"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."

Semester, Year	WINTER, 2027
Course Title	**SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY: FAITH SEEKING UNDERSTANDING**
Course Code	**THEO 0531 1S**
Date **Time** **Delivery Format**	From January 13, 2027 to April 7, 2027 **EVERY WEDNESDAY** From 8:15 a.m. to 11:05 a.m. SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE
Class information	The classes will be LIVESTREAMED on Wednesday mornings. Each class involves a combination of pre-recorded lectures with livestream discussion in large and small (breakout) groups.
Instructor Contact Information	**PATRICK S. FRANKLIN, Ph.D.** Email: pfranklin@tyndale.ca Tyndale Phone Number: (416) 226-6620 Ext. 2172
Office Hours	By appointment only.
Course Materials	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.

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 STEPBible – 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. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Preliminary Research Assignment (4 pages; 20%, Due Feb. 12 at 11:59 p.m. via Moodle)
This assignment is related to Outcome #4.

This assignment will prepare students for the final research thesis paper and provide an opportunity for the instructor to give students feedback and direction. You might think of this

assignment as completing a basic research proposal, within which you will identify one topic and one theologian and formulate a preliminary hypothesis (which you will test and defend or reformulate for your final term paper, based on your ongoing research and analysis).

In 4 pages, outline your basic plan for completing your research thesis paper, which argue a thesis concerning one major theological issue as addressed by one major theologian.

For more detailed instructions on how to complete this assignment, and where to find research resources, please see the supplementary document uploaded to Moodle.

2. Research Thesis Paper (12 pages, 40%; due April 2 at 11:59 p.m. via Moodle)
This assignment is related to Outcomes #1, #3, and #4.

Students will write a 12-paged (+/- 10%) research paper on the topic proposed in assignment 1, above. Students should consult **at least** 8 good quality academic sources *beyond the course materials* (i.e., beyond assigned texts & readings), including several academic journal articles and at least 1 theological monograph (a major work by a theologian). The research thesis paper should demonstrate careful engagement with primary and secondary sources, critical analysis, thoughtful reflection, and should embody a conceptual argument (a thesis) in which various angles of the topic are explored in fairness. 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.

3. Short Theological Papers (2 x 12.5% = 25%; due Fridays by 11:59 p.m. via Moodle)
This assignment is related to Outcomes #2 and #3.

Of the seven dates listed below, **choose two** on which to submit a 4-paged (double spaced) theological reflection on that date's topic.

Drawing on and interacting with the course content for that day (readings, lectures, etc.), write your own theological response to the question or issue being addressed. Pages 1-3 should focus on describing the specific concept(s), issue(s), argument(s), and/or person (or people) related to the topic. Page 4 should be your own evaluative (critical and/or constructive) theological response to the topic. You just have 4 pages, so please be clear and concise, focusing on central concepts, issues, arguments, and possibly theologians. Dates and topics include the following (NOTE: all due dates fall on Fridays, via Moodle, by midnight. Remember, you just have to submit two papers):

i. **Due Jan. 22**: What role should Tradition play in theology? Include one paragraph reflecting on the implications of this for your own theological development.
ii. **Due Jan. 29**: What important contributions does reason or experience (choose one) make to theological knowledge? What are the limitations of that source for doing theology?

iii. **Due Feb. 12**: Write a reflection on either one of God's attributes or about your preferred approach to theodicy (the problem of evil and suffering).

iv. **Due Mar. 5**: 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. **Due Mar. 19**: Write a reflection on one theological issue related to the Person of the Holy Spirit that interests you from the Basil reading (*On the Holy Spirit*).

vi. **Due Mar. 26**: How is our salvation (our 'being saved') related to creation and new creation?

vii. **Due Apr. 9**: How might a trinitarian, participatory model of ministry, impact 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)? How might a trinitarian approach correct or affirm your/your church's present practice?

4. Personal Reflection on Kapic (4-5 pages; 15%; due April 9 at 11:59 p.m. via Moodle)

This assignment is related to Outcomes #1 and #6.

Write a reflection paper (4-5 pages) on the practice of theology as it relates to your life as a Christian and to your particular vocation or calling to serve God in the world. Your reflection should interact with Kapic'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 key ideas/insights that *you* found to be most important. Reflect on how theology is relevant for *both* Christian life & vocation *and* the importance of our life & vocation being conceived theologically.

D. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Assignment	Due	Weight
Preliminary Research Assignment	Feb. 12	20%
Short Theological Papers (2)	See pp. 3-4	25%
Research Thesis Paper	Apr. 2	40%
Personal Reflection Paper on Kapic	Apr. 9	15%
Total Grade		**100 %**

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

Week 1 (Jan. 13): 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

Week 2 (Jan. 20): 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. 27): 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, exerpts: 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. 3): 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

Week 5 (Feb. 10): 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 this week (Friday, Feb. 12): Preliminary Research Assignment

Feb. 17: NO CLASS (Reading Week)

Week 6 (Feb. 24): Jesus Christ is God and Human

Who is Jesus? Scriptural foundations; Patristic Christology

CT, chapter 10 (pp. 207-245)
Ezbigo, "Jesus as God's Communicative and Hermeneutical Act"
Tanner, *Christ the Key* (chapter 1: "Human Nature")

Week 7 (Mar. 3): 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. 10): The Holy Spirit is God

Who is the Holy Spirit? Scriptural foundations; Patristic Pneumatology

CT, chapter 12
Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 1-8 (pp. 27-52)
Thomas Oden, "The Person of the Holy Spirit," in *Classic Christianity: A Systematic Theology* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2009), 513-525 [67 pages total]

Week 9 (Mar. 17): 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
Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 9-20 (pp. 52-89)
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. 24): 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"

Week 11 (Mar. 31): 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 this Week (Friday, April 2): Research Thesis Paper

Week 12 (April 7): 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 this Week (Friday, April 9): Reflection Paper on Kapic

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Available on Moodle course page.

VI. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL COURSES

A. 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.

B. REQUIREMENTS FOR LIVESTREAM INTERACTION (SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE COURSE ONLY)

- Livestream attendance for the entire duration of the class at announced times
- Built-in microphone and web-camera (headphones for quiet); Well-lit and quiet room
- Stable high-speed internet connection, preferably using an Ethernet cable over Wi-Fi
- Full name displayed on Zoom and Microsoft Teams for attendance purposes*
- A commitment to having the camera on to foster community building*

** exceptions with permission from professor*

C. GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTIONS

Tyndale University prides itself in being a trans-denominational community. We anticipate our students to have varied viewpoints which will enrich the discussions in our learning community. Therefore, we ask our students to be charitable and respectful in their interactions with each other, and to remain focused on the topic of discussion, out of respect to others who have committed to being a part of this learning community. Please refer to "Guidelines for Interactions" on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

D. GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Grading Rubric

Please consult the rubric provided for each assignment on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

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 (including improper use of artificial intelligence programs). Tyndale University takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Academic Integrity website for further details.

For proper citation style, consult Citation Guides for different styles. Students are encouraged to consult Writing Services.

Students should also 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.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)
Tyndale Seminary's Academic Calendar provides a definition and broad descriptions of types of Academic Dishonesty using AI.

Academic dishonesty includes the submission of work for which previous credit was given, the submission of work under one's own name that is largely the result of another person's efforts, aiding another's dishonesty, cheating on exams and giving false information for the purpose of gaining admission, credits, etc. … **Academic dishonesty also includes submitting academic work which has been written, rewritten, or substantially edited by an artificial intelligence program.** (Seminary Academic Calendar, 2026/7, p. 173.)

AI programs are not adequate information sources for academic writing.

Students should not use AI in academic writing without explicit permission from their course instructor. Given the tendency of AI programs to give inaccurate information and even falsify citations, students are cautioned against using AI prompts to begin researching or summarizing a topic. Instructors may deduct points from [or give a failing grade to] assignments for the improper use of AI sources. (Seminary Academic Calendar, 2026/7, p. 174.)

Students *may* use AI as an enhanced search engine, provided they are extremely careful about checking its sources. That means personally verifying texts and claims *every time* by clicking through to the source link or independently searching. This also means public information sources like Wikipedia are not satisfactory sources. We recommend using sites like Google Scholar or the variety of journal and research databases available with a Tyndale student ID.

Students *may* use AI to transcribe interviews, videos, or dictations of their own ideas when preparing for assignments. But they must read through the transcripts themselves

and *manually* verify accuracy, make selections to quote, or edit for concision and clarity. This use of AI is reserved only for ideas that students have created themselves. Students may not submit course lectures, videos, or other course material to AI or any other software to transcribe, synthesize, annotate, or otherwise summarize course content.

Students *may not* use AI in any aspect of the planning and writing process for class assignments, including but not limited to early planning, ideas, outlining, argumentation, grammar, syntax, or phrasing. Struggling with all this is fundamental part of human learning. This struggle is precisely what develops writing ability and is essential to developing critical thinking and communication skills. If further clarification is required, students should ask their professors, not an AI assistant.

Students *may not* use Grammarly or similar AI copyediting programs, including Copilot in Microsoft Word. Tyndale students are expected to write with sophistication in English. Use of a LLM to edit/re-write/re-phrase/alter student work will be viewed as a breach of the Tyndale AI policy. Students should also be aware that many of these programs can/will change student ideas without permission or notification and should be careful to turn off any generative AI features in any software they use for course assignments.

Special Note:
Students should carefully discern and justify any use of AI tools. Convenience, efficiency, academic pressure, lack of time or even health issues are not sufficient reasons to rely on AI. If personal or external difficulties affect your work, you should first speak with your instructor before using AI assistance. Your personal formation, theological reflection, and authentic engagement with the course remain the priority in completing assignments.

Some course professors may allow AI use for specific projects within specific limits. All Seminary syllabi (or course pages on Moodle) will contain guidelines for permitted uses of AI. When using AI for any professor-approved application in assignments, students should save all rough work and earlier versions of their assignments before editing. Students may be required to produce these versions on request. The name of the AI software used must be noted (Claude, ChatGPT, etc.) including the specific version number and model of that software, and the specific text of all prompts employed to get the results must be reported in the submitted assignment.

Turnitin Text-Matching Software
Tyndale has a subscription to Turnitin, a text-matching software that ensures the originality of academic writing and verifies the proper citation of all sources. The instructor for this course will use Turnitin for assignments submitted through your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca. Upon submission, you will receive a summary that includes your submitted

files along with a similarity report generated by Turnitin. Please be aware that Turnitin can also detect AI-generated content from tools like Grammarly, so students should be mindful of when using such software. It's advisable to confirm with your instructor before using any AI tools into your assignments. Below are some useful resources:

- Student Guides for Turnitin via classes.tyndale.ca course resource page
- Interpreting Similarity (Guide, Video, Spectrum)

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 (seminaryoffice@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

Late Papers and Extensions Policy
All papers and course assignments must be submitted by the due dates indicated in the course syllabus. Unless the instructor already has a policy on grading late papers in the course syllabus, grades for papers submitted late without an approved extension will be lowered at the rate of two-thirds of a grade per week or part thereof (e.g., from "A+" to "A-," from "B" to "C+"). Please note that some programs, such as cohort-based or intensive courses, may follow a different policy due to the nature of the program.

Faculty may not grant an extension beyond the last day of exams for the semester, which for this class is April 16. Requests for extensions beyond this date must be addressed in writing to the Registrar by filling out the Extension Request Form. The application will be considered only in cases such as a death in the family, medical emergency, hospitalization of oneself or immediate family member or prolonged illness requiring treatment by a physician. Factors such as assignments for other courses, holidays, and technology-related difficulties are insufficient grounds for requesting an extension.

A temporary grade of incomplete ("I") may be granted by the Registrar. Once an extension is granted, it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor and make satisfactory arrangements to complete the outstanding work. A grade of "F" will be recorded for students who do not complete the outstanding work by the deadline.

E. 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.

F. LIBRARY RESOURCES

Tyndale Library supports courses with e-journals, e-books, and the mail delivery of books and circulating materials. See the Library FAQ page.

G. GRADING SYSTEM & SCALE

For each course's grading rubric, please refer to your course syllabus or classes.tyndale.ca. For general grading guidelines, refer to Seminary Grading System & Scale.