

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY 3

ST603Z

Online

3 Semester Credit Hours

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Please be sure to read and familiarize yourself with ALL sections in this syllabus.

Welcome to the course, Systematic Theology 3. Although I can't give you a personal welcome, as I might in my on-campus courses, I do want you to know how delighted I am that you have chosen to study with us through our Distance Education Network. I am available to discuss any aspect of this course with you through the communication medium most comfortable and available to you. My official email is rgore@erskine.edu; however, my PREFERRED email is inaliam@gmail.com. Please send your e-mail assignments to this address. I look forward to getting to know you better and to teaching you what God has taught me about this very important subject.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course concludes a systematic presentation of the Christian faith. Using Biblical constructs, historical developments, and confessional statements, students explore the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit and Salvation, the Doctrine of the Church and Sacraments, and the Doctrine of Last Things.

COURSE PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to further the student's study of Systematic Theology; to continue a dialog with various theological traditions; to consider attempts to formulate and integrate doctrine in terms of biblical, theological and historical dynamics; and to consider the claims set forth by Reformed Theology as a comprehensive system of thought, belief, and practice.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to educate persons for service in the Christian Church. As a part of that mission, one goal is that graduates **write and speak using theological language that is clear, well-considered,**

disciplined, and meaningful for those to whom they minister. Another goal is that graduates **be prepared to communicate the Bible's message through preaching and evangelism, so as to make clear that its meaning is relevant for today.** Furthermore, **we seek to create an educational climate that brings about growth in Christian character and fosters the spiritual formation of students, faculty, and staff.** In this course conventional theological language and various methods of doing theology are emphasized. Specific objectives for this course are that, by the end of the course, students will:

1. **Know** the nature and constructs of systematic theology needed in order to **identify significant doctrinal issues.**
2. **Know the various options proposed for resolving doctrinal issues** and develop a methodology for handling theological tensions
3. Be able to **explain the major doctrines of the church** and illustrate them in light of the student's own theological commitment.
4. Be able to **relate the major doctrines of the church to current discussions** and **apply them in authentic ministry opportunities.**
5. Be able to **develop and to formulate biblical and theological constructs** that **reflect the student's faith tradition** and theological commitments.
6. Be able to **critique systematic theological formulations** and to determine their degree of conformity to biblical, theological, and historical criteria.
7. **Grow** in their intellectual understanding of the Christian faith and **deepen** their spiritual awareness of the Reformed faith and their own faith tradition.

[POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS](#) Click Here
[DOCTRINE OF SALVATION NOTES](#) Click Here
[CHURCH AND SACRAMENTS NOTES](#) Click Here
[LAST THINGS NOTES](#) Click Here
[SAMPLE PAPER SALVATION](#) Click Here
[SAMPLE PAPER CHURCH](#) Click Here
[SAMPLE FOOTNOTES](#) Click Here
[INTERNET RESOURCES](#) Click Here

COURSE TEXTBOOKS

Students continue to be responsible for securing their own required textbooks. As a convenience, there is a bookstore on the seminary's home page. To access this site and its information, locate textbooks, and compare prices, go to <http://www.erskineseminary.org/bookstore.html>

The online bookstore will be a portal with links to Amazon, CBD, Barnes & Noble, the Erskine Campus Bookstore, and perhaps others. A limited number of copies of each textbook may be available from the Erskine Campus Bookstore, and copies may be ordered through that Bookstore.

Calvin, John. *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960.

Williams, Michael. *Far as the Curse is Found*. Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2005.

Wilson, Douglas. *"Reformed" is Not Enough*. Moscow, IA: Canon Press, 2002.

Wright, N.T. *What Saint Paul Really Said*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

House, Wayne. *Charts of Christian Theology and Doctrine*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.

Leith, John. *Creeds of the Churches*, 3rd edition . Atlanta: John Knox, 1982.

COURSE METHOD

The purpose and objectives of this course will be achieved through three learning components. The first is the Content Component, the student's own mastery of material, accomplished by completing the required readings and measured objectively by a Final Examination. The ability to do theological study is determined directly by the student's competency in using conventional theological language and contextualizing theological discussion.

The second is the Discussion Component. Each class will incorporate discussion and lecture. A vital exchange of ideas is essential to the process of exploration. Students will build on their classroom preparation (the Content Component) by participating in the discussion of theological issues. Such participation presupposes the student's familiarity with material from the assigned reading.

The third is the Research and Reflection Component. All students will research and prepare a series of documents that, collectively, will constitute a personal statement of faith. One of these statements will suffice to fulfill the portfolio requirement for a statement of faith. Drawing from the student's mastery of the content of theological study and building on the lessons learned from the interchange of ideas in classroom discussions, the student will engage in original research, theological reflection, and positive formulation.

These three components will provide a well-rounded learning experience for the thoughtful student. The total out-of-classroom commitment is expected to be approximately 80-90 hours per student for the semester.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Requirement One (25 points): Weekly posting to the online journal.

Requirement Two (15 points): Each student will read *Far as the Curse is Found* and will write a 3-4 page (double-spaced) critical response to the presentation. As part of the response, the student will select three-to five (3-5) **issues** concerning covenant theology and briefly discuss their significance for theology and Christian living. **The point of this exercise is to enable the student to grasp the coherent structure of Scripture as well as the nature of covenant relationship as established by God.**

Due date: Week Three. Send assignment to inaliam@gmail.com as word attachment.

Requirement Three (10 points): Each student will read *Reformed is Not Enough* and will write a 2-3 page (double-spaced) critical response to Wilson's presentation. In response, the student will select two or three issues that confront the church today and give the student's own response to the issue. The point of this exercise is to help the student reflect on issues that are currently agitating the Reformed community and reach mature decisions about how to address controversial matters.

Due date: Week Seven. Send assignment to inaliam@gmail.com as word attachment.

Requirement Four (10 points): Each student will read *What Saint Paul Really Said* and the on-line response to the New Perspective located at http://www.alliancenet.org/partner/Article_Display_Page/0.,PTID307086|CHID560462|CID1660662,00.html The student then will write a 2-3 page (double-spaced) critical response to the question: Should we abandon the Reformation understanding of justification. The point of this exercise is to lead the student to examine the strength of the historic Reformed faith on justification and to assess the value of contemporary challenges.

Due date: Week Eleven. Send assignment to inaliam@gmail.com as word attachment.

Requirement Five (10 points): All students will complete the reading of Books III and IV of Calvin's *Institutes*. Students will keep a Reading Log, documenting the dates and times spent reading the texts. Students will keep handwritten account of any new learning, challenges to their beliefs, or other significant findings. Failure to do the preparatory reading may negatively influence the student's final grade by a least a full letter. The Reading Log will count a maximum of 10 points toward the course total of 600 points. **Due date: Last week of course.**

Requirement Six (105 points): Each student will research and prepare a series of three Reflection Papers (35 points each) that, collectively, will constitute a personal statement of faith. These Reflection Papers should be adequate for presentation to an examining board or church judicatory as a summary of the student's theology. These papers will be a minimum of six (6) full pages in length and a maximum of eight (8) pages in length. The papers will be double-spaced and proper footnote form will be followed (using 7th ed. Turabian, *Manual for Writers*). **NOTE: Do NOT use Parenthetical Reference form.** Each paper will count a maximum of 35 points towards the final course total of 175 points. Scripture references may be numerous, but Scripture

quotations, if used at all, will be infrequent and brief. Put street address for Scripture in parenthesis within the text. e.g., (John 3:16), **NOT IN FOOTNOTES.**

ALTERNATIVE ASSIGNMENT: In lieu of the **third statement of faith** on “Last Things,” students who wish to do so, may do a manuscript sermon on one of the following. 1) Death of a child; 2) Death of a long-time church member, or 3) death of an unchurched neighbor. The student will make use of standard homiletic device, including illustrations, but will also make use of creeds and confessions to indicate the student’s belief about last things. More details re this assignment will be given in class.

Note: Requirement Six can meet a Professional Assessment Portfolio and Graduation Requirement for all students who began seminary in the Fall of 2002 or afterwards. It is the student’s responsibility to turn in a clean, corrected copy of their paper to the seminary office for inclusion in your portfolio. Failure to do so will delay your graduation. Portfolio requirements are listed on the back of the academic worksheet of all degree programs. This satisfies the portfolio requirement for a Statement of Faith from a theology class. Moreover, this requirement helps the student develop the skills needed to relate doctrine at the theoretical level to personal spiritual awareness and growth in the student’s own faith tradition.

All Students: Reflection Papers will include, as a minimum-

*Scripture references

*Conventional theological language

*Reference to the student’s own denominational confession or statement of faith

*Reference to at least four Reformation/Post-Reformation confessions

*Reference to early church creeds, where appropriate

*Reference to key issues noted below- where appropriate to YOUR system of belief

PAPERS THAT DO NOT MEET THESE MINIMUM STANDARDS WILL BE GRADED DOWN ACCORDINGLY. See Sample Attached at end of syllabus

EXTRA CREDIT:

Read the following on-line article about the Auburn Avenue controversy and the New Perspective on Paul. Write a two-three page (double-spaced) critical response to it. Students may have as much as 5 points added to the total of points earned:

http://www.bibleighthouse.com/covenants/within_the_bounds_of_orthodoxy.htm

Reflection Papers: Topics and Due Dates:

Doctrine of Salvation- Person of Holy Spirit, Work of the Holy Spirit, Union with Christ, Regeneration, Justification, Adoption, Sanctification

Due Date: Week Five

Doctrine of Church and Sacraments- Attributes and Marks of the Church, Sacraments or Ordinances, Baptism, Lord’s Supper

Due Date: Week Nine

Doctrine of Last Things- Intermediate State, Second Advent, Judgment, Heaven, Hell

Due Date: Last Week**CRITERIA FOR GRADING RESEARCH:**

Writing that is grammatically correct and stylistically clear

A form that adheres to the guidelines in Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers* (7th edition)

Adherence to the parameters of the assignment (length, scope)

Use of primary and secondary sources besides textbooks and lecture notes

Analysis of historical and theological information, not just summary of that information

Depth and creativity in handling the assignment

Grading Scale:

100-95	A	83-80	C
94-93	A-	79-78	C-
92-91	B+	77-76	D+
90-88	B	75-72	D
87-86	B-	71-70	D-
85-84	C+	69-0	F

SEMINARY POLICIES:**Drop/Add/Withdrawal**

Once a student has completed, signed, and submitted his/her registration to the Registrar for this class, it is a binding contract and billing will be based on this registration. If the student decides not to take this class, he/she must complete a "drop/add" form and secure the appropriate signatures prior to the drop/add deadline during the second week of the semester or term. If one wishes to withdraw from the course after the drop/add deadline, one must complete a withdrawal form, and tuition will be refunded on a pro rated basis. Failure to withdraw from the class properly will result in the student's receiving a grade of "F" for the course and full tuition charges will apply. No exceptions will be made to this policy.

Incompletes

The grade of "I" or incomplete is given at the discretion of the professor. A grade of "I" is normally given when a student has substantially completed the requirements for a course but has been prevented by extraordinary circumstances from completing the remainder of the course requirements. A student who wishes to request an incomplete should normally complete an incomplete form prior to the end of the semester and ask the professor to grant the request. (Under unusual circumstances, the student may communicate with the professor by phone or email rather than in person, and the professor may then agree to fill out the form at the student's request. Under exceptional

circumstances, the professor may initiate the process by filling out the form on the student's behalf.) If the professor grants the request, he/she will sign the incomplete form and turn it in with his/her final grade report. An "I" in any course must be removed by March 1 for the Fall Term, April 1 for the January Term, August 1 for the Spring Term, and November 1 for the Summer Term. Only the Dean may grant extensions of incompletes beyond the established completion date. Otherwise, these grades automatically become "F."

Language about God and Humanity

Although God transcends the distinction between male and female, the Bible and the Church's historic creeds and confessions use masculine language in reference to God. Thus, the Seminary encourages all students to retain this masculine usage when speaking and writing about God. Furthermore, the Seminary recognizes that all human beings, male and female, are created equally in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27), and believers of both sexes are fellow heirs of the grace of life (1 Pet. 3:7). Accordingly, whenever students are speaking and writing about males and females, they should use language that clearly includes both men and women (for example, by saying/writing "humanity" rather than "man" or "people" rather than "men").

Conduct in Theological Discussions

Erskine Seminary is committed to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, and it expects its students to show respect for all who identify with that one Church. In all written work, oral presentations, and discussions both inside and outside the classroom, the Seminary expects students to conduct discussions of controversial issues in a context of respect for those with whom one disagrees. Please see the Community Life Statement in the Catalog for more information.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the use in writing of wording or ideas produced by others without crediting the author and/or source from which the material was taken. As the following statement indicates, plagiarism is a serious offense that undermines both the witness and integrity of the Christian community:

Plagiarism injures the community by inhibiting the recognition and cultivation of gifts imparted by the Spirit. Clearly unattributed use of the words and/or ideas of others fails to give appreciative recognition of their gifts. But this illegitimate appropriation of the gifts of others also blocks the recognition and cultivation of the actual gifts of the person engaged in plagiarism.

Plagiarism creates an atmosphere of falsehood in the community's discernment and cultivation of gifts, both within the Christian community and in God's larger creation. Since freedom comes only by way of truth (Jn. 8:32), such falsehood can only result in captivity, and therefore has no place in the Christian community.

On this basis, the Seminary adheres to the following general requirements for the acknowledgement of sources of academic work. These requirements apply to both print and electronic media.

1. Quotations. Any sentence or phrase that a student uses from another source must be placed in quotation marks or, in the case of longer quotations, clearly indented beyond the regular margin. Any quotation must be accompanied (either within the text or in a note) by a precise indication of the source.

2. Paraphrasing. Any material that is paraphrased or summarized must also be specifically acknowledged in a note or in the text.

3. Ideas. Specific ideas that are borrowed should be acknowledged in a note or in the text, even if the idea has been further elaborated by the student.

4. Bibliography. All the sources consulted in the preparation of an essay or report should be listed in a bibliography.

In addition to plagiarism, the following related practices are also unacceptable compromises of the truth requisite to a free community:

1. Multiple submission. Failure to obtain prior written permission of the relevant instructors to submit work which has been submitted in identical or similar form in fulfillment of any other academic requirement at any institution.

2. False citation. The deliberate attribution to, or citation of, a source from which the material in question was not, in fact, obtained.

3. Submission of work done by someone else, either with or without that person's knowledge. Neither ignorance of the regulations concerning academic violations nor personal extenuating circumstances are an adequate defense against charges of plagiarism. The Seminary's provisions for "due process" apply in cases of alleged plagiarism.

[The italicized statement above is used by permission of The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia and Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey, based upon a document adapted by LTSP, with permission, from "Princeton University Rights, Rules and Responsibilities," 1990 Edition. Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey.]

Occurrences of plagiarism shall be considered 'documented' when the instructor is able to produce documentary evidence that plagiarism has occurred, and when the instructor has reason to believe that the plagiarism was motivated by a deliberate attempt to receive credit for ideas or work not the student's own. Where such plagiarism involves the theft of the academic work of another student, whether at Erskine or any other institution, it shall be designated 'documented theft of another student's work.'

The instructor involved, in consultation with the Dean, may recommend measures deemed appropriate. In cases of documented plagiarism or documented theft of another student's work, the offending student will automatically receive the following penalties:

Failure of the course(s) in which plagiarized or stolen work is submitted

Dismissal from the Seminary for a minimum of one semester

Forfeiture of the right to tuition refunds during the semester(s) affected

Before such penalties are imposed, a committee of at least three faculty members must agree that they are appropriate to the case. Appeals in such cases may only be addressed, in writing, to the President of Erskine College and Theological Seminary.

REMEMBER- if you can GOOGLE IT, SO CAN I!

COURSE WEIGHTING:

Paper on Salvation	35 points
Paper on Church	35 points
Paper on Last Things	35 points
Calvin Reading	10 points
Williams Reading	15 points
Wilson Reading	10 points
New Perspective Rdg	10 points
Exam	25 Points
Extra Credit: Up to 5 points added	

TOTAL: 175 pts.