



Nazarene Theological Seminary

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THE515 – The Christian Faith and the Apostles' Creed (Online) Spring 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 <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

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

In accordance with the mission of Nazarene Theological Seminary to prepare women and men for ministry and acting as a resource to the church, this course will assume a method designed to prepare students to be conversant with the doctrines of the Christian church, and to bring those doctrines to bear upon the life of the contemporary setting. We will adopt the metaphor of "theological engineers," learning first history, concept and theory, and then working to apply those concepts in faithful and synthetic ways. Therefore, each section of this course will serve to introduce a particular doctrine (as found in the Apostles' Creed) and press the student to think critically about the implications of that doctrine for Christian ministry as pastoral "theologians-in-residence."

Course Outcomes

1. Familiarity with and knowledge of the doctrines of the Christian Church as found in the Apostles' Creed (Creed Memorization, Book Review)
2. Knowledge of terms and language necessary to engage in the study of theology (Terms Quiz)

3. Ability to apply theological principles critically and analytically for the sake of faithful and effective Christian ministry (Learning Exercises 4-6)
4. Knowledge of historical theologians and their contributions to Christian theology (Final Research Paper)

Church of the Nazarene COSAC Competencies

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

CN20 – Ability to reflect theologically on life and ministry

CN21 – Ability to demonstrate understanding of the sources of theological reflection, its historical development, and its contemporary expressions

CN24 – Ability to describe the general story line of Church history and the development of the major doctrines and creeds

CP2 – Ability to write clearly and in a grammatically correct manner in the modes of discourse used in ministry

Required Texts & Course Materials

Roger Van Harn, ed., *Exploring and Proclaiming the Apostles' Creed* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2005). ISBN 978-0802821201.

Theodore Jennings, *Loyalty to God: The Apostles' Creed in Life and Liturgy* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1992). ISBN 0-687-22821-2.

Stanley Grenz and Roger Olson, *Who Needs Theology? An Invitation to the Study of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996). ISBN 978-0830818785. **This book is assigned only to students who have not previously completed a degree in theology, ministry, or religion.**

Stanley Grenz, et al., *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1999). ISBN: 978-0830814497.

Michael Lodahl, *The Story of God (2nd Edition): Wesleyan Theology and Biblical Narrative* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 2008). ISBN 978-0834123939.

George Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* (Louisville, KY: William John Knox Press, 1984). ISBN 0-664-24618-4. **This book is assigned only to students who have previously completed a degree in theology, ministry or religion.**

Alister McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (4th Edition) (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2007). ISBN 978-1-4051-5360-7.

TN Mohan, dir., *Apostles' Creed – Abridged Version* (Vision Video, 2007). ASIN: B000Y4EM4M.

Recommended Texts & Course Materials

Colin Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2002). ISBN 0-631-21182-9.

Course Assignments & Requirements

The goal of this course is for the student to learn the material and be equipped with the theological analytical skills necessary to engage in faithful and effective Christian ministry. It is also

understood that students in this course will bring with them varying degrees of exposure to and experience in theological education. As such, the assignments and requirements have been designed to give students the ability to choose Learning Exercises that they feel will contribute most effectively to their learning and development as pastoral theologians-in-residence. For some Learning Exercises, the student may choose to complete one of three options. Each option is intended to be equitable in terms of work hours. Please choose the option which will result in maximum learning and development given your particular ministry context, vocation, and level of experience in previous formal theological education.
(Outcome 1 is fulfilled by LE 1&2, Outcome 2 is fulfilled by LE 3, Outcome 3 is fulfilled by LEs 4-6, and Outcome 4 is fulfilled by LE 7)

Title	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Learning Exercise 1	Creed Memorization	Creed Memorization	Creed Memorization
Learning Exercise 2	Book Review	Book Review	Book Review
Learning Exercise 3	Terms Quiz	Terms Quiz	Terms Quiz
Learning Exercise 4	Living Doctrine Exercise 1	Doctrine Interview	Doctrine Sermon
Learning Exercise 5	Doctrine Wiki	Congregational Teaching	Book Review
Learning Exercise 6	Living Doctrine Exercise 2	Living Doctrine Exercise 2	Living Doctrine Exercise 2
Learning Exercise 7	Final Research Paper	Final Research Paper	Final Research Paper

Assignment	Explanation and Instructions
Online Forum Participation	<p>Each week, post a substantial (250 word minimum) summary of the week’s reading, demonstrating mastery of that week’s material (reading and lecture). Conclude the post with two conversation questions that you would like to submit to the class. This post is due on the Moodle discussion board each week by Wednesday at 11:55 PM CST.</p> <p>By Thursday of each week at 11:55 PM CST, substantially respond to at least 2 conversation questions of another student. Because the educational process relies heavily upon the exchange of ideas between persons, a response will be defined as “substantial” if it engages the core of the original post. Posts which simply affirm the student’s insights without engaging the substance on a dialogical level will not receive full credit.</p> <p>If the instructor poses a question to you directly in the discussion thread by Thursday at 11:55 PM CST, you must respond to that question by Friday at 11:55 PM CST in order to receive full credit for that week’s post.</p> <p>Please submit a personal introduction on Week 1, providing information on your background and context.</p>
Creed Memorization	Memorize Apostle’s Creed. Student will be tested in a timed environment. Version for memorization taken from the hymnal of the Church of the Nazarene and is provided below.
Book Review	Each student will submit a written 8-10 page book review on either <i>Who Needs Theology?</i> or <i>Nature of Doctrine</i> . Students who have not previously completed a formal degree in theology shall review <i>Who Needs Theology?</i> while students who have previously completed a formal degree in theology shall review <i>Nature of Doctrine</i> . Review should demonstrate a graduate-level engagement with the author’s argument. Should you agree or disagree with the author’s conclusions, you must demonstrate your conclusion in a way that is intellectually consistent with graduate-level scholarship.
Terms Quiz	A quiz over various theological terms. Terms and their corresponding definitions will be taken from <i>A Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms</i> by Stanley Grenz, et al. You will be tested over 50 of the listed terms and are expected to not use any kind of book, website or notes to assist in this task. The quiz will be timed. Please do not use the ‘Back’ button on your internet browser or navigate to any other webpage during the quiz as these actions will typically result in a technological error and the failure of the quiz.
Living Doctrine Exercise 1	In a 4-page review, reflect upon and analyze a particular doctrine at work in a worship service. In what ways did this doctrine function for the worship of the congregation? What implications did this have for the lives of the people? Demonstrate the ability to detect the doctrine and to provide the in-depth analysis of a theologian-in-residence. Choose any doctrine except for the doctrine of the resurrection.

Living Doctrine Exercise 2	In a 4-page review, reflect upon and analyze the ways in which the doctrine of the resurrection was (or was not) at work in an Easter Sunday worship service. In what ways did this doctrine function for the worship of the congregation? What implications did this have for the lives of the people? Demonstrate the ability to detect the doctrine and to provide the in-depth analysis of a theologian-in-residence. Choose a doctrine which has not been previously covered in another leaning exercise.
Doctrine Wiki	Create a wiki on a particular doctrine, drawing upon no fewer than 5 scholarly resources, which are to be cited on the wiki. Wiki should include biblical foundations of the doctrine, historical developments of the doctrine, major thinkers who have contributed to its development, and contemporary ministerial implications. Wiki may be created on any wiki platform. One free resource is www.wikispaces.com . Your preparation for this lesson should be directly applicable to your final research paper and be a substantial resource to you in completing that assignment. Choose a doctrine which has not been previously covered in another leaning exercise.
Doctrine Sermon	Write a 5-page sermon manuscript which deals with a particular doctrine. Sermon should deal with biblical texts from which the doctrine was developed and demonstrate a working knowledge of the doctrine and its implications for Christian life. Take up your task as a “theological engineer,” bringing the concepts to bear in the life of the congregation. Submit manuscript to instructor. Preaching this sermon publicly is welcome, but not required. Choose a doctrine which has not been previously covered in another leaning exercise.
Doctrine Interview	Select a particular doctrine and interview 2 ordained clergy (from different denominations) and 2 active lay-persons (from different denominations) about that doctrine. Inquire about their understanding of the doctrine and the way it functions in their lives and the lives of their congregations. In a 5-page report, detail what you have learned about the way this doctrine is perceived and the way in which it functions in the life of the church, providing an analysis of the doctrine’s presence and effectiveness according to the research you have completed on that doctrine. Choose a doctrine which has not been previously covered in another leaning exercise.
Congregational Teaching	Teach a public lesson in the context of your local congregation dealing specifically with a particular doctrine and its implications. Take up your task as a “theological engineer,” bringing the concepts to bear in the life of the congregation. Preparation for this presentation should appeal to no fewer than 5 scholarly resources. Your preparation for this lesson should be directly applicable to your final research paper and be a substantial resource to you in completing that assignment. When the teaching is complete, submit manuscript and/or outline of the lesson, including bibliography, along with 3 email addresses of those present for the lesson, who you have notified in advance. The instructor will send evaluation forms to those persons. Choose a doctrine which has not been previously covered in another leaning exercise.
Book Review	Select and review a book dealing specifically with a particular doctrine and its implications. This research should be directly applicable to your final research paper and be a substantial resource to you in completing that assignment. This assignment is recommended for students who have previously completed a degree in theology, ministry or religion. Choose a doctrine which has not been previously covered in another leaning exercise.
Final Research Paper	In a 15-20 page research paper, engage the relationship between at least one theologian and at least one doctrine from the list of possibilities below. You may also wish to bring that relationship into conversation with an issue of contemporary importance in your local ministry setting (Example: Thomas Aquinas’ Pneumatology and Contemporary Evangelism). This paper should draw on resources gained from Learning Exercise 5. The topic must be submitted to the professor for approval no later than March 20. This paper should also draw from no fewer than 7 scholarly bibliographic resources, which are to be included in a bibliography at the end of the paper. This assignment should demonstrate graduate-level scholarship, analysis, synthesis and grammatical formulation. Examples of such quality will be provided on Moodle for your review. Students are welcome and encouraged to submit a first draft of this assignment to the instructor at least 1 week before the due date for feedback.

Research Paper Possibilities:

Historical Figures: Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Origen, Tertullian, Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil, Augustine, Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, William of Ockham, Erasmus, Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Teresa of Avila, Jonathan Edwards, John Wesley, Schleiermacher, Karl Barth, Paul Tillich, Karl Rahner, Hans Urs von Balthasar, Jurgen Moltmann, Wolfhart Pannenberg, Rosemary Radford Ruether, Gustavo Gutierrez, Jose Miguez Bonino, James Cone, John Zizioulas, George Lindbeck, John Milbank, Catherine Pickstock, Rebecca Chopp, John Cobb

Doctrines: Creation, Incarnation, Christology, Doctrine of God, Doctrine of the Trinity, Atonement, Resurrection, Ascension, Soteriology, Hamartiology, Ecclesiology, Eschatology

Distribution of Student Learning Hours

	hours
Online Participation in forums, groups, etc.	24
Reading	64
Writing	45
Other Assignments and Learning Activities	0
Exams & Quizzes	2
TOTAL	135

Method for Submitting Assignments

Assignments should be completed through Moodle online platform.

Feedback Schedule

So that students might incorporate feedback from the instructor into their learning, the instructor will provide feedback on all assignments submitted at least one week from the date of submission. Students are encouraged to view feedback as an opportunity for growth and learning.

Form and Style Expectations

Writing assignments should be completed in accordance with one particular style guide (e.g., Turabian, Chicago, APA, MLA, etc.). Please consult an appropriate style guide, available in the NTS library, or an online resource (<http://www.calstatela.edu/library/styleman.htm>). There is not one particular style which is required, but each assignment must be consistent with at one style listed above.

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. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in reduction of assignment grade.

Policy Regarding Late Work & Missed Exams

Late work will be accepted until the final day of class. All work submitted late will be reduced by 20%. Any exception to this must be approved by the professor prior to the due date. Normally, the only requests that will be approved will be for illness, death in the family, etc. Incomplete standing will be granted in cases of serious illness, bereavement or extraordinary circumstances at no penalty. Incompletes requested for any other purpose will result in a 10% reduction of the final grade. Please see NTS Catalog for additional policies on Incomplete status.

Course Grading

Assignment	Points Worth	Percentage Worth	Criteria for Evaluation
Online Forum Participation	200	20%	Degree of insight in questions/comments - 50%, Connection of comments/questions to assigned reading - 50%
Book Review	100	10%	Grasp of content - 40% Grasp of theological issues - 20% Demonstration of synthetic analysis - 20% Force of the argument, writing, grammar - 20%
Creed Memorization	50	5%	Student begins with full credit. Each word deviating from the Apostles' Creed as provided in this syllabus will result in the loss of one point.
Theological Terms Quiz	50	5%	50 terms will be tested. Each term will be worth 1 point.
Learning Exercise 4	75	7.5%	Grasp of content - 40% Grasp of theological issues - 20% Demonstration of synthetic analysis - 20% Force of the argument, writing, grammar - 20%
Learning Exercise 5	150	15%	Grasp of content - 40% Grasp of theological issues - 20% Demonstration of synthetic analysis - 20% Force of the argument, writing, grammar - 20%
Learning Exercise 6	75	7.5%	Grasp of content - 40% Grasp of theological issues - 20% Demonstration of synthetic analysis - 20% Force of the argument, writing, grammar - 20%
Final Research Paper	300	30%	Grasp of content - 40% Grasp of theological issues - 20% Demonstration of synthetic analysis - 20% Force of the argument, writing, grammar - 20%

All grades are open to reasonable and respectful review.

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

Date	Week	Doctrine	Creedal Stanza	Reading Due	Learning Exercise Due
Jan 31	1	Introduction		Course Syllabus, <i>Nature of Doctrine or Who Needs Theology?</i>	Learning Exercise 1 Discussion Board Introductions
Feb 7	2	Historical Background		McGrath, 1-97, Video <i>The Apostles' Creed</i>	Learning Exercise 2
Feb 14	3	Sources and Method		McGrath, Ch. 5-6; Lodahl, Part 1	
Feb 21	4	Doctrine of God	I believe in God the Father Almighty	McGrath, Ch. 9, Jennings, Ch 2-3	Learning Exercise 3
Feb 28	5	Doctrine of God and Trinity		McGrath, Ch. 10, Van Harn, Ch. 1-2	
March 7	6	Doctrine of Creation	Maker of heaven and earth	Jennings, Ch. 4; Lodahl, Part 2; Van Harn, Ch. 3	
March 14	7	Incarnation and Christology	And in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,	McGrath, Ch. 11; Jennings, Ch 5-7; Lodahl Part 5, Van Harn, Ch. 4-5	Learning Exercise 4
March 21	8	Reading and Research			Paper Topic Due
March 28	9	Doctrine of Resurrection	Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; he descended into hades; the third day He rose from the grave; He ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty	McGrath, Ch. 12; Van Harn, Ch. 6, 8.	
April 4	10	Pneumatology	I believe in the Holy Spirit	Jennings, Ch. 17; Van Harn, Ch. 11	Learning Exercise 5
April 11	11	Ecclesiology	The holy church universal, the communion of saints	McGrath, Ch. 15; Jennings, Ch. 18-19; Lodahl, Part 6; Van Harn, Ch. 12	
April 18	12	Hamartiology	The forgiveness of sins	McGrath, Ch. 14; Jennings, Ch. 20; Lodahl, Part 3; Van Harn, Ch. 13	
April 25	13	Eschatology	The resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.	McGrath, Ch. 18; Jennings, Ch. 21-22; Lodahl, Part 7; Van Harn, Ch. 14	Learning Exercise 6
May 2	14	Final	Amen.		Learning Exercise 7

The Apostles' Creed (Church of the Nazarene Hymn #8)

I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord:
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
Born of the Virgin Mary,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, dead and buried;
He descended into hades;
The third day He rose from the dead;
He ascended into heaven,
And sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The holy Church universal,
The communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And the life everlasting.
Amen.