

Covenant Orientation

Theology of the ECC Syllabus

Purpose: Demonstrate by explanation and especially modeling how the ECC does theology. Show how the theology of the ECC helps form its identity and life. Communicate and explain the key theological affirmations and commitments of the Evangelical Covenant Church.

Objectives: At the end of the course students will be able to...

- I. Articulate, interpret and contextualize Covenant Affirmations
- II. Articulate the theological basis for the Covenant's positions on sacraments and ordination.
- III. Understand the Covenant's theological heritage as an apostolic, catholic, Reformation and evangelical church.
- IV. Understand how the Covenant reads Scripture and contextualize it in a local ministry setting.
- V. Discuss Atonement as an example of theological method and diversity in the Covenant.
- VI. Understand how the Covenant's theological character informs and shapes our faithful response to the whole Gospel ("God's glory, neighbor's good").
- VII. Discover the theological richness of the Covenant Hymnal, the Covenant Book of Worship and the "Core Values of Worship."
- VIII. Experience the breadth of theological perspective found within the ethnic diversity of the ECC.
- IX. Experience some of the assigned theological and worship resources devotionally through preparatory assignments and in-class devotional/worship experiences.
- X. Interact in theological discussion with colleagues both on-line and in-person both through in-class discussion and informal gatherings during "off" hours.
- XI. Identify and know how to connect with people resources for Covenant theological reflection.

Structure

Three components comprise this course:

1. Pre-coursework
2. A week long intensive course
3. Post-coursework

Requirements:

Attendance and Participation: Participants are expected to be in attendance at all sessions. No early dismissals for travel plans can be accommodated. This session is interactive and participants will engage in various exercises throughout the process.

Required Resources

- I. Donald Frisk, [*Covenant Affirmations: This We Believe*](#)
- II. James Bruckner, Michelle Clifton-Soderstrom, Paul Koptak, [*Living Faith*](#)
- III. Michelle Clifton-Soderstrom, [*Angels, Worms, and Bogeys: The Christian Ethic of Pietism*](#)
- IV. [*Covenant Affirmations*](#) (long version)
- V. [*The Covenant Hymnal: A Worship Book*](#), review Table of Contents, read pp. vii-x.
- VI. [*The Covenant Book of Worship*](#), pp. 3-29, 123-128, 397-399.
- VII. "A Study on Baptism," [*The Covenant Quarterly*](#) (Nov. 1995, Feb. 1996): pp. 1-93
- VIII. John E. Phelan, Jr., [*All God's People*](#) (Covenant Publications)
- IX. [*Called & Gifted*](#), Commission on Biblical Gender Equality (Covenant Publications, 2004)
- X. *Various readings as assigned and posted on-line*

Assignments | All assessments should be submitted through Moodle as Word files.

I. Preparation (pre-class work)

A. Reflection. Dialogue on Moodle: Read all of Donald Frisk, *Covenant Affirmations: This We Believe* (the 186 page book). Write 3-5 page review of the book and post it in your group's discussion forum on Moodle, answering these questions:

1. What do you find refreshing?
2. What do you not understand?
3. What do you not agree with?

B. Discussion. Interact with 2 other people in your group's discussion forum on Moodle (comment on their reviews, respond to comments on your own review).

C. Readings: All reading, including all on-line material is required to be read BEFORE the first day of class. So, please bring to class the first day and submit a detailed log of what you have read prior to class. For books, note whether you have read the assigned chapters/sections in their entirety. For the on-line material, list the articles you have read. If you've done all reading, just write "ALL." If you've done most of it, just list what you did not read.

D. **PLEASE NOTE:** Preparation pre-class work must be completed by the deadlines in order to attend class sessions and receive credit for the course. Students with significant deficiencies in the pre-class assignments will be asked to take the course at another time.

II. Class time (attendance and participation in all classes, January 25-29, 2016).

Please note: Because of the intensive time frame of the class, students are expected to attend all class sessions. Please plan travel schedules, etc., accordingly.

III. Concluding Assignment

Final paper: Choose TWO of the following 6 questions which make application of a theological topic to ministry. Each question should be answered in about 1,500 words, 3,000 words total for both essays (not counting writing out the question). Please do not choose both #1 and #2 as your questions.

Questions

1. How does the Covenant's affirmation of the centrality of Scripture relate to the Covenant's doctrine of the Atonement? Explain and connect both our view of the Bible and of the Atonement. Make use of the assigned readings.
2. How does the Covenant's affirmation of Christian freedom relate to the Covenant's position on baptism? Explain and connect both our view of freedom and of baptism. Make use of the assigned readings.
3. How and where in Covenant Affirmations does the Covenant affirm that God is Trinity? Explain how the Covenant is Trinitarian and talk about the importance of that conviction for Christian life and worship, especially in relation to the Holy Spirit. Make use of the assigned reading.
4. How did pietism contribute to Covenant theology? Identify some pietist theological distinctives and explain how they shape Covenant thinking and practice today. Make use of the assigned reading.
5. What is the nature and mission of the church? Discuss the relationship between priesthood of the believers and ordination (explaining each) and then discuss the whole mission of the church. Make use of the assigned readings.
6. When does salvation happen? Is it a matter of the past, the present, or the future—or is it some combination? What is salvation? Be sure to include aspects like sanctification. Make use of assigned readings and lectures.

Submission Guidelines

All papers should be posted on Moodle as a Word Doc (no PDF's will be accepted).

Please do not send papers either by mail or e-mail directly to professors.

Format Guidelines:

These guidelines apply to each assigned essay.

1,500 words, 3,000 total for both essays (not counting reproducing the question).

Double-spaced, with 1 inch margins all around; your name and the page number should appear at the top right of each page (your computer can do this automatically); the question number should appear before each essay. You do not need to type out the question, but it's fine if you do.

Use 12 point fonts, not 18 point and not 8 point (if you get my point)

Use a serif font like Times New Roman. (Serif fonts have tiny feet on the letters.) no fancy fonts because they make it really hard to read!

Use good citations showing you read the material on your topic. Footnotes are not necessary but cite quotations or references in parentheses in the text.

Please use gender inclusive language when referring to people.

IV. Grading Policy

Grades for participation and assignments will be weighted as follows: Pre-class (Frisk review and discussion) 20%,

Attendance 10%, Reading 10%, Final Essays 60% (30% each).

In general, instructors follow the grading policy of North Park Theological Seminary (NPTS), which can be viewed on page 5 of the NPTS Academic Policies manual:

[http://www.northpark.edu/Seminary/Academics/Academic-](http://www.northpark.edu/Seminary/Academics/Academic-Programs/~media/Files/PDF/Seminary/Catalog/AcademicPolicies.ashx)

[Programs/~media/Files/PDF/Seminary/Catalog/AcademicPolicies.ashx](http://www.northpark.edu/Seminary/Academics/Academic-Programs/~media/Files/PDF/Seminary/Catalog/AcademicPolicies.ashx). All students will be assigned letter grades for assignments and for the course, but it is understood that the course is pass/fail with regard to the Covenant Orientation program, *except* for those students who make application to receive NPTS academic credit. **Application for academic credit is to be made the first day of class (in Chicago).** For-credit students will receive the appropriate letter grade on their academic record.

Grade of Incomplete

A grade of Incomplete (I) is given at the instructors' discretion and is only granted in extraordinary circumstances. Instructors are not obligated to grant requests for a grade of I. Incompletes are given zero points toward GPA calculation until the course work is completed and the grade changed. The deadline for an incomplete course is 60 days after the deadline for the final assignment, after which the course will become a permanent fail (F) if taken for academic credit. In any case, a student who fails to meet an incomplete deadline will not be allowed to take further Orientation courses until work for this course is completed. Any exceptions to the deadline must be documented in writing by both student and instructor and on record in the student's file.

Grade Reduction for Late Assignments

Letter grades for late assignments without excuse or request for an incomplete will be reduced 1 letter for each day late. Students who do not complete pre-class work in a timely way will be asked to take the course at another time. Students who do not complete the final assignment on time, without excuse or request for an incomplete, will not be allowed to take further Orientation courses until work for this course is completed.

Grade Disagreement

Should a student disagree with a grade he or she has received, the student is encouraged to first contact the faculty member involved to discuss the disagreement. If there is no resolution, the student may submit, in writing, a description of the unresolved grade disagreement to the Academic Dean of NPTS or for non-credit students, to the Covenant Orientation office. The student must provide verifiable evidence that the grade in question is inconsistent with grading standards and procedures contained in the course syllabus, or with previously stated standards, or does not give full consideration to all graded assignments. The Academic Dean will consult the Academic Cabinet and the Covenant Orientation Office will consult the Executive Minister of Ordered Ministry. Either the Dean or the Orientation Office is the final arbiter of the disagreement.

Americans with Disabilities Provisions

Covenant Orientation provides services for students with documented disabilities to ensure equal access to programs, services, facilities, and activities. Students with a disability who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Tanya Constanza in the Orientation office as soon as possible. If desired or necessary, discussion pertaining to documentation and accommodation can take place at another suitable location or by telephone.