

Christian Commitment and Excellence in Learning

ERSKINE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

www.erskine.edu/seminary

www.erskineseminary.org

ST 603 CO Systematic Theology III

Fall 2009

Mark E. Ross, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Systematic Theology

Class Meeting Times and Location

Thursdays, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

September 3rd – December 10th

Erskine Theological Seminary

Columbia Extension Site

1500 Lady Street

Suite 200 *

Columbia, SC

** 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:

E-mail: ross@erskine.edu, MarkERoss@aol.com

Telephone: (803) 771-6180 (o)
(803) 782-8447 (h)

FAX: (803) 540-2846 in Columbia

Address: Dr. Mark E. Ross
4 Forest Trace Court
Columbia, SC 29204

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 when necessary. 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 in Columbia. I have a flat rate long distance telephone service, so I shall be happy to bear the cost of long distance telephone meetings if that is more convenient for you.

CATALOG 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. *Students should complete ST 601 and 602 (Systematic Theology I and II, formerly ST 201 and 202, formerly ST 03 and 04) prior to taking this course. Required for M.Div. and M.A.T.S. students. Three hours.*

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to educate persons for service in the Christian Church. Fundamental to that task is helping our students to know and understand the things which have been revealed to us by God. The aim of this course is to provide a foundational knowledge of the person and work of the Holy Spirit, especially in the application of the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the doctrines of the Church, the sacraments, and the Last Things.

From the lectures, readings, classroom discussion, and writing assignments, diligent students should acquire a thorough knowledge of what the Scriptures teach concerning the areas mentioned above. A student successfully completing this course should be able to:

1. Understand and explain the fundamentals of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and the application of the work of Christ in salvation.
2. Understand and explain the doctrine of the Church.
3. Understand and explain the nature of the sacraments and the place they have in the Christian life and the Church.
4. Understand and explain the principal views on the Last Things.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

NOTE: Students are required to secure their own copies of required textbooks. As a convenience, the seminary offers a bookstore portal on the website at <http://www.erskineseminary.org/bookstore.html>. There you will find links to familiar vendors, and can compare prices and place orders. The Erskine Campus Bookstore will stock a small number of each required text and book orders can be placed through the Campus Bookstore.

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 Press, 1960. ISBN: 0664220282
3. James Montgomery Boice, *Foundations of the Christian Faith*. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986. ISBN: 0-85110-637-4

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

1. J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1993. ISBN: 08423-3960-4
2. Walter A. Elwell, ed., *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House Company, 1984, 2001.

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. **Three worksheets** – The worksheets will cover the lectures and readings that have been assigned up to their due date. Like take home exams, students will complete the worksheets outside of class time. Like papers, students will do research and consult the textbooks and lecture notes to complete the answers. Also, like papers, worksheets are to be typed and double-spaced, with footnotes and bibliography to be used in documenting sources. Your footnotes should include references to all the assigned reading (Calvin, Boice, and your chosen theologian). Each worksheet will be worth 15% of your final grade. Note: Students who choose the optional, larger term paper described below will be exempted from doing one of these worksheets.
3. **Term paper** – One term paper is required for this course. The paper will be worth 25% of your final grade. It will include one paragraph summary of your beliefs (a statement of faith) on each of the doctrines covered in this course: the Holy Spirit, Salvation, the Church, the Sacraments (or ordinances), and the Last Things. This statement is to be followed by a 12-15 page paper providing explanation, commentary, and support for the statement of faith. In the commentary section, it is most important that Biblical support be provided for the statements contained in the statement of faith. Where a Biblical passage is cited, the reference can be inserted in the text of the paper, for example, (John 3:16). **The paper must also include and discuss (either positively or negatively) appropriate quotations from Calvin, Boice, and the third theologian that the student has chosen to read.** These citations must be footnoted in the appropriate fashion and there must be a bibliography. The paper should conform to the standards for seminary papers. This paper will fulfill the portfolio requirement for M.Div. students (see back of degree program worksheet).

OPTIONAL: Students may elect to do a larger term paper covering all the major topics covered in Systematic Theology I-III. Students choosing this option will be exempted from doing one of the worksheets, and will instead submit a statement of faith covering, **in addition to what is listed above**, a one paragraph summary statement of your beliefs on the doctrines of Revelation (especially on Scripture), God, Humanity, and the Person and Work of Christ, along with the explanation, commentary, and support of these beliefs as you must do for the required doctrines above. This larger paper should be about 17-20 pages and will be worth 40% of your final grade. For this paper you may incorporate work you have previously done in Systematic Theology I and II. This final product would give to you a complete statement of faith on the basic doctrines of the Christian faith, and a supporting paper for the statement. It would serve you well in applying for a position with a church or ministry organization. As above, it would fulfill the portfolio requirement for theology if you have one in your degree program.

IMPORTANT: Before writing a paper, each student should consult the seminary's approved papers ETS Style and Form Standards for Papers, Theses, and Dissertations (<http://www.erskine.edu/library/libinstructionfetcher.htm?igor=229>) and ETS Writing Theological Papers (<http://www.erskine.edu/library/libinstructionfetcher.htm?igor=230>) by Dr. Fairbairn. They can be located online at the home page for McCain Library, under Library Research Guides.

4. **Comprehensive Final Exam** – The exam will consist of 30 short identification questions (requiring a one or two sentence answer) taken from the lectures and the reading in Calvin and Boice. This will be worth 30% of your grade. The focus of the exam will be on the basic terms and concepts used in theology. To prepare for this exam, it is recommended that, as you read, you take note of the chapter and section headings: writing them down and summarizing the major ideas in each. Look for underlined or italicized words in the reading, or terms which are explained in significant footnotes. Write these down, and provide a one to two sentence explanation for them. Review your worksheets and lecture notes.

GRADING AND EVALUATION

The grading scale published in the seminary catalog will be used to arrive at your final grade. Your exam and worksheets 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 paper 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!

- September 3rd The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit
- Read Boice, pp. 373-398
 - Read Calvin, pp. 537-592
 - Read your theologian on the person and work of the Holy Spirit

- September 10th The Order of Salvation (introduction)
- Read Boice, pp. 401-423
 - Read Calvin, pp. 592-669
 - Read your theologian on faith and regeneration
- September 17th Justification and Adoption
- Read Boice, pp. 424-448
 - Read Calvin, pp. 725-788
 - Read your theologian on justification and adoption
- September 24th Sanctification
- Read Boice, pp. 449-456
 - Read Calvin, pp. 788-849
 - Read your theologian on sanctification
- October 1st The Christian Life
- Read Boice, pp. 459-482
 - Read Calvin, pp. 684-724
 - Read your theologian on the Christian life
 - **Due: first work sheet (15% of final grade)**
- October 8th Prayer
- Read Boice, pp. 483-507
 - Read Calvin, pp. 850-920
 - Read your theologian on prayer and the means of grace
- October 15th Foreknowledge and Election
- Read Boice, pp. 511-562
 - Read Calvin, pp. 920-987
 - Read your theologian on foreknowledge and election
 - **Due: one or two page draft of statement of faith (or proposal on optional term paper)**
- October 22nd The Doctrine of the Church
- Read Boice, pp. 565-593
 - Read Calvin, pp. 1011-1084
 - Read your theologian on the doctrine of the church
- October 29th The Doctrine of the Sacraments
- Read Boice, pp. 594-605
 - Read Calvin, pp. 1276-1303
 - Read your theologian on the sacraments
 - **Due: second work sheet (15% of final grade)**
- November 5th The Doctrine of Baptism
- Read Calvin, pp. 1303-1359

- Read your theologian on baptism
- November 12th The Doctrine of the Lord’s Supper
- Read Calvin, pp. 1359-1428
 - Read in your theologian on the Lord’s Supper
- November 19th The Doctrine of the Last Things: Personal Eschatology
- Read Boice, pp. 606-656
 - Read Calvin, pp. 987-1008
 - Read your theologian on personal eschatology
 - **Due: third work sheet (15% of final grade)**
- November 26th NO CLASS: FALL BREAK FOR THANKSGIVING
- December 3rd The Doctrine of the Last Things: General Eschatology
- Read Boice, pp. 657-720
 - Read Calvin, pp. 1485-1521
 - Read in your theologian on general eschatology
 - **Due: statement of faith and commentary paper (25% of final grade)**
- December 10th **Comprehensive Final Exam (30% of final grade)**

A Final Word

A study of theology should never be approached as merely an academic exercise—completing course requirements solely for the purpose of gaining credits and ultimately a degree. The subject matter of our study is God himself, as he makes himself known to us in all his glory, and the work of God in the world to save a people for himself. This course will focus on the consummation of the plan of God for his people, particularly, on how the salvation secured by Christ for his people is applied to them personally and in the Church. Our study should engage our hearts as well as our minds, and lead us to worship. Let us pray that God will open our hearts and minds to the beauty and glory of his being and ways with us, and move us to adoring service.

ERSKINE 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.

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, 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.