

Church Meetings, Ecumenical Councils, and Ecumenism (7,5 ECTS credits)

Level: 1st cycle

Discipline: THEOLOGY (Historical Theology)

Course ID: 0414

Admission requirements

General admission requirements for university studies. 60 ECTS credits in theology or religious studies.

Educational goals

After the course is finished, the student should be able to:

- Give an account of the history of Church meetings and councils in the Christian Church, as well as of the role of Church meetings and councils in different Christian churches and denominations, with an emphasis on the Catholic Church.
- Exhibit an understanding of the development of conciliarism and of the view of ecumenism in different Christian churches and denominations, with an emphasis on the Catholic Church.
- To critically reflect on the role that Church meetings and councils have had and can have in ecumenical relations between churches and denominations.

Course content

Ever since the days of the Early Church, church meetings have played a crucial role in dealing with important questions of interest to the Christian community as a whole. In the period of 1700 years, since the Council of Nicaea in 325, some of these church meetings have become known as Ecumenical Councils. Moreover, in 1925, precisely a 100 years ago, the Ecumenical Movement started in Stockholm with just such a church meeting. Taking its point of departure from this history, and combining historical and systematic perspectives, this course will examine the current status and the future of church meetings, both in relation to the individual churches as well as to the Christian oikoumene as a whole. How can church meetings best serve the unity of the churches and of Christians around the globe?

Teaching and examination

The course is partly taught online via the Moodle platform where there will be lectures and assignments throughout the course. There will also be one intense week of teaching, discussions, excursions, and group activities. Examination will take the form of a written essay (10–12 pages) that is to be submitted on the last week of the course.

Bibliography

Joseph F Kelly, *Ecumenical Councils of the Catholic Church: A History*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2009. 268 pages.

Francis Oakley, *The Conciliarist Tradition: Constitutionalism in the Catholic Church 1300–1870*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. 298 pages. (Also exists in another printing: 2008, 312 pages, same edition).

John O'Malley, *When Bishops Meet: An Essay Comparing Trent, Vatican I, and Vatican II*. Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2019. 223 pages.

Additional readings of 300 pages, provided digitally.

See also "Kursplaner: allmänna bestämmelser" (Course plans: General rules)

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Valid as 2025-10-15