



Nazarene Theological Seminary

1700 E Meyer Blvd • Kansas City, MO 64131 • 816/268-5400

THE515 — The Christian Faith and the Apostles' Creed, Block (Hybrid) Fall 2011

Essential Information

Please refer to the following resources for information essential for the successful completion of courses and degree programs at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Links to these resources are available in the Essential Information section at <http://support.nts.edu>

- NTS Mission Statement & Purpose and Degree Objectives
- Tips for online learning success
- NTS library services
- NTS textbook information
- Online technical requirements and Moodle support information
- NTS Student Handbook including statements on quality of work, plagiarism, and academic probation
- *Handbook for Inclusive Language*

Instructor Information

Professor: Eric M. Vail, PhD

Email: ericmvail@hotmail.com

Church Office: (816) 364-4550

NTS Office Hours: Tuesdays by appointment

Catalog Description

A survey of the fundamental doctrines of the Church of Christ that are believed, taught, confessed, and developed through the Apostles' Creed. This course is foundational to the student's ability to work theologically.

Course Narrative & Rationale

This course intends to provide a basis for further study in Christian theology. Therefore, the course will include a basic theological grammar, a treatment of the fundamental issues confronting the Christian faith, treatment of the major theologians of the West, and a basic understanding of the relevance of theology for pastoral ministry. Underlying all of this will be a

perspective on theology as a disciplined reflection on the forms of life engendered by Word and Spirit.

Degree Objectives

This course addresses the following NTS Degree Program Objectives:

- MDiv Objective 3, “The development of wisdom and discernment through engagement with the intellectual challenge of the literature of the Christian faith, by the critical, scholarly study of the history and theology of Christianity, and of the literature and practices of Christian spirituality, ethics and ministry.”
- MACE Objective 1, “Appropriate and enhance the student's ecclesial understanding of the Word of God, the heritage of the faith, the doctrines of the church, and the fellowship of believers, sufficient to enable him or her to deepen a personal commitment to God and His Church and to inform a passionate, vital, and redemptive ministry.”
- MAICS Objective 4, “Graduates will articulate, communicate, and contextualize the essential affirmations of the Christian faith in a cross-cultural setting.”
- MA(TS) General Academic Track Objective 1, “Students will develop a comprehensive knowledge of the major theological disciplines and their interrelationships.”

Degree Outcomes

This course addresses the following NTS Degree Program Outcomes. At the end of the course the student should be able to understand more fully and articulate:

1. The basic doctrines that comprise the Christian tradition;
(Accomplished by assignments 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9)
2. The major voices in the Christian tradition;
(Accomplished by assignments 1, 2, 4, 6)
3. A timeline of the major theological ideas and movements in Western Christianity;
(Accomplished by assignments 1, 2, 4, 6)
4. Demonstrate a basic proficiency for speaking about/bearing witness to the Christian faith.
(Accomplished by assignments 2-10)
5. Provide a basis for further theological education.
(Accomplished by assignments 1, 2, 4, 9, 10)
6. The relationship between the broader Christian tradition and the Wesleyan/Holiness tradition.
(Accomplished by assignments 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10)

Church of the Nazarene COSAC Competencies

- CN18 Ability to list and explain the Nazarene Articles of Faith
(Accomplished by assignments 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8)
- CN19 Ability to identify and explain the main characteristics of the nature of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Human Person, Sin, Salvation, the Christian Life, the Church and Sacraments, and Eschatology

- (Accomplished by assignments 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10)
- CN20 Ability to reflect theologically on life and ministry
(Accomplished by assignments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10)
- CN21 Ability to demonstrate understanding of the sources of theological reflection, its historical development, and its contemporary expressions
(Accomplished by assignments 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10)
- CN22 Ability to articulate the distinctive characteristics of Wesleyan theology
(Accomplished by assignments 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10)

Required Texts & Course Materials

McGrath, Alister E. *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 5th ed. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011. ISBN 978-1444335149

Lodahl, Michael. *The Story of God, DVD + Book: Lessons for Faith Communities* (Insight Media Series). Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2008. ISBN: 978-0834125261

- If you do not want the extra DVD materials for future use in ministry, it is acceptable to obtain a copy of *The Story of God: A Narrative Theology*, 2nd ed. ISBN: 978-0834123939

Lodahl, Michael. *All Things Necessary to Our Salvation: The Hermeneutical and Theological Implications of the Article on the Holy Scriptures in the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene* (Monograph Series, 4). San Diego, CA: Point Loma Press, 2004.

- Contact Sharon Bowles (sbowles@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2788) directly to obtain a copy for \$5.00 from Point Loma Press; let her know you are ordering the book for an NTS course.

Additional required readings will be assigned throughout the semester that will be available through the NTS library or online.

Course Outline

Unit I – Landmarks: Periods, Themes, and Personalities of Christian Theology

Unit II – Sources and Methods

Unit III – Christian Theology

Course Assignments & Requirements

1. Reading (DO 1-3, 5, 6 - CN 18-22)

It is imperative that every course participant reads the assigned reading prior to class time. Every person will be expected to be prepared and ready to interact with the material in class. Students should track each week what percentage of the reading they finish.

2. Participation (DO 1-6 - CN 18-22)

Given the block structure of the course, we will be doing a variety of activities each week in class. Every person will be expected to actively engage in the learning activities.

3. Moodle Interactions (DO 4 - CN 20-22)

Course participants will read one another's essays and help provide feedback for their peers. Questions may also be posed throughout the semester that require response from course participants.

4. Essay #1: Apostles' Creed Book Review (DO 1-6 - CN 20, 21)

Write a well-crafted book review (approximately 1000 words) of one of the following five books in which you demonstrate a grasp of the content and theological issues. Include at the end an argument, based on what you learned in the book, for the significance of the Apostles' Creed for contemporary Christian faith and practice.

González, Justo L. *The Apostles' Creed for Today*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007.

Küng, Hans. *Credo: The Apostles' Creed Explained for Today*. Trans. by John Stephen. New York: Doubleday; London: SCM Pr, 1993.

Balthasar, Hans Urs von. *Credo: Meditations on the Apostles' Creed*. New York: Crossroad, 1990.

Westra, Liuwe H. *The Apostles' creed: Origin, History and Some Early Commentaries*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2002.

Pelikan, Jaroslav. *Credo: Historical and Theological Guide to Creeds and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003.

5. Essay #2: Article of Faith IV (DO 1, 4, 6 - CN 18, 20, 22)

At our last General Assembly, it was suggested that the Church of the Nazarene change its Article of Faith on The Holy Scriptures to:

"We believe in the plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, by which we understand the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, given by divine inspiration, inerrant throughout, and the supreme authority on everything the Scriptures teach so that whatever is not contained therein is not to be enjoined as an article of faith."

Based on the assigned course readings and in-class content, write a position paper arguing in favor of the current Nazarene Article of Faith on The Holy Scriptures.

6. Articles of Faith Education Series (DO 1-4, 6 - CN 18, 19, 22)

In groups, students will develop a series of presentations they can use in a membership course, a Sunday School class, and/or teaching setting on the Articles of Faith. The aim of the series is to be detailed enough that it can be simplified if appropriate, but suitable for educating even life-long members. Issues such as major historical developments, controversies, and distinctions

among various Christian traditions on each doctrine should be included to help explain the significance of the Articles of Faith.

7. Midterm Exam (DO 4 - CN 18, 19, 21)

Suggestions for preparation and the nature of the exam will be given well in advance of the exam.

8. Final Exam (DO 4 - CN 18-22)

Suggestions for preparation and the nature of the exam will be given well in advance of the exam.

9. Term Paper (DO 1, 4-6 - CN 19-22)

Each student will write a research paper (15 pages) on a topic approved by the professor—proposal due October 4th. The topic must reflect a theme associated with Christian theology. Criteria for evaluation will include grasp of issues, use of appropriate primary and secondary sources, integration of material treated in class, clarity of argument, and grammar.

10. Paper Presentation (DO 4-6 - CN 19-22)

Each student will present their findings to the entire class. The exact length of the presentations will be determined based on the number of people enrolled in the course.

Distribution of Student Learning Hours

	Hours
Face-to-face Class Sessions	39
Online Participation in forums, groups, etc.	3
Reading	43
Writing	40
Other Assignments and Learning Activities	10
Exams & Quizzes	6
TOTAL	141

Method for Submitting Assignments

Please submit all written assignments via Moodle unless you are given instructions otherwise.

Form and Style Expectations

When referencing materials in this course, please use the form and style provided by *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

Inclusive Language

NTS is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, NTS urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions, and in their writings. All written work presented to meet course requirements must use gender inclusive language.

Policy Regarding Late Work & Missed Exams

Assignments may be reduced by 10% per day late. Exams must be taken on the day they are scheduled. Any exceptions must be approved by the professor prior to the due date and/or exam date. Normally the only requests that will be approved will be for illness, death in the family, etc.

Course Grading

Each assignment will be assigned a grade between 0 and 100 inclusive. The final class grade will be weighted as follows:

Reading	5%
Participation	5%
Moodle Interactions	5%
Essay #1: Apostles' Creed Book Review	10%
Essay #2: Article of Faith IV	10%
Articles of Faith Education Series	15%
Midterm Exam	10%
Final Exam	10%
Term Paper	25%
Paper Presentation	5%

In accordance with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, NTS is committed to providing students with disabilities the opportunity to participate and benefit from its programs and activities. Accordingly NTS will make reasonable modifications to its programs and activities to accommodate otherwise qualified students with disabilities, unless such modifications would impose an undue burden on the operation of the particular program or activity or would fundamentally alter the nature or purpose of the program or activity. Students needing accommodations should contact the Office of the Registrar. They also should contact the instructor no later than the end of the first class session to discuss learning needs and adaptive strategies that have been beneficial for the student in the past.

Class Attendance

Attendance at classes is essential for realizing the maximum benefit of your education. If you must be absent because of extenuating circumstances, contact the professor as soon as possible to discuss the situation.

By NTS policy if a student is absent four or more weeks during the semester, the professor may automatically fail the student.

Daily attendance records must be reported for those obtaining V.A. and Department of Education benefits. Students must make the professor aware if their attendance must be recorded.

Course Calendar*

Date	Week	Unit	Assignment
Sept 6	1	I	Patristic Period, Middle Ages, and Renaissance: c. 100-1500 Reading: McGrath, 1-42 and 465-471; David S. Yeago, "The New Testament and the Nicene Dogma: A Contribution to the Recovery of Theological Exegesis," <i>Pro Ecclesia</i> 3, no. 2 (Spring 1994): 152-164—available online through NTS Library.
Sept 13	2	I	The Age of the Reformation Onward Reading: McGrath, 43-98 Assignment: Essay #1
Sept 20	3	II	Sources and Methods Reading: McGrath, 99-194; Lodahl, <i>Story</i> , 13-48; <i>Manual: Church of the Nazarene</i> , Article of Faith IV; Lodahl, <i>All Things Necessary</i> , 5-55.
Sept 27	4	III	Doctrine of God and Doctrine of the Trinity Reading: McGrath, 195-264; Lodahl, <i>Story</i> ; Miroslav Volf, "Allah and the Trinity: A Christian Response to Muslims," <i>The Christian Century</i> (Feb. 28, 2011)—available at kcdistrict.org/resources/Allah.pdf ; <i>Manual: Church of the Nazarene</i> , Article of Faith I. Assignment: Essay #2
Oct 4	5	III	Doctrine of the Son Reading: McGrath, 265-314; Lodahl, <i>Story</i> , 125-144; <i>Manual: Church of the Nazarene</i> , Article of Faith II. Assignment: Term Paper Proposal
Oct 11	6	III	Doctrine of the Spirit Reading: <i>Manual: Church of the Nazarene</i> , Article of Faith III. Midterm Exam
Oct 18	7		Reading and Research Week
Oct 25	8	III	Doctrine of Creation Reading: Lodahl, <i>Story</i> , 49-68, 237-240.
Nov 8	9	III	The Doctrines of Human Nature, Sin, and Grace Reading: McGrath, 348-374; Lodahl, <i>Story</i> , 69-124; <i>Manual: Church of the Nazarene</i> , Articles of Faith V and VII.
Nov 15	10	III	The Doctrine of Salvation in Christ Reading: McGrath, 315-347; Lodahl, <i>Story</i> , 153-164, 183-190; <i>Manual: Church of the Nazarene</i> , Articles of Faith VI, VIII-X.
Nov 22	11	III	The Doctrine of Christian Holiness and Entire Sanctification

			<p>Reading: Lodahl, <i>Story</i>, 191-204; <i>Manual: Church of the Nazarene</i>, Article of Faith X; Paul M. Bassett, et. al. "A White Paper on Article X," <i>Didache</i> (available at didache.nts.edu).</p> <p>Doctrine of the Church and Sacraments</p> <p>Reading: McGrath, 375-423; Lodahl, <i>Story</i>, 165-182; <i>Manual: Church of the Nazarene</i>, Articles of Faith XI-XIV.</p>
Nov 29	12	III	<p>Eschatology, Christianity and the World Religions</p> <p>Reading: McGrath, 424-464, Lodahl, <i>Story</i>, 205-236; J. Richard Middleton, "A New Heaven and a New Earth: The Case for a Holistic Reading of the Biblical Story of Redemption," <i>Journal for Christian Theological Research</i> 11 (2006): 73-97—available at www2.luthersem.edu/ctrf/JCTR/Vol11/Middleton_vol11.pdf; <i>Manual: Church of the Nazarene</i>, Articles of Faith XV-XVI.</p> <p>Assignment: Term Paper</p>
Dec 6	13	III	<p>Paper Presentations</p> <p>Assignment: Exam, Articles of Faith Education Series</p>
Dec 13	14	III	<p>Paper Presentations</p>

****Additional readings may be supplemented throughout the semester with advanced notice from the professor.***