



Nazarene Theological Seminary

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

MTS 880: MA (THEOLOGICAL STUDIES) SENIOR COLLOQUY -- BLOCK - SEMESTER II, 2010-2011

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/index.php/Essential_Information. Additional technical support information can be found 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
- *A Handbook for Inclusive Language*

Instructor Information

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Office Hours: Monday and Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. or by appointment

Catalog Description

A forum for demonstrating an ability to integrate theological studies and to establish dialogue between theology and culture. The unifying theme will vary from year to year.

Course Narrative & Rationale

The purpose of this colloquy (“a conversational exchange; dialogue; conference” - *Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary*) is to serve as an integrative exercise for MA (Theological Studies) students at or near the end of their course of study. It seeks to provide an opportunity for students to bring the range of their studies to bear on an intellectual/cultural/social issue or problem of contemporary significance in a context of focused academic theological discussion and dialogue. The issue of issues addressed may vary from year to year, as may the methodology by which the issues are approached. However, the consistent and foundational elements of the colloquy are integration, dialogue, and theological engagement with significant cultural issues.

The theme this semester is **religious pluralism**.

Course Outcomes

Conscientious investment of oneself in the learning activities of the colloquy should enable students to:

1. Draw upon their theological studies in an integrated fashion in order to employ theological reflection in the analysis and assessment of an important contemporary intellectual/theological/ethical/social issue (demonstrated through participation in class discussion and written “theology of religions”).
2. Acquire knowledge of the history and contemporary state of Christian reflection on “religious pluralism” (demonstrated through participation in class discussion and written “theology of religions”).
3. Gain familiarity with the main views of “religious pluralism,” and be able to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each (demonstrated through participation in class discussion and written “theology of religions”).
4. Develop at least a provisional personal “theology of religions” informed by the assigned reading of the colloquy, class discussion, the course of one’s studies in the MA (Theological Studies) degree program, and personal reflection on the issues raised by the colloquy (demonstrated by written “theology of religions”).

Required Texts & Course Materials

1. *Christianity and Other Religions: Selected Readings*, edited by John Hick and Brian Hebblethwaite (Revised edition 2001 - Oneworld Publications).
2. Articles (available on NTS MOODLE).

Course Assignments & Requirements

1. Completion of all assigned reading.
2. Regular attendance and consistent participation in colloquy discussion. Students are expected to attend colloquy meetings regularly and to be prepared to fully participate in all learning activities. Students that miss more than 20% of colloquy meetings, or/and who are consistently poorly prepared for group discussion risk receiving an “Unsatisfactory” grade for the colloquy.
3. Planning for and providing leadership in group discussion (possibly together with one or two other students) in one colloquy session.
4. Preparation of a final written “theology of religions.” This should be approximately 2,000 words in length (i.e. about 8 printed pages) and should articulate and support the student’s understanding of “religious pluralism” and the relation between Christianity and other religions. This should interact critically with the material read and discussed in the colloquy, and should be informed by the range of the student’s studies in the MA (Theological Studies) degree program. **This is due no later than April 28, 2011.**

Distribution of Student Learning Hours

	hours
Face-to-face Class Sessions	13
Online Participation in forums, groups, etc.	0
Reading	13
Writing	16
Other Assignments and Learning Activities	3
Exams & Quizzes	0
TOTAL	45

Method for Submitting Assignments

The final written “theology of religions” should be submitted on the course site on NTS MOODLE. There is a clearly-marked link where this assignment should be posted. **This assignment is due by 11:55 p.m. (Central Time) on Thursday, April 28, 2011.**

Form and Style Expectations

There is no mandatory “style sheet” for the colloquy. Students are, however, expected to consistently follow one of the standard forms for theses and term papers. The most current Turabian style manual is always an excellent choice.

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.

Course Grading

Letter grades are not assigned for the colloquy. **Grading is on a “Pass/Fail” basis.** Determination of “pass” or “fail” is based on students’ total performance in the colloquy. A **“Pass” grade means** that a student has attended colloquy sessions consistently, has participated regularly in colloquy discussions, has demonstrated in discussion familiarity with the assigned reading and a serious attempt to engage the issues raised in the reading in a theologically informed manner, has given leadership in discussion to one colloquy session, and has submitted a written “theology of religions” that fulfills the expectations of that assignment (see above, “Course Assignments and Requirements,” #4). A **“Fail” grade means** that a student has *consistently* failed to perform according to the expectations for a “Pass” grade described above.

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, which have been beneficial for the student in the past.

COURSE CALENDAR

Session I

“The Place of Christianity Among the World Religions” – Ernst Troeltsch (article)

“The Non-Absoluteness of Christianity” – John Hick (article)

Christianity and Other Religions, chapter 9

Session II

“The Uniqueness of Christian Doctrine Defended” – Paul J. Griffiths (article)

“A Particularist View: An Evidentialist Approach” – R. Douglas Geivett and W. Gary Phillips (article)

Christianity and Other Religions, chapters 1, 6

Session III

Christianity and Other Religions, Chapters 2, 3, 7, 11

Session IV

“An Inclusivist View” – Clark H. Pinnock (article)

Christianity and Other Religions, chapters 4, 10

Session V

“Candidates for Heaven:’ Wesleyan Resources for A Theology of Religions” – Phillip R. Meadows (article)

Christianity and Other Religions, chapters 5, 8