TH502: Theology Survey II  
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Charlotte  
Dr. Don Fairbairn – Fall 2013

Professor’s Contact Information:  
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Schedule of Class Meetings: Monday evenings, 6:30 – 9:30 PM, Sep. 9 – Nov. 18  
[no class on October 14 (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>
<th>Student’s Actual Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading the three textbooks and other theological works of your choice</td>
<td>60 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lectures and class discussions</td>
<td>30 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three integrative doctrinal papers</td>
<td>45 hours</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Students must keep a record of the time they spend on each assignment and by Dec. 16 must upload to the Sakai site a chart like the one above, indicating the amount of time they have actually spent on each assignment in the right-hand column.

Required Textbooks and Materials:


Course Assignments:

1. Reading (10 points; approximately 60 hours): You must complete 2000 pages of reading, including the following:
   - McGrath, *Christian Theology*, chaps. 11-13, 15-18 (pp. 265-347, 375-464). This reading will give you broad exposure to the issues and ideas of Christian theology.
   - McGrath, *Christian Theology Reader*, chaps. 4-5, 7-10 (pp. 219-338, 407-566). This reading will give you exposure to the range of the Church’s thought throughout Christian history.
   - 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.
   - 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.

• Supplemental reading of your choice in order to assist you in preparing the integrative doctrinal papers. For example, you may want to read contemporary works on specific issues, such as the “Three Views on…” books. This reading will enable you to explore specific issues in more detail.

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.

By Monday, Sep. 16, you must indicate on Sakai which modern 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, and how long it has taken you to read each one. By Monday, December 16, 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]; approximately 15 hours each): 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.

   Paper 1 will cover the Person and work of Christ and is due on Monday, Oct. 21.

   Paper 2 will cover the Holy Spirit and salvation and is due on Monday, Nov. 18.

   Paper 3 will cover the Church and eschatology and is due on Monday, Dec. 9.

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.
- For each doctrine, or in the conclusion of each doctrinal paper as a whole, reflect on the significance of your belief 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.
- Relate the doctrinal issues covered back to your key idea for theology, formulated in TH501.

**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)

3. **Chart indicating actual time spent on all assignments.** You must upload this chart (printed earlier in this syllabus) to the Sakai site by Dec. 16.

**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 Wednesday, Dec. 18 (one month after the final class meeting) will normally require that an extension be approved by the Seminary. 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 and Citation Style 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. Citations should preferably follow Turabian style, although APA style is also acceptable. 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. 9 – Introduction
   Highlights from TH501
   The Promise in Light of the Trinity

Statement of which modern textbook and confessions you will read is due on Sep. 16.

Sep. 16, 23 – Christ in Light of the Trinity
   Initial Considerations
   The Incarnation
   The Person of Christ

Sep. 30 – The Work of Christ in Light of the Trinity
   Christ’s Work: As God and As Man
   Christ’s Prophetic Work
   Christ’s Priestly Work: The Atonement (Life, Death, and Resurrection)

Oct. 7 – The Holy Spirit in Light of the Trinity
   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

Oct. 14 – No Class (Columbus Day)

Doctrinal paper 1 is due Oct. 21.

Oct. 21, 28 – Salvation in Light of the Trinity
   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. 4, 11 – The Christian Church in Light of the Trinity
   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 is due Nov. 18.

Nov. 18 – The End Times and the Trinity
   The Kingdom of God
   Christ’s Return
   The Descent of the Father
   The Eternal State
   Millennial and Tribulational Questions

Doctrinal paper 3 is due Dec. 9.

Reading Report is due Dec. 16.

Time Chart is due Dec. 16.

All late work is due Dec. 18.

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Suggested Systematic Theology Texts:

Baptist/Evangelical


Gordon Lewis and Bruce Demarest. Integrative Theology. (Zondervan, 1996).


Daniel L. Akin, ed. A Theology for the Church. (Broadman & Holman, 2007).

Dispensational

Evangelical/Ecumenical/Methodist


Lutheran


Pentecostal/Charismatic


Presbyterian/Reformed


Wesleyan/Holiness/Nazarene/Methodist


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 “last day to submit written work,” as noted on the seminary’s Academic Calendar, 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 publicized calendar due date, must be approved by the Registration Office. An extension form, available online, must be submitted to the Registration Office prior to the “last day to submit written work.” 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.

**Returned Work**
Submitted hard-copy course work will be returned to the students if they provide a self addressed and postage-paid envelope with their final work. Work submitted without the appropriate envelope will be destroyed after the grade has been assessed and issued.