

**Course Syllabus**  
**WYT3310/6310H – Sin and Evil in Christian Theology**  
**Wycliffe College**  
**Toronto School of Theology**  
**Fall 2022**

***Instructor Information***

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***Course Identification***

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Course Number: WYT3310/6310H  
Course Format: *In-class*  
Course Name: Sin and Evil in Christian Theology  
Course Location: TBD  
Class Times: TBD  
Prerequisites: WYT2101

***Course Description***

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This course will consider the matters of sin and evil as they are accounted for in the Christian theological tradition. Subjects to be discussed will include: the place and manner of evil's emergence, the question of original sin, the devil and demons, personal evil, systemic evil, the relation of sin and grace, sin and culpability, sin and the will, sin/evil and God (theodicy), and hell. A major theme of the course will be the necessity of understanding sin from the vantage point of its negation in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The course will consist mainly of lectures and discussions of key texts from both contemporary and historic authors. AD students will be expected to lead a seminar discussion (including the preparation of a summary handout) and submit a 5000 word research paper on a topic pertinent to the course content. BD students will produce 2 short papers (1000 words) critically discussing a particular issue addressed in the course content as well as submit a 2500 word research paper.

***Course Resources***

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**Required Course Texts**

- Augustine. *The City of God against the Pagans*. Edited and translated by R.W. Dyson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Johnson, Keith L., and David Lauber, eds. *T&T Clark Companion to the Doctrine of Sin*. London: T&T Clark, 2016.

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- Anderson, Gary A. *Sin: A History*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009.
- Augustine. *Answer to the Pelagians I*. Edited by Roland J. Teske. Translated by Teske, Roland J. The Works of Saint Augustine. Hyde Park, NY: New City, 1997.
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- Baard, Rachel Sophia. *Sexism and Sin-Talk: Feminist Conversations on the Human Condition*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2019.
- Barth, Karl. *The Doctrine of Creation*. Translated by G.W. Bromiley. Vol. III/3. Church Dogmatics. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1961.
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- Blocher, Henri. *Original Sin: Illuminating the Riddle*. New Studies in Biblical Theology. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997.
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- Croasmun, Matthew. *The Emergence of Sin: The Cosmic Tyrant in Romans*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Darko, Daniel K. *Against Principalities and Powers: Spiritual Beings in Relation to Communal Identity and the Moral Discourse of Ephesians*. HippoBooks, 2020.
- Darr, Ryan. "Social Sin and Social Wrongs: Moral Responsibility in a Structurally Disordered World." *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 37, no. 2 (2017): 21–37.
- Dearey, Melissa. *Making Sense of Evil: An Interdisciplinary Approach*. Critical Criminological Perspectives. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
- Domning, Daryl P, and Monika K Hellwig. *Original Selfishness: Original Sin and Evil in the Light of Evolution*. Ashgate Science and Religion Series. London: Routledge, 2006.
- Farley, Wendy. *Tragic Vision and Divine Compassion: A Contemporary Theodicy*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1990.
- Ferdinando, Keith. *The Triumph of Christ in African Perspective: A Study of Demonology and Redemption in the African Context*. Carlisle: Paternoster, 1999.
- Finn, Daniel K. "What Is a Sinful Social Structure?" *Theological Studies* 77, no. 1 (2016): 136–64.
- Fredriksen, Paula. *Sin: The Early History of an Idea*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012.

- Gaventa, Beverly Roberts. "The Cosmic Power of Sin in Paul's Letter to the Romans." *Interpretation* 58, no. 3 (2004): 229–40.
- Greene-McCreight, Kathryn. "Gender, Sin and Grace: Feminist Theologies Meet Karl Barth's Hamartiology." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 50, no. 4 (1997): 77–79.
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- McFadyen, Alistair. *Bound to Sin: Abuse, Holocaust and the Christian Doctrine of Sin*. Cambridge Studies in Christian Doctrine. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- McFarland, Ian A. *In Adam's Fall: A Meditation on the Christian Doctrine of Original Sin*. Challenges in

- Contemporary Theology. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2010.
- Miller, Samantha L. *Chrysostom's Devil: Demons, the Will, and Virtue in Patristic Soteriology*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2020.
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- Williams, Delores. "A Womanist Perspective on Sin." In *A Troubling in My Soul: Womanist Perspectives on Evil and Suffering*, edited by Emilie M. Townes. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993.
- Wright, Archie T. *Satan and the Problem of Evil: From the Bible to the Early Church Fathers*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2022.
- Yip, Francis Ching-Wah. "'For Our Struggle Is Not Against Flesh and Blood': The Demonic in Hong Kong." In *The Hong Kong Protests and Political Theology*, edited by Kwok Pui-Lan and Yip, Francis Ching-Wah. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2021.

Ziegler, Philip G. “‘Bound Over to Satan’s Tyranny’: Sin and Satan in Contemporary Reformed Hamartiology.” *Theology Today* (Ephrata, Pa.) 75, no. 1 (2018): 89–100.

### 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

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#### BD Level

Students successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes.

#### (A) IN RESPECT OF GENERAL ACADEMIC SKILLS

Students will demonstrate competence in reading, understanding, and critically commenting on theological texts and concepts.

#### (B) IN RESPECT OF THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTENT OF ONE OR MORE THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINES

Students will compare differing approaches to the topic of sin and evaluate these approaches’ relation to both Scripture and the creedal tradition.

#### (C) IN RESPECT OF PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Students will recognize the shape and impact of sin and evil in their own lives and contexts and devise ways of articulating this in both the private and public spheres.

#### Graduate Level

Each graduate program has detailed statements of “degree level expectations” (goals and outcomes) found in the respective program Handbooks. The harmonized course goals and outcomes (below) describe the level of knowledge and skill that will be characteristic of a typical graduate of the program. Instructors are required to develop a statement of learning outcomes for each course. These outcomes will provide benchmarks for course evaluation/grading and program assessment. Doctoral students are typically required to demonstrate higher levels of ability or expertise.

GRADUATE “DEGREE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS”	CORRESPONDING COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES	CORRESPONDING COURSE ELEMENTS / ASSIGNMENTS
<p><b>EXPECTATIONS:</b>  <i>In this course students are expected to demonstrate the following:</i></p>		
<p><b>1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge</b> is defined as a set of increasing levels of understanding within a student’s area of specialization, methodologies, primary &amp; secondary sources, historical developments and inter-disciplinarity.</p>	<p><i>Students in this course will study the contours of the Christian doctrine of sin so that they can identify and compare prevalent contemporary and classical positions on the subject.</i></p>	<p><i>Lectures, Discussion Assignment, Research Paper, Assigned Readings</i></p>
<p><b>2. Research and Scholarship</b> is defined as the ability to identify a new or unresolved question, to locate that question within a corpus of scholarly research &amp; assess critically the relevant literature, to adopt a methodology(-ies), and to then formulate a thesis and reasoned argument(s) on the basis of the evidence.</p>	<p><i>Students will formulate a coherent research question around the doctrine of sin/evil and argue for its possible resolution in dialogue with significant voices from the field.</i></p>	<p><i>Research Paper</i></p>
<p><b>3. Level of Application of Knowledge</b> is defined as the ability to engage in self-directed or assisted research, and the ability to produce innovative or original analysis within the context of graduate seminars and courses. In some cases this includes the application of a research language.</p>	<p><i>Students will demonstrate understanding of key thinkers by engaging in peer discussion around key theological proposals in order to evaluate their respective contributions to the conversation around sin and evil.</i></p>	<p><i>Seminar Participation, Discussion Assignment</i></p>
<p><b>4. Level of Communication Skills</b> is defined as clear and effective communication in both oral and written forms; the construction of logical arguments; the making of informed judgments on complex issues; and facility with standard conventions of style</p>	<p><i>Students will interpret relevant texts along with their peers and evaluate their respective claims within the context of the Christian tradition. They will prepare summaries of certain readings</i></p>	<p><i>Seminar Participation, Assigned Readings, Discussion Assignment</i></p>

GRADUATE “DEGREE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS”	CORRESPONDING COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES	CORRESPONDING COURSE ELEMENTS / ASSIGNMENTS
for scholarly writing. Cohort formation is a component of all graduate programs.		
<b>5. Awareness of the Limits of Knowledge</b> is defined as the recognition that Theological Studies is a complex discipline, comprising: a broad array of subject areas; methods and sources; various ecclesiastical traditions and social contexts; and, insights from other disciplines.	<i>Students will recognise and evaluate the impact of traditioned frameworks for resolving persistent tensions around the doctrine of sin/evil.</i>	<i>Lectures, Seminar Participation, Research Paper, Discussion Assignment</i>

## Evaluation

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### Requirements

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

Basic Degree Students:

(1) *Participation (10%)* – Students are expected to attend all classes having carefully read the assigned texts and ready to discuss their content critically. Should circumstances prevent attendance, this should be communicated beforehand to either the TA or the course instructor.

(2) *Short Papers (50%)* – Students will submit 2 short papers, each 1000 words in length. Papers should summarise the major issues involved in one of the topics treated in the course and should at least make reference to the assigned readings (though consultation with additional sources is encouraged). In the final part of each paper, students should make a judgment as to their own views on the topic and give reasons why they feel this judgment is valid. The first paper should deal with one the following topics: original sin, the nature of the devil, the origin of evil, powers and principalities, the relation between sin and grace. The second paper should deal with one of the following topics: systemic evil, sin and race, sin and money, sin and gender.

(3) *Final paper (40%)* – Students will write a shorter research paper of 2500 words addressing a topic related to sin and/or evil in Christian theology. Students are free to choose any topic they like, but all topics must receive approval from the course instructor before the project may proceed. At the head of the paper, students should pose a particular research question and explain the method by which they intend to answer this question (including a defence of the choice of sources to be consulted). At the end of the paper, a conclusion should be stated and defended with reference to the foregoing material. Papers should be properly formatted in accord with the Chicago Manual of Style (17<sup>th</sup> ed.) and should include headings/subheadings for its various sections.

Graduate Students:

(1) Participation (10%) – Students are expected to attend all classes having carefully read the assigned texts and ready to discuss their content critically. Should circumstances prevent attendance, this should be communicated beforehand to either the TA or the course instructor.

(2) Facilitated Class Discussion (40%) – Each student is expected to lead a class discussion on one of our course texts. This will include the production and distribution of a 1000 word handout which will consist of four parts: 1) short statement of the text's main argument; 2) summary of the text, 3) a list of disputable points made by the author (including reasons); 4) questions for discussion. The student will then facilitate a discussion amongst his/her peers around the text lasting no more than 30 minutes.

(3) Final paper (50%) – Students will write a substantial scholarly paper of around 5000 words addressing a topic related to sin and/or evil in Christian theology. Students are free to choose any topic they like, but all topics must receive approval from the course instructor before the project may proceed. At the head of the paper, students should pose a particular research question and explain the method by which they intend to answer this question (including a defence of the choice of sources to be consulted). At the end of the paper, a conclusion should be stated and defended with reference to the foregoing material. Papers should be properly formatted in accord with the Chicago Manual of Style (17<sup>th</sup> ed.) and should include headings/subheadings for its various sections.

### 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 (BD).** Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. Under exceptional circumstances a student may request a short extension to be negotiated with the instructor. Instructors are not obliged to accept assignments that are late. If the



instructor chooses to accept an assignment, where an extension has not been requested and approved before the due date, then **one percentage point per day will be deducted**. The absolute deadline for the submission of assignments 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.

Students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness) who are unable to submit their work by the end of the term are requested to consult with their instructor and request an SDF. The form is available on our website at this link <https://www.wycliffecollege.ca/sites/default/files/Basic%20Degree%20Request%20For%20Extension.pdf> or can be collected from the registrar's office. An SDF request must be submitted, with instructor approval and with an agreed deadline, to the registrar's office no later than the last day of the exam week or the last day of class in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond one year. If a student has not completed work and has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be calculated that reckons a grade of zero for that component of work that was not submitted.

**Late work (Graduate).** The prima facie deadline for the completion of work in a course is the last day of the examination week for the trimester in which the course is taken. Students are expected to meet the course deadlines of the instructor offering the course and are advised to plan their research projects accordingly. Students who find themselves unable to meet deadlines for completing coursework can, under certain conditions, receive extensions for completing the work after the dates set by the college in which the course is offered.

The authority to grant an extension for the completion of work in a course beyond the original TST or college deadline (whichever is earlier) for that course rests with the student's college Graduate Director, not the instructor of the course. Nevertheless, the instructor's signature is required for course extension requests to be processed. Students will petition their college Graduate Director for extensions, using a standard form provided by TST on its website. See Section 7.11 of the Conjoint Graduate Degree Handbook.

**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**

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**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](http://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**

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### **Week 1**

*Day, Date* Course Introduction: Sin and Evil according to the Gospel

### **Week 2**

*Day, Date* The Origin and Nature of Evil

### **Week 3**

*Day, Date* 'The Devil and his Angels'

**Week 4**

*Day, Date*

The Possibility and Reality of the First Sin

**Week 5**

*Day, Date*

Original Sin and Human Culpability

**Week 6**

*Day, Date*

Powers, Principalities, and Paul

**Week 7**

*Day, Date*

Sin, Tragedy, and Horror

**Week 8**

*Day, Date*

The Cosmos and the Kingdom: Systems of Evil

**Week 9**

*Day, Date*

Sin, Evil and Race

**Week 10**

*Day, Date*

Mammon

**Week 11**

*Day, Date*

Sin and Gender

**Week 12**

*Day, Date*

Speaking of Sin outwith Christendom