



Nazarene Theological Seminary

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

THE 510– Introduction to Christian Theology Online Spring 2010

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 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 bookstore procedures
- Online technical requirements and Blackboard support information
- NTS Student Handbook including statements on quality of work, plagiarism, and academic probation
- *A Handbook for Inclusive Language*

Instructor Information

Professor: Henry W. Spaulding II, Ph.D.
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between 9:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m.

Catalog Description

This course is a survey of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. Attention will be given to the mastery of a foundational theological construct and the development of a theologically oriented glossary. The course is foundational to the student's ability to work theologically in the fields of Christian education and missiology.

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.

Course Outcomes

This course intends to:

- Treat the basic doctrines that comprise the Christian tradition;
- Treat the major voices in the Christian tradition;
- Make the student aware of the major theological works in Western Christianity; and
- Provide a basis for further theological education.

Required Texts & Course Materials

Alister McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*. Fourth Edition. Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2007.

Alister McGrath, ed., *The Christian Theology Reader*. Third Edition. Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2007.

N.T. Wright, *Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, 2006.

Course Outline

- Unit 1 - Landmarks: Periods, Themes, and Personalities of Christian Theology
- Unit 2 - Sources and Methods
- Unit 3 - Christian Theology

Course Assignments & Requirements

Participation - 30%: Students are required to post substantial responses to posts and/or make substantial posts each week. A quality post is one that begins a new topic, critical reflection on another person's post, or one that moves the discussion in a new direction. Each student will post three questions related to the assigned reading for the week no later than Tuesday @11:59pm. Each student will respond with seven twenty-five word responses to the questions of other students by Saturday of each week by 11:59pm.

A substantial post is one that engages the specific content of the week. It is essential that each post critically engage course content. No points will be given for the type of notes that merely encourage one another or comments not related to the content of the course. Participation will be assessed Monday through Saturday (11:59pm - Central Time) of each week. You cannot make up participation points. You will receive one participation grade at the end of the course for up to 200 points. This requirement represents 30% of the total grade.

Total possible points for participation for the course will be 200. Criteria for evaluation: Degree of insight in questions/comments - 100 pts (50%), Connection of comments/questions to assigned reading - 50 (25%) pts, and Participation throughout the semester- 50 (25%) pts.

The points for this assignment will be awarded two times in this course: up to 100 points at the end of Week 7 and up to 100 points at the end of Week 14. Therefore, the points will break down the following way at Week 7 and 14: Degree of insight in questions/comments - 50 pts (25%), Connection of comments/questions to assigned reading - 25 pts (12.5%), and participation across the first or second half of the semester - 25 pts (12.5%).

Theological essays - 30%: Each student will do two theological essays. These essays should be 10-15 pages each. Each essay will be worth 100 points. Criteria for evaluation: clarity of the description - 35 pts, strength of the critical analysis - 30 pts, reflection upon class lecture and assigned reading - 25 pts, and quality of writing - 10 pts.

Theological essay 1 is due March 18 by 11:59pm.

Theological essay 2 is due May 6 by 11:59pm.

Research paper - 22%: Each graduate student will write a research paper (15 pages) on a topic approved by the professor. The topic must reflect a theme associated with Christian theology.

Criteria for evaluation: grasp of issues - 70 pts, use of appropriate primary and secondary sources - 30pts, integration of material treated in class - 25 pts, clarity of argument, grammatical issue - 15 pts. Total points - 140 points. This assignment represents 22% of the grade.

The Research paper is due April 22 by 11:59pm.

Book Review - 18%: A book review on *Simply Christian*. Total possible points: 125. Criteria for evaluation: grasp of content - 50 pts, grasp of theological issues - 35 pts, connection to material covered in class - 25 pts, force of the argument and writing - 15 pts. Total

The Book Review is due by 11:59pm - Central Time on September 29.

A book review on *Simply Christian*. Total possible points: 125. Criteria for evaluation: grasp of content - 50 pts, grasp of theological issues - 35 pts, connection to material covered in class - 25 pts, force of the argument and writing - 15 pts. Total

The Book Review is due by 11:59pm - Central Time on February 25.

Method for Submitting Assignments

All assignments must be submitted through Moodle in the appropriate assignment thread.

Policy Regarding Late Work

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.

Relevant Academic Policies

- No work will be accepted after **May 7 @ 11:59pm - Central Time.**
- All work must be submitted through the assignments function of Blackboard set up for this class.
- All grades are open to reasonable and respectful review.
- It is expected that all work turned in for this class reflect the labors of the person whose name appears on the paper. If there is any evidence to the contrary of this the student will receive a zero for the assignment.

Course Grading

A	665-598
B	597-532
C	531-465
D	464-399
F	398-000

Course Calendar All assignments listed here are due by 11:59pm - Central Time.

Date	Week	Unit	Assignment
February 1	1	1 Landmarks: Periods, Themes, and Personalities of Christian Theology	Topics: The Patristic Period Assignments: Participation (Due on Saturday) Reading: McGrath, <i>Introduction</i> , chapters 1 The purpose of this week is to get to know each other, become familiar with the syllabus and course expectations.
February 8	2	1 Landmarks: Periods, Themes, and Personalities of Christian	Topics: The Middle Ages and the Renaissance The Age of Reformation The Modern Period Assignments: Participation (Due on Saturday)

		Theology	Reading: McGrath, 2,3,and 4
February 15	3	2 Sources and Methods	<p>Topic: Getting Started Preliminaries The Sources of Theology Knowledge of God</p> <p>Assignments: Participation (Due on Saturday)</p> <p>Reading: McGrath, <i>Introduction</i>, chapter McGrath, <i>Introduction</i>, chapters 5 and 6 <i>Reader</i>, 2.1-2.15, 2.18-2.38, 2.43-2.47, 2.50, 2.16, 2.17, 2.39, 2.48, 2.497</p>
February 22	4	2 Sources and Methods	<p>Topics: Philosophy and Theology: Introducing a Dialogue</p> <p>Assignments: Participation (Due on Saturday)</p> <p>Book Review is due - February 25 by 11:59pm</p> <p>Reading: McGrath, <i>Introduction</i>, chapter 8</p>
March 1	5	3 Christian Theology	<p>Topic: The Doctrine of God</p> <p>Assignments: Participation (Due on Saturday)</p> <p>Reading: McGrath, <i>Introduction</i>, chapter 9 McGrath, <i>Reader</i>, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8,3.14, 3.21, 3.23, 3.24, 3.25, 3.26, 3.27, 3.29, 3.30, 3.32, 3.33, 3.34, 3.37, 3.38, 3.39, 3.42</p>
March 8	6	3 Christian Theology	<p>Topic: The Doctrine of the Trinity</p> <p>Assignments: Participation (Due on Saturday)</p> <p>Reading: McGrath, <i>Introduction</i>, chapter 10 McGrath, <i>Reader</i>, 3.3, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 3.12, 3.13, 3.15, 3.16, 3.17, 3.18, 3.19, 3.20, 3.22, 3.28, 3.31, 3.35, 3.36, 3.40, 3.41, 3.43</p>
March 15	7	3 Christian Theology	<p>Topic: The Doctrine of the Person of Christ</p> <p>Assignments: Participation (Due on Saturday)</p> <p>Theological Essay 1 is due March 18</p>

			Reading: McGrath, <i>Introduction</i> , Chapter 11 McGrath, <i>Reader</i> , 4.1 – 4.42
March 22	8		Reading and Research Week
March 29	9	3 Christian Theology	Topic: Faith and History: The Christological Agenda of Modernity Assignment: Participation (Due on Saturday) Reading: McGrath, <i>Introduction</i> , Chapter 12
April 5	10	3 Christian Theology	Topic: The Doctrine of Salvation in Christ Assignment: Participation (Due on Saturday) Reading: McGrath, <i>Introduction</i> , Chapter 13 McGrath, <i>Reader</i> , 5.1-5.35
April 12	11	3 Christian Theology	Topic: The Doctrine of Human Nature, Sin, and Grace Assignments: Participation (Due on Saturday) Reading: McGrath, <i>Introduction</i> , Chapter 14 McGrath, <i>Reader</i> , 6.1-6.56
April 19	12	3 Christian Theology	Topics: The Doctrine of the Church The Doctrine of the Sacraments Assignments: Participation (Due on Saturday) Research paper is due - April 22 by 11:59pm - Central Time Reading: McGrath, <i>Introduction</i> , chapters 15 and 16 McGrath, <i>Reader</i> , 7.1-8.36
April 26	13	3 Christian Theology	Topics: Christianity and the World Religions Assignment: Participation (Due on Saturday) Readings: McGrath, <i>Introduction</i> , 18 McGrath, <i>Reader</i> , 9.1-9.12
May 4	14	3 Christian Theology	Topic: The Last Things: The Christian Hope Assignment: Participation (Due on Saturday) Readings: McGrath, <i>Introduction</i> , 17

			McGrath, <i>Reader</i> , 10.1-10.25 Theological Essay 2 is due - May 6 by 11:59pm
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Selective Resources

Gilkey, Langdon, *Message and Existence: An Introduction to Christian Theology*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1979.

Hall, Douglas, *Thinking the Faith: Christian Theology in a North American Context*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.

McGrath, Alister E., *I Believe: Understanding and Applying the Apostles' Creed*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing, 1991.

Micks, Marianne H., *Introduction to Theology*. New York: The Seabury Press, 1964.

Placher, William, ed., *Essentials of Christian Theology*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2003.

Placher, William, *Unapologetic Theology: A Christian Voice in a Pluralistic Conversation*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1989.

Rahner, Karl, *The Practice of Faith: A Handbook of Contemporary Spirituality*. Edited by Karl Lehmann and Albert Raffelt. New York: Crossroad, 1986.

Richardson, Alan, *Creeds in the Making: A Short Introduction to the History of Christian Doctrine*. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1969.

Taylor, Richard, Grider, J. Kenneth, and Taylor, Willard H., ed., *Beacon Dictionary of Theology*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1983.

Volf, Miroslav and Bass, Dorothy, *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002.