

Course Syllabus

Wycliffe College

Toronto School of Theology



Course Identification

Course Number : WYT????
 Course Name: The Church and the Churches

Instructor Information

Instructor: Shaun Brown
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Course Prerequisites or Requisites

Systematic Theology I and II or permission of instructor.

Course Description

While most Christian traditions value the church and affirm the creedal marks of the church as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic, they define the term “church” in different ways. Even members within these various traditions disagree on the primary model, image, or description of the church. Theologians may even agree with those outside of their tradition on the primary description of the church, while disagreeing with them on the proper referent of the term “church.” This course will survey and compare various contemporary ecclesiologies, or theologies of the church, by looking at how various major Christian traditions (Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, Free Church/Congregational, Pentecostal/Charismatic) understand the church, before moving onto a few major contemporary depictions of the church (communion, people of God), a discussion of how the church is understood by some within the two-thirds world, and concluding with an analysis of two major ecumenical documents that pertain to the church (*Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* and *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*).

Course Methodology

Short video introductions, written unit lectures, readings, discussion forum, two short papers, research paper.

Course Outcomes

| COURSE OUTCOMES | COURSE ELEMENT | PROGRAM OUTCOMES |
|---|---|--|
| By the end of this course, students will be able to | This outcome will be demonstrated through these course elements: | This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of Wycliffe’s statements of outcomes (MTS, MDiv) |
| Compare and contrast greater the major ecclesial traditions | Reading, discussion forum, short paper, research paper | MTS: 1.3, 1.5 MDiv: 1.4, 1.5 |

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| and their understandings of the church | | |
| Relate ecclesiology to other Christian doctrines | Reading, discussion forum, short paper, research paper | MTS: 1.2, 1.5 MDiv: 1.3 |
| Examine how Scripture informs the ecclesiologies studied in the course | Reading, discussion forum | MTS: 1.1, 1.5 MDiv: 1.1, 1.2 |
| Apply the material studied in this course to the church's service and mission | Reading, discussion forum | MTS: 1.4, 1.5 MDiv: 1.6 |
| Better summarize and explain the ecclesiology of their own tradition, as well as the other major ecclesial traditions | Research paper | MTS: 2.1, 2.2 MDiv: 2.1, 2.2 |

Course Resources

Required Course Texts

- Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen. *An Introduction to Ecclesiology: Ecumenical, Historical & Global Perspectives*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002.
- Ephraim Radner. *Church*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2017.

Course Website(s)

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

Class Schedule

Unit 1: The Divided Church; Definition of terms

- **Reading:** Kärkkäinen, Introduction; Radner, Introduction, ch. 1, ch. 3

Part I: Christian Traditions

Unit 2: Eastern Orthodox Ecclesiology

- **Reading:** Kärkkäinen, ch. 1; Radner, pp. 30–37, 39–40; Kondothra M. George, “Ecclesiology in the Orthodox Tradition” (PDF)

Unit 3: Roman Catholic Ecclesiology

- **Reading:** Kärkkäinen, ch. 2; Radner, pp. 37–39; *Catechism of the Catholic Church* ch. 3, art. 9 (PDF)
- **Recommended Reading:** Kärkkäinen, ch. 9; [*Lumen Gentium*](#).

Unit 4: Lutheran Ecclesiology

- **Reading:** Kärkkäinen, ch. 3; Radner, pp. 40–43; *Augsburg Confession* (PDF); Luther, “On the Councils and the Church (excerpt) (PDF)

Unit 5: Reformed Ecclesiology

- **Reading:** Kärkkäinen, ch. 4; Radner, pp. 43–44; [*Heidelberg Catechism*](#) Q&A 54–55, 66–85; Barth, excerpt from *Dogmatics in Outline* (PDF)

Unit 6: Anglican Ecclesiology

- **Reading:** Paul Avis, “Anglican Ecclesiology” (PDF); “Articles of Religion” 19–36 (PDF)

Unit 7: Free Church/Congregational Ecclesiology

- **Reading:** Kärkkäinen, ch. 5, 13; Radner, pp. 44–46

Unit 8: Pentecostal/Charismatic Ecclesiology

- **Reading:** Kärkkäinen, ch. 6, 19; Radner, pp. 48–51

Part II: Contemporary Perspectives on the Church

Unit 9: Communion Ecclesiology

- **Reading:** Dennis Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, ch. 1 (PDF); Kärkkäinen, ch. 8; [ARCIC, *The Church as Communion*](#)

Unit 10: The Church as the People of God/Israel

- **Reading:** [Lumen Gentium](#), ch. 2; George Lindbeck, “The Church”; “The Church as Israel: Ecclesiology and Ecumenism” (PDF)
- **Recommended Reading:** Radner, chs. 4–Conclusion

Part III: Global and Ecumenical Perspectives

Unit 11 Global Perspectives

- **Reading:** Kärkkäinen, ch. 15–16, 18

Unit 12: Ecumenical Perspectives

- **Reading:** Kärkkäinen, ch. 7; *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (PDF); *The Church: Toward a Common Vision* (PDF)

Evaluation

Requirements

- 1) Weekly Discussion Forum Participation. Students will be given weekly questions on the reading material. They must answer at least one question and respond to the answer of another student. **Weight: 30%**
- 2) Ecclesiological Autobiography: Write a brief paper (2–3 pages double spaced) on your own ecclesial journey. Did you spend your life worshiping in one denomination or have you moved between churches? Why did you stay/leave? Were you raised in the church or did you come to faith in Christ as an adult? Do you identify with an ecclesial tradition? Due at the end of unit 2. **Weight: 10%**
- 3) Write a short paper (1000 words) on a topic relevant to ecclesiology (e.g., sacraments, polity, missionary work, the relation of ecclesiology to christology or pneumatology). Topic should be approved in advance. Paper due at the end of unit 8. **Weight: 25%**
- 4) Research Paper: Write a paper (2000 words) in which you more deeply explore the ecclesiology of your own tradition. For example, if you are a Baptist or a Mennonite, do not just speak about free church ecclesiology generally, but focus more specifically on Baptist or Mennonite ecclesiology. You will then compare and contrast your church’s ecclesiology with another tradition discussed in the class. Focus on a tradition that differs greatly from your own. For example, do not compare and contrast Baptist and Mennonite or Presbyterian and Dutch Reformed ecclesiologies, but instead do a comparison of Anglican and Pentecostal or Lutheran and Eastern Orthodox ecclesiologies (you should get approval before you begin writing). Note in your paper not only how your own church is similar to and differs from the other, but what that church can offer your own tradition. If you do not identify with one ecclesial tradition or are unsure of

where you fit in the ecclesial landscape, pick one closest to the church you currently attend in dialogue with the professor. This research will involve visiting a worship service of the other tradition and comparing and contrasting what you observe in that service *theologically* with your own church. Paper is due at the end of unit 12. **Weight:** 35%

Grading System

| Letter Grade | Numerical Equivalents | Grade Point | Grasp of Subject Matter |
|--------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| A+ | 90–100% | 4.0 | Profound & Creative |
| A | 85–89% | 4.0 | Outstanding |
| A- | 80–84% | 3.7 | Excellent |
| B+ | 77–79% | 3.3 | Very Good |
| B | 73–76% | 3.0 | Good |
| B- | 70–72% | 2.7 | Satisfactory |
| FZ | 0–69% | 0 | Failure |

Grades without numerical equivalent:

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|-----|--|
| CR | Designates credit; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value |
| NCR | Designates failure; has no numerical equivalent, but has a grade point value of 0 and is included in the GPA calculation |
| SDF | Standing deferred (a temporary extension) |
| INC | Permanent incomplete; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value |
| WDR | Withdrawal without academic penalty |
| AEG | May be given to a final year student who, because of illness, has completed at least 60% of the course, but not the whole course, and who would not otherwise be able to convocate; has no numerical equivalent and no grade point value |

Policy on Assignment Extensions

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.

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/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf>) or college grading policy.

Policies

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](#) and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>), 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.

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*, 9th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018).

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