

CTH 5510 FUNDAMENTALS OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
ASHLAND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Spring 2022 Jan 10 – May 5
Tuesdays 6:30-8:30pm
Ashland Campus and Remote Attendance

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NOTICE: CLASS WILL NOT MEET ON TUESDAY JANUARY 18TH!
See Assignment III.B.2, below, for the Instructional Activity for that week.

I. Course Description

This course is a survey of Christian theology for students in professional counseling. Building upon key themes in biblical theology, the course gives students an overview of Christian doctrines, with special attention to issues important in counseling. The course is designed to expose students to a variety of theological perspectives so that they can develop a coherent theological framework for themselves as Christian professionals and so that they can engage the religious views of Christian clients with integrity and respect.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

As a result of this course, students will be able to do the following:

I. Knowledge Objectives

1-8 Not assessed.

9a. Reflect on the theological lenses through which they view the world.

9b. Identify the perspectives and contributions of various Christian traditions regarding significant theological issues.

9c. Develop a coherent theological perspective from which to engage in the counseling task.

II. Professional Skills Objectives

1. Not assessed.

2. Draw upon theological concepts to construct meaning in a representative counseling situation.

3-6 Not assessed.

III. Personal Attributes Objectives

1-4 Not assessed.

III. Course Requirements

A. Textbooks (in addition to the Bible):

Holeman, Virginia T. (2012). *Theology for Better Counseling: Trinitarian Reflections for Healing and Formation*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. ISBN 978-0830839728

Thorsen, Don. (2020). *An Exploration of Christian Theology*, 2nd edition. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic. ISBN 978-1540961747

Selected readings listed in the course schedule and available in Blackboard.

B. Assignments/Assessment of Student Learning

For All Papers:

Papers are to be submitted before class on the day they are due. Late submissions will result in a grade reduction. Papers must be written in approved Turabian format with an appropriate cover page. Pages must be in either Times New Roman font, 12 pt. or Ariel font, 11 pt. Text must be double spaced with one inch margins top, bottom, right, and left (unless noted otherwise). All papers are to be submitted through Blackboard in MS Word or Adobe pdf. Please follow Turabian formatting, and carefully proofread for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. A grading rubric for papers will be available on Blackboard.

1. **“Questions for Further Reflection” in Thorsen (30% of grade)**

Length: no more than 1 page single-spaced each week Due prior to the start of each class.

Students will respond to **only the assigned question(s)** at the end of each chapter in Thorsen’s text, listed under “Questions for Further Reflection.” Assigned questions can be found on the Course Schedule in the syllabus, as well as in each weekly module in Blackboard. Responses should engage the assigned reading in Thorsen for the week. **Be sure to respond to the entire question!**

Responses should be single-spaced, and do not need a title page; but be sure to put your name and date at the top, and list the page and question number with each response). Responses each week should be one brief paragraph for each question assigned, and should not total more than one page (if you go a little over, that’s fine, but not by much!) Do not write a theological treatise; simply offer your concise thoughts to answer each question. Submit responses in the appropriate weekly module on Blackboard prior to the start of class each week.

No credit will be given for these assignments if submitted late!

Please see the Course Schedule for Assigned Questions, or look in Blackboard.

2. **“Exploring Your Theology” (10% of grade)**

Instructional Activity for Week 2, January 18th

Students will view a video in the Week 2 module on Blackboard, “Preparing to Explore Theology,” which introduces students to the process of examining their own beliefs, convictions and questions about God and the things of God. After watching the video, students are to respond to the questions in “Exploring Your Theology” (also in the Week 2 module on Bb), which is a set of questions on the student’s currently held beliefs. Students will download “Exploring Your Theology,” saving it as a Word document (it already is; don’t change it!). Then type their responses directly on the document. Students will save their work and submit the completed responses.

Submit in the Week 2 module on Bb

Due prior to the start of class Jan 25h

3. **Written Case study (25% of grade)**

Choose one of the case studies supplied by the instructor in Blackboard. Discuss the theological issues involved in the case from your own perspective.

Length: 6-8 pages of text Due before Class on April 12th

- In your discussion, draw upon the Bible, course texts, class lectures, and at least three other sources. The secondary resources should represent biblical and theological scholarship rather than scholarly or popular counseling literature.
- The objective is to develop a coherent and thoughtful theological discussion in your own voice, supported by biblical evidence, careful reasoning, and selected theological scholarship. Don’t simply quote biblical verses but set forth the relevant theological content from your own perspective.
- Do not discuss how you would counsel the person in the case study. Do not refer to counseling theories or psychological insights. Instead, construct a theological framework that would help you think theologically about this person’s situation. Be sure to connect the theological discussion to the issues in the case study.
- Include one paragraph that reflects on how your own presuppositions and religious tradition would inform your understanding of the issues.
- Document all uses of secondary sources (including course texts, lectures, and handouts) in APA style (must include page numbers). Any statements taken directly from secondary sources must be enclosed in quotation marks. Biblical references should be documented in parentheses. The paper must conform to the seminary’s Writing Handbook.

4. **Credo (35% of grade)**

Students will write a statement of faith on the theological areas covered by the course. The purpose is to integrate the course material from your own perspective. The credo will consist of six parts. See the handout “Questions to Address for the Credo” for more information about the parts. This handout will be available in Blackboard.

Total Length: 12-17 pages of text (see page limits for each section, below) Due May 3rd

- Part 1: What are your theological “lenses”? Length: 1 page
- Part 2: What do you believe about God, creation, and humanity? Length: 2-3 pages
- Part 3: What do you believe about sin and the problem of evil and suffering? Length: 2-3 pages

- Part 4: What do you believe about Jesus and atonement? Length: 2-3 pages
 - Part 5: What do you believe about the Holy Spirit, salvation, and the church? Length: 3-4 pages
 - Part 6: What do you believe about personal and corporate eschatology? Length: 2-3 pages
- Credos will be graded on clarity, coherence, depth of insight, constructive engagement with course content, and faithfulness to Scripture. You need not do any additional research for this assignment, but any sources you do use must be appropriately documented in the text. Any Biblical references should be documented in parentheses in the text. Credos should use gender-inclusive language about people and should conform to APA style. See the ATS Writing Handbook. Due date: See course schedule. NOTE: I am willing to give feedback on any section(s) of the credo submitted in a timely manner. This is optional but will likely improve your grade.

B. Calculation of Grade and Connection of Learning Outcomes

<i>Graded Assignment</i>	<i>Learning Outcomes</i>	<i>Percent of Final Grade</i>
Questions for Further Reflection	I.9a; I.9b	30%
Exploring Your Theology	I.9a	10%
Written Case Study	I.9a; II.2	25%
Credo	I.9a; I.9c	35%

IV. Course Schedule

This schedule is a tentative schedule; changes may need to be made during the semester. Students are responsible to check Blackboard regularly for updates. Every effort will be made to communicate changes to the students in a timely and responsible manner.

Week	Lesson Topics	Readings & Assignments
Part One: Thinking Theologically		
1 Jan 11	Why Theology? <i>Theology and the Counselor</i>	Thorsen, chapter 1; Holeman, chapter 1 “Questions for Further Reflection” (QFFR) – p 11-12 # 1, 2, 4 & 5 Due prior to start of class on Blackboard
2 Jan 18	NO CLASS MEETING!!! Preparing to Explore Theology <i>Examining what you believe about God and the things of God</i>	View video: “Preparing to Explore Theology” in the Week 2 module on Bb Complete “Exploring Your Own Theology” and submit on Bb by start of class Jan 25th
3 Jan 25	Thinking Theologically <i>Revelation, Scripture, Method, The Big Story</i> Case Study: “Knowing God; Scripture”	Thorsen, chapters 2-5 Colijn, “Thinking Theologically in Two Dimensions” Swope, “Orthodox Soteriology” pages 1-12 only QFFR – p 21 #2; p 34 #3; p 53 #2; p 63 #2 Due prior to start of class
Part Two: God and the Good Creation		
4 Feb 1	What is God Like? <i>The Trinity</i>	Thorsen, chapters 6-8; Holeman, chapter 2 QFFR – p 79 #2 & 4; p 88 #2 & 5 Due prior to start of class
5 Feb 8	How Does God Relate to the World? <i>Creation and Sovereignty</i>	Thorsen, chapters 9-10; Holeman, chapter 3 QFFR – p 103 #1 & 4; p 117 #1 & 4 Due prior to start of class
6 Feb 15	What Does It Mean to be Human? <i>Humanity</i> Case Study: Humanity and Sin: Sexuality	Thorsen, chapters 12-13 QFFR – p 135 #2 & 6; p 145 #3 & 5 Due prior to start of class
Part Three: What’s Wrong with this Picture?		

7 Feb 22	What Is the Human Problem? <i>Sin</i> Case Study: Humanity and Sin: Effects on Family & Church	Thorsen, chapters 14-15 QFFR – p 155 #2 & 5; p 167 #1 & 5 Due prior to start of class
8 Mar 1	Why Do Bad Things Happen? <i>The Problem of Evil and Suffering</i> Case Study: God, Creation & Problem of Evil	Thorsen, chapter 11; Holeman, chapter 7 QFFR – p 126 #2, 3 & 4 Due prior to start of class
Mar 8	Spring Break	No Class Meeting; No Assignments
Part Four: Redemption, Restoration and Transformation		
9 Mar 15	Why Does Jesus Matter? <i>Jesus' Identity</i> Case Study: Identity of Christ: Deity & Humanity How Does Jesus Help? <i>Jesus' Life and Work (Atonement)</i>	Thorsen, chapters 16-18; Holeman, chapter 6 QFFR – p 184 #2; p 193-194 #1 & 3; p 205 #5 Due prior to start of class
10 Mar 22	Who Counsels the Counselor? <i>The Holy Spirit</i> Case Study: Holy Spirit: Unforgiveable Sin	Thorsen, chapters 19-20 Pinnock, "Other Hand of God" QFFR – p 218 #2 & 4; p 233 #2 & 3 Due prior to start of class
11 Mar 29	How Do the Broken Become Whole? <i>Salvation: Beginning the Journey</i> Case Study: Work of Christ: Salvation	Thorsen, chapters 21-22 Green, "Salvation as Healing" QFFR – p 251 #3 & 4; p 267 #1 & 4 Due prior to start of class
12 Apr 5	What Does Wholeness Look Like? <i>Salvation: The Journey Continues</i> Case Study: Christian Living: Nature of Grace	Thorsen, chapter 23; Holeman, chapter 4 Swope, "Orthodox Soteriology" pages 13-29 only QFFR – p 279-280 #1, 2, 3 & 4 Due prior to start of class
13 Apr 12	Do We Have a Purpose? <i>The Church: Community and Calling</i> Case Study: Women in Ministry	Thorsen, chapters 25-26; Holeman, chapter 5 QFFR – p 316 #4 & 7; p 329 #2 & 3 Due prior to start of class Written Case Study due April 12th
14 Apr 19	What Are Our Resources? <i>Practices of Wholeness</i>	Thorsen, chapter 24, 27 QFFR – p 299-300 #2 & 4; p 349 #2 & 3 Due prior to start of class
15 Apr 26	What Do We Hope For? <i>Life After Life After Death & The New Creation</i> Case Study: Personal Eschatology	Thorsen, chapters 28-30, Epilogue Holeman, Postscript Van Biema, "Christians Wrong About Heaven" QFFR – p 365 #1 & 3; p 374-375 #2 & 4 Due prior to start of class Credo due May 3rd

V. Recommendations for Lifelong Learning

God is infinite and impossible to know exhaustively. Therefore, theology is a lifelong endeavor of growing to know Him. In order to help you along your theological journey, it is good to practice at least four things: 1) Spend time with God daily. There is no substitute for getting to know someone than to spend time with them. 2) Spend time in Scripture. God has chosen to reveal Himself through His interactions with people, and ultimately through His incarnation, which are recorded in Scripture as the Spirit inspired. Listening for God to speak to you through Scripture, and mediating on it, will set a firm foundation for all theology. 3) Continue to engage with other theologians. Read widely; listen to podcasts, and watch videos of reputable thinkers. Weigh what they say against what you believe, and what you believe Scripture says. And 4) Stay in community with others in the faith. We are not meant to do theology alone.

VI. Selected Bibliography or References

Theological Dictionaries

- Elwell, W.A., ed. (2001). *Evangelical dictionary of theology*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker.
- González, J. (2005). *Essential theological terms*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox.
- Grenz, S. J., Guretzki, D., and Nordling, C. F. (1999). *Pocket dictionary of theological terms*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.
- Wright, D. F., Ferguson, S. B., and Packer, J. I., eds. (1988). *New dictionary of theology*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.

Theological Method

- Bauckham, Richard and Benjamin Drewery, eds. *Scripture, Tradition, and Reason: A Study in the Criteria of Christian Doctrine*. London: T&T Clark, 2004.
- Franke, John R. *The Character of Theology: An Introduction to Its Nature, Task, and Purpose: A Postconservative Evangelical Approach*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005.
- Meadors, Gary T. and Stanley N. Gundry, eds. *Four Views on Moving Beyond the Bible to Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.
- Volf, Miroslav and Dorothy C. Bass, eds. *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.

Systematic Theology

- Bloesch, D. G. (1978). *Essentials of evangelical theology*. 2 vols. San Francisco: Harper & Row.
- _____. D. G. (1992-2004). *Christian foundations*. 7 vols. Downers Grove: InterVarsity.
- Blomberg, C. L. (2006). On building and breaking barriers: Forgiveness, salvation and Christian counseling with special reference to Matthew 18:15-35. *Journal on Psychology and Christianity*, 25(2), 137-154.
- Demarest, B. A., and Lewis, G. R. (1987-1994). *Integrative theology*. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- Dyrness, W. A., and O. Garcia-Johnson. (2015). *Theology without borders: An introduction to global conversations*. Grand Rapids: Baker.
- Erickson, M. J. (1998). *Christian theology*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker.
- Fackre, G. J. (1978-1987). *The Christian story*. 2 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Finger, T. N. (1985, 1989). *Christian theology: An eschatological approach*. 2 vols. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press.
- _____. (2004). *A contemporary Anabaptist theology: Biblical, Historical, Constructive*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.
- Grenz, S. J. (1994). *Theology for the community of God*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman. Reprint Grand Rapids: Eerdmans/Vancouver, BC: Regent College, 2000.
- Hall, D. J. (1996). *Professing the faith: Christian theology in a North American context*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress.
- Horton, S. M., ed. (1994). *Systematic theology: Revised edition*. Springfield, MO: Logion Press.
- Kärkkäinen, V.-M. (2002). *An introduction to ecclesiology: Ecumenical, historical & global Perspectives*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.
- _____. (2003a). *An introduction to the theology of religions: Biblical, historical & contemporary perspectives*. Grand Rapids: InterVarsity.
- _____. (2003b). *Christology: A global introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker.
- _____. (2003c). *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in ecumenical, international, and contextual perspective*. Grand Rapids: Baker.
- _____. (2004). *The doctrine of God: A global introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker.
- _____. (2005). *One with God: Salvation as deification and justification*. Liturgical Press.
- McClendon, J. W., Jr. (1986-2000). *Systematic theology*. 3 vols. Nashville: Abingdon.
- McGrath, A. E. (2001a). *Christian theology: An introduction*. 3rd ed. London: Blackwell.
- _____. (2001b). *The Christian theology reader*. 2nd ed. London: Blackwell.
- Migliore, D. L. (2004). *Faith seeking understanding: An introduction to Christian theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Oden, T. C. (1987-1992). *Systematic theology*. 3 vols. San Francisco: Harper & Row.
- Olson, R. E. (2002). *The mosaic of Christian belief: Twenty centuries of unity and diversity*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.
- Stiver, D.R. (2008). *Life together in the way of Jesus Christ*. Waco: Baylor.

Ethics

- Hays, R. B. (1996). *The moral vision of the New Testament: A contemporary introduction to New Testament ethics*. New York: HarperSanFrancisco.
- Stassen, G. H. and Gushee, D. P. (2003). *Kingdom ethics: Following Jesus in contemporary context*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.
- Volf, M. (1996). *Exclusion and embrace: A theological exploration of identity, otherness, and reconciliation*. Nashville: Abingdon.

Seminary Guidelines

A. ATS Academic Integrity Policy

Ashland Theological Seminary expects each student to uphold the Seminary's core value of academic excellence by contributing to an environment that is both challenging and supportive. In such an environment a student will neither seek nor offer improper assistance. All students have an obligation to be forthright in their academic endeavors and to respect ethical standards. The work that one submits for academic evaluation must be one's own, unless an instructor expressly permits certain types of collaboration. Academic integrity requires that each student will use one's own capabilities to achieve one's fullest potential and will neither offer nor accept aid that is not in keeping with regularly accepted standards of academic integrity. Failure to conform to this conduct shall constitute academic dishonesty. The full Academic Integrity Policy statement may be found in the *Student Handbook*.

B. ATS Grading Scale

Grade	Quality	Percent	Description
A	4.0	97-100	Superior achievement of course objectives, diligence and originality, high degree of freedom from error, outstanding evidence of ability to utilize course knowledge, initiative expressed in preparing and completing assignments, positive contributions verbalized in class.
A-	3.7	92-96	
B+	3.3	89-91	
B	3.0	86-88	Good work submitted, commendable achievement of course objectives, some aspects of the course met with excellence, substantial evidence of ability to utilize course material, positive contributions verbalized in class, consistency and thoroughness of work completed.
B-	2.7	83-85	
C+	2.3	80-82	
C	2.0	77-79	Acceptable work completed, satisfactory achievement of course objectives, demonstrating at least some ability to utilize course knowledge, satisfactory class contribution.
C-	1.7	74-76	
D+	1.3	71-73	

D	1.0	68-70	Passing but minimal work, marginal achievement of course objectives, poor performance in comprehension of work submitted, inadequate class contributions.
D-	0.7	65-67	
F	0.0	Below 65	Unacceptable work resulting in failure to receive class credit, inadequacy of work submitted or of performance and attendance in class.

C. Attendance

According to the Student Handbook, attendance at all class sessions is expected, unless the professor has been notified in advance and has approved the absence. Students should be on time and should stay through the duration of all classes. Any student missing more than six class hours will be required to do additional work, receive a lower grade, audit or withdraw from the class, or be penalized otherwise at the discretion of the professor.

D. Attendance Reporting:

Students are required to participate in a course related activity in the first and third weeks of the course. Students may be administratively withdrawn from the course and/or may lose financial aid benefits if a qualifying activity has not occurred between the student and the course work or faculty within the first three days of the course. Simply logging into a course online via the Learning Management System (LMS) is not considered a qualifying activity.

Student non-participation during the first 8 days of a course may initiate the administrative course withdrawal process. Student non-participation, mid-course, for 14 consecutive days may also initiate the administrative course withdrawal process.

According to policies and procedures set forth by Ashland University's Department for Veterans' Services, AU will grant any service member requiring more than a 30-day leave a release from coursework. Contact the Office of Veterans' Services for more information regarding this process.

E. Accessibility Resources and Accommodations

It is Ashland University's goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on a disability, please contact the Student Accessibility Center at 419-289-5904, or send an email to au-sac@ashland.edu. The Student Accessibility Center office and the course instructor will work together in order to establish accommodations and to meet your learning needs.

F. Writing and Communication Center (WCC)

The Writing and Communication Center can help you brainstorm, draft, and revise your writing assignments in your graduate Seminary classes. Masters and doctoral qualified consultants can advise you online or in person. For more information [click here](#).

- Receive one-on-one feedback from an WCC graduate consultant on any project that involves communication - essays, speeches, group presentations, lab reports, poster presentations, and much more!
- Our default type of appointment for graduate students is conducted asynchronously via email. In other words, after you make an appointment through our online scheduler (WOnline), you attach a draft to the appointment, then within 48 hours of the scheduled appointment, one of our consultants reviews your paper and emails you feedback. We also offer synchronous (live) appointments via Zoom by request.
- To schedule an asynchronous email appointment, go to www.ashland.mywconline.com (you will need to register for an account the first time you use the scheduler).
- To schedule a synchronous (live) Zoom appointment, please email us at amulitcenter@ashland.edu.

Visit our graduate services webpage for more information -

<https://www.ashland.edu/administration/graduate-online-adult-center-academic-support/resources-students/graduate-writing-consultation>