WYT 1101HF
The God of the Gospel: Systematic Theology I
Spring, 2018 (online)

This description is intended to assist in the course approval process and to assist students in determining whether this course will help them achieve their educational objectives and the learning goals of their program. It is not a learning contract. The details of the description are subject to change before the course begins. The course syllabus will be available to the class at the beginning of the course.

Instructor   Jonathan Slater, PhD.   **Teaching Assistant**   Laura VanderVelden

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Skype office hours: TBA

The instructor will respond to email questions concerning the course within 24 hours, and will be available for skype conversations, online chat, or immediate email response during online office hours for three hours each week.

Course Prerequisites   None

Course Description

An introduction to the discipline of "systematic" theology, also known as Christian doctrine or dogmatics, covering the following major topics: (1) the nature and sources of theology, (2) the doctrine of the Trinity, (3) the person and work of Jesus Christ. While the approach adopted in this course reflects the traditions of the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation, including Anglicanism, the course is broadly ecumenical in scope and purpose. Students will attain facility in the basic grammar of Christian confession as grounded in Scripture and articulated in the ecumenical creeds/definitions (e.g Nicea, Chalcedon) as well as the wider catholic tradition. The course assumes that theology is a difficult science, because God is not easy to understand, but also a joyful science, because there is no greater delight than letting the mind dwell on the beauty and the mystery of God or excite to the proclamation of the gospel.

Course Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will:	This outcome will be achieved by these course elements:	This course outcome corresponds to this aspect of Wycliffe's statement of MTS and MDiv outcomes:
• identify and assess various approaches the role of Scripture and tradition in theological reflection.	- Readings, reading notes - Online discussion	MTS: 1.2 and 1.3 MDiv: 1.2 and 1.3
• articulate an understanding of the aims and character of Christian theology, and of the basic content of the doctrines of the Trinity, the person of Christ, and the work of Christ.	- Readings, reading notes - Online discussion - Short papers	MTS: 1.3 MDiv: 1.3

• articulate an awareness of their own ecclesial tradition in relation to the ecumenical faith of the church.	- Readings and reading notes - Online discussion - Short papers	MTS: 1.5 MDiv: 1.5
• analyze and assess assigned readings, and engage in critical and respectful discussion of these readings in an online learning environment.	- Readings and reading notes - Online discussion - Short papers	MTS: 2.3 MDiv: 2.2

Required Texts
- David Yeago, *The Apostolic Faith: A Catholic and Evangelical Introduction to Christian Theology* (This is an unpublished manuscript, and will be made available through Blackboard).
- Additional readings will be available online through the course website.

Recommended Texts
- Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction* 6th ed. (Wiley-Blackwell, 2016). This book is available as an e-book through VitalSource.com.
- *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, ed. John Webster, Kathryn Tanner, and Iain Torrance (Oxford, 2007). Available as an electronic resource via the Blackboard site for this course. Alternatively, you can access the work via the U of T online catalogue – click on "E-Resources."

Course Website
- Blackboard https://weblogin.utoronto.ca/

This course uses Blackboard for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT portal login page at http://portal.utoronto.ca and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to the portal using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Blackboard-based courses. (Your course registration with ROSI gives you access to the course website at Blackboard.) Note also the information at http://www.portalinfo.utoronto.ca/content/information-students. Students who have trouble accessing Blackboard should ask Thomas Power for further help.

Course Methodology and Requirements

1. Course Notes

- On Friday mornings, the course notes for the next unit will be made available on Blackboard. The notes will typically be about 10 pages, and will include study questions to stimulate your thinking as you do the required readings.

2. Reading Notes (20% of grade)

- As the name suggests, reading notes should be oriented toward one or more of the assigned readings. You may use questions in the study guide to spur your thinking, but can also reflect on others aspects of the readings that you think are important.
- Your notes should reflect a balance of description, constructive criticism, and exploratory testing and extending of ideas. For instance, you might propose other ways of framing a particular

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theological issue, or suggest the implications of a doctrine for church practice or mission. Identify what you see as the main points in the text, but do not spend too much time simply summarizing the material. We will be looking for evidence of your own reflective engagement with the issues raised.

- Reading notes will be between 500 and 600 words, and will be submitted through Blackboard by 10 pm on Monday for at least eight weeks of the course. These notes are due at the beginning of the week so that they may inform participation in online discussion.

3. Online Conversation (20% of grade).

- 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 unit, one of the group members will initiate discussion of the week's topic by noon on Monday with a post of approximately 500 words. The post should identify and briefly develop one or two questions for discussion. Initiating discussion will rotate between group members.
- Each member of the group will be responsible to contribute at least two substantive comments to the discussion.
    - One of these comments must be a response to the initial post. The person who makes the initial post only needs to make one other post that week.
    - The other comment must be a response to one of the other students in the group.
- The deadline for completing these contributions is 10:00 pm on Thursday.
- Posts should be detailed, informed by the reading, and assist in moving the conversation forward. Each post should be between 250 and 300 words. NB: These are the minimal requirements for participation in the on-line discussion. Additional posts are certainly welcome.

4. Mid-Term Paper (30% of grade; due February 18).

- The mid-term paper will engage **one of two** short dogmatic treaties by important Christian thinkers, one ancient and one modern. The ancient work is St. Athanasius' classic *On the Incarnation*. The modern work is Robert W. Jenson's *Can These Bones Live? An Outline of Theology.* Read your chosen work carefully, taking careful notes, in order to carry out the following tasks:

    1. Exposition: 4-5 pages either (a) summarizing the primary argument or (b) focusing on one particular issue that arose through the reading. Secondary sources may be utilized as aids for understanding, but keep the focus on the text itself. This is not a research paper!
    2. Analysis: 2 pages highlighting the theologically and philosophically significant ideas and issues which you observe in the text.
    3. Application: 2-3 pages answering questions such as: i) does this text teach us anything that you see missing from contemporary ecclesial thinking about the Christian faith? How would this text aid you in ministry? How would you teach this text to others? Etc. You may orient this application either to the academic setting or to the church's context of ministry and mission in which you are engaged.

5. Final Paper (30% of grade; due April 12).

- The final paper will be a critical reflection (2000 words, or 6 to 8 pages, double spaced) on a key theological topic arising from the readings. The only limitation on topic is that the paper should address some aspect of the main themes of the course: the character of theology, the nature of Scripture, God, Trinity, the person and work of Jesus Christ. The paper should advance a thesis that you deem to be important for the church's life and witness, and superior to some alternative view: on topic X, we ought to believe Y (rather than Z). Please consult with the instructor if you are uncertain.

Course Schedule

Unit 1 (January 5 to 11). Introduction
Primary Readings:
- Augustine, *Confessions*, Book I, i-vi, available as PDF on Blackboard;
- Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, Prologue and Question I: "The Nature and Extent of Sacred Doctrine," available via link on Blackboard

Unit 2 (January 12 to 18). What is Theology?
Primary Readings:
- Yeago, *Apostolic Faith*, Preface and Chapter 1: "What is Theology"

Supplemental Readings:
- Barth, "Commentary," "The Word", and "The Witnesses," in *Evangelical Theology: An Introduction*, available via link on Blackboard

Unit 3 (January 19 to 25). Beginning with the Gospel.
Primary Readings:
- Yeago, *Apostolic Faith,* Chapter 2: "The Centrality of Jesus of Nazareth"

Unit 4 (January 26 to February 1) The One God.
Primary Readings:
- Yeago, *Apostolic Faith,* Chapter 3: "The God of Israel"
- Katherine Sonderegger, "The Perfect Oneness of God," *Systematic Theology* I, PDF on Blackboard

Unit 5 (February 2 to 8) God as Trinity (I).
Primary Readings:
- Yeago, *Apostolic Faith,* Chapter 4," The Doctrine of the Trinity"

Unit 6 (February 9 to 15) God as Trinity (II).
Primary Readings:
- Yeago, *Apostolic Faith,* Chapter 5, "The Mystery of the Triune God"
- Karen Kilby, "Perichoresis and Projection: Problems with Social Doctrines of the Trinity," PDF on Blackboard
  Mid-Term Paper: Due February 18

Reading Week: February 16 to 22

Unit 7 (February 23 to March 1) The Christological Dogma (I).
Primary Readings:
- Yeago, *Apostolic Faith*, Chapter 6, part I and II: "The Christological Dogma" and "One Person in Two Natures"

Unit 8 (March 2 to 8) The Christological Dogma (II).
Primary Readings:
- Yeago, *Apostolic Faith*, Chapter 6, part III and IV: "The Act of Incarnation" and "The Mystery of Christ's Humanity"
- George Hunsinger, "Salvator Mundi: Three Types of Christology," PDF on Blackboard

Supplemental Readings:
- Karl Barth, "The Miracle and Mystery of Christmas," *Church Dogmatics* 1.2, Digital KB Library, link on Blackboard

Unit 9 (March 9 to 15) Jesus, Messiah, Israel, and History.
Primary Readings:
- Yeago, *Apostolic Faith*, Chapter 7: "Jesus, Messiah, and the Reign of God"

Unit 10 (March 16 to 22) Christ Died for Our Sins: The Crucifixion (I).
Primary Readings:
- Yeago, *Apostolic Faith*, Chapter 8, parts I and II: "The problem of atonement" and "The passion and death of Jesus Christ"
- Anselm, "A Meditation on Redemption," from *Prayers and Meditations of St. Anselm*, PDF on Blackboard

Unit 11 (March 23 to 29) Christ Died for Our Sins: The Crucifixion (II).
Primary Readings:
- Fleming Rutledge, *The Crucifixion*, "Substitution," PDF on Blackboard

Supplemental Readings:
- Karl Barth, "The Judge Judged in Our Place," *Church Dogmatics* 4.1, Digital KB Library, link on Blackboard

Unit 12 (March 30 to April 5) The Lord is Risen: The Resurrection.
Primary Readings:
- Yeago, *Apostolic Faith,* Chapter 8, part III: "The Resurrection of Jesus Christ"
  Final Paper: Due April 12

Course Requirements Summary

- Weekly Reading notes (20%)
- Weekly on-line discussion (20%)
- Mid-term paper (30%)
- Final paper (30%)

Students will be required to submit a course evaluation prior to receiving their grade for the course. As always, the professor does not see the evaluation until he has submitted the grade to the college registrar, and does not ever see the name of the person who has written the evaluation.

Grading Policy

Grading will follow the grading scale, found in section 11.2 of the Basic Degree Handbook.

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalents	Grade Point	Grasp of Subject Matter	Other qualities expected of students
A RANGE: Excellent: Student shows original thinking, analytic and synthetic ability, critical evaluations, and broad knowledge base.				
A+	90-100	4.0	Profound and Creative	Strong evidence of original thought, of analytic and synthetic ability; sound and penetrating critical evaluations which identify assumptions of those they study as well as their own; mastery of an extensive knowledge base
A	85-89	4.0	Outstanding	
A-	80-84	3.7	Excellent	Clear evidence of original thinking, of analytic and synthetic ability; sound critical evaluations; broad knowledge base
B RANGE: Good: Student shows critical capacity and analytic ability, understanding of relevant issues, familiarity with the literature.				
B+	77-79	3.3	Very Good	Good critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; good familiarity with the literature
B	73-76	3.0	Good	
B-	70-72	2.7	Satisfactory at a post-baccalaureate level.	Adequate critical capacity and analytic ability; some understanding of relevant issues; some familiarity with the literature
FZ	0-69	0	Failure	Failure to meet the above criteria

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

Policy on Assignment Extensions

Students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the outline. Basic Degree students are expected to complete all course work by the end of the term in which they are registered. Under **exceptional circumstances**, with the written permission of the instructor, students may request an extension (SDF = "standing deferred") beyond the term. An extension, when offered, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. An SDF must be requested no later than the last day of classes of the term in which the course is taken. The request form is available on the college website or from the Registrar's office. **One percentage point per day will be deducted on the course grade if an extension has not been requested by the stated deadline**.

Academic Policies

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. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/grading.htm) or college grading policy.

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/. 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* (linked from http://www.tst.edu/content/handbooks) and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871. A student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges (http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm.

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of *Behaviour on Academic Matters* http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm).

Writing Style. The writing standard for the Toronto School of Theology is Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 8th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), which is available at Crux Books.