

Understanding the Christian Tradition

Course descriptions and scheduling are subject to change by administrative decision. See course offerings booklet for current offerings. Some courses will be offered on a two- or three-year rotation.

Ethics (CTE)

CTE 640 Topics (1-3 SH)

This course provides an in-depth engagement with a particular aspect of ethical reasoning or engagement.

CTE 702 Christian Ethics (3 SH)

Christian ethics attempts to reflect in a clear, consistent and accountable way on the moral significance of the church's claims regarding the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Theological ethics thus requires attentiveness to basic Christian convictions regarding God, the Church, and the world. Moreover, with the power of the Holy Spirit and in the midst of a worshipping people of God, it requires the cultivation of wisdom and discernment to form lives capable of embodying the holiness, righteousness, justice, compassion and truth to which we are called in Christ. Therefore Christian ethics requires a commitment to the life of the Church, a life that is joined to a love for the world for which Jesus died.

CTE 713 Sermon on the Mount: Peace and Justice (3 SH)

The teachings of Jesus have reached across many centuries with a strong witness against violence: "Love your enemies." People in many cultures have found the Sermon on the Mount foundational for understanding the core of Jesus' ethical teaching and practice. The earliest Christians placed this instruction at the forefront of their witness on what it means to be Christian. Are we willing to be instructed in this way of Christ today, as the movement takes form in the third millennium? This course builds on the Old Testament Jewish backgrounds for Jesus' teaching. Two further horizons are surveyed: the resonance with this core (Matthew 5-7) in other ethical instruction of the New Testament, and the strong echoes down through Christian history where this teaching has been translated into lived practices.

CTE 730 Human Sexuality: Living with Questions, Living in Faithfulness (3 SH)

We live in a time of rapid change and diverse understandings about human sexuality - both identities and practices. Such a context calls for theological insight and pastoral wisdom for those providing church leadership. The course will engage students in theological, biblical and intercultural reflection about the meaning and purpose of human sexuality. In conversation with biblical, historical and contemporary writings, this course will challenge participants to articulate the sexual theology that informs their ministry and practice.

Biblical Foundations for Justice and Peacemaking (3 SH)

See BVG 541.

Churches and Social Transformation (3 SH)

See CM 651.

Historical (CTH)

CTH 501 Christian Tradition I (3 SH)

This course emphasizes the social, theological, ethical and liturgical developments of the history of Christianity from the first century to the end of the 15th century. The course will focus on the origins, organizational development, events, persons, issues and movements that have shaped Christianity (ies) in the West. We will interpret this history by giving attention to social and ecclesial issues of power and authority.

CTH 512 Christian Tradition II (3 SH)

This course emphasizes the social and theological development of the history of Christianity from the Early Modern period to the 21st century. The course will focus on expansion, cross cultural encounter, events, persons, issues and movements that have shaped Christianity (ies) in Europe, Colonial America and the United States. We will interpret this history by giving attention to social and ecclesial issues of power and authority.

CTH 529 Anabaptist History and Theology (3 SH)

This survey course will acquaint students with the almost 500-year sweep of Anabaptist/Mennonite history, experience and theological reflection since 1525. This story of a movement and faith communities will be viewed against the background of the spiritual, social, geographical and cultural dimensions of the times. The course will be structured around key turning points in history and theological convictions with the ultimate goal of better understanding the relevance of Anabaptist history and theology for the contemporary life of the church in local and global contexts.

CTH 611 Prayer in the Christian Tradition (3 SH)

The Prayer in the Christian Tradition course invites careful attention to the practice of corporate and personal prayer within the believing community from Old Testament times to the present. Reading, class discussion, course assignments, and experiments in prayer provide a context for learning together intellectually and experientially. The course is designed to orient students to the scope of salvation history from the perspective of prayer and to invite them to deepen the formative and transformative nature of relational dialogue – God with us and we with God.

CTH 640 Topics (1-3 SH)

This course provides an in-depth engagement with a contemporary question in the history of the Christian movement.

CTH 641 Mennonite History & Thought (3 SH)

A survey of the Anabaptist movement and Mennonites throughout the world from the sixteenth to twenty-first centuries. Issues include pacifism, wealth, political participation, community and tensions between faith and the dominant culture. Particular attention is given to the Anabaptist vision and its relevance for 21st century American life.

Theology (CTT)

CTT 523 Anabaptism Today: Topics (3 SH)

Traditional churches and non-institutional movements of Christians who draw on the heritage of the sixteenth-century Anabaptists are now found around the world, and include more than two million baptized members. This course will consider the teaching, preaching, writing, and active witness of Anabaptist-related groups in many different places, including engagement with socio-economic injustice, proclamation of the gospel in diverse religious settings, facing into political and environmental challenges, and responding to war and other situations of violence. The course also emphasizes ways that North American churches can receive and give gifts within this global faith community.

CTT 546 Justice, Peace and the Biblical Story (3 SH)

The Bible has often been used to justify war and other forms of violence. The biblical story has also been read and interpreted as pertaining to only personal beliefs and behavior rather than communal concerns or social issues. The intent of this course is to explore the biblical story and what it says about issues of violence, justice and peace. How are people who embrace the biblical story called to apply these understandings to their lives, individually and collectively? How have Christian communities around the world made use of the biblical story as a core component of their efforts to secure safety, self-determination and healing? How can we use biblical narratives in our work to build peace and justice with in communities? As we examine these questions, we will center perspectives and traditions of reading the Bible birthed by people experiencing direct violence and oppression.

CTT 634 Living Theology (3 SH)

Theology is the essential and ongoing task of faithful reflection on our life lived with deliberation in the presence of God. Theology involves and engages all we are and all we do, and demands our attentiveness to everything around us. The theological integrity of the Christian community is grounded in this task of disciplined, discerning examination of the meaning of daily life in Christ. When we do this task well, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it illuminates everything we do. Through an engagement with a variety of texts, written and otherwise, this course will help us know what it means to embrace "living theology."

CTT 640 Topics (1-3 SH)

This course provides an in-depth engagement with a specific issue in Christian theology.

CTT 711 Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Life, Theology & Witness (3 SH)

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's life stands as an extraordinary witness against the backdrop of that long, dark night known as Nazi Germany. He is rightly well known for his popular and influential books, *Discipleship* and *Life Together*. However, this pastor, theologian and director of a seminary also penned numerous other writings in biblical studies, ethics, systematic and practical theology—as well as unforgettable letters from prison—that have etched his influence in large letters into the face of contemporary theology. This course reflects on Bonhoeffer's life, theology and ongoing witness.

CTT 721 Contemporary Theological Issues (3 SH)

This course is a study of the themes, assumptions, methods, movements and /or debates within the broad and complex field of contemporary theology. This course will change each time it is offered, pursuing different themes and trajectories (e.g. narrative, feminist, black, womanist, or postmodern theologies). Thus it may be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: CTT 634 or by permission of the instructor.