

“The mission of Tyndale Seminary is to provide Christ-centred graduate theological education for leaders in the church and society whose lives are marked by intellectual maturity, spiritual vigour and moral integrity, and whose witness will faithfully engage culture with the Gospel.”

Course	SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY: FAITH SEEKING UNDERSTANDING THEO 0531
Date and Time	JANUARY 14 – APRIL 8, 2021 THURSDAYS, 2:15 – 5:05 PM
Instructor	PATRICK FRANKLIN, PhD Email: pfranklin@tyndale.ca
Class Information	The classes will start on Thursdays at 2:15 PM with pre-recorded lectures, followed by livestream discussions. Classes end at 5:05 PM. Students may participate in virtual office hours as posted on the course page.
Course Material	Access course material at classes.tyndale.ca or other services at Tyndale One . Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account only. Learn how to access and forward emails to your personal account.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Equips students to use the tools of systematic theology to understand, proclaim, and live the Christian faith today. We will address such questions as: How can we know God, and how do we adjudicate truth claims about God? How can God be both one and three? How can Jesus be both divine and human? Who is the Holy Spirit and how does the Spirit’s work relate to that of the Father and Son? How does theological knowledge impact our day-to-day lives in the church and in the world?

Prerequisites: HIST 0561 or HIST 0562

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze the interconnection and cohesion of Christian doctrines and apply implications for Christian life, vocation, and mission.
2. Evaluate intelligently, graciously, and critically the theological ideas and writings of others, and articulate your own positions in a manner that is informed, coherent, winsome, and charitable.
3. Distinguish between the essentials and non-essentials of the Christian faith through deeper and broader exposure to the historic Christian Tradition.
4. Effectively identify, assess, and analyze theological sources through electronic library research tools.
5. Express their love for God and their worship of God through deeper and more integrated knowledge of God.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING

Basil of Caesarea. *On the Holy Spirit*. Popular Patristics. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2011. ISBN 9780881418767.

Kapic, Kelly M. [*A Little Book for New Theologians: Why and How to Study Theology*](#). Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012. ISBN: 9780830839759.

McGrath, Alister E. [*Christian Theology: An Introduction*](#). Sixth edition. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2016. ISBN: 9781118869574 (hereafter *CT*).

Other assigned readings will be available via the course page, as per the schedule below (IV).

B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS

Tyndale recommends www.stepbible.org – a free and reputable online resource developed by Tyndale House (Cambridge, England) – for word searches of original-language texts, as well as for topical searches, interlinear texts, dictionaries, etc. Refer to the library for other [online resources for Biblical Studies](#).

C. INTERACTIVE LIVESTREAM AND/OR HYBRID COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Livestream attendance at announced times

- Headphones (preferred), built-in microphone, and web-camera
- Well-lit and quiet room
- Stable high-speed internet connection, preferably using an Ethernet cable over Wi-Fi

D. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Forum Discussions (30% final grade; 5 X 5% for individual posts + 5% for group conclusion)

This assignment is related to Outcomes #2 and #5.

Educational research reveals that maximum benefits in online instructional formats result when students take personal responsibilities to complete readings, engage actively (e.g. forums), and consciously contribute to a virtual learning community through a spirit of collaboration, openness, and encouragement.

Individual Posts & Responses (5% each forum; 5 forums in total, 25% of course grade)

There will be 5 forums in total (see the course schedule in [Section IV](#) for dates), each answering a question (or set of questions) posted by the Professor. Students will post their responses to the question(s) by 11:59 PM on Thursdays, and comment on the posts of 2 other students in their group by 8:00 PM of the next day (Fridays). Each initial post is worth 3% and each of the two response comments is worth 1% each.

Your initial (Thursday) post should be about 25-35 lines (250-350 words; can exceed by 10%, but marks deducted thereafter). Each post should be concise, addressing the issues in the question with reference to course readings and lectures, and demonstrate critical thinking (e.g. further questions or issues raised, application to your context). Your comments to fellow students should be briefer (approx. 100-150 words), with both an affirmation or connection point (perhaps from your experience or readings) and perhaps one thoughtful question for further reflection. (The question is not always necessary; it is one option for engaging. If you pose a question, it is helpful to provide your own provisional answer to it, then ask “What do you think?” or “Do you agree?” or “What else comes to mind for you?”) You are not required to respond to a “late post” of any member.

Group Conclusion (one, 5% of course grade)

After the individual posts and responses, one member of the group will write a group conclusion. This conclusion will provide the following summary: (1) major theological concepts and/or arguments discussed; (2) a tentative conclusion (summarizing points of agreement and issues still unresolved); and (3) practical applications and/or implications. This conclusion is due by 11:59 PM on Saturday evening of the week in question. The conclusion should be about 30-35 lines (approx. 350 words). Your group is responsible for establishing a schedule for

conclusion writers. Each student will only write one conclusion through the course. You do not need to include late posts of any member.

Penalty for late work:

“Late posts” will be noted by the instructor, and the penalty is one mark deduction for every hour late. The total number of “late hours” will be recorded at the end of the course and your grade for the “forum assignment” would be reduced accordingly. Penalty for late posts would be a reduction of 1/3 of a grade per every 3 hours late (e.g. from A to A minus or B to B minus).

If there is “no post” after 8:00 pm on Fridays, the student will receive a “zero” for that forum. If there are specific reasons for late posts (as stated in “Late Papers and Extension Policy,” Seminary Academic Calendar), the student is to email the instructor directly.

This work will display your winsome, charitable, and humble engagement with others and their views, the expansion and development of your own thought through dialogue, and your recollection, synthesis, and application of course content.

FORUM DISCUSSION GRADING RUBRIC

	A	B	C	D
Completeness of post	Addresses all parts of question; meets and did not exceed limit; comprehensive response	Addresses all parts of question; respectable length & did not exceed limit; somewhat comprehensive	Addresses some parts of question; shorter length; incomplete post	Rarely addresses question; far too short or far too long; incomplete post
Clarity of post	Clear and concise posts; grammatically correct with rare misspellings	Clear, but can be more concise; a few grammatical or spelling errors	Somewhat clear, but with significant number of errors in spelling and grammar	Unclear, poor spelling and grammar in most posts
Critical engagement with class material (lectures, readings)	Thoughtful; opinions and ideas are substantiated with class material and additional resources; active reflection & questioning; obvious integration with one’s ministry context	Thoughtful; opinions and ideas are occasionally substantiated with class material; some reflection & questioning; some integration with one’s ministry context	Less thoughtful; opinions and ideas are sometimes substantiated with class material; insufficient reflection & questioning; less integration with one’s ministry context	Opinions and ideas are not substantiated with class material; no reflection & questioning; no integration with one’s ministry context

Promptness & quality of responses	Posting on time; responds to all group members' postings in timely manner; thoughtful responses	Posting on time; responds to most postings in timely manner; somewhat thoughtful responses	Posting mostly on time; responds to postings 2-3 days after initial discussion; less thoughtful responses	Late posting; rarely responds to group members' postings; responses not thoughtful
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2. Preliminary Research Assignment (3-4 pages; 10%, due Feb. 11 at 11:55 p.m.)

This assignment is related to Outcome #4.

This assignment will prepare students for the final research paper and provide an opportunity for the instructor to give students feedback and direction.

- Find two encyclopedia entries on a major theologian or a major theological issue (lists to be provided)
- If you choose a theologian, identify two or three major issues they addressed. If you choose an issue, identify two or three major thinkers who have addressed the issue
- From the above, choose one issue you would like to address, and one thinker who you would like to read on that topic; then, state your topic in the form of a research question, and provide a tentative answer
- Find and list eight or more good quality academic sources on the proposed topic; sources must include at least three academic journal articles, at least one academic monograph, and relevant sources from the major thinker in question as per the proposed topic

3. Short Research Paper (10 pages, 35%; due April 1 at 11:55 p.m.)

This assignment is related to Outcomes #1, #3, and #4.

Students will write a 10-paged research paper on the topic proposed in assignment 2, above. Students should consult **at least 8** good quality academic sources beyond the course materials. The research paper should demonstrate thoughtful reflection, critical analysis, and should embody a conceptual argument (thesis) in which various angles of the topic are explored in fairness. Course lectures and readings will serve as a starting point, but students should engage **at least 8** other academic sources in writing this paper, including academic journal articles and at least 1 theological monograph (a major work by a theologian). Be sure to consult the detailed *Grading Grid* and the *Research Paper Instructions* documents posted in Moodle. Read and follow these documents carefully at the beginning of your research and again when you begin writing your paper.

4. Short theological reflection papers (2 pp. each x 3; 15%; due: assigned dates at 11:55 p.m.)

This assignment is related to Outcomes #2 and #3

Of the seven dates listed below, choose three on which to submit a 2-paged (1.5 or double spaced) reflection on that date's topic (so, 3 papers total). Drawing on and interacting with the course content for that day (readings, lectures), write your own theological response to the question or issue being addressed. You just have 2 pages, so be very clear and concise.

Dates & topics include:

- i) Jan. 21: What role should Tradition play in in theology? Include one paragraph reflecting on the implications of this for your own theological development.
- ii) Jan. 28: What important contributions does reason or experience (choose one) make to theological knowledge? What are the limitations of that source for doing theology?
- iii) Feb. 11: Write a reflection on either one of God's attributes or about your preferred approach to theodicy (the problem of evil and suffering).
- iv) Mar. 4: Of the atonement theologies discussed, which one do you find to be most important and/or helpful and why? Which do you find least helpful and why? [In answering this question, offer theological reflection based on Scripture (interpreted in light of Tradition, reason, and experience), not just personal preference or 'gut response']
- v) Mar. 11: Write a reflection on one aspect or issue related to the Person of the Holy Spirit that interests you from the readings.
- vi) Mar. 25: How is our salvation (our 'being saved') related to creation and new creation?
- vii) Apr. 8: How might a trinitarian, participatory model of ministry, impacts your approach to worship, or pastoral ministry, or Christian community, or social justice, or mission, or vocation (or some other aspect of Christian life and witness)? As part of answering this question, you might reflect on how such theology corrects or affirms your (or your church's) present practice.

5. Reflection on Kopic (3-4 pages; 10%; due April 8 at 11:55 p.m.)

This assignment is related to Outcomes #1 and #6

Write a reflection paper (3-4 pages) on the practice of theology as it relates to your life as a Christian and your particular vocation or calling to serve God in the world. Your reflection should interact with Kopic's *A Little Book for New Theologians*. Don't try to say everything that can be said about the topic generally. Limit your discussion to 2-3 ideas/insights that *you* found to be most important. If possible, reflect both in terms of how theology is

relevant for Christian life and vocation and the importance of our life and vocation being conceived theologically.

E. EQUITY OF ACCESS

Students with permanent or temporary disabilities who need academic accommodations must [contact](#) the [Accessibility Services](#) at the [Centre for Academic Excellence](#) to [register](#) and discuss their specific needs. *New students* must self-identify and register with the Accessibility Office at the beginning of the semester or as early as possible to access appropriate services. *Current students* must renew their plans as early as possible to have active accommodations in place.

F. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Assignment	Due	Weight
Forums	See	25%
Conclusion	Section IV	5%
Preliminary Research Assignment	Feb. 11	10%
Short Research Paper	April 1	35%
Short Theological Papers (3)	See p. 6	15%
Reflection Paper on Kopic	April 8	10%
Total Grade		100 %

G. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

1. Your work should demonstrate the following characteristics:

With the exception of online forums, all written work should be double-spaced, written in 12-pt Times New Roman font, include a properly formatted title page, and use Turabian/Chicago formatting (not APA formatting) throughout.

Research papers should include properly formatted footnotes (not endnotes) and a bibliography of all works cited (i.e., quoted or paraphrased), not all works consulted.

Assignments that engage a single book (critical book reviews, theological engagements/reflections on a single book) do not require the use of footnotes. Please just refer to page numbers for citations in parentheses and provide a bibliography for your source.

For proper citation style, consult the [Chicago-Style Quick Guide](#) (Tyndale e-resource) or the full edition of the [Chicago Manual of Style Online](#), especially [ch. 14](#). For citing scripture texts, refer to sections [10.44 to 10.48](#) and [14.238 to 14.241](#).

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 takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty.

Students are encouraged to consult [Writing Services](#). Citation and other [tip sheets](#).

Students should also consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for academic policies on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System.

Research Ethics

All course-based assignments involving human participants requires ethical review and may require approval by the [Tyndale Research Ethics Board \(REB\)](#). Check with the Seminary Dean's Office (aa@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

H. COURSE EVALUATION

Tyndale Seminary values quality in the courses it offers its students. End-of-course evaluations provide valuable student feedback and are one of the ways that Tyndale Seminary works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student's learning experience. Student involvement in this process is critical to enhance the general quality of teaching and learning.

Before the end of the course, students will receive a MyTyndale email with a link to the online course evaluation. The link can also be found in the left column on the course page. The evaluation period is 2 weeks; after the evaluation period has ended, it cannot be reopened.

Course Evaluation results will not be disclosed to the instructor before final grades in the course have been submitted and processed. Student names will be kept confidential and the instructor will only see the aggregated results of the class.

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

Please complete all readings prior to attending class, so that we can make the most use of class lecture and discussion time. CT = McGrath's [Christian Theology](#). CTR = McGrath's [Christian Theology Reader](#) (available online as an e-book via Tyndale's Library). All other sources are posted online, in the course page on Moodle.

Week 1 (Jan. 14): Theology is Faith Seeking Understanding

The nature and task of theology; theology as a practice of the church.

CT, Part 1 (chs. 1-4); CT, chapter 5

Due: Online Forum #1 (This week only: initial post Monday (Jan. 18) by 11:59 p.m.; response posts, Tuesday (19th) by 8:00 p.m.; conclusion Wednesday (20th) by 8:00 p.m.)

Week 2 (Jan. 21): Theology's rule is the Bible, interpreted through tradition

Sources of theology I: The doctrine of revelation; Scripture as the un-normed norm of theology; the role of Tradition.

CT, chapter 6

C. S. Lewis, Preface to Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*

Erickson on approaches to biblical inerrancy

Smith on the problems of 'biblicism'

Week 3 (Jan. 28): Theology's rule is the Bible, interpreted through reason and experience

Sources of theology II: the role of reason and experience.

CT chapters 7-8

CTR, excerpts: 1.7 (Anselm), 1.9 (Aquinas), 1.17 (Paschal), 1.27 (Lossky), 1.37 (Polkinghorne), 2.29 (Paley), 2.51 (McGrath)

CTR, excerpts 1.26 (Wittgenstein), 1.31 (McFague), 1.29 (Tillich), 1.34 (Lindbeck), 2.45 (Trible), 9.2 (Feuerbach), 9.3 (Marx), 9.10 (Cobb)

Week 4 (Feb. 4): The Evangelical Character of Theology

What does it mean to be an 'evangelical'? What is evangelical theology?

Larsen on Evangelicalism

Barth on Theology and the Word

Due: Online Forum #2 (initial post Thursday; response posts, Friday; conclusion Saturday)

Week 5 (Feb. 11): God is One

The God of the Bible and classical theism; divine attributes; theodicy

CT, chapter 9

Webster on God's holiness

Moltmann on theodicy and atheism

Due: Preliminary Research Assignment

Feb. 18: NO CLASS (reading days are February 16-19)

Week 6 (Feb. 25): Jesus Christ is God and Human

Who is Jesus? Scriptural foundations; Patristic Christology

CT, chapter 10 (pp. 207-245)

Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 1-8 (pp. 27-52)

Ezbigio, "Jesus as God's Communicative and Hermeneutical Act"

Due: Online Forum #3 (initial post Thursday; response posts, Friday; conclusion Saturday)

Week 7 (Mar. 4): Jesus Christ Atoned for our Sin

The work of Christ in salvation; atonement and justification

CT, Chapter 11 (pp. 246-279)

McGrath, *Christian Theology Reader* (online, Library): 5.2 (Irenaeus), 5.7 (Rufinus), 5.13 (Anselm), 5.14 (Abelard), 5.19 (Calvin), 5.28 (Aulén), 5.32 (Packer), 5.38 (Weaver).

Wesley, Sermons 44 and 45, "Original Sin" and "The New Birth"

Aldred, "An Indigenous Reinterpretation of Repentance"

Week 8 (Mar. 11): The Holy Spirit is God

Who is the Holy Spirit? Scriptural foundations; Patristic Pneumatology

CT, chapter 12

Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 9-20 (pp. 52-89)

Thomas Oden, "The Person of the Holy Spirit," in *Classic Christianity: A Systematic Theology* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2009), 513-525 [67 pages total]

Due: Online Forum #4 (initial post Thursday; response posts, Friday; conclusion Saturday)

Week 9 (Mar. 18): The Holy Spirit is Poured Out on All Flesh

The Spirit as pledge of our inheritance; the consummation of God's work of redemption

CT, chapter 18, "The Last Things," 426-447

Yong, "I Believe in the Holy Spirit: From the Ends of the Earth to the Ends of Time"

Gabriel, "Intensity of the Spirit"

Week 10 (Mar. 25): Creation, Fall, New Creation

The human person, sin and grace, creation and new creation

CT, chapter 14

Bonhoeffer on 'cheap' vs. 'costly' grace

Gunton on the Doctrine of Creation

Middleton, "A New Heaven and a New Earth: The Case for a Holistic Reading of the Biblical Story of Redemption"

Due: Online Forum #5 (initial post Thursday; response posts, Friday; conclusion Saturday)

Week 11 (Apr. 1): God is Triune

Solidifying the Nicene consensus; Trinity as the "grammar" of the Christian faith

CT, chapter 13

Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 21-30 (pp. 89-122)

Due: Research Paper

Week 12 (Apr. 8): The Triune God Invites us to Participate in God's Love, Life, and Mission

The Trinity and the mission of God; human participation; a participatory model of ministry

Torrance, "Worship – Unitarian or Trinitarian?"

Kreider, "'They Alone Know the Right Way to Live': The Early Church and Evangelism"

C. Rosalee Velloso Ewell, "Learning to See Jesus with the Eyes of the Spirit: The Unlikely Prophets of God's Reign"

Due: Reflection Paper on Kopic

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Systematic Theology

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- _____. *Dogmatics in Outline*. trans. G. T. Thomson. London: SCM, 1949.
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- Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Translated by Henry Beveridge. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989. (Reformed)
- Erickson, Millard. *Christian Theology*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998. (Broadly Baptist, Evangelical; USA)
- Finger, Thomas N. *A Contemporary Anabaptist Theology: biblical, historical, constructive*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004. (Contemporary Anabaptist)
- Franke, John R. *The Character of Theology: An Introduction to its Nature, Task, and Purpose*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2005. (Reformed, postmodern)
- Grenz, Stanley J. [*Theology for the Community of God*](#). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994. (Baptist)
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Revelation, Scripture, Theological Method & Sources

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