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?

II. EVALUATION

A. Critical reading notes (or reading report). Each student will provide me with the reading notes covering the required reading (see under Course Content). The notes will not be simple sketches or synopses of the material, but they will have to reflect your critical interaction with it. Weighted at 25%. Due at beginning of each class.

B. Book critique. Choose 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 25%. Due on the last day of written work.

C. Research paper: A list of topics is provided. The length should be 3,000 words. Weighted at 50%. Due on the last day of written work.

III. COURSE CONTENT

WEEK 1: BASIC QUESTIONS IN EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY


WEEK 2: THE GREAT TRADITION
Lints 81-139

WEEK 3: REVELATION
Lints 57-81, 259-290; Grenz 132-38.

WEEK 4: INSPIRATION AND ACCOMMODATION
Erickson ch. 9; Grenz 379-404

WEEK 5: FOUNDATIONALISM AND AFTER
Lints 191-259

WEEK 6: THEOLOGICAL LANGUAGE AND THE NATURE OF DOCTRINE
Franke 83-163; Erickson ch. 6

WEEK 7: APOSTOLIC AND PATRISTIC TRINITARIAN THOUGHT
Grenz 53-76; Bray 111-185

WEEK 8: TRINITY AND RELATIONALITY
Grenz 77-87; Bray 197-224

WEEK 9: GOD, VIOLENCE, AND JUSTICE
Grenz 88-97; Erickson chs. 12-14.

WEEK 10: OPEN THEISM

IV. REQUIRED TEXTS

- Bray, Gerald, The Doctrine of God (IVP, 2003)
- Erickson, Millard, Christian Theology, 2nd edition (Baker, 1998)
- Franke, John R., The Character of Theology (Baker, 2005)
- Grenz, Stanley, Theology for the Community of God (Eerdmans, 2000)

V. RECOMMENDED TEXTS

- Abraham, William J., Canon and Criterion in Christian Theology (OUP, 1998)
- 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.