



**TYNDALE**  
• SEMINARY •

## Course Syllabus

**WINTER 2019**  
**THEOLOGY OF THE HUMAN PERSON**  
**THEO 0646**

**JANUARY 15 – APRIL 9**  
**TUESDAYS, 8:15 AM – 11:05 AM**

**INSTRUCTOR: PATRICK S. FRANKLIN, PhD**

416 226 6620 ext. 2172

Email: [pfranklin@tyndale.ca](mailto:pfranklin@tyndale.ca)

Office Hours (Rm. C405):

Tuesdays, 1:00-2:30pm

Other times as arranged via email; phone and video appointments available.

Access course material at <http://classes.tyndale.ca/>

Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account only.

[Learn how to access and forward emails to your personal account.](#)

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.

### I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course endeavours to acquaint students with the theology of the human person. It focuses on biblical and doctrinal issues that bear on such questions as “What does it mean to be a human being?”, “What is meant by the ‘image of God’?”, and “How is the Person of God related to the personhood of human beings.”

*Prerequisite: THEO 0531 Systematic Theology I*

### II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- Recognize the wonder, dignity, and mystery of every human person (Psalm 8)
- Express the meaning and significance of being created in the image of God

- Explain the relationship between Christology and Trinity to anthropology
- Examine the relationship between theological anthropology and basic human rights
- Analyze presuppositions about human personhood in various theologies, philosophies, ideologies, and approaches to community/sociality
- Identify and discuss contemporary issues in understanding the human person in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences and assess them theologically
- Construct proposals for the implications one's view of personhood for theology, spirituality, and ethics
- Apply implications of theological anthropology to one's discipline of study and vocation

### III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

#### A. REQUIRED READING

All students are required to read Grenz and one other text. Specifically, counselling students are to read Grenz and Smith, while all other students are to read Grenz and Fisher.

- Stanley J. Grenz, *The Social God and the Relational Self: A Trinitarian Theology of the Imago Dei* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001).
- Christopher L. Fisher, *Human Significance in Theology and the Natural Sciences* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2010). [All students other than counselling students.]
- Christian Smith, *What is a Person? Rethinking Humanity, Social Life, and the Moral Good from the Person Up* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010). [Counselling students.]

**Online Readings** (available on the course page in Moodle; see table in section IV):

#### B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS

Tyndale recommends [www.stepbible.org](http://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. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. **Reading Reflections (15%; Due each week, beginning week 2):** Submit to the professor via Moodle a brief reflection (max. one page, double-spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman font) on the assigned readings. Identify one theme, argument, or theological concept that you found compelling, interesting, challenging, or concerning, and write a theological reflection engaging the author's treatment of that theme. You could choose to focus on analyzing the argument or idea (agree, disagree, and why?) or reflect on important implications for theology, church, vocation (counselling, pastoral life, other), or personal or social ethics. Your reflection will be assessed according to its engagement with the text (do you identify, accurately explain, and analyze well an important theme?) and its theological insight (synthesis of and reflection on the interplay of complex ideas). Focus primarily on the Grenz text and draw supplemental readings into the conversation when

appropriate. Of the 11 weeks of readings, you can skip one week (so **submit 10** total for grading).

- 2. Pop Culture Paper (15%; Due April 20 via email).** Write a brief theological analysis (5-6 pages) of the portrayal of the human person in a popular cultural 'text.' This 'text' might be a novel, a TV show (or series), a film or documentary, a music video, song (or several songs from a single artist or band), or some other cultural 'text' (approved in consultation with the professor). You will receive a list of examples on the first day of class.

Your analysis should address the following questions:\*

- a) What does it mean to be human according to this 'text'? (What is human existence?) What does it mean to be a 'good' human person according to the 'text's' narrative?
- b) What theological and philosophical assumptions about human personhood are stated (explicitly) or taken for granted (implicitly) by the 'text' and its portrayal of (i)?
- c) What theological questions and themes does the 'text' raise, illumine, or challenge?
- d) Analyze and evaluate the 'text's' portrayal of (i)-(iii), in light of your theology of being human. Limit your discussion to 1 key issue.
- e) Reflect personally on the significance of the 'text' for your understanding of human personhood. What practical issues are at stake, given your theological analysis? E.g., human identity, meaning and purpose, personal and social ethics, etc.

\* **In terms of space, allot 2½ – 3 pp. to (a – c), 2 pp. for (d), and ½ – 1 p. for (e).**

- 3. Theological Anthropology in Relation to Your Discipline (30%; Due April 27 by email):**

**Choose ONE of the following two options.** Use the cited book as your primary source for reflection, supplemented by other relevant academic sources (books and journal articles). Normally, counselling students should choose option 1, and other students should choose option 2. However, some students may receive permission from the professor to choose the other option (if they have a good reason to do so).

**Option 1: The Human Person in the Social Sciences:** In close dialogue with Christian Smith's book, *What is a Person*, write a thoughtful and informed paper (8-10 pages) on *why* the question "what does it mean to be a human person?" *matters*. Reflect theoretically (why the question matters at a basic philosophical or worldview level), vocationally (why does it matter in *my* discipline or vocation?; how does it encourage genuine yet critical engagement with my discipline?), and personally (why is this question important for me in my life, my sense of call and/or purpose, my walk with God, my loving and serving my neighbour, etc.). The paper might also include reflection on other pertinent questions or issues the book helped address or ideas that it stimulated.

**Option 2: The Human Person in Christian Theology and Ministry:** In close dialogue with Christopher Fisher's *Human Significance in Theology and the Natural Sciences*, write a thoughtful and informed paper (8-10 pages) on the importance of theological anthropology for systematic theology, or practical theology and the practice of ministry. Questions to address might include one or more of the following: (1) How would you characterize the way the three theologians discussed in the book relate theology to

science? Whose approach did you resonate with most and why? Least (and why)? (2) How has studying theological anthropology in light of science impacted your own operative theology? (i.e., Where has it affirmed, enriched, challenged, or disrupted your own theological assumptions, upbringing, ecclesial tradition, etc.); (3) Discuss the relationship between theological anthropology and another area of doctrine, such as creation, providence, salvation, Christology, or eschatology (choose one area of doctrine to keep your paper focused); (4) What practical and pastoral implications arise in light of your study of being human? These might include pastoral insights into the human condition, implications for pertinent ethical issues (e.g., ecology, human sexuality, physician assisted dying, etc.), or implications for your theology and practice of church and ministry and/or mission.

- 4. Research Report (40%; Due April 27, via email).** Write a 10-12-paged research report (plus one page appendix) on one of the themes treated by theological anthropology, as it relates to biblical studies, systematic theology, practical theology, or the integration of theology and counselling theory and practice. Instructions
- a) Select a topic that addresses a specific question that you want to sort out in your own theology of being human (typically, this will be something that occurs at the worldview or basic convictions / theology level, with ripple effects on overall theology, implications, and practice). For example, you might want to ask whether the binary sexual complementarity of male and female is truly a basic theological conviction, or can it be revised? Or, you might want to consider how the question of the intrinsic mortality of the human person impacts your understanding of heaven and/or hell. Or, how a relational theology of being human (perhaps based on a Trinitarian understanding) informs counselling theory and practice.
  - b) Research the topic in depth (at least 10 sources: 4-5 academic theological books and 6-10 peer reviewed journal articles (the ATLA database accessed via our library is the best source for full text, peer reviewed theological journal articles). Keep in mind that you don't need to read every chapter of every book, or every paragraph of every article; but you do want to read thoroughly the sections that are most relevant, and be sure to understand their logic and argument. You should also grasp the book's / article's overall thesis and how it contributes to the theological discussion of the topic at hand).
  - c) Write up a report (10-12 pp. max.) on how your research informed your answer to the question you posed. If possible, mention and address briefly 1-3 other serious options (other, alternative answers to the question) that you discovered while doing research. State briefly why you are convinced the answer you give in your paper, rather than these alternatives.
  - d) Conclude the paper with a paragraph outlining your own tentative thesis on the topic. In a nutshell, where do you currently stand on the question you researched and why? What further questions remain for you (if any?) that need to be addressed in future research?

- e) Please include an appendix page outlining your argument visually (it could appear as a kind of “table of contents” or a diagram or table . . . whatever helps communicate concisely your position as a summary of your research and reflection).

#### D. 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.

#### E. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

	Weighting	Due Date
Reading reflections	15%	Weekly
Pop culture paper	15%	Feb. 26
Disciplinary paper (based on Smith or Fisher)	30%	Mar. 26
Research report	40%	April 9
TOTAL	100%	

#### F. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

**Assignments are to be uploaded to the assignment submission section of the course page in pdf or Microsoft Word format by 11:55 PM (Eastern Time) on the assigned due date.** Papers submitted after 11:55 PM on the due date will receive a 1/3 grade deduction (i.e., B+ to B) for each day (or part thereof) following the due date. This late policy will apply to all assignments for which no extension has been granted. Extensions will be granted only for serious personal, family, or health situations.

Assignments should be double-spaced, in 12 pt Times New Roman font, with 1” margins. The standard citation method for theological papers is **footnotes with a complete bibliography** in the [Chicago style](#), as explained in the [popular guidebook written by Kate L. Turabian](#). For proper citation format, consult the "[Turabian Citation Quick Guide](#)" (follow style for notes (“N”) and bibliography (“B”)), or see the complete [Chicago Manual of Style online](#) (Tyndale e-resource), especially [ch. 14](#). For citing scripture texts, refer to sections [10.44 to 10.48](#) and [14.238 to 14.241](#).

The bibliographic software **Zotero** is recommended as a helpful citation tool which will save time and help to ensure that proper formatting is followed (available free at [www.zotero.org](http://www.zotero.org)).

### **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 are encouraged to consult [writing resources](#).

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 approval by the [Tyndale Research Ethics Board \(REB\)](#). Check with the Seminary Office (Room B302; [aau@tyndale.ca](mailto:aau@tyndale.ca)) before proceeding.

## **G. 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

\* **Note:** Assigned texts are to be read in preparation for the class under which they are listed.  
All readings other than Grenz are posted as PDF docs in Moodle

##### **PART ONE: INTRODUCTION: KEY ISSUES & PROBLEMS**

1. Jan. 15 Introduction to the course  
Problems with non-theological approaches  
Read: Grenz, Introduction; UN Declaration on Human Rights (Preamble); Moltmann excerpt on human dignity
2. Jan. 22 The 'Self': history of and problems with the concept  
Read: Grenz, chs. 1-2
3. Jan. 29 Loss of teleological and theological narratives  
Read: Grenz, ch. 3; Deneen article on the 'triumphant' failure of Liberalism
4. Feb. 5 Fragmentation of personhood and community  
Read: Franklin chapter (*BHBC*, ch. 2)

##### **PART TWO: IMAGO DEI**

5. Feb. 12 Image of God I: Three biblical-theological lenses  
Read: Grenz, ch. 4

##### **Feb. 19: No Class (Reading Week)**

6. Feb. 26 Image of God II: *Imago Christi* (image of Christ)  
Read: Grenz, ch. 5  
**Due: Pop Culture Paper** (via Moodle; 11:55pm)

7. Mar. 5 Image of God III: The new humanity  
Read: Grenz, ch. 6

##### **PART THREE: BODY & SOUL**

8. Mar. 12 Body & Soul as unity; Emergence and top-down causation  
Is the soul inherently immortal?; Human sexuality  
Read: Grenz, ch. 7; Radner article: "Sexuality in the 'anthropocene' era"; Franklin article: "The human person in contemporary science and theology."
9. Mar. 19 Human origins I: Evolution: What do Scripture and Science say?  
Read: Brooks: Humans as evolved and yet unique  
View: Denis Lamoureux Lecture: "[The Bible and Ancient Science.](#)"
10. Mar. 26 Human origins II: Theological implications of evolution for the *imago Dei*, human dignity, human fallenness (or 'The Fall'), and human destiny  
Read: Franklin article, "The Beginning in Light of the End"; Excerpts from McKnight & Venema, *Adam and the Genome*  
**Due: Discipline paper** (Smith or Fisher; via Moodle; 11:55pm)

#### **PART FOUR: PERSONHOOD & COMMUNITY**

- 11. Apr. 2** The vulnerable human person: beginning of life; end of life; disability and incapacity; balancing individual autonomy with distributive justice  
Read: Sidney Callahan, "A Case for Pro-Life Feminism"; excerpt from Hauerwas and Wells, eds., *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*
- 12. Apr. 9** Persons-In-Relation: Personhood, church, and the *missio Dei*  
Read: Grenz, ch. 8; Smith on cultural liturgies (from *Desiring the Kingdom*); Pennington, *The Sermon on the Mount and Human Flourishing* (excerpt)
- Due: Research report** (via Moodle; 11:55pm)

#### **V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY (posted in Moodle)**

(Tyndale Library supports this course with [e-journals and e-books](#). See the [Library FAQ page](#).)

**NB:** Tyndale Library has an excellent collection of eBooks (including many of the items listed below), which can be accessed remotely from your home computer (with login). Tyndale's eBooks can be found through the [library catalogue](#).

#### **OTHER ONLINE RESOURCES**

Tyndale's MTS Modular program has an excellent online [Christian Theology Reading Room](#), which has extensive links to material available as full text eBooks, as well as partial-text books available on Google Books. Reading rooms have also been established on the [Doctrine of the Trinity](#), as well as theologians [Dietrich Bonhoeffer](#), [Eberhard Jüngel](#), [John Howard Yoder](#), [Jürgen Moltmann](#), and [Karl Barth](#).

To search topically for relevant journal articles, book reviews or collected essays, use the comprehensive *ATLA Religion Database*, or the *Proquest Religious Database, Religious and Theological Abstracts* and *JSTOR*. [Full-text versions of many theological journals](#) and book reviews can be downloaded from these databases.

For **detailed bibliographies** to support *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, a **glossary** of theological terms, and **details of theologians** from *The Christian Theology Reader*, cf. [www.wiley.com/mcgrath](http://www.wiley.com/mcgrath)