

ASSOCIATED CANADIAN THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS OF TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY

Graduate Course Syllabus

Course Number: THS 671 OL

Course Name: Theology II

Semester and Year: Spring 2020

Instructor: Dr. Brian Cooper

Contact Information: briancooper@mbseminary.ca

Office Hours: Generally Monday through Thursday. Email me to make sure I'm here when you are.

Co-requisites or Pre-requisites: Three semesters in each of Greek, Hebrew, and Latin (just kidding)

Semester Hours: Three semester hours

Course Description

A study of the Bible's story of creation, fall, and redemption. This course begins with the existence and nature of God, especially focusing on God's action in creation and providence. Discussion then moves to the nature of human beings as creatures and sinners, culminating in a consideration of the person of God the Redeemer.

Course Learning Outcomes

You are required to watch, listen to, and/or read the course instructional content and interact about the content in the online forums. The full instructional script along with links to the videos and audio podcasts will be posted in the Moodle online classroom.

By the conclusion of this course, a student should be able to:

- describe how theology shapes our understanding of the human condition and the life and ministry of the individual Christian and of the church as a whole;
- articulate the main points of the classic Trinitarian Christian convictions regarding God, the person of Christ, and humanity in a way that is helpful for understanding Christian discipleship and mission;
- explain important theological issues which arise in relation to these convictions, together

with key biblical texts from which they arise as well as significant historical and contemporary contextual examples which illustrate them;

- develop robust methodological processes and practical techniques for answering theological questions and developing coherent systems of theology in an Evangelical Christian framework;
- apply these principles and techniques through theological reflection and problem-solving in the context of the student's ministry setting.

Required Texts and Materials

Bloesch, Donald G. *God the Almighty*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1995. 9780830827534

Kärkkäinen, Veli-Matti. *Christology: A Global Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003. 9780801030889

Anderson, Ray S. *On Being Human: Essays in Theological Anthropology*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2010. 9781608999743

Stone, Howard W., and Duke, James O. *How to Think Theologically* (3rd ed.). Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013. (The 2nd edition will also work just fine.) 9780800629671

Recommended Texts

McGrath, Alister E., ed. *The Christian Theology Reader* (5th ed.). Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell, 2017. 9781118874387

McKim, Donald K. *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996.

Erickson, Millard. *Christian Theology* (2nd ed). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1998. Or another equivalent one-volume systematic theology.

Course Activities/Requirements

Assignments are due by midnight (your time) on the day they are due. I would ask that you submit your assignments in the online Moodle classroom accessible through MyCourses. When you go to the Moodle classroom, you will see assignment folders where you can submit assignments. Once I have marked your assignment, I will put it in your grade book in the Moodle classroom where you can check your grade and review the comments I made on the assignment (you will receive an automatic notification whenever I put a graded assignment in your grade book). Please note that I will typically deduct 5% of an assignment's total possible value for each day that it is late. I will consider extensions in exceptional circumstances such as a medical emergency (when a doctor's note accompanies the request). For the times when I allow a student to rewrite an assignment, I will generally take off 20% of the assignment's value before assigning a grade to the rewritten assignment.

Here is an overview of all the assignments followed by a detailed description of them:

Week	Due Date	Assignments	% Final Grade	Cumulative %
1	Jan 6-11	Pre-reading due		
2	Jan 13-18	Forum Week #1	5%	5%
3	Jan 20-25	Forum Week #2	5%	10%
4	Jan 27-Feb 1	Short Essay (Feb. 1)	35%	45%
5	Feb 3-8	Forum Week #3	5%	50%
6	Feb 10-15	Forum Week #4	5%	55%
7	Feb 17-22			
8	Feb 24-29	Reading Log	5%	60%
		Research Paper (Feb. 29)	40%	100%

Course Pre-Reading Requirement

Due to the condensed nature of this course, please have the following read before the course begins on January 6, 2020:

- All of *How to Think Theologically* and *God the Almighty*.

You will be expected to integrate ideas from this textbook into the forum discussions and other assignments

1. Readings and Online Forum Participation (20% of the final grade)

This course has four online forum weeks where you will have an opportunity to interact with others in the class around key questions, assignments, course readings, and/or additional lecture material. You should plan to invest approximately four hours into each forum week. Each forum is worth 5% of your final grade. Please make sure that you do the prescribed reading and watch the instructional videos (or access the instructional content in other ways) for each forum week, so that you can participate fully in the forum discussions.

Students are expected to contribute to the forum discussions by posting a minimum of four conversational (worth up to 10 points each) and three substantive contributions (worth up to 20 points each) per forum week. Please make sure that you spread out your contributions over at least three days during the designated forum weeks so that you engage in the forum conversations at different points.

By conversational contributions, I mean simply joining the flow of discussion with shorter responses (e.g. questions, affirmations, quick thoughts about what someone has said).

By substantive responses, I mean responses that show a deep processing of relevant ideas (this usually takes 200-300 words). We have a tremendous opportunity to build upon one another's knowledge, insights, and experience. Our goal is to collaborate in the forum. At times, we will respectfully challenge each other. We anticipate that this will be a rich time of dialogue. To create a safe environment for this to take place, we must build a supportive subculture that encourages one another. Disagreeing and challenging can be stimulating if done in an edifying manner.

Substantive participation may include (among other things):

- Providing and developing a new thought, idea, or perspective.
- Citing an experience or example of what we are learning and showing how it applies.
- Adding a new twist on a perspective.
- Critically reflecting on an idea/concept.
- Questioning or challenging a principle/perspective and giving reasons for your questioning.
- Integrating Scripture and other sources in a meaningful way

What Substantive Participation is NOT:

- Very basic comments such as "I agree" or "I disagree."
- Restating what someone has said (*unless there is a direct purpose in doing so*).
- Disrespectfully disagreeing.
- Pat answers that are not thought-provoking.

Below are examples of how to stimulate your own and others' thinking:

- What would happen if...
- Other times it may be helpful to...
- It is my understanding...what is your experience with this?
- You might approach this from...
- Is it possible that...
- Would you consider...
- Maybe...
- Possibly...
- Sometimes...
- I'm wondering if...
- Do you think...

Have fun!

2. Reading: All three texts are required reading throughout the duration of the course, as assigned. There will also be some short readings each week, for the purposes of class and group discussions. The course requires approximately 1000 pages of text readings plus further research for the paper. Much of your learning in this course will depend upon careful, disciplined reading of assigned texts. Value: 5%

3. Short Essay: The purpose of this assignment is to give the student an opportunity for an extended engagement with the first text, God the Almighty, especially in light of the methodological issues raised in *How to Think Theologically*. A general rule is that it should be two thirds summary and one third critical evaluation. It should be 8-10 pages in length (no longer), and typed using 10-12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced on 8.5x 11 paper. This assignment is due February 1, 2020. Value: 35%.

4. Research Paper: Students will produce a research paper of not less than 15 and not more than 20 pages in length. It is to be typed using 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced. All supporting documentation and bibliography should be done in accordance with Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*, 9th ed. It should demonstrate a clear understanding, and also seek to establish, by weight of evidence from the thoughtful engagement with Scripture and secondary sources, a thesis statement in relation to the topic under discussion. You can request further guidance from me if you require it. This assignment is due February 29, 2020. Value: 40%.

Course Evaluation

Forum contributions	Worth	20%
Readings and Reading Log	Worth	5%
Short Essay	Worth	35%
Research Paper	Worth	40%
TOTAL		100%

Near the conclusion of this course, you will be asked to complete a course evaluation. Because feedback is very important, the course evaluation is a required part of the course and is tied to the submission of your last assignment. The course evaluation will be integrated into the Moodle classroom in Week 8.

Grading System

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description	Grade Point	Meaning in Graduate Work
A+	97-100	Superior	4.30	Exceptionally well-reasoned, compelling development of position. Outstanding incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Strikingly appropriate examples. Extraordinary insight, critical analytical and evaluative ability, and creativity. Superlative style and language usage. Makes an original contribution and is potentially publishable.
A	93-96.99	Excellent	4.00	Well-argued and convincing development of position. Insightful incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Notably appropriate examples. Excellent insight, critical analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Impressive style and language use.
A-	90-92.99	Very Good	3.70	Thorough and plausible development of position. Skilful incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Very good examples. Very good insight, analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Commendable and fluent style and language usage.
B+	87-89.99	Proficient	3.30	Proficient development of position. Appropriate incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Relevant examples. Good quality insight, analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Clear and correct style and language usage.
B	83-86.99	Good	3.00	Competent development of position, but possibly with some gaps and/or limitations. Good incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Good examples. Reasonable insight, analytic and evaluative ability. Little creativity. Generally good style and language usage, but possibly with some minor flaws.
B-	80-82.99	Average	2.70	Average development of position, but with obvious gaps and/or limitations. Satisfactory incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Satisfactory examples. Reasonable insight, analytic and evaluative ability. Little creativity. Generally satisfactory style and language usage, but possibly with some minor flaws.
C+	77-79.99	Adequate	2.30	Adequate development of position with significant gaps and/or limitations. Some incorporation of personal vision as well as references and resources. Adequate use of examples. Very little creativity. Considerable number of issues related to coherence and style.
C	73-76.99	Acceptable	2.00	Limited development of position with a noticeable lack of consistency with personal vision or references. Limited integration with external sources. Acceptable analytic and evaluative ability. Numerous weaknesses in terms of clarity, coherence, and grammar.

C-	70-72.99	Needs Work	1.70	Passable but unimpressive development of position. Position not completely consistent with personal vision <i>or</i> references and resources not taken fully into account <i>or</i> examples are basic or not completely convincing <i>or</i> barely acceptable insight and analytic and evaluative ability. Adequate style and language usage, but with weaknesses in some respects (e.g., clarity, coherence, grammar). Overall quality shows noticeable deficiencies.
F	Below 70	Below Standard	0.00	Unacceptable work at graduate level. Shows lack of understanding and/or competence in several of the criteria described above. This grade is a failing grade at the graduate level.

Course Outline

Week 1 – Theological Method and Talking About God

Week 2 – Knowing (About) God: In Person and Through Attributes

Week 3 – God as Three and Yet One

Week 4 – The Problems of Knowing God When You’re not God

Week 5 – Jesus of Faith, Jesus of History

Week 6 – Talking About Jesus in Context

Week 7 – Human Being in the Image of God

Week 8 – Sin, Sex, and Gender ... Until We Die

Course Policies

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM AT TWU

One of the core values of Trinity Western University is the integration of academic excellence with high standards of personal, moral, and spiritual integrity. The University considers it a serious offence when an individual attempts to gain unearned academic credit. It is the student’s responsibility to be informed about what constitutes academic misconduct. For details on this, and on identifying and avoiding plagiarism go to the [University Homepage > Academics > Academic Calendar](#) (p. 47).

<https://prezi.com/od62fxnkbmxh/plagiarism-how-to-get-it-out-of-your-life/> (Prezi presentation)

<http://bit.ly/1p00KX3> (Google Slide presentation offering more comprehensive information)

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY

Students with a disability who need assistance are encouraged to contact the Equity of Access Office upon admission to TWU to discuss their specific needs. All disabilities must be recently documented by an appropriately certified professional and include the educational impact of the disability along

with recommended accommodations. Within the first two weeks of the semester, students must meet with their professors to agree on accommodations appropriate to each class. Students should follow the steps detailed by the Equity of Access Office on their website at:
<http://www.twu.ca/student-life/student-success/disabilities-and-equity-access>.

HOSPITALITY IN THE CLASSROOM

TWU is committed to an ethic of inclusion centred on the principles of Christian hospitality, reciprocity and reconciliation. We seek to cultivate generous learning spaces that are based on respect for differences and are open to diverse views, opinions, and identities that are thoughtfully expressed in a collegial manner. We welcome and value all voices, including those from under- represented groups or those who have been marginalized.

The following policies are optional but recommended, to allow you to efficiently respond to student challenges to the syllabus. *Click on these fields and press delete if you do not wish to use them:*

CAMPUS CLOSURE AND CLASS CANCELLATION POLICY

In the event of extreme weather conditions or other emergency situations go to the <https://www.twu.ca/campus-notification>.

COURSE GRADE APPEALS

Students can appeal their grade to the course instructor by stating in writing their reasons for contesting the grade. Deadline for such appeals is one week after the student has receipt of grade. Formal course grade appeals can be made with the ACTS Office.

PAPER FORMATTING

The preferred manner for citations is the Turabian Notes (Bibliography) format. For information and accuracy you may wish to reference the following style guide: Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 9th ed. Students may find the following website helpful: http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html