



Course Syllabus
Winter 2013

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY I
THEO 0531

THURSDAYS, JANUARY 17 – APRIL 18, 2013
6:30 – 9:20 PM

INSTRUCTOR: PROFESSOR JAMES A. BEVERLEY
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Office Hours: I can see students by appointment before and after class on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I will be on campus those two days during the course. The best way to set up an appointment is by email to my Sympatico address. The best number to reach me is my cell phone number noted above. When sending me an email please put Tyndale in subject line.

To access your course material, please go to <http://mytyndale.ca>

I. Course Description

Acquaints students with the elemental building blocks of the Christian faith. The nature and necessity of theology will be considered (i.e., Why theology?), together with major doctrines such as revelation, scripture, Trinity, creation, and sin.

I adopt the words of my colleague Victor Shepherd: "This introductory course endeavors to acquaint students with the elemental "building blocks" of the Christian faith. The nature and necessity of theology will be considered (i.e., "Why theology?"), together with development of doctrine through church history. We will follow the first half of McGrath's textbook in introducing us to the opening issues in Systematic Theology.

II. Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course students will understand various perspectives and options that Christians have chosen on the different doctrines and issues addressed through the course.

Through this course students will learn to think more deeply about their own theological journey, about options in Christian theology, and about how to relate one's own journey and theology with the positions of other Christians. Students will also learn to address major cultural and social pressures that impact developments and changes in theological work.

Through reading, class participation, and research the student will learn the basic history of Christian theology, the major alternatives in theological outlook, and know how to integrate his/her Christian faith with developments and patterns in philosophy and culture.

III. Course Requirements

A. REQUIRED TEXT

McGrath, Alister E. *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 5th ed. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011

B. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Attendance, Participation, and Interview (20%)

Attendance is expected at all classes. The student's final grade will be adjusted in relation to attendance. **Students who miss three classes or more without exceptional reason will fail the course.**

Professor Beverley expects that by signing up for the course students will **fully participate** in the class through listening, note taking, and other proper forms of engagement. As well, participation and politeness means that students will refrain from texting during class and using computers in ways that distract self and others from learning. Students can use the Internet during class to look up relevant items directly related to class learning. Otherwise, random surfing of the Net and the playing of games on the computer should be avoided.

All students will have a half hour **personal interview** with Professor Beverley sometime during the spring term. This will provide an opportunity for the student

to share his/her life story and theological views and to set a foundation for further discovery during the term.

For the interview the student will prepare a 1000 word answer to these questions: "What are the most crucial moments in your life story? How would you describe yourself theologically? Also, students are asked to prepare a timeline of the major events in their life, birth to present.

2. Reading + two reports (30%)

For each class students are to read the relevant chapter of McGrath + do one hour of reading in primary material and/or major authors dealt with in each chapter. The student is to keep a dated reading journal which lists the scope of reading in McGrath for each class + the details of other reading, including most important quotes and facts from the other reading material. Each chapter reading report: 500 words. Lists are fine. Casual writing is okay.

The reading report is submitted twice during the course. The first report covers chs. 1-4 of the text while the second deals with chs. 4-8. No report due for ch. 9.

3. Major Research Project (30%)

Written essay 2500 words. This can be on any topic related to all of the issues raised in Systematic Theology I. The topic is to be discussed with Professor Beverley before research begins.

4. Take Home Exam (20%)

The take home exam will assess student interaction with text material plus classroom work.

C. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Special Note about Assignment Due Dates

I am asking all students to hand in the various assignments on a specific class day for the sake of simplicity. However, please do **not** miss class in order to finish an assignment. Rather, every student can take one extra day after the class date noted to get the assignment done to be considered on time.

Every student can ask for an extension without penalty due to extreme circumstances. Please inform Professor Beverley of these special circumstances in writing.

Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity, and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the

instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism. Tyndale University College & Seminary takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty.

Students should consult the current Academic Calendar for academic polices on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System. The Academic Calendar is posted at <http://tyndale.ca/registrar>.

Students must follow the [Chicago-Style Quick Guide](#) (Tyndale e-resource)/ [Chicago Manual of Style Online](#) exactly (especially [ch. 14](#); for citing scripture texts, refer to sections 10.46 to 10.51 and 14.253 to 14.254).

D. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments

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| Attendance, Participation, and Interview | 20 % |
| Reading + two reports | 30 % |
| Major Research Project | 30 % |
| Take Home Exam | 20 % |
| Total Grade | 100 % |

IV. Course Schedule, Content and Required Readings

| Date | Topic | Assignments |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Jan 17 | Introduction to Course | |
| Jan 24 | The patristic period – ch. 1 | |
| Jan 31 | Middle Ages and Renaissance– ch. 2 | |
| Feb 7 | Reformation – ch. 3 | |
| Feb 14 | Modern – ch. 4 | |
| Feb 21 | Preliminaries – ch. 5 | Reading Report #1 Feb 23 |
| Feb 28 | Sources of Theology – ch. 6 | |
| March 7 | Knowledge of God – ch. 7 | |
| March 14 | NO CLASS March Break | |
| March 21 | Philosophy and Theology –ch. 8 | Reading Report #2 Mar 23 |
| March 28 | Doctrine of God – ch. 9 | |
| April 4 | Doctrine of God– ch. 9 | |
| April 11 | Summary – – Last class | |
| | | Research Project Due Apr 13 |

V. Selected Bibliography

For web material related to McGrath, go to www.wiley.com/mcgrath

Students should use the electronic resources of the Tyndale library.
<http://www.tyndale.ca/library> is the library home page.

Tyndale also hosts reading rooms in theology prepared by my colleague Arnold Neufeldt-Fast. Arnold is a great theologian, scholar and Christian leader. The following can help any of you working on research topics or looking for material to use in the take home exam. As well, these resources are useful for continued reflection on Christian life and beliefs.

For the general listing of his online reading rooms, go here:

<http://www.tyndale.ca/seminary/mtsmodular/reading-rooms>

For the specific theology stuff, go here:

<http://www.tyndale.ca/seminary/mtsmodular/reading-rooms/theology>

Also, note the Trinity reading room:

<http://www.tyndale.ca/seminary/mtsmodular/reading-rooms/theology/trinity>