS

4/11 The Common Confession
To be read before class meeting:
SC, “10 Commandments” “Lord’s Prayer”
LC, “10 Commandments” “Lord’s Prayer”

“The Common Confession” and “Commentary”
http://www.lutherancore.org/what-we-believe/the-common-confession/
“The Statement on Nascent Life”
http://www.lutherancore.org/what-we-believe/statement-on-nascent-life/

4/18: Review and Conclusions
To be read before class meeting:
Gritsch, “Fortress Introduction to Lutheranism”
4/25: Final Oral Exam

5/25: Final paper due

Syllabus Addendum

Academic Standards:
Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of personal and academic integrity. Cheating involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination or the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors. Plagiarism involves the use of another person’s distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one’s own instead of giving proper credit to the source. Plagiarism can also involve over dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one’s writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures. For more information, please consult the Student Handbook.

ADA Policy:
The seminary complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student with a qualifying and authenticated disability who is in need of accommodations, should petition the seminary in accordance with the stated guidelines in the Student Handbook.

Cancellation of Class:
In the event the seminary has to cancel a class meeting (impending storm, professor illness, etc.), the Registration Office will send out an email (via the GCTS email account) notification to all students registered in the respective course. If the cancelation occurs the day of the scheduled meeting, the Registration Office will also attempt to contact students via their primary phone contact on record. The professor will contact the students (via GCTS account) regarding make-up. If a weekend class is cancelled, the class will be made up during the scheduled Make-Up weekend (see the academic calendar for the designated dates). For more info, consult your Student Handbook.

Extension Policy:
Arrangements for submission of late work at a date on or before the “last day to submit written work”, as noted on the seminary’s Academic Calendar, are made between the student and professor. Formal petition to the Registration Office is not required at this time. This includes arrangements for the rescheduling of final exams.

However, course work (reading and written) to be submitted after the publicized calendar due date, must be approved by the Registration Office. An extension form, available online, must be
submitted to the Registration Office prior to the “last day to submit written work.” Requests received after this date will either be denied or incur additional penalty. For a full discussion of this policy, please consult the Student Handbook.

**Grades:**
Grades are posted on line within twenty-four hours of receipt from the professor. Students are expected to check their CAMS student portal in order to access posted grades. Those individuals who need an official grade report issued to a third party, should put their request in writing to the Registration Office. Faculty have six weeks from the course work due date to submit a final grade.

**Returned Work:**
Submitted course work will be returned to the student provided s/he provides a self addressed and postage paid envelope with his/her final work. Work submitted without the appropriate envelope will be destroyed once the grade has been assessed and issued.
Virtual Writing Center

Free assistance in writing papers is available to students through the Virtual Writing Center at Gordon Conwell. The Virtual Writing Center is staffed by Gordon Conwell graduates, or writing tutors with specialized knowledge in writing and/or ESL. Generally, this service is available to students who have completed or are currently enrolled in one of the following three classes:

- CT500 (Introduction to Theological Research)
- CO501 (Introduction to Counseling Research)
- IS502 (Theological Research and Writing)

If you enrolled in GCTS before Fall 2008, you were not required to take one of the three prerequisites above, and you may request access to the Virtual Writing Center. Also, ESL writing tutors are available to ESL students even if they are not currently enrolled in a degree program. If you do not meet one of these qualifications, but feel you would benefit from using the Virtual Writing Center, contact us and we will evaluate your status. Email writingcenter@gordonconwell.edu for more information.