

ST602 SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY 2

Fall 2010

Wednesdays 1-4 PM

3 Semester Credit Hours

Professor: R. J. Gore, Jr., D.Min., Ph.D.

PO Box 594, Due West, SC 29639

<http://acad.erskine.edu/facultyweb/gore/gore.htm>

FALL 2010 OFFICE HOURS:

Tuesday: 1:30-4:30

Other times arranged by appointment.

Contact me at inaliam@gmail.com for appointment and for submitting course work.

MISSION:

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to educate persons for service in the Christian Church.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The course continues a systematic presentation of the Christian faith. Using Biblical constructs, historical developments, and confessional statements, students explore the Doctrine of God, the Doctrine of Humanity, and the Doctrine of Christ. Required. *Three hours.*

COURSE PURPOSE:

The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to the study of theology and ethics and to prepare him/her for more advanced study.

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**. 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

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTBOOKS:

D.A. Carson, *How Long, O Lord?* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006. ISBN 0801031257

*John Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols. Philadelphia: Westminster Press. ISBN 0-664-22020-7, 0-664-22021-5 * Portions of Books 1 and 2

William Edgar, *The Face of Truth*. Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2001. ISBN 0-87552-1789

*J. van Genderen and W.H. Velema, *Concise Reformed Dogmatics*. Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2008.

*Used in all three semesters of Systematic Theology.

Students are expected to secure their own copies of all required textbooks. As a convenience, the seminary has a bookstore portal of the website at <http://www.erskineseminary.org/bookstore.html>. There you will find links to familiar vendors (CBD, Amazon, B&N, and Books-A-Million) and can check availability of texts, compare prices, and place orders. The ETS SBA will receive a modest percentage of the profits from students' and professors' purchases through this portal. The Erskine Campus Bookstore will carry a limited number of copies of every required text and orders for books can be placed through the Campus Bookstore.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

Joel Beeke and Sinclair Ferguson, eds. *Reformed Confessions Harmonized*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.

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

John Leith, *Creeds of the Churches*, 3rd ed. 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. 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 EXPECTATIONS:

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

Attendance: No absences are excused. However, you may miss three (3) hours of class without being required to do make-up work. I will not try to assess reasons for absences in order to grant excuses. You decide if you want to or need to miss a portion of the class. If you miss more than three (3) hours, you will be required to do extra work in the areas missed. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP TRACK OF YOUR ABSENCES AND CONSULT WITH ME IMMEDIATELY (before the missed class if possible) TO HAVE THE EXTRA WORK and "DUE DATE" ASSIGNED. All make-up work must be handed in by the Exam Day. You cannot complete the course without this being done. The "rule of thumb" for extra work is nine (9) hours of work for each three (3) hours class period missed. This is based on the idea that each class period requires three hours in class and six hours outside for fulfilling the work of the course.

Requirement One: Attend class regularly and participate in the opening dialogs. Students who miss more than a total of three hours will be assigned additional work at the rate of 3 hours of work for every hour missed. Students will be expected to complete the required reading in *Concise Reformed Dogmatics* prior to each class and be prepared to discuss the key points in the reading. Bring *CRD* and your Bible to every class.

Requirement Two: All students will complete the reading of the required portions of Books 2 and 3 of Calvin's *Institutes*. Students will keep a Reading Log, documenting the dates and times spent reading the texts. Students will read Book 2, Chapter 1 through Book 3, Chapter 19 (pages 237- 849 in volume 1). Students will keep a handwritten account of any new learning, challenges to their beliefs, or other significant findings. **The Reading Log will count 10 points toward the course total of 100 points and should be 8-10 pages, handwritten.**

Requirement Three: All students will complete the assigned reading, William Edgar, *Face the Truth*. In addition, students will write a one-page, single-spaced critical response to Edgar. As part of your response, explain how you approach the issue of Worldview. To what extent has a secular, postmodern view of reality influenced the way you approach Christianity. **The reading and critical response will count 5 points towards the course total of 100 points.**

Requirement Four: All students will complete the reading of D.A. Carson, *How Long, O Lord?* In addition, students will write a two-page, single-spaced critical response to Carson. As part of your response, explain how you approach the issue of God's sovereignty and foreknowledge, especially your understanding of the interaction between human freedom/God's Will (and proper pastoral handling of the problem of pain!) **The reading and critical response will count 10 points towards the course total of 100 points.**

Requirement Five: All students will research and prepare three Statements of Faith that, collectively, will constitute a comprehensive, personal statement of faith. These Statements of Faith 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 using **Times New Roman 12pt font**. The papers will be double-spaced and proper footnote form will be followed (using 7th ed. Turabian, *Manual for Writers*). Bibliography note required. **Each paper will count 25 points towards the final course total of 100 points. Scripture references may be numerous, but Scripture quotations, if used at all, will be infrequent, brief, and the Scripture chapter and verse will be noted in the text in parenthesis (John 3:16). A bibliography page is not needed**

Note: One of these papers may serve as 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. This requirement does not apply if you have already satisfied that requirement.

[SAMPLE PAPER](#) [Click Here](#)

[SAMPLE FOOTNOTES](#) [Click Here](#)

Statements of Faith will include, as a minimum (see Sample above)

*Scripture references (DO NOT FOOTNOTE SCRIPTURE)

*Conventional theological language- standard terminology

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

*Reference to (1) at **least four Reformation/Post-Reformation confessions** and (2) **early church creeds**, where appropriate- See Internet Resources below

[INTERNET RESOURCES](#) [Click Here](#)

*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.

STATEMENTS OF FAITH- TOPICS AND DUE DATES:

13 October: Doctrine of God: Triune God, Persons (and personality), Attributes, Works, Decrees

10 November: Doctrine of Humanity: Origins, Nature, Image of God, Covenant, Origin of Sin, Nature of Sin, Imputation of Sin

8 December: Doctrine of Christ: Person of Christ, natures of Christ, Christological heresies, States of Christ, Offices of Christ, Nature of Atonement, Election and Atonement

STANDARDS FOR ALL PAPERS:

- A.....No more than 4 misspellings or grammatical errors in total
Identified the most significant articles, books in bibliography
Used research materials expertly, leaving no unanswered questions
Thesis statement clear and proved
- B.....No more than 2 misspellings or grammatical errors per page
Identified a number of important articles, books in bibliography
Used research material fairly, addressed most problem areas
Thesis statement clear and sustained
- C.....No more than 3 misspellings or grammatical errors per page
Used the minimum required number of bibliographical entries
Used research material adequately
Thesis statement not clear and/or not sustained
- D.....More than 3 misspellings or grammatical errors per page
Failed to use minimum number of bibliographical entries
Research poorly done
What thesis statement?

LECTURES AND ASSIGNMENTS

CRD Chapter

Lecture One:	1 September		4
Lecture Two:	8 September		4
Lecture Three:	15 September	Edgar Response	5
Lecture Four:	22 September		5,6
Lecture Five:	29 September		6
Lecture Six:	6 October		7
Lecture Seven:	13 October	God Paper	8
Lecture Eight:	20 October		8,9
Lecture Nine:	27 October	Carson Response	9
Lecture Ten:	3 November		10,11 (33,4)
Lecture Eleven:	10 November	Humanity Paper	10
Lecture Twelve:	17 November		10,11

Thanksgiving Break

Lecture Thirteen: 1 December
Lecture Fourteen: 8 December
10 December

11
Christ Paper 11
Calvin Reading Log

ERSKINE SEMINARY POLICIES

Drop/Add and Course 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.

Office Hours

My normal office hours are printed in this syllabus. However, due to meetings and unforeseen circumstances that may arise, my schedule may change. If you need to see me, I strongly recommend that you call or e-mail to schedule an appointment.

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.

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."

Official Seminary Class Attendance Policy:

Class participation is considered an important part of the total educational experience at Erskine Seminary. Students are expected to attend classes on a regular basis and are responsible for the mastery of all materials required in the course. Each professor will indicate in writing the specific class attendance policy at the beginning of each course. In general, students are allowed up to three hours of unexcused absence without penalty. Students wishing to take a course which meets four times over the semester **must** attend the first meeting of the course.

Policy Regarding Absences

Students are required to attend all class sessions. If students have to be absent for any reason, they are still responsible for all work missed and all work due. A student who misses more than three class sessions for any reason will automatically fail the course.

Style and Bibliographical Formatting Requirements

All papers must be typed/processed (12-point type, Times New Roman double-spaced, one-inch margins) and fully documented, following the standards in the "Style and Form Standards" (Erskine Seminary) and Turabian 7th edition. In this course, footnotes are required in the research paper. The paper's cover page is not counted towards page requirements. Bibliography is not required.

Chapel Attendance Policy (FOR TUESDAY-THURSDAY ON-CAMPUS CLASSES)

All morning and afternoon on-campus classes (except for Friday and Saturday courses) carry a chapel attendance requirement. Consult the catalog for the specifics of the chapel attendance policy. There is a per chapel fee if you attend fewer chapels than required.

COURSE WEIGHTING:	100 Points total
Paper on God	25 points
Paper on Humanity	25 points
Paper on Christ	25 points
Calvin Reading	10 points
Carson Reading	10 points
Edgar Reading	5 points