

T 305-0 Theological Anthropology (Spring 2019)

Bethany Theological Seminary

.....Professor Nate Inglis

WHAT WILL YOU LEARN IN THIS COURSE?

Course Description

Theological anthropology is the study of human nature in relation to God. It intersects with questions of grace, sin, salvation, and the person of Jesus Christ. By putting traditional Christian views of humanity in dialogue with insights from the natural and social sciences, we will focus on current questions about gender, sexuality, race, disability, culture, the distinction between human beings and other animals, and humanity's relationship to the natural world.

Course Objectives

Your work in this class should develop your ability to:

1. *think critically* about classic and current issues surrounding the Christian understanding of humanity, with a perspective informed by contemporary science and social theory.
2. *demonstrate* an understanding of some of the major themes, questions, and problems central to recent trends in theological anthropology.
3. *articulate* your own perspectives and insights as an active and thoughtful participant in class discussions.
4. *write analytically and creatively* about issues raised in the course in order to find your own theological voice, connecting your beliefs, practices, and commitments of ministry with a disputed question in theological anthropology.

Program Objectives

- Interpret Scripture, tradition, and theology: Apply the results of careful interpretation, with attention to multiple contexts, to contemporary settings, situations, and concerns (MDiv 1.3, MA 1.3)
- Communicate faith and values with contextual awareness: Demonstrate awareness of various contexts and social locations in one's communication (MDiv 2.3, MA 2.3)
- Interpret skillfully the Christian sources, including scripture, history, and theology and church practices, with special attention to the Anabaptist-Pietist heritage (CATS 1).
- Communicate religious faith and values effectively, listen well, and express faith with clarity in ways that are theologically informed and culturally persuasive (CATS 2).
- Engage in constructive understandings of the nature of theology, with attention to its function in the public sphere and connections to wider cultural contexts (CTTI 1).
- Express one's own theological imagination informed by theological investigation (CTTI 3)

HOW WILL THE COURSE BE DELIVERED?

This online course is asynchronous and collaborative. This means that while you will be able to do the work for the course at times of day that are convenient to you, there will be assignments and activities to complete each week, and many of these will involve interaction with other students in the class.

The course is built around a consistent weekly rhythm so that you will know what to anticipate and how to plan your schedule. The class is structured into weekly modules that begin on Friday mornings and end on Thursday nights. Each week there are assigned readings, videos, or podcasts. You can start these assignments at any time, but Friday through Sunday of each week is dedicated time for you to do the reading. The reading for each week should be completed by Sunday night. Monday through Thursday of each week there will be an online class discussion of the reading. Different students will be in charge of moderating these discussions. I will provide short weekly introductions to the main themes in the readings. Finally, if there is sufficient student interest, I may schedule a few optional real time class discussions on Zoom.

EXPECTATIONS

What I expect from you: In an online course like this one, you have more freedom to work according to your own schedule, but you also have greater responsibility for your learning. Since you are in control, you will need to be disciplined and resilient in order to keep up with the weekly reading and assignments. The following strategies will help you succeed in the course:

1. **Moodle Login:** Log in to Moodle every day to view announcements, discussion posts and replies to your posts. You may need to log in multiple times a day during the group discussion.
2. **Manage your Time:** Taking courses online requires good planning. Thinking ahead, and having a consistent schedule for your classwork allows you to plan for the unexpected sickness, travel requirements, Internet outages etc. You should set aside at least 9-12 hours per week to complete the reading, discussions, assignments, and other required activities for this course.
3. **Keep track of due dates:** Use the class calendar on Moodle and print out the course schedule at the end of the syllabus, but also look for updates on Moodle.

What your peers expect from you: Just like a traditional classroom, in online courses certain rules of netiquette are expected, which contribute to more enjoyable and productive communication. Remember that the person receiving your message is someone like you, who deserves and appreciates courtesy and respect. When communicating online please:

- Write messages that are *courteous*.
- Criticize *ideas*, not *people*.
- Never submit a message in *anger*.

What you can expect from me: As your teacher, I am committed to providing a quality learning experience through thoughtful planning, implementation, and assessment of course activities. I am also committed to being available to you throughout the semester:

- By appointment via Zoom or phone throughout the semester
- By replying to questions in the forums or through email within 24 to 48 hours
- By returning graded course work with feedback within one week of each assignment's due date

Within our discussion forums, I will be present as student leaders initiate thoughtful, on-topic discussions. I will encourage student-to-student communication, and mediate when necessary. Although

I will read every post, I won't respond directly to everything said in the discussions. Instead, my goal is to encourage you to take ownership of the learning process by engaging with each other.

THINGS YOU NEED FOR THIS COURSE

The following texts are required reading for the course. All texts are available for purchase online in print or eBook formats. They are also all available at the Lilly Library on reserve or as eBooks (when indicated below). If you cannot access the books on reserve at the library, you may be able to borrow them by using your local library's Interlibrary Loan (ILL) service. Instructions for finding all other required readings are available on our Moodle course site.

Required Texts:

- Cole-Turner, Ron. *The End of Adam and Eve: Theology and the Science of Human Origins*. TheologyPlus Publishing, 2016. ISBN: 0998068608
- Copeland, M. Shawn. *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race, and Being*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009. ISBN: 0800662741
- Marvin Ellison and Kelly Brown Douglas, eds. *Sexuality and the Sacred: Sources for Theological Reflection*, 2nd edition. Louisville: WJK, 2010. ISBN: 9780664233662 [Lilly eBook]
- Fernandez, Eleazar S. *Reimagining the Human: Theological Anthropology in Response to Systemic Evil*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2004. ISBN: 0827232527 [Lilly eBook]
- Gonzalez, Michelle A. *Created in God's Image: An Introduction to Feminist Theological Anthropology*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007. ISBN: 157075697X
- Lents, Nathan H. *Not So Different: Finding Human Nature in Animals*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2016. ISBN: 0231178328 [Lilly eBook]
- Ted Peters, ed. *Astrotheology: Science and Theology Meet Extraterrestrial Life*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2018. ISBN: 9781532606397 [Lilly eBook]
- Sinha, Indra. *Animal's People: A Novel*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007. ISBN: 141657879X
- Sussman, Robert Wald. *The Myth of Race: The Troubling Persistence of an Unscientific Idea*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014. ISBN: 067466003X [Lilly eBook]

Technology Requirements:

- Computer with high-speed internet, speakers, microphone, and video camera.
- Web browser (e.g., Firefox, Safari, Chrome, or Internet Explorer)
- Word processor (e.g. Word, Pages, or Google Docs)
- PDF Reader (Adobe Acrobat Reader or other)
- Headset with microphone

COURSE POLICIES

1. Communication

- Course Announcements: All announcements relating to the course will be made on the Moodle News Forum.
- Discussion Boards: There are three types of discussion boards in the course:
 - *Course Q&A*: Use this for all questions relating to the course or its content.
 - *The Gathering Room*: Use this forum post to explore ideas beyond the scope of the class discussions or post resources or events that you think that the other students might be interested in even if they are not directly related to the course.

- *Class Discussions*: Use these forums to participate in weekly discussions of the readings.
- **E-mail**: Please use my e-mail above for all private communication that cannot go on one of the discussion boards. If I believe that your question is better answered on the discussion board, I may ask you to post it there before I answer it.
- **Individual appointments**: During the first week of class I will ask you to schedule an appointment with me over Zoom. This is an opportunity for us to meet and for me to answer any remaining questions you might have. I will be available anytime during the semester via Zoom (or by phone). Just email me to set an appointment.

2. Attendance

For an online class attendance and participation are essentially equivalent. I will expect you to be present on our Moodle course page, and to actively participate in class discussions and group activities. This class follows Bethany's policy on attendance, which places limits on allowable absences. The policy for online courses states:

"Online courses do not require attendance at face-to-face meetings, but regular participation in online discussions becomes the equivalent of classroom attendance. Time spent interacting on Moodle is considered time the student would otherwise be spending in the classroom. One should typically expect to spend at least three hours online each week, in addition to readings and other assignments. In keeping with the above 20% standard, a student who misses more than 20% of the posting deadlines (whether failing to post or posting late) during a semester-long course will not receive credit for the course. In order to maximize interaction among participants in the course, it is highly preferable that students participate in online discussions according to the schedule set by the instructor. It is essential that students keep up with online postings and other assignments, as this is a vital part of the context for online learning. Typically, late posts are not allowed. However, instructors have the freedom to make explicit exceptions to this, as stated in course syllabi." (Bethany Student Handbook, 2015-2016, p. 70)

3. Assignments

All assignments are due on the date and time listed on the course schedule and on the assignment instructions. If you know that you will not complete an assignment on time, please contact me as soon as possible so we can discuss your options. There are no exceptions for late work if you do not approve it with me ahead of time. Do not wait until the last minute to submit. If you turn in an assignment very close to the deadline, any technical problems with your computer or your internet connection may cause your assignment to be counted as late. Unless otherwise noted, all assignments should be submitted online through our course Moodle site.

4. Grading Criteria

Students will receive either Credit or No-Credit for the course, as well as a Rubric Assessment. However, evaluation for Bethany students will appear as follows: *Credit with Distinction, Credit, Credit with Concern, or No-Credit*. This will allow Bethany to recognize exemplary work while also identifying areas of concern as a student progresses through the program. Note: This will only appear on the Rubric Assessment for Bethany students, while the grade reported and transcript will continue to reflect the "Credit/No-Credit" system.

5. Academic Intellectual Honesty Policy and Plagiarism

Using content from other sources as your own, or using classmates' responses to answer examination or assignment questions undermines the integrity and respect on which our class depends. This course complies with Bethany's policy and actions on plagiarism as stated in the Student Handbook:

"Plagiarism is using the work of other people without giving them credit, whether in written assignments or formal oral presentations. . . . The consequences for plagiarism will vary according to the extent of the offense, but even

'minor' instances are considered serious enough to incur penalties. These may range from rewriting the assignment, non-crediting the assignment, or non-crediting the course, up to dismissal from the program. Any instance of plagiarism will be reported by the instructor to the student, the student's advisor, the academic dean of the instructor's institution, and the dean of the student's institution, if appropriate. Students who wish to challenge the charge of plagiarism have recourse to the Complain Policy of the instructor's institution." (Bethany Student Handbook, 2015-2016, p. 79).

6. Turabian Citation Style

The Turabian (aka Chicago) citation style, with footnotes and full bibliography, is required for all written assignments in this course. Guidelines for this citation style can be found in the most recent edition of Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press). A Turabian Quick Reference Guide is also available as a downloadable PDF on the Bethany Theological Seminary website at:

<https://bethanyseminary.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Turabian-Style-Guide-2017.pdf>⁷.

Students with Disabilities Policy

This course complies with Bethany's policy on students with disabilities, as stated in the Student Handbook. Bethany's policy includes a commitment to provide appropriate accommodations for students with documented disabilities. If you believe that you need accommodations, please be in contact with the Director of Student Development about the development of such a plan. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate this plan to the instructor as soon as possible.

ASSIGNMENTS

Participation in Weekly Discussion Forums and Other Weekly Activities [30%]

Your work will involve weekly participation in an online discussion forum with the other students in the course. Each week's discussion will be four days long, starting each Monday morning and ending on Thursday evening. Please schedule at least one hour each of these days to participate in the class discussion by reading the entries of others and posting your own contributions. Details about the discussion guidelines are posted on our course Moodle page. I'm also planning to host monthly live discussion sessions over Zoom. Although these sessions are optional, they are an opportunity to talk in real time about larger questions and ideas in the course.

Lead Online Discussions [20%]

Each week one student will lead the online discussion. As the discussion leader you are responsible for starting the discussion by posting a brief summary of the issues you think are most important from the week's reading and posing at least three open-ended and thought-provoking questions about the readings. Once everyone else starts responding to the questions, your role is to enhance the conversation by drawing connections between participants' thoughts, highlighting differences of opinion in the class, or encouraging others to think about solutions to problems in the text and answers to questions raised in discussion.

Reflection Essay [Credit/No Credit]

Toward the beginning and end of the semester you will be asked to write a two-page reflective essay.

Final Research Project [50%]

The major assignment for this course is a research project on a topic or question related to the course that culminates in a 20-page essay. Assignment details will be provided.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 0: (Jan 28 – 31): Course Introduction

I. Foundations for the Study of Theological Anthropology

Week 1 (Feb 1 – 7): Intro to Theological Anthropology: “Image of God”

Reading:

- Michelle Gonzalez, *Created in God's Image*, ix-84 (Intro and chs. 1-3).

Week 2 (Feb 8 – 14): Intro to Theological Anthropology: “Sin”

Reading:

- Eleazar Fernandez, *Reimagining the Human*, 11-71 (chs. 1-3).

REFLECTION ESSAY DUE

II. Current Questions in Theological Anthropology

Week 3 (Feb 15 – 21): Women and the Image of God

Reading:

- John Paul II, “Letter to Women,” 139-43.
- Elizabeth Johnson, “Imaging God, Embodying Christ,” 45-59.
- Michelle Gonzalez, *Created in God's Image*, 85-160 (chs. 4-6).

Week 4 (Feb 22 – 28): Gender and Sexuality

Reading:

- BMC, “Trans 101: A Brief Guide.”
- Austen Hartke, “And God Said, Let There Be Marshes,” in *Transforming*, 47-58 (ch. 4).
- Marvin Ellison and Kelly Brown Douglass, *Sexuality and the Sacred*, 2nd ed., 48-66, 105-164 (chs. 4, 8-10).

Watch: Saltwater Baptism

Week 5 (Mar 1 – 7): Human Evolution

Reading:

- Ron Cole-Turner, *The End of Adam and Eve*, 67-172 (chs. 5-9).

Week 6 (Mar 8 – 21): Science and Racism

Reading:

- Robert Wald Sussman, *The Myth of Race*, 1-209 (Intro and chs. 1-7).

March 11: LAST DAY TO DROP – NO “NC” ON TRANSCRIPT

Week 7 (Mar 22-28): Theology and Racism

Reading:

- James Baldwin, “On Being White . . . and Other Lies,” in *The Cross of Redemption*, 135-38.
- Eleazar Fernandez, *Reimagining the Human*, 133-154 (ch. 6).
- M. Shawn Copeland, *Enfleshing Freedom*, 1-105 (chs. Intro, chs. 1-4).

Week 8 (Mar 29 – Apr 4): Disability

Reading:

- Deborah Creamer, *Disability and Christian Theology*, 13-52, 93-114 (chs. 1-2, 5).
- Thomas Reynolds, "Love Without Boundaries: On Parenting a Child with Disabilities," 193-209.
- Mary Elise Lowe, "'Rabbi, Who Sinned?' Disability Theologies and Sin," 185-94.

Week 9 (Apr 5 – 11): Animal's People

Reading:

- Indra Sinha, *Animal's People*.

PROGRESS REPORT DUE

Week 10 (Apr 12 – 18): Humans and Animals

Reading:

- Nathan Lents, *Not So Different: Finding Human Nature in Animals*, 69-90, 225-245, 272-310 (chs. 3, 8, 10, and conclusion).
- Gary Steiner, "Descartes, Christianity, and Contemporary Speciesism," in *A Communion of Subjects*, 117-131.
- Nancy Howell, "Embodied Transcendence: Bonobos and Humans in Community," *Zygon* 44 no. 3 (September 2009): 601-612.
- Oliver Putz, "Moral Apes, Human Uniqueness, and the Image of God," *Zygon* 44 no. 3 (September 2009): 613-624.

Week 11 (Apr 19 – 25): Life Beyond Earth

Reading:

- Ted Peters, ed., *Astrotheology*, 3-105 (chs. 1-5).

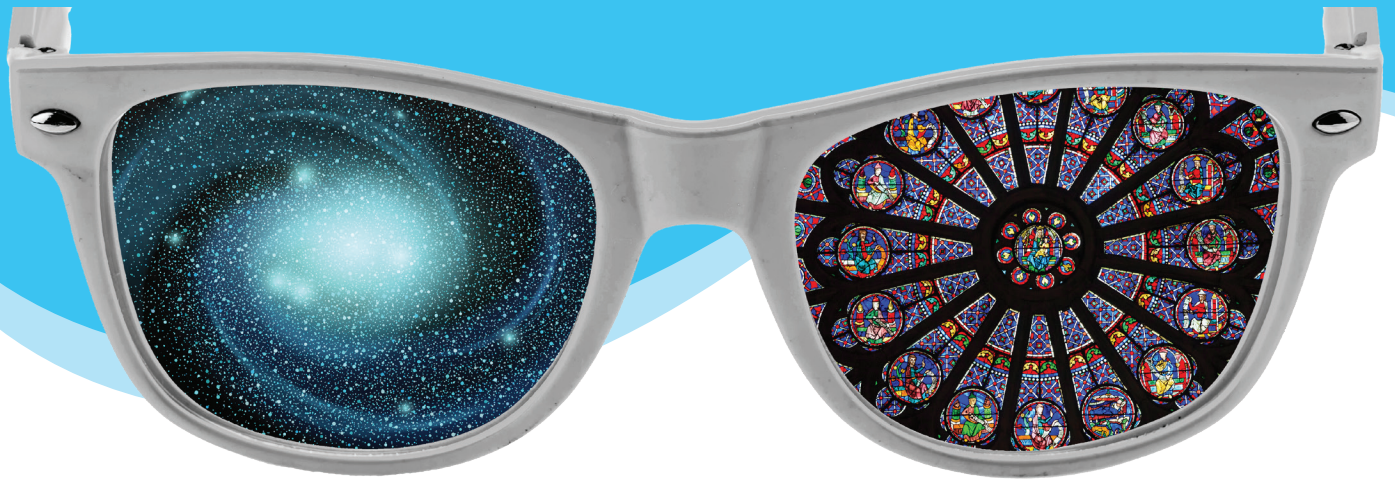
April 25 – 27: Bethany Theology and Science Conference

Week 12 (Apr 26 – May 2): Theological Anthropology, Ecology, and Ethics

Reading:

- Eleazar Fernandez, *Reimagining the Human*, 159-232 (chs. 7-9).

May 9: FINAL PROJECT DUE



“Look at Life”

A Conference Where Faith Meets Science

SCHEDULE

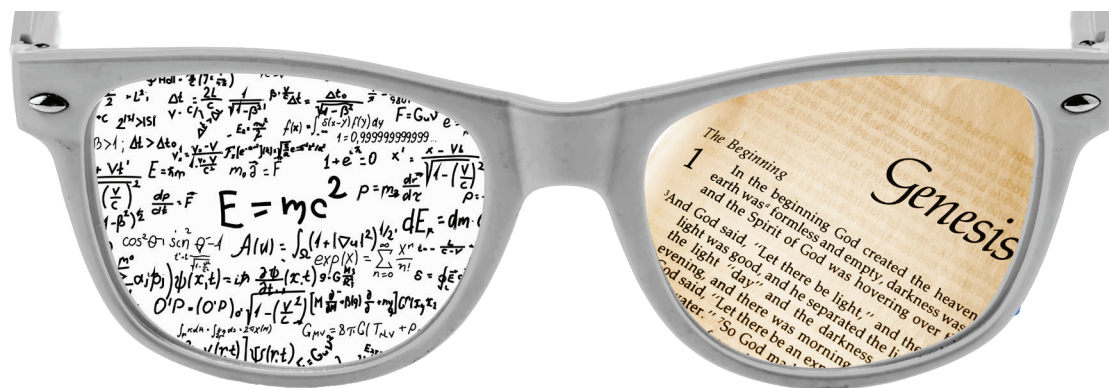
Thursday, April 25

3:00-4:00 PM	Check-In
4:00	Welcome: Seminary President and Conference Directors Invocation: Song and Prayer
4:30	“The Big Bang, Fine Tuning, and the Existence of God” <i>Isaac Wilhelm, Rutgers University</i>
5:20	Break
5:30	“Looking for Life on Other Planets” <i>Dr. Wes Tobin, Indiana University East</i>
6:20	Dinner
7:40	Small Group Meetings
8:45	Reception



Friday, April 26

8:00 AM	Continental Breakfast
8:45	Morning Song and Prayer
9:00	“Putting Faith and Science Back Together Again” <i>Dr. Russell Haitch, Bethany Theological Seminary</i>
10:00	Break
10:15	“The Tree of Life, Biologically Speaking: A Brief History with Updates” <i>Dr. Craig Story, Gordon College</i>
11:15	Break
11:30	From Tree Rings to Microwaves: How Scientists Date Stuff <i>Dr. Katherine Miller-Wolf, Indiana University East</i>
12:30 PM	Lunch
1:30	Small Group Meetings
2:30	Nature Walk or Museum Visit
4:15	“The Perfect Human? The Promises and Perils of Human Genome Editing” <i>Dr. Craig Story, Gordon College</i>
5:15	Dinner
6:30	“The Lost World of Genesis 1” <i>Dr. John Walton, Wheaton College</i>
7:45	Break
8:00	Dialogue with Dr. John Walton
8:45	Reception



Saturday, April 27

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| 8:00 AM | Continental Breakfast |
| 8:45 | Morning Song and Prayer |
| 9:00 | “The Lost World of Adam and Eve”
<i>Dr. John Walton, Wheaton College</i> |
| 10:15 | Break |
| 10:30 | Professors Discuss Genesis
<i>Dr. Nancy Bowen, Earlham School of Religion</i>
<i>Dr. Martin Hanna, Andrews University</i>
<i>Dr. Russell Haitch, Bethany Theological Seminary</i>
<i>Dr. Steve Schweitzer, Bethany Theological Seminary</i>
<i>Dr. John Walton, Wheaton College</i> |
| 11:30 | Small Group Meetings |
| 12:30 | Lunch |
| 1:30 | Panel Discussion: Pulling Strands Together |
| 2:30 | Closing Prayer |



Conference Presenters and Panelists



Nancy Bowen
Earlham School of Religion



Craig Story
Gordon College



Russell Haitch
Bethany Theological Seminary



John Walton
Wheaton College



Martin Hanna
Andrews University



Wes Tobin
Indiana University East



Katherine Miller-Wolf
Indian University East



Isaac Wilhelm
Rutgers University