

*“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.”*

<b>Semester, Year</b>	Fall 2026
<b>Course Title</b>	<b>SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY: FAITH SEEKING UNDERSTANDING</b>
<b>Course Code</b>	<b>THEO 0531 1A</b>
<b>Date</b>	From Sept 14, 2026 to Dec 11, 2026
<b>Delivery Format</b>	ASYNCHRONOUS ONLINE
<b>Class information</b>	The course is web-based asynchronous with no fixed class time.  <b>BI-WEEKLY COFFEE HOUR (Online):</b> Every other Tuesday from 3:00 to 4:00 PM (EST) on the dates indicated on the course page in Moodle, along with the meeting link. Alternative arrangements to meet with the instructor can be made for those who are unable to join during these times.
<b>Instructor</b>	<b>ALEX TREW, PhD</b> Email: <a href="mailto:atrew@tyndale.ca">atrew@tyndale.ca</a>
<b>Office Hours</b>	By appointment only.
<b>Course Materials</b>	Access course material at <a href="https://classes.tyndale.ca">classes.tyndale.ca</a> or other services at <a href="https://TyndaleOne.com">Tyndale One</a> . Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca email account only.

## I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Empowers 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

McGrath, Alister E. [\*Christian Theology: An Introduction\*](#). Seventh edition. Wiley-Blackwell, 2025. (hereafter *CT*).

Barth, Karl. *Dogmatics in Outline*. Translated by G.T. Thomson. Harper & Row, 1959.

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

#### 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

**NOTE:** Marking rubrics for all assignments will be posted on our course page on Moodle.

Assignments are to be uploaded to the assignment submission section of the course page in pdf or Microsoft Word format by 11:59 PM (Eastern Time) on the assigned due date. **Papers submitted after 11:59 PM on the due date will receive a grade deduction (i.e., A 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.

### **1. Group Discussions (20% of Final Grade).**

Attendance in this course is demonstrated by regular log-ins and up-to-date participation in forums. During weeks 3, 4, 6, 9, and 11 students will be expected to participate in online group discussions. The purpose of the discussions is to engage the theological content of the course and explore the implications of the material covered for discipleship and ministry. The instructor will post a question each week for group reflection.

Students are expected to post their own response to the question (300-400 words) by 11:55 PM (Eastern Time) on Tuesday evening of the week in question, and then reply to the reflections of each of the other students in their group by 11:55 PM (Eastern Time) on Thursday of that same week.

Students will be assessed individually for their contributions to each weekly discussion.

### **2. Preliminary Research Assignment (15%; due Oct 16 11:59 PM [Eastern Time])**

This assignment will prepare students for the final research paper and provide an opportunity for the instructor to give students feedback and direction. Students should follow the steps below, outlining a response for each step for the instructor.

- a) **Initial research on theologian or issue.** Choose a particular theologian or theological issue you would like to research and find two encyclopedia entries that provide an overview of the theologian or issue (lists of topics and resources to be provided).
- b) **Identifying possible topics.** If you choose a theologian, identify two or three major issues they addressed, based on the encyclopedia articles you read. If you choose an issue, identify two or three major thinkers who have addressed the issue.
- c) **Choosing your topic.** From the above, choose *one issue* you would like to address, and *one thinker* who addresses that issue. Then state your topic in the form of a *research question*, and provide a tentative answer.
- d) **Identifying good quality resources.** Find 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. Open-Book Examination (30%; due Nov 13 11:59 PM [Eastern Time]).**

A set of short-essay examination questions (with some choice) will be posted online on Monday, March 3, and students will have until Saturday, March 15 at 11:59 PM (Eastern Time) to complete the exam. Further instructions will be provided at that time.

### **4. Short Research Paper (9-10 pages, 35%; due Dec 11 11:59 PM [Eastern Time]).**

Students will write a research paper on the topic proposed in assignment 2, above. Students should consult **at least 8** good quality academic sources beyond the course materials. A

detailed marking rubric will be provided on the course page. 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.

The paper should be double-spaced, in 12 pt Times New Roman font, with 1” margins. The standard citation method for theological papers is **full footnotes with a complete bibliography** in the **Chicago style**. For proper citation style, consult the [tip sheet, “Documenting Chicago Style”](#) (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 from the *Chicago Manual of Style* or reference the [tip sheet, “How to Cite Sources in Theology”](#).

#### D. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Assignment	Due	%
1. Group Discussions	Various	20 %
2. Preliminary Research Assignment	Oct 16	15 %
3. Open-Book Examination	Nov 13	30 %
4. Short Research Paper	Dec 11	35 %
<b>Total Grade</b>		<b>100 %</b>

#### IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

##### Week 1 (Sept 14-18): What is Faith? 1: No Scripture without Doctrine

McGrath, CT, ‘Preliminaries’, 97-113

McGrath, CT, ‘Early Christianity’, 5-23

Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline*, 9-21

Frances M. Young, *Scripture, the Genesis of Doctrine: Doctrine and Scripture in Early Christianity, Vol. 1* (Eerdmans, 2023), 34-49

##### Week 2 (Sept 21-25): What is Faith? 2: Is It the Same for Everyone?

McGrath, ‘Sources’, 122-154

McGrath, ‘Middle Ages and Renaissance’, 23-43

Barth, 22-34

Kwok Pui-Lan, ‘Can the Native Speak Theologically?’, *Modern Theology* 37, no. 4 (October 2021): 1006-1015

##### Week 3 (Sept 28-Oct 2): Scripture, Tradition, Reason, Experience: The Oddness of Theological Knowledge

###### Mandatory Forum Discussion #1

McGrath, ‘Knowledge of God’, 156-174

McGrath, ‘Reformation’, 44-66

McGrath, 176-198

Rowan Williams, 'Theological Integrity', *On Christian Theology* (Blackwell, 2000), 8-15

**Week 4 (Oct 5-9): 'God the Father': The Limits of Language**

**Mandatory Forum Discussion #2**

McGrath, 'Doctrine of God', 201-223

McGrath, 'Modern Theology', 67-94

Barth, 35-49

John Behr, "'One God Father Almighty'" *Modern Theology* 34, no. 3 (July 2018): 320-330

**Week 5 (Oct 12-16):: 'Creator of Heaven and Earth': The Goodness of Things and the Presence of Evil**

**Preliminary Research Assignment due Oct 16 11:59pm ET**

McGrath, 'Doctrine of God', 224-239

Barth, 50-64

Katherine Sonderegger, *Systematic Theology, Volume 1: The Doctrine of God* (Fortress Press, 2015), 362-379

**Week 6 (Oct 19-23): 'God's Only Son, Our Lord': Was Jesus Human Like We Are?**

**Discussion #3**

McGrath, 'Person of Christ', 240-286

Barth, 65-94

**READING DAYS (Oct 27-Nov 1) – No class**

**Week 7 (Nov 2-6): 'He suffered and was crucified': Salvation's Political Edge**

McGrath, 'Salvation', 288-315

Barth, 95-120

Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, trans. and ed. Caridad Ina and John Eagleson (Orbis Books, 1973), 47-57

**Week 8 (Nov 9-13): 'He died and was buried': Salvation Embodied**

**Take Home Examination due Nov 13 11:59pm ET**

McGrath, 316-326

Barth, 121-136

David Tonghou Ngong, 'Rumors of Salvation', in *Routledge Handbook of African Theology*, ed. Elias Kifon Bongmba (Routledge, 2022), 429-442

Mayra Rivera, *Poetics of the Flesh* (Duke University Press, 2015), 19-28

**Week 9 (Nov 16-20): 'The Holy Spirit': A Person, Not Just Personal**

**Discussion #4**

McGrath, 'Holy Spirit', 327-350

Barth, 137-140

Sarah Coakley, 'Beyond the Filioque Disputes?', in *It is the Spirit Who Gives Life: New Directions in Pneumatology*, ed. Radu Bordeianu (Catholic University of America Press, 2022) 153-176

**Week 10 (Nov 23-27): Trinity: The Fitting Theological Conclusion**

McGrath, 'Trinity', 351-383

Gregory of Nyssa, *On Not Three Gods*

**Week 11 (Nov 30-Dec 4): 'The forgiveness of sins': Being Made New**

**Discussion #5**

McGrath, 'Human Nature, Sin and Grace', 383-413

Barth, 141-153

Søren Kierkegaard, 'Luke 7:47', *Discourses at the Communion on Fridays*, trans. Sylvia Walsh (Indiana University Press, 2024), 108-115

**Week 12 (Dec 7-11): 'The resurrection of the body and the life everlasting': The Beginning of the End**

**Short Research Paper due Dec 11 11:59pm ET**

McGrath, 'Last Things', 499-522

McGrath, 'Sacraments', 448-474

Grant Macaskill, *Union with Christ in the New Testament* (Oxford University Press, 2013), 297-308

**V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Anselm and Gaunilo. *Proslogion: With the Replies of Gaunilo and Anselm*. Translated by Thomas Williams. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Co., 2001.

Aulén, Gustaf. *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of Atonement*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003.

Ayres, Lewis. *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Bacote, Vincent, Laura C Miguélez, and Dennis L Okholm, eds. *Evangelicals and Scripture: Tradition, Authority, and Hermeneutics*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004.

Barrett, Matthew, ed. *On Classical Trinitarianism: Retrieving the Nicene Doctrine of the Triune God*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Reformation as Renewal: Retrieving the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church: An Intellectual and Theological History*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2023.

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Behr, John. *The Formation of Christian Theology*. 2 vols. Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004.

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- Burgess, Stanley M. *The Holy Spirit: Ancient Christian Traditions*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1985.
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- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Holy Spirit: Medieval Roman Catholic and Reformation Traditions*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997.
- Castelo, Daniel, and Kenneth Loyer, eds. *T&T Clark Handbook of Pneumatology*. London: T&T Clark, 2020.
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- Cone, Steven D. *Theology from the Great Tradition*. London: T & T Clark, 2018.
- Congar, Yves. *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*. New York: Crossroad, 1997.
- Cross, F. L, and Elizabeth A Livingstone, eds. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1974.
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- Elwell, Walter. *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.
- Erickson, Millard. *Christian Theology*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998.
- Flannery, Austin P., ed. *The Documents of Vatican II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*. New Revised Edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975.
- Ford, David, ed. *The Modern Theologians: An Introduction to Christian Theology Since 1918*. 3rd ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005.
- Goroncy, Jason, ed. *T&T Clark Handbook of the Doctrine of Creation*. T&T Clark Handbooks Series. London: T&T Clark, 2024.
- Green, Gene L, Stephen T Pardue, and Khiok-Khng Yeo, eds. *So Great a Salvation: Soteriology in the Majority World*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017.
- \_\_\_\_\_, eds. *The Spirit Over the Earth: Pneumatology in the Majority World*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016.
- \_\_\_\_\_, eds. *The Trinity Among the Nations: The Doctrine of God in the Majority World*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015.
- Greenman, Jeffrey P, and Gene L Green, eds. *Global Theology in Evangelical Perspective: Exploring the Contextual Nature of Theology and Mission*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012.
- Grillmeier, Alois. *Christ in Christian Tradition: From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451)*. 2nd ed. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975.

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## **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
- 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
- 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](https://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](https://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. Students must review the policies and procedures regarding Artificial Intelligence (AI) outlined in [Academic Calendar](#) and consult guidance from their course instructors.

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 policies and expectations on Attendance and Classroom Expectations, Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System.

## **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](http://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](http://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](mailto: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. 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](#).