Course Syllabus
WYT 1101H – The God of the Gospel: Systematic Theology I
Wycliffe College
Toronto School of Theology
Winter 2024

Instructor Information

Instructor:	Michael Brain, PhD
Office Location:	N/A
Telephone:	N/A
E-mail:	michael.brain@mail.utoronto.ca
Office Hours:	Virtual Office Hours; by appointment

Course Identification

Course Number:	WYT 1101H
Course Format:	*Online*
Course Name:	The God of the Gospel: Systematic Theology I
Course Location:	Quercus
Class Times:	N/A
Prerequisites:	N/A

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the discipline of "systematic" theology, also known as Christian doctrine or dogmatics, covering the following major topics: (1) the nature and sources of theology, (2) the doctrine of the Trinity, (3) the person and work of Jesus Christ. While the approach adopted in this course reflects the traditions of the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation, including Anglicanism, the course is broadly ecumenical in scope and purpose. You will attain facility in the basic grammar of Christian confession as grounded in Scripture and articulated in the ecumenical creeds/definitions (e.g., Nicaea, Chalcedon) as well as the wider catholic tradition. The course assumes that theology is a difficult science, because God is not easy to understand, but also a joyful science, because there is no greater delight than letting the mind dwell on the beauty and the mystery of God.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts/Bibliography
- Readings will be available online through the course website.

Course Website(s)
- Quercus: https://q.utoronto.ca/

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at https://q.utoronto.ca/ and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the

website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701. Students who have trouble accessing Quercus should ask the Registrar's Office for further help.]

Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Course Outcomes	Course Element	Program Outcomes
By the end of this course students will:	**This outcome will be achieved through these course elements:**	**This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of Wycliffe's statements of outcomes (MTS, MDiv)**
Articulate an understanding of the aims and character of Christian theology, and of the basic content and "logic" of the doctrines of the revelation, the Trinity, the person of Christ, and the work of Christ.	• Course notes • Discussion forums • Short papers	MTS: 1.2, 2.1 MDiv: 1.3, 2.1
Articulate an awareness of their own ecclesial tradition in relation to the ecumenical faith of the church.	• Course notes • Discussion forums • Short papers	MTS: 3.1 MDiv: 1.5
Engage in critical and respectful discussion of assigned readings in an online learning environment.	• Discussion Forums • Reading Responses • Short Papers	MTS: 3.1; MDiv: 2.2
Gather, analyze and assess material from both primary and secondary literature	• Reading Responses • Short Papers	MTS: 2.1, 2.2; MDiv: 2.1
Express themselves effectively both orally and in writing	• Reading Responses • Short Papers	MTS: 2.1, 2.2 MDiv: 2.1

Evaluation

Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in three areas:

(1) *Online Discussions (30%)* – Participating in online discussion will form a key element of the course, providing opportunity for students to learn from one another and to clarify their thinking as they engage with one another and with the course material. You will be assigned to discussion groups of 4-5 persons. Five weeks throughout the course, students will respond to a prompt related to the

course readings and lectures. The post should develop an argument or a question for discussion. Each member of the group will then contribute responses to each of their group members. Original posts will be due Tuesdays at 11:59pm of the discussion week, and responses to each group member will be due by Thursdays at midnight of the same week. Further guidelines and the grading rubric will be available on Quercus.

(2) _Theological Reflection Papers (20% each)_ - You will submit two _theological reflection_ papers (1,800 words each). Papers should formulate and defend a thesis, based on a question or issue within the doctrinal locus that you select, while considering potential objections to your viewpoint. Papers should engage with course materials (readings, lectures, etc.) in support of your position. The first paper is due February 17th, and the second paper is due March 17.

Reflection Paper #1: Your first theological reflection will provide a preliminary statement of your own approach to theology. Paper should address three major questions: 1) what is theology?; 2) what are the crucial questions to be explored in theology?; 3) how does theology relate to Christian life and ministry? You are encouraged to incorporate your own ministry or vocational goals into your reflection. Due February 7th, 11:59pm.

Reflection Paper #2: Your second theological reflection is an open reflection on one of the topics covered in the course. After selecting a doctrinal topic covered in one of the course sessions, you will identify one of the questions or issues that are associated with that topic. You will then present an argument, in which you defend a particular position on that question. Due March 21, 11:59pm.

(3) _Take Home Exam (30%)_ – There will be a final take home examination due at the end of exam week (April 11th). The exam will be an open-book exam, consisting in a set of short essay questions (with some choice). Exams will be posted at the end of week 11 (Friday, March 28), and students will have until Thursday, April 11th at midnight to complete the exam. Further instructions will be provided at the time.

Grading System

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale (see section 11.2 of the BD Handbook):

90-100 (A+)	Exceptional
85-89 (A)	Outstanding
80-84 (A-)	Excellent
77-79 (B+)	Very Good
73-76 (B)	Good
70-72 (B-)	Acceptable
0-69 (FZ)	Failure

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

Late Work (BD). Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. The absolute deadline for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner.

This penalty is not applied to students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness); students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor and request an SDF. The absolute deadline for obtaining an SDF for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of examination week, whichever is sooner.   An SDF must be requested from the registrar's office in the student's college of registration no later than the last day of exam week in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted to ACORN. Grades are not official until they are posted to ACORN. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy found at www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf, policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks (linked from http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871. A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm.

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of *Behaviour on Academic Matters* http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm.

Back-up copies. Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

Obligation to check email. At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. *Students should check utoronto email regularly* for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder. Students in non-conjoint programs should contact the Registrar of their college of registration.

Email communication with the course instructor. The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students in conjoint programs must be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses for students in conjoint programs. Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.

Course Schedule

Module 1
Jan 6 - 10   **What is Theology?**
Introduction to systematic theology; theological method
- Migliore, 'The Task of Theology,' *Faith Seeking Understanding*, ch. 1
- Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline*, pp. 15-34 (ch. 2-4)

Module 2
Jan 13 - 17   **Scripture & Tradition**
Doctrine of Scripture; historical perspectives on tradition
- Webster, 'Scripture, Church, and Canon,' *Holy Scripture*, ch. 2
- East, 'Source,' *The Doctrine of Scripture*, ch. 1

Module 3
Jan 20 - 24   **The Knowledge of God**
Theological language; doctrine of revelation
Discussion Forum #1
- 'Analogy,' 'Revelation,' *Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology*
- Kreeft, *A Shorter Summa*, pp. 45-64, 75-77
- Elizabeth Johnson, 'Basic Linguistic Options,' *She Who Is*, ch. 3

Module 4
Jan 27 -   **The Doctrine of the Trinity (Pt. 1)**
Feb 31   Biblical perspectives; the early church
Discussion Forum #2
- Olsen & Hall, 'The Trinity: Patristic Contributions,' *The Trinity*, ch. 1
- Tanner, 'The Trinity as Christian Teaching,' *Oxford Handbook of the Trinity*

Module 5

Feb 3 - 7   **The Doctrine of the Trinity (Pt. 2)**
Medieval and modern developments
Due: Theological Reflection Paper #1: What is Theology? (Feb. 7th)
- Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, ch. 1
- Woodley, 'Beyond *Homoiousios* and *Homoousios*,' *Majority World Theology*, ch. 2
- Kilby, 'Is an Apophatic Trinitarianism Possible?,' *God, Evil, and the Limits of Theology*, ch. 3

Module 6

Feb 10 - 14   **Christology (Pt. 1)**
Intro to Christology; biblical perspectives; the early church
Discussion Forum #3
- Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*, pp. 49-60
- Cyril of Alexandria, *Letters*, pp. 34-50
- Crisp, 'Incarnation,' *Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, pp. 160-175

Reading Week: February 17-21

Module 7

Feb 24 - 28   **Christology (Pt. 2)**
Modern developments; contemporary issues in Christology
- Maximus the Confessor, *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ*, pp. 115-122, 173-176
- Coakley, 'What Does Chalcedon Solve and What Does It Not?' *The Incarnation: An Interdisciplinary Symposium*, ch. 7
- Hayes, 'Christology in African American Theology,' *The Oxford Handbook of African American Theology*, pp. 153-163

Module 8

Mar 3 - 7   **The Holy Spirit**
Who is the Holy Spirit? Biblical and historical perspectives
Discussion Forum #4
- Basil of Caesarea, *On the Holy Spirit* pp. 52-57, 69-76, 84-93
- Kärkkäinen, 'Introduction to Pneumatology as a Theological Discipline,' *Pneumatology*, ch. 1
- Yong, 'I Believe in the Holy Spirit,' *Majority World Theology*, ch. 17

Module 9

Mar 10 - 14   **The Unity and Perfections of God**
The being of God; divine attributes
Discussion Forum #5
- Holmes, 'The Attributes of God,' *Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*
- Kreeft, *A Shorter Summa*, pp. 65-74
- Bonhoeffer, 'Letters to Eberhard Bethge,' *A Testament to Freedom*, pp. 491-513

Module 10

Mar 17 - 21   **The Atonement (Pt. 1)**
The work of Christ; the doctrine of atonement
Due: Theological Reflection Paper #2 (Mar. 21)
- Adam Johnson, 'Atonement: The State and Shape of the Doctrine,' *T&T Clark Companion to the Atonement*, p. 1-18
- Rutledge, 'The Primacy of the Cross,' *The Crucifixion*, p. 41-72

Module 11

Mar 24 - 28   **The Atonement (Pt. 2)**
Atonement theories
Discussion Forum #6
- Sonderegger, 'Anselmian Atonement,' *T&T Clark Companion to the Atonement*
- Cone, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*, ch. 3

Module 12

Mar 31 -   **The Resurrection of Christ**
Apr 4   Nature of the resurrection; theological meaning of the resurrection
Due: Final Examination (end of exam week)
- Jenson, 'Resurrection,' *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, pp. 194-206
- Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, pp. 719-738