TH502: Theology Survey II
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Charlotte
Dr. Don Fairbairn – Fall 2015

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Schedule: The assignments for this course will extend throughout the fall semester, from Sep. 8 through Dec. 19. The actual class meetings will be held on Monday evenings, 6:30 – 9:30 PM, Sep. 14 – Nov. 23 [no class on October 12 (Columbus Day)].

Office Hours: I will be in the office and available for drop-in meetings before class on Monday afternoons. I will be in the office all day on Wednesdays, but most Wednesdays will be filled with meetings. I can also be available by appointment on Friday afternoons prior to weekend classes, or at other times convenient to students. Please email me to make appointments.

Catalog Course Description: A study of the person and work of Christ, predestination, conversion, justification, sanctification, and the work of the Holy Spirit; perseverance, the nature and mission of the church; sacraments, eschatology.

Relation to Curriculum: This is a required course for students in all master’s-level programs.

Course Purpose: This course, like its predecessor TH501, is designed to give students a basic and growing competence in the area of theology through careful consideration of the Bible’s teaching on core Christian doctrines, the church’s formulation of those doctrines in history, and the expression of those doctrines in the varied contexts of contemporary society.

Course Objectives: In keeping with Gordon-Conwell’s mission statement, the professor intends that upon completing this course, students will:

1. Gain a mastery of biblical teaching on the doctrines covered in the course (article 1 of the mission statement).
2. Learn to think critically in analyzing various theological positions (article 2).
3. Develop their own positions on the doctrines studied and be capable of articulating and defending those positions and applying them to their own ministries (article 3).
4. Reflect on the implications of Christian doctrine for their own spiritual maturity, intimacy with Christ, character, and relationships inside and outside the church (article 4).
5. Consider the centrality of Christian doctrine for the development of a Christian and evangelical view of society (article 5).
6. Apply Christian doctrine to the church’s tasks of missions, evangelism, discipleship, compassion, and justice (article 6).
Course Requirements: Achievement of the course objectives will be measured through a variety of assignments. The successful completion of these assignments will require each student to spend at least 135 hours devoted to coursework, both in class and outside of class. The following chart indicates how these hours are distributed across the various course assignments. More specific descriptions of the assignments are given later in this syllabus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Assignment</th>
<th>Expected Time Commitment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading the textbooks and other theological works of your choice</td>
<td>60 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lectures and class discussions</td>
<td>30 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three integrative doctrinal papers</td>
<td>45 hours</td>
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Required Textbooks and Materials:


Tennent, Timothy C. *Theology in the Context of World Christianity: How the Global Church is Influencing the Way We Think about and Discuss Theology*. Zondervan, 2007. (ISBN 978-0310275114; ASIN of e-book: B000SIYT06)

Course Assignments:

1. **Reading (10 points):** You must complete the equivalent of 2000 pages of reading, including the following:
   - McGrath, *Christian Theology*, chaps. 11-18 (pp. 265-464). This reading will give you broad exposure to the issues and ideas of Christian theology. Because this book is double-columned, you may count each page as two pages. **Thus the reading from this book counts as 400 pages.**
   - McGrath, *Christian Theology Reader*, chaps. 4-10 (pp. 218-566). This reading will give you exposure to the range of the Church’s thought throughout Christian history. Because this book is double-columned, you may count each page as two pages. **Thus the reading from this book counts as 698 pages.**
• Fairbairn, Life in the Trinity, chaps. 6-10 (pp. 108-233). This reading will assist you in understanding the professor’s lectures and attune you to the ways a patristic perspective on theology can be helpful.

• Tennent, Theology in the Context of World Christianity, chaps. 5-10 (pp. 105-274). This book will help you to understand the way issues from the Majority-World Church are reshaping the discussions of Christian theology.

• Davis, Worship and the Reality of God, entire (pp. 1-206). This book will be particularly useful for the study of the church and sacraments.

• The relevant portions of a modern or contemporary theology textbook of your choice, preferably from your own doctrinal tradition. See the list at the end of this syllabus for suggestions. This reading will give you a unified contemporary perspective on theology and will help you interact with the thought of your own tradition.

• At least one evangelical Protestant confessional statement, preferably from your own doctrinal tradition. Examples include the Augsburg Confession, the Second Helvetic Confession, the Belgic Confession, the Thirty-Nine Articles, the Scots Confession, the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Methodist Articles of Religion, and the Philadelphia Baptist Confession. Some of these may be found in Schaff, The Creeds of Christendom (vol. 3) or in Leith, Creeds of the Churches. They are also available on-line or in denominational publications. This reading will help you interact with the history of your tradition.

Overall, the reading for this course will give you the data you need to reflect, in light of Scripture, on the doctrines covered. The reading will thus constitute your preparation to write the doctrinal papers.

You may read any of the readings in electronic form, but you should still report your reading with the approximate number of pages as if you were reading the printed version. (Remember that in McGrath and the Reader, each page counts as two.) Required readings are listed by chapter and page numbers, so you can easily find what to read in the electronic versions and can easily report your reading with page numbers. If you do other reading electronically, approximate the number of pages as well as you can (perhaps by comparing to a library print copy) without wasting undue time trying to be exact.

By Monday, Sep. 21, you must indicate on Sakai which contemporary theology textbook you will read and which evangelical Protestant confessions you will consult as you prepare for the doctrinal papers.

As you read, you must keep track of the books and pages you have read. By Monday, December 14, you must upload a reading report to the Sakai site indicating which books and pages you have read and the total number of pages.

2. Integrative Doctrinal Papers (30 points each [90 points total]): You must reflect on the Bible’s teaching and the reading (from requirement one) pertaining to each of the doctrines covered in the course and must compose three doctrinal papers. Each paper should be 10-12 pages in length.
In order to save space, you should use parenthetical references rather than footnotes whenever possible. Scripture passages, passages from the readings that all students read, and Protestant confessions can all easily be identified parenthetically. Some examples follow:
  
  Jn 15:9
  McGrath, p. 245
  Kant in Reader, p. 28
  Fairbairn, p. 25
  WCF 2.4 (= Westminster Confession of Faith, art. 2, sec. 4)

You should include a bibliography with full information for the sources you cite parenthetically in the paper.

Because these will be your personal doctrinal statements, you can and should write in the first person.

Paper 1 will cover the Person and work of Christ and is due on Monday, Oct. 26.

Paper 2 will cover the Holy Spirit and salvation and is due on Monday, Nov. 23.

Paper 3 will cover the Church and eschatology and is due on Monday, Dec. 14.

For each of the integrative doctrinal papers, you must do the following:

- Decide an appropriate way to divide and organize the doctrines/issues covered under the broad topic.
- For each doctrine, succinctly summarize the relevant biblical teaching. (To save space, you may use parenthetical references instead of footnotes when citing Scripture and course textbooks.) This will constitute evidence that you have met course objective no. 1 above.
- For each doctrine, interact with important statements from the history of the Church (early creeds, Reformation confessions, denominational doctrinal statements, or other historical materials presented by McGrath or the professor). This will constitute evidence that you have met course objective no. 2 above.
- For each doctrine, interact with contemporary issues from McGrath or your reading of a modern systematic theology textbook. This will constitute evidence that you have met course objective no. 2 above.
- For each doctrine, state your own belief clearly. This will constitute evidence that you have met course objective no. 3 above.
- Relate the doctrinal issues covered back to your key idea for theology, formulated in TH501.
- Reflect on the significance of your belief about the doctrines covered for your own devotion to Christ and for your ministry. This is a crucial portion of the assignment and will constitute evidence that you have met course objectives nos. 4-6 above.
Grading the papers: Your integrative doctrinal papers will be evaluated on the basis of five primary criteria:

1) Coverage of the important questions related to the doctrinal subjects of the paper (5 points)
2) Depth and comprehensiveness in addressing the important questions (10 points)
3) Relating the doctrinal subjects to your key idea for theology and addressing the implications of these doctrinal subjects for your own ministry (5 points)
4) The organization and clarity of your writing (5 points)
5) The mechanical correctness and elegance of your writing (5 points)

Grading: The point values listed above mean that the total number of points available for the course is 100. Final letter grades will be applied with cutoffs as follows: A 95, A- 90, B+ 87, B 83, B- 80, C+ 77, C 73, C- 70, D+ 67, D 63, D- 60, F below 60. A grade of A+ will be given very rarely, when the student’s work is truly exceptional. (At Gordon-Conwell, a grade of A+ and a grade of A are both counted the same way in calculating the student’s GPA. Thus, a GPA above 4.0 is not possible.)

Late work: All late work will be penalized the equivalent of one letter grade per week beyond the due date, unless arrangements are made ahead of time. Extenuating circumstances will be considered as appropriate. Work turned in later than Saturday, Dec. 19 (the end of the fall semester) will normally require that an extension be approved by the Registrar’s Office. If you anticipate a problem, contact me as soon as possible.

Attendance Policy: Class attendance and participation are a central part of this course. If you must miss a class period, you should notify me in advance to justify your absence. If you have more than one unexcused absence from class, you will receive a penalty of three points per additional unexcused absence on your final grade.

Document Formatting Requirements: All written assignments should be submitted in either MS-Word or PDF format. (If you use a different word processor than MS-Word, please convert the file to PDF before submitting it.) Assignments should be double spaced with 1” margins on all sides of each page, and should be printed in Times New Roman 12 point type or another font of similar size and appearance. Assignments must be submitted electronically by posting on the Sakai site. Hard-copies will not be accepted.

Syllabus Addendum: For other Seminary policies, refer to the attached Syllabus Addendum.

Class Schedule and Assignment Due Dates:

Sep. 8 – Beginning of fall semester: Get started on reading listed below.

Sep. 14 – Introduction
(Read Fairbairn, chap. 6.)
Highlights from TH501
The Promise in Light of the Trinity

Statement of which modern textbook and confessions you will read is due on Sep. 21.

Sep. 21, 28 – Christ in Light of the Trinity
(Read McGrath, chaps. 11-12; Reader, chap. 4; Fairbairn, chap. 7; Tennent, chap. 5.)
  Initial Considerations
  The Incarnation
  The Person of Christ

Oct. 5 – The Work of Christ in Light of the Trinity
(Read McGrath, chap. 13; Reader, chap. 5; Fairbairn, chap. 8.)
  Christ’s Work: As God and As Man
  Christ’s Prophetic Work
  Christ’s Priestly Work: The Atonement (Life, Death, and Resurrection)

Oct. 12 – No Class (Columbus Day)

Oct. 19 – The Holy Spirit in Light of the Trinity
(Read Tennent, chap. 7.)
  The Person of the Holy Spirit
  The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament
  The Work of the Holy Spirit in Christ’s Life
  The Holy Spirit and the Father-Son Relationship

Doctrinal paper 1 (on the person/work of Christ in relation to your key idea) is due Oct. 26.

Oct. 26, Nov. 2– Salvation in Light of the Trinity
(Read McGrath, chap. 14; Reader, chap. 6; Fairbairn, chaps. 9-10; Tennent, chap. 6.)
  What is salvation?
  The Beginning of Salvation
  The Holy Spirit, Election, and Saving Faith
  The Initial Results of Union with God (adoption, justification, etc.)
  The Continuing Results of Union with God (sanctification, perseverance)

Nov. 9, 16 – The Christian Church in Light of the Trinity
(Read McGrath, chaps. 15-16; Reader, chaps. 7-8; Tennent, chap. 8, Davis, entire.)
  The Nature of the Church
  The Mission of the Church
  The Gifts of the Holy Spirit and the Church
  Leadership in the Church
  The Rites of the Church (Baptism, Lord’s Supper)

Doctrinal paper 2 (on Holy Spirit and salvation in relation to your key idea) is due Nov. 23.
Nov. 23 – The End Times in Light of the Trinity
(Read McGrath, chaps.17-18; Reader, chaps. 9-10; Tennent, chaps. 9-10.)

The Kingdom of God
Christ’s Return
The Descent of the Father
The Eternal State
Millennial and Tribulational Questions

Doctrinal paper 3 (on Church and eschatology in relation to your key idea) is due Dec. 14.

Reading Report is due Dec. 14.

All late work is due Dec. 19 (end of fall semester).

Suggested Systematic Theology Texts:

Lutheran

Reformed (with extensive interaction with modern theology of all stripes)

Presbyterian

Methodist (with extensive interaction with patristic theology)

Wesleyan/Holiness/Nazarene

Baptist

Pentecostal/Charismatic

Dispensational
Syllabus Addendum

Academic Standards
Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of personal and academic integrity. Cheating involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination or the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors. Plagiarism involves the use of another person’s distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one’s own instead of giving proper credit to the source. Plagiarism can also involve over dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one’s writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures. For more information, please consult the Student Handbook.

ADA Policy
The seminary complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student with a qualifying and authenticated disability who is in need of accommodations, should petition the seminary in accordance with the stated guidelines in the Student Handbook.

Cancellation of Class
In the event the seminary has to cancel a class meeting (impending storm, professor illness, etc.), the Registration Office will send out an email (via the GCTS email account) notification to all students registered in the respective course. If the cancelation occurs the day of the scheduled meeting, the Registration Office will also attempt to contact students via their primary phone contact on record. The professor will contact the students (via GCTS account) regarding make-up. If a weekend class is cancelled, the class will be made up during the scheduled Make-Up weekend (see the academic calendar for the designated dates). For more info, consult your Student Handbook.

Extension Policy
Arrangements for submission of late work at a date on or before the end date for the semester are made between the student and professor. Formal petition to the Registration Office is not required at this time. This includes arrangements for the rescheduling of final exams.

However, course work (reading and written) to be submitted after the end date for the semester must be approved by the Registration Office. An extension form, available online, must be submitted to the Registration Office prior to the end of the semester. Requests received after this date will either be denied or incur additional penalty. For a full discussion of this policy, please consult the Student Handbook.

Grades
Faculty have six weeks from the course work due date to submit a final grade. Grades are posted on-line within twenty-four hours of receipt from the professor. Students are expected to check their CAMS student portal in order to access posted grades (unless instructed otherwise). Those individuals who need an official grade report issued to a third party should put their request in writing to the Registration Office.
**Virtual Writing Center**

Free assistance in writing papers is available to students through the Virtual Writing Center at Gordon Conwell. The Virtual Writing Center is staffed by Gordon Conwell graduates, or writing tutors with specialized knowledge in writing and/or ESL. Generally, this service is available to students who have completed or are currently enrolled in one of the following classes:

- CT500 (Introduction to Theological Research)
- CO501 (Introduction to Counseling Research)

If you enrolled in GCTS before Fall 2008, you were not required to take one of the three pre-requisites above, and you may request access to the Virtual Writing Center. Also, ESL writing tutors are available to ESL students even if they are not currently enrolled in a degree program. If you do not meet one of these qualifications, but feel you would benefit from using the Virtual Writing Center, contact us and we will evaluate your status.

Email writingcenter@gordonconwell.edu for more information.