TH 504 - SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY I
Dr. Richard Lints
Syllabus – Fall Term 2016 (Thursdays 8-11AM)
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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course is designed to give you a concise introduction to the nature, history and methodology of theology. It should also provide a helpful stimulus in understanding the relationship between the practice of one's faith and the belief context into which that practice fits. The course will focus the nature of a theological vision, the inspiration and authority of Scripture, the interpretation of those Scriptures and the nature of the God whom we worship.

II. COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Students are required to complete the assigned reading from the required texts listed below. In addition, the student shall prepare a one page (or less) description of the most important point of each book with the exception of required reading #5 (Systematic Theology text). There shall also be a mid-term and final exam. Both of these shall be take-home essay exams. A sample copy of an exam is included for your perusal. The mid-Term exam shall be available on October 20 and due on October 28. The Final Exam will be available on the last day of class (December 8) and is due on the last day written work can be turned in (December 20). A final assignment consists of a two page report that records a conversation with your pastor about the importance of theology for the life of the church. This final assignment is due on Friday December 2.

III. REQUIRED TEXTS
5. A Systematic Theology Text of your own choosing (see sample list below)

II. RECOMMENDED TEXTS
IV. EVALUATION
The examinations shall each constitute 40 percent of the final grade. The required reading reports shall constitute 8% of the final grade and the Pastoral Report shall constitute 12%

VI. Internet Usage
Students are asked to refrain from accessing the internet at any point during class sessions, unless otherwise instructed by the professor. “Surfing the web,” checking email, and other internet-based activities are distracting to other students and to the professor, and prevent the student from fully participating in the class session. No laptops or tablets are permitted in class. All lecture notes can be accessed prior to class or after class.

TH 504 - Course Outline
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WEEK ONE - Introduction
a. Introduction to Course
b. A Theological Framework and Vision
c. Major Assumptions

WEEK TWO - The Theological Trajectory
a. The Task of Theology
b. The Use of Scripture in Theology
c. The Use of Tradition in Theology

WEEK THREE - Culture and the Evangelical Theological Vision
a. The Nature of Culture
b. The Use of Culture in Theology
c. Evangelical Culture and Theology

WEEK FOUR - Reason and Revelation
a. The Use of Reason in Theology
b. Human Language and Divine Revelation
c. Special and General Revelation

WEEK FIVE - Redemptive Revelation
a. The Nature of Inspiration/Authorization
b. The Internal Case for Inspiration/Authorization
c. The Importance of the Canon

WEEK SIX – Redemptive Revelation
a. Consequences of Inspiration/Authorization
   Authority of Scripture
   Sufficiency of Scripture
   Inerrancy of Scripture
b. Scripture and The Gospel

WEEK SEVEN – Objections to Scripture
a. Religious Language
b. Historical Criticism
c. Inerrancy

WEEK EIGHT – Canon and Interpretation
a. The Nature of the Canon
   Scripture's Own Sense of the Canon
   The Testimony of History to the Canon
b. Canonical Interpretation
   The Three Horizons
   Culture and the Application of Scripture

WEEK NINE - The Trinity
a. Monotheism
b. The Divinity of the Son and the Spirit
c. The Nature of the Trinity

WEEK TEN – The Trinity (con’t)
a. The nature of Divine Persons
b. The Economic and Ontological Trinity
c. Knowing God and Knowing about God

WEEK ELEVEN – The God who is Revealed
a. The Glory of God
b. The Mercy and Justice of God
c. The Love of God
**TH 504 - SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY I**
**EXAM (SAMPLE)**

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**Instructions** - This is a take home exam. You will have three hours from the time you open up the exam until you complete it. Answer three (3) out the following six (6) essay questions. Please attempt to be clear and concise. Bibles are permitted in the exam. Therefore, you should cite the Biblical material where appropriate and also the material from the required reading. You will have three hours to complete the exam which means that you should spend approximately 1 hour on each question. If English is not your first language, you may take one additional hour to complete the exam. The exam questions are then to be typed as is, and turned in. Please make sure that the typed-versions are double-spaced using at least a 12 pt. font. Each of the essays will count as 1/3 of the exam mark. Please remember to put your box number on the front page of your exam.

**Grading Scale**: 93-100=A, 90-92=A-; 88-89=B+; 83-87=B; 80-82=B-; 78-79=C+; 73-77=C; 70-72=C-; 68-69=D+; 63-67=D; 62-60=D-; 59 and below = F.

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1. **Theology and Faith** - What are some guidelines you would suggest to a person in your congregation if they were to embark on the study of theology? How ought one to begin the study of theology? Is the objective study of theology possible? Why or why not?

2. **Theology and Culture** - What is "contextualization"? Offer some constructive examples of it and some negative examples. In what ways has the culture of modernity impacted the Christian community? Explain how the church ought to intersect with the culture of modernity.

3. **Theology and Tradition** - How should the past inform the present Christian community? What periods of church history seem especially fruitful to you for the contemporary church's consideration and exploration? Why?

4. **Evangelicalism** - Explain the relationship between the doctrinal (or beliefs) context and the cultural context of contemporary American evangelicalism. How has culture been influential in the shaping of the evangelical movement over the last 50 years. What prescriptions would you give to the movement in order to alleviate these influences where you consider them to be negative?

5. **Revelation** - How does God reveal himself in the Bible? Explain the Bible's use of anthropomorphic language in reference to God? How does God accommodate himself to our limited rational faculties of understanding in order to reveal himself.

6. **Scripture** - In what sense is Scripture inspired? How does this doctrine relate to what role Scripture ought to play in the daily life of a follower of Jesus? Does inspiration entail inerrancy? Why or why not?
Bibliography – Systematic Theologies
Richard Lints

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Key -

BE – Broadly evangelical
CH - Charismatic
ER - Evangelical Reformed
EW - Evangelical Wesleyan
LP - Liberal Protestant
EA – Evangelical Anglican
LA - Liberal Anglican
D - Dispensational
F - Feminist
EB - Evangelical Baptist
RC - Roman Catholic
EE - Ecumenical Evangelical
L - Lutheran
W - Wesleyan
LR - Liberal Reformed