



**ERSKINE**  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

*For Christ and His Church*

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**ST 601 CO Systematic Theology I**

Fall 2010

Mark E. Ross, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Systematic Theology

**Class Meeting Times and Location**

Thursdays, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

September 2<sup>nd</sup> – December 9<sup>th</sup>

Erskine Theological Seminary

Columbia Extension Site

1500 Lady Street

Suite 200 \*

Columbia, South Carolina

*\* Enter by the side door off the driveway from Lady Street and go to the second floor.  
Parking is available on the side and behind the building, on the street, or across Bull Street.*

## CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Erskine Theological Seminary Columbia Campus  
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Columbia, SC 29201

## OFFICE HOURS

In Columbia: Fridays, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon.

*My office is located at the Erskine Theological Seminary Columbia extension site, 1500 Lady Street, Suite 200, Room 205. Enter by the side door off the driveway from Lady Street and go to the second floor. Due to meetings and unforeseen circumstances that may arise, my schedule may change. If you need to see me, I strongly recommend that you schedule an appointment. You are welcome to call me at home. Please make your calls between 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. Because Columbia is not convenient for many students, I will do my best to be available. We can meet before or after class or by telephone.*

## CATALOG DESCRIPTION

This course begins a systematic presentation of the Christian faith. Using Biblical constructs, historical developments, and confessional statements, students explore Introduction to Systematic Theology (including concepts, methodology, and systems) and the Doctrine of Revelation and Scripture. *Required for M.Div. and M.A.T.S. students. Three hours. Available as an EDEN course.*

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to educate persons for service in the Christian Church. In keeping with that mission Erskine offers both the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) and Master of Arts in Theological Studies (M.A.T.S.) degrees. This course is the first of a three course sequence (ST 601, 602, and 603) required for both of these degree programs. The purpose of the M.Div. degree is to educate ministers who can formulate a theory of ministry, design and implement forms of ministry appropriate to particular circumstances, and integrate the various disciplines and skills of ministry so as to share God's love with all people, all to the end that God may be glorified. The purpose of the M.A.T.S. degree is to prepare scholars who have an in-depth knowledge of a given field in Biblical, historical, or theological studies and who can integrate the various fields into a coherent whole, to the end that God may be glorified. This course introduces students to the study

of theology and to its role in the Christian life and the life of the Church. Students are introduced to the basic concepts and methodologies used in systematic theology. From the lectures, readings, classroom discussion, and writing assignments, diligent students should acquire an understanding of theology as a discipline . A student successfully completing this course should be able to:

1. Understand and explain the nature of theology and some of the basic concepts involved in it.
2. Understand and explain the importance of systematic theology for a right interpretation of Scripture, and for preaching and teaching the word of God.
3. Understand and explain the four-fold curriculum and how it is worked out in the seminary's curriculum.
4. Incorporate the four-fold curriculum into one's personal study of the Bible and ministry.
5. Grow in one's appreciation for careful study of the Bible.
6. Become a better interpreter and expositor of the Bible.
7. Increase one's motivation and commitment to personal study of the Bible, and living one's life according to the will of God found in the Scriptures.

### REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

*The first three books below are also to be used in ST 602CO and ST 603CO.*

1. Any systematic theology text by a single author of your choosing, preferably one that is accepted in your church or denomination. If you need recommendations, please consult with your professor, or another minister or faculty member who belongs to your church tradition.
2. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Philadelphia: The Westminster John Knox Press, 1960. ISBN-10: 0664220282, ISBN-13: 978-0664220280.
3. James Montgomery Boice, *Foundations of the Christian Faith*. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986. ISBN: 0-85110-637-4, ISBN: 978-0-87784-991-9
4. J. I. Packer, *God Has Spoken: Revelation and the Bible*. Third edition. Baker Academic, 1994. ISBN-10: 0842339604, ISBN-13: 978-0842339605
5. Steven J. Lawson, *The Expository Genius of John Calvin*. Lake Mary, FL: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2007. ISBN-10: 1567690858, ISBN-13: 978-1567690859

### RECOMMENDED BOOKS

*Under Required Books above, students must select a systematic theology text alongside those which are required. The books in 3-11 below would be suitable options..*

1. J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2001. ISBN-10: 0842339604, ISBN-13: 978-0842339605

2. Walter. A. Elwell, ed., *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. Second edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House Company, 1984, 2001. **ISBN-10:** 0801020751, **ISBN-13:** 978-0801020759
3. Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Zondervan, 1995. ISBN-10: 0310286700, ISBN-13: 978-0310286707 [Reformed, Baptist, Charismatic]
4. Thomas Oden, *Classic Christianity: A Systematic Theology*. HarperOne, 2009. ISBN-10: 0061449717, ISBN-13: 978-0061449710 [Ecumenical by a Methodist]
5. Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*. Baker Academic, 1998. ISBN-10: 0801021820, ISBN-13: 978-0801021824 [Baptist]
6. Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*. New Combined Edition. Eerdmans, 1996. ISBN-10: 0802838200, ISBN-13: 978-0802838209 [Reformed]
7. Robert L Reymond, *A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*. Second Revised Edition. Thomas Nelson, 1998. ISBN-10: 0849913179, ISBN-13: 978-0849913174 [Reformed]
8. J. Rodman Williams, *Renewal Theology: Systematic Theology from a Charismatic Perspective*. Zondervan, 1996. ISBN-10: 0310209145, ISBN-13: 978-0310209140 [Charismatic]
9. Bruce A. Demarest, *Integrative Theology*. Zondervan, 1996. ISBN-10: 0310209153, ISBN-13: 978-0310209157 [Reformed]
10. John Frame, *Salvation Belongs to the Lord: An Introduction to Systematic Theology*. P & R Publishing, 2006. ISBN-10: 1596380187, ISBN-13: 978-1596380189 [Reformed]
11. Paul Culbertson and H. Orton Wiley, *Introduction to Christian Theology*. Beacon Hill Press, 1946. ISBN: 083410217X. ISBN-13: 9780834102170 [Wesleyan-Arminian]

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attendance** – Preparation, attendance, and participation in class sessions are required. Bring your Bible to each class. Students must arrive on time for class and following breaks. You are expected to remain at each session until it concludes. A student who misses as much as three full class sessions or the equivalent in late arrival or early departure (*i.e.*, 9 hours or more) will normally be asked to withdraw from the course or receive a failing a grade. Exceptions to this policy will be made only in **extreme** cases.
2. **Two short papers** – **IMPORTANT:** Before writing a paper, each student should consult the seminary's approved paper on "Writing Theological Papers" by Dr. Fairbairn. This can be located on McCain Library's web page at <http://www.erskine.edu/library/libinstructionfetcher.htm?igor=230>.

- a. Two short papers are required for this course, each about 5-7 pages, and each counting for 25% of your grade:
- (1) The first paper is a review and response to Lawson's book on *The Expository Genius of John Calvin*. In it you should describe Calvin's expository method, and give your response to it as a method for Biblical exposition. This paper is not for the purpose of responding to Calvin's theology on other topics, just his method of expository teaching and preaching.
  - (2) The second paper will discuss your theologian's view of the Bible in comparison with Calvin, Boice, or Packer. In the conclusion to this paper, you should prepare a one paragraph statement (3-5 sentences) of what *you* believe about the Bible, a statement suitable for incorporation into a statement of faith. You should also show from Scripture and from the readings why you hold to this view.

b. Each paper should include the following:

- (1) Appropriate Biblical support for the points being made. This is a major component. Belief and doctrine must be founded on Scripture. Show where in the Bible the points you are making can be found. *Where a Biblical passage is cited, the reference should be inserted into the text of the paper, for example, (John 3:16).* Do not put Biblical references in the footnotes! At the first citation of a Biblical passage, footnote which version of the Bible you are using. For example: "1. All quotations from the Bible are from the English Standard Version (Crossway Bibles, 2003)."
- (2) The paper must also include and discuss (either positively or negatively) appropriate quotations from Calvin, Boice, Packer, Lawson, and your theologian. These citations must be footnoted in the appropriate fashion. The paper should conform to the standards for seminary papers. It is from these papers that I will know you have done the reading in your theologian. If you have no references and/or quotations from the books assigned, I will assume you have not done the reading.

*IMPORTANT: All papers must be typed/processed (twelve point type, double spaced, one-inch margins) and fully documented, following the standards in the "Style and Form Standards for All Masters Level Programs" (Erskine Seminary). This document is available on the McCain Library's web site, under Library Research Guides, under Seminary Guides, <http://www.erskine.edu/library/content/Style-FormStandards.pdf>. In this course, footnotes and a bibliography are required in each paper. The paper's cover page and bibliography are not counted towards page requirements.*

3. Mid-term Exam - The exam will consist of 25 short identification questions (requiring a one or two sentence answer) taken from the lectures and the readings in Lawson, Boice, and Calvin. This will be worth 25% of your grade.

4. Final Exam – The exam will consist of 25 short identification questions (requiring a one or two sentence answer) taken from the lectures and the readings in Boice, Calvin, Lawson, and Packer. This will be worth 25% of your grade.

### GRADING AND EVALUATION

The grading scale published in the seminary catalog will be used to arrive at your final grade. Your exams will receive a numerical grade. The scale is:

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

The papers will receive a letter grade. For letter grades, the scale is:

A	4.0	B	3.0	C	2.0	D	1.0
A-	3.7	B-	2.7	C-	1.7	D-	0.7
B+	3.3	C+	2.3	D+	1.3	F	0

### SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

*“For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it?”*

Luke 14:28

Each seminary class requires about 120 hours of work, covering both time in class and time spent in reading, researching, thinking, and writing. About 40 hours will be spent in class for this course, leaving about 80 hours of work to be done outside. Roughly, that means that **for each 3 hours a week you spend in class, you will need 6 more hours that week to complete the assigned work.** Plan ahead. Let the one who has ears to hear, hear!

*The dates given below are when the assignments are due!* Please complete the readings before class and bring your questions about the reading to class. **Bold** print indicates dates where a paper is due or an exam is given.

September 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Introduction to Systematic Theology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Lawson, pp. xi-52</li> <li>• Read in your theologian</li> </ul>
September 9 <sup>th</sup>	The Four-fold Curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Lawson, pp. 53-102</li> <li>• Read in your theologian</li> </ul>
September 16 <sup>th</sup>	Systematic Theology and Bible Exposition

- Read Lawson, pp. 103-139
  - Read Calvin, Introduction sections I-II, VIII-XV, pp. xxix-xxxv, l-lxxi; and Preface, pp. 3-31
- September 23<sup>rd</sup>      The Doctrine of Revelation: General Revelation
- Read Calvin, pp. 35-69
  - Read in your theologian
- September 30<sup>th</sup>**      Revelation and the Knowledge of God
- Read Boice, pp. 19-34
  - Read in your theologian
  - **Due: First paper**
- October 7<sup>th</sup>      The Doctrine of Revelation: Special Revelation
- Read Calvin, 69-96
  - Read in your theologian
- October 14<sup>th</sup>**      Special Revelation and the Bible
- Read Boice, pp. 37-66
  - Read in your theologian
  - **Mid-term Exam**
- October 21<sup>st</sup>      Modern Theories of Revelation and the Bible
- Read Boice, pp. 67-98
  - Read Packer, pp. 7-45
- October 28<sup>th</sup>      God's Word Spoken
- Read Packer, pp. 46-83
  - Read in your theologian
- November 4<sup>th</sup>      God's Word Written
- Read Packer, pp. 84-113, 134-149
  - Read in your theologian
- November 11<sup>th</sup>      Understanding God's Word
- Read Packer, pp. 114-125
  - Ready in your theologian
- November 18<sup>th</sup>**      Receiving God's Word
- Read Packer, pp. 151-170
  - Read in your theologian
  - **Due: Second paper**
- November 25<sup>th</sup>      NO CLASS: HAPPY THANKSGIVING

December 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Review Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review reading and lecture notes for final exam</li> <li>• Come prepared with your questions about the reading and the lectures.</li> </ul>
December 9 <sup>th</sup>	Final Exam

## **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.

### **Required Textbooks**

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.

### **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.

### **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, double-spaced, one-inch margins) and fully documented, following the standards in the “Style and Form Standards” (Erskine Seminary). In this course, footnotes and a bibliography are required in each paper. The paper's cover page and bibliography are not counted towards page requirements.