Course Profile

Course # and Title: RHTH 406 Grace Incarnate: The Lutheran Confessional Heritage
Instructor: Hendel
Semester/Year: Spring 2020

Course Rationale and Description
(Why do we offer this course? Which of LSTC’s degree program learning outcomes does it address?):

Most of the Lutheran communities throughout the world affirm that Scripture, the ecumenical creeds, and the Lutheran Confessions are normative for their life and ministry. The authority of the Confessions reflects the commitment of Lutheran communities to strive to be faithful witnesses of Christ and of the gospel in the church and in the world. Because leaders of Lutheran churches are expected to preach, teach, and live in accordance with Scripture and the Confessions, it is crucial that those leaders are well-acquainted with the confessional writings, that they evaluate and interpret them with the gospel as the chief hermeneutical key but also in light of contemporary theological and social insights and perspectives, that they explore their own faith commitments in conversation with the Confessions, and that they consider the meaning and significance of confessional subscription for their own faith life and ministries.

This course is intended to serve as a thematic introduction to and exploration of the Lutheran confessional writings, and it strives to encourage the learners to consider the important theological and vocational considerations identified above. This course addresses particularly M.A.M., M.A.T.S. and M.Div. Outcomes 1, 3, and 4; Th.M. Outcomes 1-6 and Ph.D. Outcomes 1, 5, and 6.

Course Learning Competencies (Learners will be able to):
(What difference will this course make to students’ knowledge, skills, attitudes, and practices?)

Students will be able to:
1. explicate the context within which the Lutheran Confessions were written.
2. elucidate the meaning of confessional subscription and the significance of their ordination vows for their own faith journeys and for their vocations.
3. clarify and evaluate the theological witness of the Confessions in light of the gospel and current theological and intellectual insights and experiences.
4. articulate the evangelical faith with clarity and conviction, both orally and in writing.
5. examine the meaning and importance of a Lutheran Christian identity.
6. explain the role of the confessional writings in shaping their own theological development and faith commitments.

7. evaluate the ecumenical significance of the Lutheran Confessions in light of the catholic tradition.

8. communicate effectively and relationally, both orally and in writing.

**Strategies for Learning:**
(How shall we go about achieving these outcomes?)

The competencies will be achieved through the exploration of the following course units:

1. The Sixteenth-Century Context
2. The Confessions: Their Character and Authority
3. Word of God
4. Doctrine of God
5. Christology
6. Justification
7. Sacraments
8. Ministry
9. Church
10. Christian Life and Two Governances
11. Predestination and Adiaphora
12. Modern Confessions
13. The Unity of the Church
14. The Ecumenical Significance of the Confessions

**Assessment:**
(How shall we know if we—students and instructors—have been successful in achieving the competencies?)

The achievement of the competencies will be measured on the basis of the following criteria:

1. Regular attendance and participation in class. 30% of grade.
2. Reading and comprehension of assigned readings, to be evaluated in a midterm and a final examination. 30% of grade.
3. The writing and submission of a reflection essay. 10% of grade.
4. The production of a scholarly research paper or a creative project. 30% of grade.
5. Course evaluations submitted by members of the class will evaluate the instructor’s achievement of the competency expectations.
**Bibliography:**

Required texts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>ISBN# (Required)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ecumenical Agreements of the ELCA: &quot;Called to Common Mission&quot;</td>
<td>ELCA</td>
<td>0806627107</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;A Formula of Agreement&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td>0800631625</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification&quot;; others by preference and interest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ecumenism: The Vision of the ELCA</td>
<td>ELCA</td>
<td>0800627407</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions</td>
<td>Gassman, Günther; Hendrix, Scott</td>
<td>9780800627416</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Book of Concord</td>
<td>Kolb, Robert; Wengert, Timothy</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Lutheran Confessions. History and Theology of the Book of Concord.</td>
<td>Arand, Charles P; Kolb, Robert; Nestingen, James A.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Text Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>ISBN# (Required)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creeds of the Churches, 3rd ed. Sources and Contexts of the Book of Concord</td>
<td>Leith, J. H.</td>
<td>0804205264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformative Lutheran Theologies: Feminist, Womanist, and Mujerista Perspectives</td>
<td>Kolb, Robert; Nestingen, James</td>
<td>0800632907</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Streufert, Mary, ed.</td>
<td>9781451414493</td>
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Additional information:

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1100 East 55th Street * Chicago, IL 60615-5199 * 773-256-0700