

## **Interpreting and confessing frames for inquiry**

What is truth?

Courses will focus explicitly on the activity of confessing, both to clarify what sort of activity it entails and to assess its claims to truth, fidelity, and efficacy. For a confessional church, committed to an understanding of truth that is both public and unprotected by institutional guarantees, such a critical assessment is necessary. This assessment will seek to define and hold in relationship the fundamental poles of "Tradition," "Context," and "Experience" and to give specific focus and attention to the confession of the faith in today's world.

What is tradition?

... what is historically normative and decisive for the church's life and practice should provide the basic content for the courses of the division.

What is context?

... attention is focused on the interrelation of the worshipping community with the neighborhood/world in which it lives.

What is experience?

... critical attention will focus on the place of personal and communal in theology and practice as well as on the way experience and confessing the faith are mutually related.

What is vocation?

... assist them in questions of faith and commitment as well as to prepare them to minister effectively in their world with a critical sense of their context and with a confessional confidence that will enable them faithfully to integrate Tradition, Context, and Experience.

What is Lutheran?

... distinctive perspectives from the Lutheran tradition for critical and creative discernment.

What is excellence in ministry?

... By careful attention to the normative instances of the faith it seeks to enhance confessional confidence. By critical attention to tradition, context, and experience, it seeks to enhance openness to and awareness of the world in which the church must minister. The aim is to foster confidence without succumbing to authoritarianism and openness without succumbing to empty tolerance.