

Course Syllabus
WYT 3325H — The Holy Spirit: Exploring Pneumatology
Wycliffe College
Toronto School of Theology
Summer 2025

Instructor Information

Instructor: Jonathan Slater, PhD, Adjunct Professor
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Course Identification

Course Number: WYT 3325H S
Course Format: Online
Course Name: The Holy Spirit: Exploring Pneumatology
Course Location:
Class Times: Asynchronous — no scheduled class time
Prerequisites: WYT1101—The God of the Gospel: Systematic Theology I, or equivalent

Course Description

This course explores the identity and mission of the Holy Spirit through listening to the witness of the Scriptures and the early church, and through critical engagement with contemporary conversations about the Spirit. The first half of the course addresses Biblical foundations and patristic developments, with a particular focus on the Spirit in relation to the doctrine of the Trinity. The second half explores a number of contemporary issues in pneumatology. Topics to be covered include: the Spirit in relation to creation and contemporary cosmology; the Spirit in relation to the Church, Scripture, prayer, and the Christian life; Pentecostal and charismatic perspectives on the Spirit; and the task of discernment of the Spirit in the Church and the world.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts/Bibliography

- Daniel Castelo, *Pneumatology: A Guide for the Perplexed* (Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015)
- Anthony Thiselton, *A Shorter Guide to the Holy Spirit: Bible, Doctrine, Experience* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016) **Note:** It is strongly recommended that students read pages 1 – 75 of the Thiselton text prior to the beginning of the course.
- Additional readings will be available through the course site on Quercus.

Course Website(s)

- Quercus: <https://q.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701> . Students who have trouble accessing Quercus should ask [insert college contact] for further help.]

Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Course Outcomes	Course Element	Program Outcomes
By the end of this course students	This outcome will be achieved through these course elements:	This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of Wycliffe's statements of outcomes (MTS, MDiv)
Identify and assess significant theological moves in patristic and contemporary discussions of the Holy Spirit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Weeks 4, 5, 6Discussion forumsShort papers	MTS: 1.2, 2.1; MDiv: 1.3, 2.1
Articulate an understanding of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in relation to the doctrines of the Trinity, creation, the Church, and the Christian life	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Weeks 6, 7, 8Discussion forumsShort papers	MTS: 1.2, 2.1, 2.2; MDiv: 1.3, 2.1, 2.2
Articulate an awareness of the ways that diverse theological traditions have understood the Holy Spirit, with particular reference to the rise of Pentecostalism and the charismatic movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Weeks 10, 11, 12Discussion forumsShort papers	MTS: 1.3; MDiv: 1.5
Engage in critical and respectful discussion of assigned readings in an online learning environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Discussion ForumsShort Papers	MTS: 3.1; MDiv: 2.2

Course Outcomes	Course Element	Program Outcomes
Gather, analyze and assess material from both primary and secondary literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short Papers 	MTS: 2.1, 2.2; MDiv: 2.1
Express themselves effectively both orally and in writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion Forums Short Papers 	MTS: 2.1, 2.2 MDiv: 2.1

Evaluation

Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in two areas:

(1) Discussion Forums (30%) – Participating in online discussion will form a key element of the course, providing opportunity for students to learn from one another and to clarify their thinking as they engaging with one another and with the course material. Students will be assigned to discussion groups of 5 to 7 persons. For each module, you will post comments or questions on the reading and respond to postings by other students in your group. You will participate in discussion for at least six modules. Further guidelines and the grading rubric will be available on Quercus.

(2) Two short papers (1800 words; 35% each) – Students will submit a mid-term paper which addresses some aspect of the pneumatological themes explored in the first half of the course as well as a final paper which addresses some aspect of the pneumatological themes explored in the second half. The point of these papers is for you formulate and defend a thesis in which you have some personal investment. Your task is to identify some question or issue within the given doctrine and argue for or against some particular way of thinking about that question or issue. The paper should consider possible objections to your own viewpoint. The topics of these papers will be chosen in consultation with the instructor. Students who wish to explore a topic in greater depth may choose to combine the two papers and submit a single final paper of approximately 3600 words. This decision will be made in consultation with the instructor. Further guidelines and the grading rubric will be available on Quercus.

Grading System - Basic Degree Students

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale (see section 11.2 of the BD Handbook):

90-100 (A+)	Exceptional
85-89 (A)	Outstanding
80-84 (A-)	Excellent
77-79 (B+)	Very Good
73-76 (B)	Good
70-72 (B-)	Acceptable
0-69 (FZ)	Failure

Grading System - Graduate Degree Students

5000, 6000 and 7000 level courses use the following alpha grading scale;

A+	(90-100)	Profound & creative
A	(85-89)	Outstanding
A-	(80-84)	Excellent
B+	(77-79)	Very Good
B	(73-76)	Good
B-	(70-72)	Satisfactory at a post-baccalaureate level
FZ	(0-69)	Failure

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

Late work. Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. [The instructor should stipulate the penalty for late work.] The absolute deadline for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner.

This penalty is not applied to students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness); students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor and request an SDF. The absolute deadline for obtaining an SDF for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of examination week, whichever is sooner. An SDF must be requested from the registrar's office in the student's college of registration no later than the last day of exam week in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted to ACORN. Grades are not official until they are posted to ACORN. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy found at <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-26-2012>, policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of

academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>. A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges: <https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library/research/theology/avoiding-plagiarism-in-theological-writing/>

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>.

Back-up copies. Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

Obligation to check email. At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. Students should check utoronto email regularly for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder. Students in non-conjoint programs should contact the Registrar of their college of registration.

Email communication with the course instructor. The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students in conjoint programs must be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses for students in conjoint programs. Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.

Course Schedule

Module 1

June 9 - 15

Introduction

Castelo, *Pneumatology for the Perplexed*, Preface, 1 – 19

Barth, “The Spirit”, in *Evangelical Theology: An Introduction*, 48 – 59

Module 2

June 16 - 22

The Holy Spirit in Scripture

Castelo, *Pneumatology for the Perplexed*, Preface, 21 – 43

Thiselton, *A Shorter Guide to the Holy Spirit*, 3 – 75

Module 3

June 23 – 29

Pneumatology in the fourth-century
Castelo, *Pneumatology for the Perplexed*, 45 – 57
Thiselton, *A Shorter Guide to the Holy Spirit*, 79 – 86
Athanasius, *Letters to Serapion on the Holy Spirit* (selections)
Basil, *On the Holy Spirit* (selections)

Module 4

June 30 – July 6

Augustine and the *Filioque*
Castelo, *Pneumatology for the Perplexed*, 57 – 64
Thiselton, *A Shorter Guide to the Holy Spirit*, 86 – 98
Augustine, *The Trinity*, (selections)
Lewis Ayres, “Augustine on the Trinity”, in *Oxford Handbook of the Trinity* (selections)
Thomas Weinandy, “The *Filioque*: Theology and Controversy,” in *T&T Handbook of Pneumatology*

Module 5

July 7 - 13

The Holy Spirit in Creation
Castelo, *Pneumatology for the Perplexed*, 65 - 80
Steven Studebaker, “The Spirit in Creation: A Unified Theology of Grace and Creation Care” *Zygon* 43.4 (December 2008), 943 – 960
Colin Gunton, “The Spirit Moved Over the Face of the Waters: The Holy Spirit and the Created Order,” *IJST* 4.2 (July 2002), 190 – 204

Short Paper 1 due July 13

Module 6

July 14 - 20

The Holy Spirit in the Church
Castelo, *Pneumatology for the Perplexed*, 81 – 94
Thiselton, *A Shorter Guide to the Holy Spirit*, 99 – 115
Theodora Hawksley, “The Freedom of the Spirit: The Pneumatological Point of Barth’s Ecclesiological Minimalism”, *SJT* 64.2 (2011), 180 – 194
Oliver Davies, “Holy Spirit and Mediation: Towards a Transformational Pneumatology”, *IJST* 16.2 (April 2014), 159 – 176

Module 7

July 21 – 27

The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life
Castelo, *Pneumatology for the Perplexed*, 95 – 116
Thiselton, *A Shorter Guide to the Holy Spirit*, 116 – 167

Module 8

July 28 - Aug 5

Discerning the Spirit
Castelo, *Pneumatology for the Perplexed*, 117 – 134
Thiselton, *A Shorter Guide to the Holy Spirit*, 168 – 191
Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, “Testimonies from Asia”, in *Holy Spirit and Salvation: The Sources of Christian Theology* (WJK, 2010), 417 – 441

Short Paper 2 due August 5