TH 504: Systematic Theology I
Spring Term 2012

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SYLLABUS

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will attempt to answer a number of foundational questions about the nature of theological method and apply those principles in reflecting upon the nature and attributes of God. What is the role of tradition in theology? Does Scripture need an interpretative principle, e.g., tradition, in order to properly function as authority? Is revelation propositional or transformational? Is the continuing work of the Spirit in the church revelatory? What is the place of imagination and creative reconstruction in Evangelical theology? Is classical theism wrongly indebted to a metaphysics of substance? What does a properly biblical understanding of a relational God as Trinity look like?

Note on pedagogy
Based upon my conviction that the best learning is collaborative each meeting will consist of both lectures as well as interaction. You will be expected to participate in class discussions, to make class presentations, to participate in group projects. In addition to this, the instructor will set up small group tutorials, both during class and during office hours, and during reading weeks. Groups no larger than 4 students will spend about 45 minutes in discussion with the instructor.

II. EVALUATION

A. Critical reading notes (or reading journal). Each student will provide me with the reading notes covering the required reading (see under Course Content). I do not require a minimum number of pages; however, the student should specify what percentage of the reading assignments he has done. Weighted at 25%. Due by last day of written work.

B. Book critique. Chose a book from among the list of recommended texts and write a critical review of it. The length should be 1,300 words. Other books can be accepted – check with instructor. Weighted at 10%. Due on the last day of written work.

1 The final version of this syllabus will be made available on the first day of class. All final changes will concern matters of detail.
C. **Class participation. 15%** I will assess both your desire to learn, as well as the progress you are making.

D. **Exams**
   a. **Sequence of Mid-term (25%) & Final exam (25%),** multiple choice.
      Both exams will consist of around 50 multiple choice questions, covering the lectures.
      i. The exams will cover both the lectures, as well as the fundamental ideas expressed in the assigned reading. A study guide of the assigned reading will be provided.
      ii. Both exams will be taken through CAMS, each will last 90 minutes.
      iii. You will be able to access the exams in the space of two days each, but once started, it has to be completed in 90 minutes.
      iv. Exams are closed book/ closed notebook etc. More details are to be provided in class.

A score must be obtained for each part of the evaluation (A, B, C, D above) in order to pass.

### III. COURSE CONTENT

**Jan 31**
**WEEK 1: BASIC QUESTIONS IN EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY**


**Feb 7**
**WEEK 2: THE GREAT TRADITION**

Lints 81-139

**Feb 14**
**WEEK 3: REVELATION**

Lints 57-81, 259-290; Grenz 132-38.

**Reading week: Group discussion and tutorials**

**Feb 28**
**WEEK 4: RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE**

**Mar 6**
**WEEK 5: INSPIRATION AND ACCOMMODATION**
Erickson ch. 9; Grenz 379-404

**MID-TERM, covering weeks 1-5 (9-10 March 2012)**

Mar 13  
**WEEK 6: EMERGENCE OF TRINITARIAN DOCTRINE**

Grenz 53-76; Bray 111-185

Mar 20  
**WEEK 7: THE TRINITY IN THE WEST**

Lacugna

**Reading week II: Group discussion and tutorials**

Apr 3  
**WEEK 8: TRINITY, RELATIONALITY AND THE CRITIQUE OF METAPHYSICS**

Grenz 77-87; Bray 197-224

Apr 10  
**WEEK 9: DIVINE ATTRIBUTES I**

Boyd

Apr 17  
**WEEK 10: DIVINE ATTRIBUTES II**

No reading

Apr 24  
**WEEK 11: DIVINE ATTRIBUTES III**

No reading

**FINAL EXAM (May 1-2)**

**IV. REQUIRED TEXTS**

• Grenz, Stanley, *Theology for the Community of God* (Eerdmans, 2000)
• LaCugna, Catherine Mowry, *God For Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (HarperOne, 1993) – excerpt to be supplied through CAMS

V. RECOMMENDED TEXTS

• Baillie, John, *The Idea of Revelation in Recent Thought* (Columbia, 1956)
• Berkhof, Hendrikus, *Two Hundred Years of Theology* (Eerdmans, 1989)
• Cunningham, David, *These Three Are One: The Practice of Trinitarian Theology* (Blackwell, 1998)
• Fackre, Gabriel, *The Doctrine of Revelation: A Narrative Approach* (Eerdmans, 1997)
• Feinberg, John, *No One Like Him: The Doctrine of God* (Crossway, 2006)
• Frei, Hans W., *Types of Christian Theology* (Yale, 1992)
• Grenz, Stanley, *The Social God and the Relational Self* (WJK, 2001)
• Grenz, Stanley, *The Named God and the Question of Being* (WJK, 2005)
• Gunton, Colin, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (T&T Clark, 1991)
• Hütter, Reinhard, *Suffering Divine Things: Theology as Church Practice* (Eerdmans, 2000)
• Kelsey, David, *The Uses of Scripture* (Fortress, 1975)
• Lindbeck, George, *The Nature of Doctrine* (WJK, 1984)
• Marshall, Bruce, *Trinity and Truth* (CUP, 2000)
• Nash, Ronald, *The Concept of God: An Exploration of Contemporary Difficulties with the Attributes of God* (Zondervan, 1983)
• Pannenberg, Wolfhart, *Basic Questions in Theology I* (SCM, 1970)
• Raschke, Carl, *The Next Reformation* (Baker, 2006)
• Rahner, Karl, *The Trinity* (Herder & Herder, 1975)
• Shults, LeRon, *Reforming the Doctrine of God* (Eerdmans, 2005)
• Tanner, Kathryn, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity: A Brief Systematic Theology* (Fortress, 2001)
• Thiemann, Ronald, *Revelation and Theology: The Gospel as Narrated Promise* (Notre Dame, 1985)
• Webster, John, *Holy Scripture: A Dogmatic Sketch* (CUP, 2003)
• Zizioulas, John, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (St. Vladimir’s, 1995)

VI. NOTE ON PLAGIARISM

Please refer to Indiana University’s ‘Plagiarism: What It is and How to Recognize and Avoid It’ [http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml]. The document has the official recognition of Gordon-Conwell faculty.
- If you are not sure about specific situations, contact the professor for clarification.
- Cases will be automatically referred to the plagiarism committee of GCTS.

VII. GRADING SCALE

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