Syllabus: TH603

TH 603: Contemporary Theology and Theologians with Dr. Richard Lints
(mentoring professor, Dr. Adonis Vidu)

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Snapshot of Course Requirements
TH603 requires timely completion of the following **four** course requirements:

1. Required Reading - 20% of your grade
2. Response Papers - 4 papers, 20% each
3. Interactivity (required for course grade to be submitted to registration office)
4. Course Checkout/Reading Report (after you have finished all course requirements above)

Purpose and Objectives of Course
This course shall examine five of the predominant movements within contemporary theology: Process Theology, Modern Roman Catholicism, Black Theology, Liberation Theology, and Feminist Theology. The course is designed to introduce students to contemporary trends in theology and the roles they play in shaping the religious consciousness of the modern world. Each section of the course will allow “spokespersons” for the individual positions to represent themselves and will also allow for interaction of diverse theological views. An Evangelical response to each spokesperson will then be presented in which the student will be challenged to evaluate and critique each of the theologies represented.

This course is designed to meet the needs of students on several levels. It may be taken for credit by seminary students as part of the regular seminary curriculum. Pastors will find it very helpful in formulating an Evangelical response to modern theologies encountered in their ministry. Due to the complex nature of the presentations, this course is not recommended for those without previous studies in theology.

Course Requirements
Please Note: In the case of discrepancies between the course requirements mentioned in the audio material and the requirements given in this syllabus, the syllabus takes precedence. It is highly recommended that you do not turn in all of your written work at one time. Doing so will not allow you to benefit from the feedback of the instructor.

A. Required Reading
Read the following books and articles. You will be required to indicate what percentage of the required reading you have completed when you turn in the course checkout online at the conclusion of the course.


* Copies of the books/articles indicated with an asterisk are included in the “Required Reading Materials” booklet, available through the GCTS BookCentre (1-888-252-4287).

“A Brief Glossary of Theological Terms” (from J. Davis, *Theology Primer*) is available through the GCTS BookCentre. This is optional.

**B. Response Papers**

Students will choose four or five course topics on which to complete the response papers. Response papers should briefly outline the main emphasis, the primary assertions, and the major adherents of the theology considered. They should interact with the position presented by discussing the similarities and differences of the particular theology with evangelical theology, making use of the lecture material, the study questions, readings, and Scripture. Papers should be 4-5 pages in length, typed, and double spaced. All four response papers should be submitted together to the Semlink office.

**Submitting Assignments**

Assignments can be submitted electronically through the Drop Box tool in Sakai. On the left menu, under "Project Tools," select "Drop Box." To add a file, click “Add” and upload from there.

Some guidelines for this process:

• Paper submissions should be in either .doc, .docx or .pdf format.
• Submitting your work through drop box is considered a formal (and final) submission. Nothing further will be needed on your part.
• All submissions are time/date stamped and will be retrieved by the Semlink office and routed to your professor for grading.
• Assignments may be returned to you electronically, in most cases through your Sakai drop box or via email. If your assignment was graded by hand, it will be scanned and delivered to you as a PDF file.
• Remember to use a full heading, including your name, professor, course, and date.

Please let the Semlink office know if you have any further questions about electronic submission. semlink@gordonconwell.edu or 978-646-4144.

**Interactivity**

As a member of the Association of Theological Schools, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary recognizes the value of interactivity in distance learning and complies with the standards for accreditation set by ATS which include interactivity as a compulsory component of any distance learning program that wishes to continue granting credit for its courses. The purpose of Semlink interactivity is to enhance learning by providing an online environment for students to engage meaningfully and substantively with professors, teaching fellows, and other students in order to achieve an enriching and academically challenging distance learning experience.

There are two interactivity requirements for this course:

1. **An online discussion forum**: converse with other students and with instructors on the Semlink forum. You are required to participate four (4) times in the discussions relating to your area of study. To ensure successful completion of this requirement, please complete your participation in the discussion forums at least one week prior to your course due date. This will allow sufficient time for you to resubmit any responses if necessary.

2. **Email-based conversation** with your Semlink teaching fellow. You are required to email a total of three (3) times, including your original response to the conversation starter. Please allow a minimum of one month to complete this conversation to allow...
time for the teaching fellow to respond. Allow five business days for a response to each of your submissions.

To begin your interactivity (and for more details about this requirement), see the Interactivity section under Modules. This section will explain in more detail what is expected for this requirement.

**If you fail to complete the interactivity requirements, you will fail your course.**

**Grading**

Your final grade for the course will be computed on the following basis:

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response Papers</td>
<td>80% (4 papers, 20% each)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>Completion Required</td>
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**Course Outline**

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<tr>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Topics Covered</th>
<th>Required Reading</th>
<th>Suggested Schedule</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Contemporary Theology: An Introduction</td>
<td>Lints, “Modernity: Friend or Foe?”</td>
<td>Week 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Process Theology</td>
<td>Cobb, Process Theology</td>
<td>Week 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Process Theology: An Assessment</td>
<td>Gruenler, Inexhaustible God</td>
<td>Week 3: Complete Process Theology Response Paper, if applicable</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Modern Roman Catholicism: An Introduction</td>
<td>Wells, Search for Salvation, ch. 6; Wells, Revolution in Rome, chs. 1-5</td>
<td>Week 4</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Modern Roman Catholicism</td>
<td>Tracy, “The Uneasy Alliance Reconceived”</td>
<td>Week 5: Complete Catholicism Response Paper, if applicable</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Liberation Theology: An Introduction</td>
<td>Wells, Search for Salvation, ch. 5; Grenz and Olson, 20th-Century Theology</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Liberation Theology</td>
<td>Cox, “Theology from the Underside”</td>
<td>Week 7: Complete Liberation Theology Response Paper, if applicable</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Black Theology: An Introduction</td>
<td>Review Wells, Search for Salvation, ch. 5</td>
<td>Week 8</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Black Theology</td>
<td>Cone, A Black Theology of Liberation</td>
<td>Week 9: Complete Black Theology Response Paper, if applicable</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Feminist Theology</td>
<td>Russell, Household of Freedom</td>
<td>Week 10</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Feminist Theology: A Response</td>
<td>Kaminer, “Feminism’s Identity Crisis”</td>
<td>Week 11: Complete Feminist Theology Response Paper, if applicable</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>Lints, The Fabric of Theology</td>
<td>Week 12</td>
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