

CTH 5520: CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD

ASHLAND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Spring Semester 2022 – Online, January 10 – May 5, 2022

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course addresses the traditional topics of systematic theology as a narrative of salvation history. It is designed to equip students with a comprehensive and coherent theological framework for engaging in life and ministry in light of the present and future reign of God.

This course uses Blackboard for assignment submission. To access Blackboard, go to <https://ashland.blackboard.com> and login. Please contact the professor **immediately** if on the first day of the semester you cannot access the Blackboard course.

II. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course format consistently meets the same quality, assessment, learning outcomes and requirements of the traditional semester course format.

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

1-3 Not assessed

4a. Articulate basic theological concepts.

4b. Analyze theological claims in light of Scripture, tradition(s), and experience.

4c. Describe the foundation of their own theology.

4d. Reflect theologically on a particular issue of interest.

5-6 Not assessed

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Textbooks (in addition to the Bible):

- McGrath, Alister E. *Theology: The Basics, 4th ed.* Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2018. (296 pages) ISBN: 0470656751
- Felker-Jones, Beth. *Practicing Christian Doctrine: An Introduction to Thinking and Living Theologically.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014. (256 pages) ISBN: 080104933
- Boyd, Gregory A. and Eddy, Paul R. *Across the Spectrum: Understanding Issues in Evangelical Theology.* 2nd edition. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009. (352 pages) ISBN: 080103793X
- Stone, Howard W. and James O. Duke. *How to Think Theologically,* 3rd ed. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013. (152 pages) ISBN: 0800638182

B. Assignments/Assessment of Student Learning

Assignments have been structured to guide you through increasingly complex thought processes as you build your theological skills. You will identify basic concepts (journals), analyze theological models (journals, discussion), reflect on the foundations of your own theology (journals, diagnostic paper), and finally draw upon appropriate sources to think theologically about a particular question or problem that interests you (final project).

Papers will be graded on clarity, coherence, depth of insight, and constructive engagement with course content. For all papers, any sources you use **must** be appropriately documented

in the text. All such material must be quoted exactly, using quotation marks, or paraphrased completely. Any biblical references should be documented in parentheses in the text. Papers should use gender-inclusive language about people and should conform to Turabian style. **You are responsible to follow the *ATS Writing Handbook*. For due dates see the course outline.**

- **Class Engagement.** Your participation assessed in two ways:
 1. **Class podcast.** Each week a podcast will go live that you can access through Blackboard, Spotify, or wherever else you get your podcasts. This style of teaching allows the lecture to go with you. A supplemental handout along with pertinent videos will be on Blackboard each week to reinforce the podcast. You must listen to the podcast and review the supplemental material. [Budget about one hour each week for this content alone.]
 2. **Formational exercises.** Each week there will be a formational exercise designed to buttress the content covered in class. Instructions for this assignment will be given each week. You will complete the assigned exercise and upload your reflections by the following week's class. For example, one week you will be instructed to take a nature walk and be aware of what you see, smell, and hear. You will then use a tool called Flip Grid to record your observations for the class to see.
- **Class Assignments:**
 1. **Bi-weekly quizzes [due weekly].** These quizzes are meant to assess your comprehension of the material discussed over the prior two weeks. Each of these quizzes will consist of 10 matching questions regarding theological terms. Quizzes are due by the end of the day Monday (11:59pm). Here is the schedule for these quizzes:

Quiz	Date	Content Covered
1	Week 3	Weeks 1-2
2	Week 5	Weeks 3-4
3	Week 7	Weeks 5-6
4	Week 9	Weeks 7-8
5	Week 11	Weeks 9-10
6	Week 13	Weeks 11-12
7	Week 15	Weeks 13-14

2. **Diagnostic paper [due February 21].** Drawing upon class materials and diagnostic exercises that will be provided, you will reflect on the foundations of your own theology. You need not do any additional research for this assignment. **In light of the present and future reign of God,** address the following:
 - What are the sources and norm(s) of your theology [both originally **and today**]?
 - What is the Gospel? How does the Gospel reach people? How do people receive the Gospel and its benefits?
 - What is the basic problem of the human condition? What is the resolution to that problem? How is the problem resolved?

- What deeds are Christians called to do? What are the reasons for performing a service or action? Why (on what grounds) is one course of action the most fitting in a particular situation? **Length:** 3-4 pages.
- 3. Final project [see course schedule for due dates].** In the final project, you will do a theological analysis of a particular question or problem that interests you. The purpose of the project is for you to develop **your own theology** about the topic with the assistance of biblical, historical, and theological resources. I will give you feedback on each step of the assignment. See the course schedule for when each stage is due. You will complete the project in **five stages**:
- a. Stage 1 – Topic:** In a short paragraph, describe the topic you would like to work on. I will meet with you one-on-one (in-person or via Zoom) after you submit your topics to provide feedback. **Value:** 10% of final project.
 - b. Stage 2 – Proposal (2 pages):** Give an overview of your topic, **using the following boldface headings**:
 - i. Description.** A general description of the topic area, revised (not a thesis to defend).
 - ii. Rationale.** Why you want to investigate it.
 - iii. Research Question.** A single, open-ended question that your project will attempt to answer (not yes-or-no).
 - iv. Resources.** Identification of some specific resources in each of the following categories that will help you answer the question:
 - 1. Biblical Resources.** Biblical passages or books about the Bible, including commentaries.
 - 2. Resources from Christian Tradition.** Resources from the span of church history, including your own tradition, if you identify with one.
 - 3. Theological Resources.** Recent works that talk about Christian beliefs.
 - 4. Resources from Experience.** Information from your own experience (including relevant preunderstandings) or from other disciplines that you know about. **Value:** 20% of final project
 - c. Stage 3 – Sections 1-3 of the Theological Analysis (see below, 5-7 pages):** Present a draft of sections 1-3 (description, biblical resources, and resources from tradition). You will revise this for the completed project. **Value:** 20% of final project.
 - d. Stage 4 – Sections 4-5 of the Theological Analysis (see below, 4-6 pages):** Present a draft of sections 4-5 (theological resources, resources from experience). You will revise this for the completed project. **Value:** 20% of final project.
 - e. Stage 5 – Completed Theological Analysis (12-15 pages):** Discuss the results of your investigation **using the following seven headings**. The questions below should help to describe the contents of each section. Each section will stand more or less on its own and should make an argument in your own voice, presenting your own claims and conclusions backed up with solid supporting evidence from your research.

- i. **Description of the Study.** What is your research question, and why did you want to investigate it? Why might it be a significant question to answer (and for whom)? (1/2-1 page)
- ii. **Biblical Resources.** What biblical passages or themes shed light on your topic? How did Bible study resources illuminate Scripture for you? What have you concluded about your research question from your study of Scripture and biblical study resources? (2-3 pages)
- iii. **Resources from Tradition.** What events or writings from church history (including your own tradition) illuminate your topic? Has your topic been especially important at certain times or places? Is there a consensus about your topic in church history? Has it been a matter of controversy? What have you concluded about your research question from your study of historical sources? (2-3 pages)
- iv. **Theological Resources.** What recent theological writings deal with your topic? Is it often or rarely discussed? What different perspectives on your topic have you discovered? Is there any consensus? What have you concluded about your research question from your study of theological resources? (2-3 pages)
- v. **Resources from Experience.** Are there any other disciplines that shed light on your topic? Do you have any personal experience that has a bearing on your topic? What have you concluded about your research question from experiential sources? (2-3 pages)
- vi. **Conclusions.** What do you conclude from your research and thinking? What is the answer to your research question? This is your thesis statement: the one-sentence answer to your research question. You should expand upon your thesis statement to explain it more fully. Are there still unanswered questions? Do you see any need for further research or thinking? (1-2 pages)
- vii. **Application.** How might your conclusions make a difference in the lives of individual Christians, the church, or the world? (1/2-1 page)
Value: 30% of final project.

C. Calculation of Grade and Connection of Learning Outcomes

<i>Assignments</i>	<i>Learning Outcomes</i>	<i>Percent of Final Grade</i>
Class engagement	4b	25%
Weekly quizzes	4a	10%
Diagnostic paper	4c	25%
Final project	4a, 4b, 4d	40%

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE

<i>Week</i>	<i>Week of...</i>	<i>Lecture/Topics</i>	<i>Readings/Assignments</i>
1	1/10	Introduction to Theology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felker-Jones, Introduction • McGrath, “Development of Christian Theology” • Boyd & Eddy, Introduction • Stone/Duke, Introduction
2	1/17	Thinking Theologically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McGrath, “Getting Started” • Stone/Duke, chapters 1-2
3	1/24	Speaking of God: Theology and the Christian Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felker-Jones, chapter 1 • McGrath, “Apostles Creed” and chapter 1 • Boyd & Eddy, chapter 2 • Stone/Duke, chapters 3-4 • Quiz #1
4	1/31	Knowing God: Doctrines of Revelation and Scripture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felker-Jones, chapter 2 • McGrath, chapter 2 • Boyd & Eddy, chapter 1 • Stone/Duke, chapters 5-6
5	2/7	The God We Worship: Doctrine of the Trinity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felker-Jones, chapter 3 • McGrath, chapter 7 • Stone/Duke, chapters 7-9 • Quiz #2 • Topic Due
6	2/14	A Delightful World: Doctrines of Creation and Providence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felker-Jones, chapter 4 • McGrath, chapter 3a (pp. 39-47) • Boyd & Eddy, chapter 4 • Proposal due
7	2/21	Reflecting God’s Image: Theological Anthropology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felker-Jones, chapter 5 • McGrath, chapter 3b (pp. 48-60) • Boyd & Eddy, chapter 5 • Quiz #3 • Diagnostic Paper Due
8	2/28	The Personal Jesus: Christology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felker-Jones, chapter 6 • McGrath, chapter 4 • Boyd & Eddy, chapter 6
--	3/7	NO CLASS	SPRING BREAK

<i>Week</i>	<i>Week of...</i>	<i>Lecture/Topics</i>	<i>Readings/Assignments</i>
9	3/14	The Work of Jesus: Soteriology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felker-Jones, chapter 7b (pp. 159-165) • McGrath, chapter 5a (pp. 82-101) • Boyd & Eddy, chapters 7-8, 10 • Quiz #4
10	3/21	The Christian Life: Conversion, Justification, Sanctification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felker-Jones, chapter 7a (pp. 141-158) • McGrath, chapter 5b (pp. 102-104) • Boyd & Eddy, chapters 9-10
11	3/28	The Holy Spirit: Pneumatology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felker-Jones, chapter 8 • McGrath, chapter 6 • Boyd & Eddy, chapter 10 • Quiz #5 • Sections 1-3 due
12	4/4	Church in a Diverse World: Ecclesiology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felker-Jones, chapter 9a (pp. 193-211) • McGrath, chapter 8 • Sections 4-5 due
13	4/11	Practices of the Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felker-Jones, chapter 9b (pp. 212-216) • McGrath, chapter 9 • Boyd & Eddy, chapters 12-13 • Quiz #6
14	4/18	Resurrection Hope, Pt. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felker-Jones, chapter 10 • Boyd & Eddy, chapters 11, 16-17
15	4/25	Resurrection Hope, Pt. 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felker-Jones, “Benediction: A Prayer for the Practice of Christian Doctrine” • Quiz #7
--	5/2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Project due

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

To integrate your learning with your own theological beliefs, it’s a helpful practice every five years or so to write your own credo, a statement of your beliefs in the areas covered by the course. You may find that your convictions develop or even change over time. Finally, it’s always a best practice to keep returning to Scripture to refresh and test your beliefs. A bibliography on Blackboard provides many resources that may prove helpful in this journey.

VI. 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-	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 (WCC) can help you brainstorm, draft, and revise your writing and communication assignments in your graduate classes. All graduate consultants have a graduate degree and extensive experience with writing center theory and practice and can advise you online or in person. The aim of our service is to support and mentor students as they explore ways to improve their graduate-level academic writing and communication skills. All consultations are confidential.

- Receive one-on-one feedback from an WCC graduate consultant on any project that involves communication— essays, speeches, group presentations, lab reports, poster presentations, video productions, 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 upon request.

- To schedule an asynchronous appointment, go to www.ashland.mywconline.com (you will need to create an account the first time you use the scheduler).
- To schedule a synchronous (live) Zoom appointment, please email us at writingcenter@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>