



## Nazarene Theological Seminary

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

---

### THE 790 — Seminar: Luther's Life & Thought Spring Semester 2012 - BLOCK

#### ***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***

Professor: K. Steve McCormick, Ph.D.  
Office: (816) 268-5486  
Office Hours: By appointment

Email: [smccormick@nts.edu](mailto:smccormick@nts.edu)

#### ***Catalog Description***

This seminar course will examine the path of Martin Luther's life and thought.

#### ***Course Narrative & Rationale***

Luther's story is our story. Thus, his "theological biography" will serve as a means of describing and explicating the theological development of Luther's evangelical thought. We will treat Luther's life and time through 1530 - the year in which the Augsburg Confession appeared; and within that lifespan, every major doctrinal theme of Luther's theology will be explored.

## ***Degree Objectives***

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 of the 'place' and 'meaning' of evangelicalism within the catholicity of the Church. (R1, R2, R3)
2. Demonstrated an understanding of Luther's history within our Wesleyan history. (R1, R2, R3)
3. Demonstrated an understanding of Story and Doctrine through the life and thought of Martin Luther. (R1, R2, R3)

## ***Required Texts & Course Materials***

- Paul Althaus. *The Theology of Martin Luther*. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989). 425 Pages
- Carl E. Braaten, Robert W. Jenson (editors). *Union with Christ: The New Finnish Interpretation of Luther*. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1998). 180 Pages
- Bernhard Lohse. *Martin Luther's Theology: Its Historical and Systematic Development*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999). 343 Pages

- Heiko A. Oberman. *Luther, Man Between God and the Devil*. (New York: Image Books, Doubleday, 1992). 330 Pages

*Total Pages of Reading: 1,278*

## ***Course Outline***

### **Luther's Theological Biography**

- a) Luther's Intellectual Preparation to the Time of His Vow, 1483-1505.
- b) Luther's Spiritual Struggle to the Time of His Illumination, 1505-1512.
- c) Luther's Development as an Evangelical Theologian, 1512-1517.
- d) Luther in Controversy over the New Theology, 1517-1520.
- e) The Crises of the Lutheran Movement, 1520-1526.
- f) The Development of the Lutheran Church, 1526-1529.
- g) The Later Struggles and Eventual Permanence of Lutheranism, 1530-1555.
- h) Theological Controversies Leading to the Formula of Concord, 1560-1580.

## ***Course Assignments & Requirements***

1. There will be one **Comprehensive Final Take Home Exam (Outcomes 1-3)** that is critically reflective and synthetic in nature. 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. This will be given at the end of the semester. The content of this exam will cover all the class readings, lectures and Class discussion. This exam will be posted and available one week prior to the close of the class. This exam will comprise 1/4<sup>th</sup> of your final grade. ***This Final Take Home Exam is due on Monday, May 7 of Finals Week.***
2. **Class Seminar (Outcomes 1-3)** Class participation is crucial. To assist in this process, each week you will be required to prepare for, and participate in, the **Class Seminar** as sketched in the ***Course Outline and the Table Talks***. The totality of your **Class Seminar Participation (Table Talk presentations and rebuttals along with class conversation)** will constitute 1/4<sup>th</sup> of your final grade.
3. **Table Talks (Outcomes 1-3)** Each student is to present **three Theological Research Papers** (10 pages typewritten) on a selected doctrinal motif in Luther's theology. Only one specific doctrinal motif is required of every student (the ***Finnish interpretation of justification in Luther***); all other choices are at the discretion of the student. A handout of potential topics is forthcoming. Each **presenter** is assigned a **respondent** who

will offer a historical-theological critique of the paper. The *respondent* should offer a 1-3 page typewritten critique to the entire class on the day of the presentation. This means that every student will be given the opportunity to critique two research papers as well as present two research papers. All 3 *Theological Research Papers* accompanied with 2 *critical responses* is worth 1/2 of your final grade. The dates for presentation and response will be determined once the topics have been selected. The schedule will be set after the first week of class.

The *Theological Research Papers* (3) along with the *Comprehensive Final Take Home Exam* 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 essays.)
- 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
Class Seminar Participation	42
Assigned Textbook Reading—1,278 pages	51.2
Theological Research Paper (30 pages)	60
Take Home Final Exam (5 pages)	5
TOTAL	158

## 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*," 7<sup>th</sup> 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:

**Class Forum** will constitute 1/4<sup>th</sup> of your final grade.

**Doctrinal Debate** will constitute 1/4<sup>th</sup> of the final grade.  
**Final Essay Exam** will constitute 1/4<sup>th</sup> of the final grade.  
**Research Group Paper** will constitute 1/4<sup>th</sup> 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 four or more weeks of 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***

The schedule of assignments will be determined according to the student's choice of topics and assigned responders during the first week of class.