



Nazarene Theological Seminary

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

THE 790/890 — Doctrine of the Holy Trinity - Module 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 at <http://support.nts.edu>.

- NTS Mission Statement & Purpose and Master of Divinity 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

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Catalog Description

This is a study of the Church's central confession that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God is Holy Trinity. Attention will be given to the historical developments of the doctrine of God, especially in its Latin and Greek formulations. Particular attention will be given to a full range of Christian doctrines such as ecclesiology, soteriology, anthropology, worship, the Christian life, etc. This course will 'seek' to examine varied contributions in Trinitarian theology through conversation with voices like: Augustine, the Cappadocians, Irenaeus, Wesley, Moltmann, Pannenberg, Barth, Jenson, Gunton, LaCugna, Zizioulas, Rahner, Balthasar, Congar, Volf, Torrance, Rogers, Del Colle, Bobrinskoy, et al.

Degree Objectives

M.Div.

1. The articulation of the knowledge of this God through prayerful, scholarly study and a deepening understanding of the Christian Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.
2. 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.
3. The growth of mature self-awareness and self-understanding as flawed human beings, reconciled to God and to each other within the Christian community, who are being transformed into the perfect likeness of Christ, filled with his Spirit, and gifted for the service of humanity.
4. The investigation of human society, thought and culture in order to articulate clear and coherent views of the context of the mission of the Church, and to develop an understanding of the Church as the community of faith with a passion for the gospel engaging in mission to different cultures.

Course Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course you will have (R = Course requirement directed toward achieving objective):

1. Demonstrated an understanding that the Church's vision of the Triune God is central to the Dogma & Doctrine(s) of the "one," "holy," "catholic," and "apostolic" Church. (R1, R2, R3)
2. Demonstrated a theological method for thinking with the central Dogma of the Church's Faith. (R2, R3)
3. Demonstrated a working knowledge and ability to exegete—"correct & fulfill"—one's ecclesial Tradition with the various "doctrines" of the Christian Faith. (R2, R3)

Required Texts & Supplemental Texts for Group Research Paper

Required Texts: (946 Pages)

- * John G. Flett, *The Witness of God: The Trinity, Missio-Dei, Karl Barth, and the Nature of Christian Community*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010). 298 Pages
- * Robert W. Jenson, *Systematic Theology, Volume 1: The Triune God*, (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1997). 237 Pages
- * Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God For Us: The Trinity & Christian Life*, (San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 1991). 411 Pages

Supplemental Texts for Research Paper: (1,417 Pages)

--Select Any Two for your Group Research Paper--

- * Ralph Del Colle, *Christ & the Spirit: Spirit-Christology in Trinitarian Perspective*, (New York: St. Oxford University Press, 1994). 221 Pages
- * Paul S. Fiddes, *Participating in God: A Pastoral Doctrine of the Trinity*, (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 200). 300 Pages
- * Colin E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991). 175 Pages
- * Jurgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom*, (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 1993). 222 Pages
- * William C. Placher, *The Triune God: An Essay in Postliberal Theology*, (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007). 156 Pages
- * Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, (London & New York: Burns & Oates, 2001). 120 Pages
- * Eugene F. Rogers Jr., *After the Spirit: A Constructive Pneumatology from Resources outside the Modern West*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2005). 222 Pages

Course Outline

- Historical-Theological Development of the Trinity
- West & East on the Triune God
- Theological Forums: John Flett, Robert Jenson, Catherine LaCugna
- Seminar Lectures (Dr. Robert W. Jenson) and Class Conversations -2nd Week of the Module

Pre-Course Assignments & Requirements (Outcomes 1 & 3)

All three of the *Required Texts* must be read in their entirety before the first day of class. Each student will write a 2-page (single space typewritten) *Digest and Critical Reflection* of each (**3 papers total**) of the *Required Texts*. The Flett *Critical Reflection Paper* is due on **Friday, July 29, 2011**. The Jenson *Critical Reflection Paper* is due on **August 12, 2011**. And the LaCugna *Critical Reflection Paper* is due at the beginning of the class module on **Tuesday morning, August 23, 2011**. On Thursday and Friday of the first week of the module we will spend time in a *Theological Forum* discussing John Flett, Robert Jenson and Catherine LaCugna. Your class participation in the *Theological Forum*, along with your reading and **three** 2-page *Critical Reflection Papers* will constitute 1/3rd of your final grade.

Course Assignments & Requirements

1. There will be one **Comprehensive Essay Exam (Outcomes 1-3)** that is critically reflective and synthetic in nature. The content of this exam will cover all the class readings, lectures and Class discussion. This exam will be posted in Moodle on **Friday, September 2** at the end of the day. The Exam will be due one week from the end of class on **Monday, September 9**. ***No late submissions will be accepted. This exam will comprise 1/4th of your final grade.***

As this Exam attempts to answer the specific questions that make up this exam, every synthetic response to these questions should not only be written to properly cover necessary content, but they should also be carefully written to demonstrate the *Outcomes* that have been designed to govern this course.

2. **A Research Group Paper - RGP - (Outcomes 1-3)**

Specific instructions detail and pertaining to the *thesis* of each *Research Group Paper* surrounding various topics, themes, doctrines, problems and issues pertaining to the doctrine of the **Trinity** will be discussed more fully in class.

This research will be carried out in groups of no less than 6 and no more than 8 research participants. Actually, the size of the **Research Groups** will be determined by the size of the class. Each **Research Group** will be assigned to a **MOODLE Discussion Forum**. It is imperative that these *Research Group Forums* (along with chosen topics) are set up within the 2nd and 3rd day of the class. Each *Research Group* should plan to participate in the **MOODLE** threaded discussion no less than 3 times a week. I will periodically drop into the threaded discussion. I may or may not offer response(s) to the ongoing dialogue. Part of your final grade will be determined by your responsible involvement that will be "**documented**" in the Moodle with each *Research Group*.

As you work through the issues pertaining to your Research Group Paper, you should also consider what it means to 'correct and fulfill' the Tradition of the Church, and what theological method you are using that is in sync with the 'Dogma of the Church's Faith. Is your theological method of exegeting the Church's Faith in step with the Gospel? Also, depending on the theme and the set of problems that you will seek to address, you should think about the remainder of the *Course Outcomes* and ask yourselves, "How, why, and in what ways do these Course Objectives inform and shape this **Research Group Paper**?"

The final product of each *Research Group* will consist of a **25 page typewritten research paper that is fully footnoted, with bibliography, table of contents, and in Turabian format.** This is a collaboratively earned grade, unless the members of the group and the threaded MOODLE discussion reveals that full online discussion and collaborative research and writing was missing by individual students. If that is the case, then the student in question will be dropped from the *Research Group* and asked to complete a Research Paper of the same size on his/her own. This research assignment is due on **Thursday, October 13 at end of the day, 11:59pm.** This **Research Group Paper** will constitute 1/4th of your final grade.

The *Research Group Paper* along with the *Pre-Course Critical Reflection Papers* will be assessed according to several basic categories including the following:

- a. **Introduction/Clarity of Thesis** (This criterion examines the student's ability to introduce the context, state the practical problem that generated this research, and provide a clear thesis of the essay as well as explain how the paper unfolds.)
- b. **Presentation** (This criterion evaluates writing style, clarity of prose, basic grammatical and spelling competence, sentence and paragraph flow, as well as headers for key sections of the paper.)
- c. **Description of Sources** (This criterion evaluates the student's ability to describe in her or his own language the position of the theologians cited.)
- d. **Comprehensiveness of Sources** (This criterion evaluates the student's breadth of sources used in composing research.)
- e. **Critical Engagement with Sources** (This criterion examines whether a student's work has taken the step beyond mere description and critically engaged with the sources she or he has drawn upon by subjecting them to a critical theological analysis.)
- f. **Development of Position and a Coherent Theme** (This criterion determines not only if a student has critically assessed the sources and arguments

present in an essay, but also if he or she has done this through the development of her or his own coherent position.)

- g. **Implementation** (This criterion examines how well the paper has 'actually' integrated and synthesized the rationale of the thesis, its accompanying implications and the 'way' they are to be embodied and lived out in the Church.)

Distribution of Student Learning Hours

	Hours
Face-to-Face Class Sessions	37
Pre-Course Reading (3 Texts—946 pages)	37.84
Research Group Paper (25 pages)	50
Pre-Course Critical Reflection Papers (6 pages)	10
Comprehensive Essay Exam (5 pages)	6
TOTAL	141

Method for Submitting Assignments

All assignments will be uploaded for this course in Moodle: <https://moodle.nts.edu/login/index.php>. Please use the assignments section of Moodle unless otherwise directed. Each assignment is to be submitted through its corresponding link in the Learning Unit. Assignments are **NOT** to be submitted as hard copy, via e-mail. Students should keep electronic copies of all work done for the course just in case they (or the professor) accidentally delete an assignment from the Grade book.

Form and Style Expectations

All written work—the *Doctrinal Debate Paper* and the *Research Group Paper*—should be formatted (and will be evaluated) utilizing Turabian, Kate L. "*A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*," 7th edition, revised by Wayne C. Booth, et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

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

Late posts receive a 20% daily reduction the week of the assignment. Posting after the assigned week will not be graded. All research/project work is due 11:59 PM of the date assigned. Late work without a valid reason (illness or death in family) is reduced by 15% the first week and an additional 10% each week following. No coursework may be submitted after the last day of the regular semester.

Policy on Incomplete Work

Only under the rarest of circumstances will the professor approve an incomplete. Only '*Death in the family*' or the '*prolonged illness*' of the student will be considered as a justifiable cause for petition. For the **most** part, all other requests will not be considered. And yet, if the rarest of unforeseeable circumstances do arise, and those circumstances are the abovementioned ('*death in the family*' and '*prolonged illness*'), then, and only then, **may** an incomplete be granted by the professor. And, if per chance the incomplete is to be granted for reasons other than '*death in the family*' and '*prolonged illness*,' it will be given with a letter grade penalty. For example, if the final grade earned in the class results in an A, and an incomplete was granted for other reasons besides '*death and prolonged illness*,' then the final grade to be submitted to the registrar will be a B.

Course Grading

A Word about Grading: Evaluation in this kind of course, by its very nature, involves an element of subjectivity. It involves someone who has expertise in the field making a judgment on the kind of work you produce. That is a part of what you are paying for in this class. The primary factors I take into account in assessing "good solid graduate work," the sort of work to which I assign a "B" are (1) ability to demonstrate a breadth and depth of understanding of the material engaged; (2) ability to engage this material **in a critical way**; (3) ability to exhibit how the material is related to a larger theological and ecclesial context. If you demonstrate a **consistent** ability to do these things in all your coursework, you can expect to receive a B. If you demonstrate consistent ability to do them **incisively and with excellence**, you can expect to receive an A. If you demonstrate an ability to do these things **often, but not consistently**, you can expect to receive a C. (Hence, I assume that a C means "average," or "satisfactory" work. It does **not** mean "bad"

or "unsatisfactory.") If you **seldom** demonstrate an ability to do these things, you can expect to receive a D. The final grade will be computed using the following point scale.

Summary of Grading for Assignments:

Pre-Course Work (Required Texts & Critical Reflection Papers) will constitute 1/3rd of your final grade.

Comprehensive Essay Exam will constitute 1/3rd of the final grade.

Research Group Paper will constitute 1/3rd of the final grade.

Grade Scale:

A	100-90
B	89-80
C	79-70
D	69-60
F	59-0

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. Since the professor in each course is best acquainted with the importance of consistent attendance, he or she will determine the rules for attendance.

If you must be absent because of extenuating circumstances, contact the professor as soon as possible to discuss the situation.

If a student is absent for 9 hours of a two week module or is absent four or more weeks of the pre/post module, 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

Flett Critical Reflection Paper - Friday, July 29, 2011.

Jenson Critical Reflection Paper - August 12, 2011.

LaCugna Critical Reflection Paper - August 23, 2011 8AM.

Historical-Theological Development of the Trinity—Tuesday, August 23

West & East on the Triune God—Wednesday, August 24

Theological Forums: John Flett, Robert Jenson, and Catherine LaCugna—Thursday & Friday, August 25-26

Dr. Robert Jenson Seminar Lectures and Class Conversations—Monday-Friday, August 29-September 2.

Comprehensive Essay Exam - September 9

Research Group Paper - October 13