

ST 5101: THEOLOGY I: INTRODUCTION TO THEOLOGY
COURSE SYLLABUS
TRINITY EVANGELICAL DIVINITY SCHOOL
Kansas City Extension 2017: Jan. 13-14; Feb. 10-11; March 10-11; April 7-8
INSTRUCTOR: DAVID LUY
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CATALOG DESCRIPTION: This course begins by clarifying the nature, method, and necessity of theology. Discussion then moves to the doctrine of Scripture, including revelation, inspiration, illumination, and inerrancy. It concludes with the study of the existence and nature of God (including the Trinity), God's works of creation (including angels), and providence.¹

COURSE OBJECTIVES: After taking this course, students should be able to

1. Discuss the purpose(s) of systematic theology, and reflect coherently upon its vital function within the life of the Church.
2. Identify the sources of theological knowledge and explain each in relation to the governing primacy of Scripture.
3. Articulate a Protestant and evangelical doctrine of scriptural authority.
4. Explain the biblical foundations, classical development and contemporary appropriation of the doctrine of the Trinity.
5. Describe the Christian doctrine of God, and engage contemporary debates pertaining to its classical specification.
6. Identify central components for a Christian doctrine of creation, and explain their theological importance.
7. Distinguish between competing understandings of God's providence and outline some of the implications that hinge upon the matters in question.
8. Express familiarity with classical and contemporary permutations of the *loci* covered in this class and engage these 'permutations' charitably, coherently, and critically.

¹Students who feel they have covered these topics already in an earlier degree program are encouraged to refer to the TEDS guidelines for "Admission and Advanced Program Placement" located in the TEDS catalog.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Students must

- 1) Attend all classes and read all text assignments.

Class Attendance:

Students are required to attend **each and every** session throughout the entire course period. Due to the nature of Extension classes, attendance at all sessions is especially important with weekend courses. Missing even an hour of a weekend class means a significant portion of the required contact with the instructor and learning community has been lost. For this reason, students missing any portion (hours) of an Extension course can result in a grade reduction; missing more than one weekend class session **will** result in a grade reduction and possibly **failing** the course.

In the case of **extreme** emergency or unforeseen circumstances (family emergencies, death, etc.) the student should contact the instructor and secure the necessary permission to miss time in a class and make up the missed class time and assignments. Vacations, ministry responsibilities and travel plans are not considered emergencies and such requests will be denied. As the schedule for the Extension courses is set ahead of time, students should plan ahead to be sure they will be able to make it to all class sessions before they register. If the emergency necessitates a longer absence the student should contact the Dean of Students to request an extension of time, or in rare instances a withdrawal from the class without penalty.

- 2) Compose two reading reflections (3-5 pages) on self-chosen selections from the assigned reading. Each reflection must include two distinct sections: 1) a succinct and accurate synopsis of the selection's argument; and 2) a series of questions or theses, which the remainder of the reflection goes on briefly to engage. You may only write one reflection paper per Unit topic.

NB: Of these reflections, only one may directly address the topic/question, which the student elects for his or her paper. The section of text upon which you focus your reflection must contain a line of argument that you can summarize and engage.

- 3) Compose a research paper of 8-12 pages engaging one of the following topics:
 - a. What is systematic theology and why is it important for the life of the Church? (Justify and explain your response)
 - b. Specify the major components of an evangelical doctrine of Scripture and explain how it differs from alternative renderings of biblical authority within recent theology.
 - c. Compose a theatrical dialogue in which two un-likeminded theologians discuss and debate providence and evil.
 - d. A relative or friend hears that you attend Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and casually informs you that the Trinity is nowhere to be found in Scripture. Compose a reasoned response to this claim.
 - e. Do God's mercy and wrath conflict with one another?

- f. Are the doctrines of divine simplicity and divine impassibility windows or obstacles for the theological attempt to conceptualize the nature of God? (You may focus upon one attribute or both)

Note: The completion of this paper may require access to a theological library, though many materials will be available remotely through (for instance) Trinity's online databases. Please email the professor if you are not sure how best to acquire the necessary research materials.

- 4) Complete a reading comprehension quiz during the week of April 24-29

DUE DATES

1. A statement indicating the percentage of assigned reading completed throughout the course is due by **April 24**. These reading reports may be sent to the professor electronically. NB → *Though there are no specific dates by which certain reading assignments must be completed within the semester, students are encouraged to align the readings with their respective unit topics.*
2. The three reading reflections are due on **February 10** (reflection 1); and **March 10** (reflection 2). You are NOT required to turn in reflections in any particular order (I.E. the topic need not correspond with the lecture unit currently under discussion). Submissions are to be made via an electronic inbox on the moodle site.
3. The final paper must be uploaded to moodle by **May 5**.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Hart, David Bentley. *The Doors of the Sea: Where Was God in the Tsunami?* Grand Rapids, Mich: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 2005. ISBN: 0802866867

Helm, Paul. *The Providence of God*. Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1994. ISBN: 0830815333

Horton, Michael Scott. *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims on the Way*. Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan, 2011. ISBN: 0310286042

Sanders, Fred. *The Deep Things of God: How the Trinity Changes Everything*. Wheaton, Ill: Crossway Books, 2010. ISBN: 1433513153

Ward, Timothy. *Words of Life: Scripture As the Living and Active Word of God*. Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic, 2009. ISBN: 0830827447

NB: Please note the fact that you are not required to read the Horton text in its entirety. For the appropriate reading selections, refer to the following unit schedule.

COURSE SCHEDULE²:

January 13-14

UNIT I: PROLEGOMENA

(Reading: Horton, Introduction and Chapter 2)

Lecture 1: “Speaking of God with a Stutter: Systematic Theology as Risk, Task, and Joyful Pilgrimage”

Lecture 2: “Systematic Theology: *Scientia* or *Sapientia*?”

UNIT II: THE RESOURCES OF THEOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

(Reading: Horton, Chapters 3-5; Ward, entire book)

Lecture 1: “Situating Scripture: The Auditoria of Creation and Covenant”

February 10-11

Lecture 2: “Describing Scripture: The Bible as ‘*Verbum Dei*’”

Lecture 3: “Receiving Scripture: Law/ Gospel Efficacy and the Virtues of Canonical Reading”

UNIT III: DE DEO UNO

(Reading: Horton, Chapters 6-7)

Lecture 1: “Minding the Gap: Speaking of God”

Lecture 2: “The Divine Attributes”

March 10-11

Lecture 3: “The Impassibility and Simplicity of God: A Closer Look in Light of Some Widespread Contemporary Criticisms”

UNIT IV: DE DEO TRINO

(Reading: Horton, Chapter 8; Sanders, entire book)

Lecture 1: “The Trinity in Scripture”

Lecture 2: “Classical Concepts and Historical Development”

²Adjustments to the lay-out of lectures will be made at the discretion of the professor. In the case of a change, students should remain on the reading schedule indicated in the original syllabus.

April 7-8

Lecture 3: “Performing Nicene Trinitarianism: Specificity and Resonance”

Lecture 4: “Contemporary Retrieval and Constructive Reformulations”

PART V: GOD AND CREATION

(Reading: Horton, Chapter 10; Helm, entire book; Hart, entire book)

Lecture 1: “God as Creation’s Source: The Doctrine of *Creatio Ex Nihilo*”

Lecture 2: “God as Creation’s Goal: Major Aspects of a Christian Doctrine of Providence”

COURSE GRADES

Grades will be determined on the following basis:

Reading 20%

Reading Reflections: 20%

Comprehension Quiz: 20%

Paper: 40%

Grading Scale: A (95-100%); A- (90-94%); B+ (88-89%); B (82-87%); B- (80-81%); C+ (78-79%); C (72-76%); C- (70-71%); D+ (68-69%); D (62-67%); D- (60-61%); F (0-59%).

Grading criteria for reflections (out of 50 points)

Grammar/ style etc.-- 10 points

Accurate and adequate synopsis--20 points

Constructive engagement--20 points

Grading criteria for papers (out of 250 points)

Grammar/ style/ formatting (50 pts)

Organizational clarity/ thesis (100 pts)

Strength of argument/ evidence/ use of secondary sources (150 points)

VIII. PAPER WRITING GUIDELINES

- Stay focused on the chosen question or topic. If the question or topic allows it, provide a clear and concise thesis, which the remainder of your paper goes on to develop and defend.
- Make it clear on your title page which topic or question you have chosen.
- Do not exceed or fall short of the page parameters unless you receive special permission from the professor. Title page and bibliography are not included in the page count.
- Be sure to include components that will give your paper a clear structure (I.E. a clearly articulated introduction, an extended section of argument, and a synthetic conclusion).³
- Cite the sources you consult with *footnotes*.

³Dialogue papers may satisfy the ‘introduction’ and ‘conclusion’ sections by adding a moderator figure.

- Use a uniform method of notation. Make sure that your paper is typed, double-spaced and 12 font (Times New Roman).⁴
- You are expected to have at least three *unassigned* books or articles on your bibliography in addition to whatever use is made of course texts—in the case of a dialogue paper, make use of three such sources to broaden and deepen your knowledge of the issue in question, even if these sources do not appear explicitly within the body of your composition.⁵

⁴For direction on style and format considerations, consult the TIU guidelines at: <https://my.tiu.edu/academics/writing-resources.dot>

⁵For help on how to track down sources within the field of biblical and systematic theology, consult the library's theology subject guide at <http://rolfing.tiu.libguides.com/theology>.