



PROVIDENCE

Providence Theological Seminary
Course Syllabus
Theological Foundations
TS5201
Winter 2022
Tuesdays 8:15-10:55 am

***DRAFT – The professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus up until the first day of class.**

**** Note: Developments surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate changes to the class format and syllabus.**

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Office hours:
Tuesdays 1:00-3:00 pm
Wednesdays: 9:30-11:00 am

“We are all called theologians, just as we are all called Christians.” ~ Martin Luther, “Sermon on Psalm 5:17”

I. Course Description

An introductory survey of Christian Theology with a focus on the historical development of basic Christian doctrines. Includes reflection on sources and methods for doing theology within a broadly evangelical perspective. Consideration of major themes and concepts in Christian theology, including the doctrines of revelation, God and the Trinity, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, creation and fall, salvation, the church, and the last things.

II. Learning Outcomes

With diligence in reading, informed reflection and participation in class discussions, by the end of the course the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an awareness of the major issues, questions, and themes that have influenced the development of Christian theology.
2. Articulate a coherent theological position on a variety of doctrinal issues that is: rooted in the Great Tradition, generously orthodox, distinctly evangelical, and inherently missional.
3. Communicate a sense of the profound interconnectedness of doctrines within the web of Christian theology.
4. Reflect theologically upon current ecclesial, social, cultural and global realities in a way that demonstrates an appreciation for the profoundly contextual nature of theological task.
5. Read, understand, and critically engage more advanced works of theology, including works by major theologians.
6. Show an appreciation for how other types of knowledge, including modern science, intersect with and/or complement theological knowledge.

III. Course Requirements

A. Required Texts

- a. Beth Felker Jones, *Practicing Christian Doctrine: An Introduction to Thinking and Living Theologically* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014). ISBN: 978-0-8010-4933-0. (hereafter BFJ)
- b. Alister E. McGrath, ed., *The Christian Theology Reader*, 5th ed. (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2017). ISBN 978-1-1188-7438-7. (hereafter CTR)
- c. Kelly M. Kapic, *A Little Book for New Theologians: Why and How to Study Theology* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2012). ISBN: 978-0-8308-3975-9.
- d. *When God and Science Meet: Surprising Discoveries of Agreement* (Washington: National Association of Evangelicals, 2020). Copies of the booklet may be ordered or downloaded here: <https://www.nae.org/godandscience/>
- e. Additional readings as assigned in course outline and made available through course website.

B. Assignments and Grading

- a. **Pre-Course Survey Information for the AAAS DoSER Program.** Providence has been awarded a grant to participate in the Science for the Seminaries program, offered by the AAAS (American Association for the Advancement of Science) Dialogue on Science, Ethics, and Religion. This particular course is chosen to be a part of the Providence project for the Science for the Seminaries program. Students enrolled in this course are asked to complete the pre-course survey at the beginning of the course and the post-course survey at the end. Please note that these surveys are now available in Spanish.
Pre-course survey link (see below)
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Science4SeminariesPreCourse>
Post-course survey link (see below)
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Sci4SemPostCourseSurvey>

- b. **Reading Preparation and Class Participation (10%).** Students will complete assigned readings each week (see schedule below). Students should come to class prepared to dialogue about what they have read and written. Since reflection and dialogue will be central to the accomplishment of the course objectives, students will be expected to participate in an informed manner in class discussions and engage the perspectives of the text, professor and other students. Students will be expected to share with the class a brief reflection on their book review (see below).

Student participation will be graded according to the following scale: (D): present, not disruptive; responds when called on but does not offer much; infrequent involvement; (C): adequate preparation, but no evidence of interpretation of analysis; offers straightforward information; contributes moderately when called upon; (B): good preparation, offers interpretation and analysis, contributes well to discussion in on-going fashion; (A): excellent preparation, offers analysis, synthesis and evaluation of material; contributes significantly to ongoing discussion.

- c. **In-Class Presentation and Discussion Leadership (15%).** Students will write a 500-word précis of the article/essay/chapter that has been assigned to them. (For more information on writing a précis, see the handout posted on the course website.) After the précis, they will include a paragraph of an additional 250-words describing how the article has personally impacted them and/or what they perceive the significance of the article might be for the work of theology and the life of the church. Students will share what they have written with the class, (which should take about **six minutes**). The student will then lead a brief discussion of the article by introducing **three pre-prepared discussion questions**. Discussion questions should move from discrete textual issues to broader questions concerning contemporary implications for the practice of theology and Christian life and ministry. (For example, the first question should not be about the

experiences of the discussion members but should engage the group more deeply in the reading and the theological concepts under consideration.) Students will submit by e-mail a copy of their précis, reflection paragraph, and discussion questions prior to the start of their presentation. A rubric will be posted on the course website.

- d. **Book Review (25% paper; due February 8).** Students will write a book review, not exceeding 1600 words, of *A Little Book for New Theologians* by Kelly M. Kapic. Particular attention should be directed to exploring Kapic's understanding of theology, what it means to be a theologian, and what practices and virtues are required for the faithful practice of the theology. The last part of the book review (approximately the last 425 words) should be devoted to reflecting upon an aspect or aspects of the book that you found to be new or surprising and which you anticipate will be particularly beneficial to your development as a theologian. A rubric for the book review will be posted on the course website.
- e. **Faith and Science Choose-Your-Own-Adventure Assignment (25%, due April 12).** Students will choose one of the following assignments:
- i. **Participation in and Reflection Paper on Providence's Faith and Science Conference.** Students will attend the Faith and Science Conference hosted by Providence Theological Seminary, tentatively scheduled for March 22, 2022. Students will write a 250-word summary of each session, followed by a 1200-word reflection that discusses their own preconceptions about the relationship to science, how that has or has not changed as a result of participating in the conference, what aspects of the conference have made the most significant impact upon them, and how what they anticipate what they have learned might impact and inform their future ministry.
 - ii. **Participation in and Reflection Paper on a Zooniverse Project.** Over the course of the semester students will participate in an online citizen science project through Zooniverse. (Options will be discussed and an orientation to Zooniverse will be provided during the first class.) Students will collaborate with other students in the course who are also participating in the project through participating in an online discussion board on the Theological Foundations Populi page. On the discussion board, students will share their impressions of the project, what they have learned through their participation in the project and explore possible theological implications and connections. Following the conclusion of their involvement with the project, students will submit a 1200-word paper in which students will reflect upon what they have learned about science in general and their area of research in particular, alongside of what they have learned from their fellow students, theological questions and issues that have emerged, and how they have attempted to theologically understand and integrate their experience.
- f. **Theological Exegesis Assignment & Presentation (20% paper + 5% presentation; due April 19).** Students will provide an exegesis of a worship song of their choice. The song can be of any style and from any time, but the lyrics must be in English. Students will write a paper of 1200 words analyzing the song's theological content and reflecting upon its value for congregational formation. Students will address questions such as: Which theological doctrines are being represented? How are these doctrines presented? When or where might the song might be appropriately employed? How might the song need to be supplemented by other materials or even modified to advance a more robust theological vision or to promote healthier spiritual formation? Students should include the full lyrics for their selected song in an appendix to the paper. Students will share a 5-minute summary of their findings with the class on **April 19**.

Course requirements	Percentage of Final Grade	Due Date
Class Participation	10%	Weekly
In-Class Presentation and Discussion Leadership	15%	As assigned

Book Review	25%	February 8
Faith and Science Assignment	25%	April 12
Theological Exegesis Assignment and Presentation	25% (20% + 5%)	April 19
	100%	

C. General Guidelines for The Submission of Written Work

a. Your Work Should Demonstrate the Following Characteristics:

- i. Accuracy (a fair and accurate presentation of scholarly judgment on the issue) – Is what I say correct? Is it valid? Have I understood the topic or question?
- ii. Critical Analysis – Have I understood the main issues? Have I done sufficient research on the topic? Does my paper show critical reflection, interaction and dialogue with the biblical text and with authors writing on the subject?
- iii. Organization – Does my paper follow a clear outline? Does my paper have a thesis statement? Is there a clear progression and development of a main idea or an argument in the paper? Does my argument have a meaningful order?
- iv. Clarity – Does what I say make sense? Will others clearly understand what I am seeking to express?
- v. Good Grammar and Writing – Is my paper free of spelling mistakes? Is the text punctuated correctly? Does the sentence structure consistently adhere to basic rules of good grammar? Do I use inclusive language?
- vi. Well Documented – Is my work complete? Does my bibliography reflect sufficient research? Have I fully and accurately documented where I have relied upon the work of others? Have I provided complete information about my research sources? Will others be able to locate these sources on the strength of my documentation?

b. **Matters of Style.** You should submit written work in a style consistent with the model set out by Kate L. Turabian in her work *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. Written work ought to be free of spelling mistakes, punctuated correctly, and adhere to basic rules of grammar. It is expected that written work will be submitted in a clear, straight-forward style of academic prose (cf. the guidelines in Strunk and White, *Elements of Style*). Written work ought to betray a clear organization, argument and coherent thought. Assignments should be double-spaced in 12pt Times New Roman font with 1” or 1.25” margins.

c. **Plagiarism and Honesty.** In all work, you are obliged to pay careful attention to matters of intellectual property, honesty and integrity. **Students are responsible for being familiar with and abiding by Providence’s Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism Policy** (which can be accessed here: <https://my.prov.ca/registrar-s-office/general-academic-information/academic-dishonesty-plagiarism/>). Plagiarism is to be avoided at all costs and will not be tolerated in any form whatsoever. Ensure that you have accurately and fully documented sources used in your paper. Documentation and notes should be consistent with the model provided by Kate L. Turabian in her work, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*.

d. **Title Page and Documentation.** The title page for all written work ought to include the title of the paper, name of the course, name of the professor, date of submission, and your name (if you have a campus mailbox, this should also appear on the title page).

e. **Zotero.** The bibliographic software Zotero is recommended as a helpful citation tool which will save time and help to ensure that proper formatting is followed (available free at <https://www.zotero.org/>). Zotero workshops are usually offered near the beginning of each semester at Providence.

D. **Late Assignments.** Students are expected to have their work in at the beginning of class on respective due dates. Papers that are not in by the beginning of class (or the assigned time) will receive a 1/3 of a letter grade deduction for each of the first two days that they are late. After that, every week (or portion thereof)

the paper is late, the grade will be reduced by 1/3 of a letter grade. **Students not prepared to lead their tutorial group on their assigned date will receive a grade of “0”.**

Extensions without penalty will be considered only in cases such as a death in the family, the hospitalization of yourself or a member of your immediate family, or a prolonged illness for which you require treatment by a physician and must be arranged with the professor prior to the respective due date. Reference to a heavy workload, other assignments, professional or ministry obligations or holidays do not constitute legitimate grounds for an extension. Requests for extension must be made in writing prior to the due date of the assignment and should explain the reason an extension is requested. Medical reasons will require a doctor’s note. Any extensions beyond the end of term must be first cleared with the professor, and then applied for at the registrar’s office. Without such an extension granted by the professor and the registrar’s office, no late assignments will be accepted after the last day of the term.

- E. **Criteria for the Evaluation of Written Work.** Your work will be evaluated on whether you answered the specific questions given, whether you followed any specific directions given in respect of format, and whether you followed the general guidelines for submitting written work.
- F. **Submission of Written Work.** All written assignments are due by the start of class on the assigned due date. Papers are to be submitted by e-mail in Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format. Students will be notified prior to the submission due date whether they should send their papers to the professor or teaching assistant. The file name for the document should include the student’s first initial and last name along with the assignment title (e.g. msmith_bookreview.doc). **Submissions that do not follow this filename protocol are liable to receive a 2% deduction from their grade.** Students are required to retain a copy of all assignments (hard copy or electronic version).
- G. **Attendance.** Students who miss three or more classes may be in jeopardy of not receiving credit for the course.
- H. **Student Email Policy.** In order to fulfill requirements under *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) and *The Personal Health Information Act* (PHIA), all students at Providence are assigned a Providence email account (Firstname.Lastname@my.prov.ca) during initial registration at Providence. In order to both protect the confidentiality of communications and confirm the identity of individuals, all official university email sent or received between faculty, staff, and students, must originate from, and be sent to, an official Providence email account (@my.prov.ca or @prov.ca). Only electronic communication originating from a Providence email account will be accepted.

Students are required to check their Providence email account on a frequent and consistent basis in order to stay current with university-related communications. Students have the responsibility to recognize that certain communications may be time-critical. Excuses like “I didn’t check my email” or “I can’t login,” etc., are not acceptable reasons for missing official university communications via email. Academic staff may determine the extent to which electronic communication will be used in their classes. Academic staff may reasonably expect that students are accessing their Providence email account, and may use electronic communication for their courses accordingly.

Proposed Course Schedule, Preparation, Due Dates

January 11 (Week #1) – Introduction & Orientation to Zoinverse

- Readings: BFJ: “Introduction,” pp. 1-9.
 CTR: “The Development of Christian Theology,” xxv-xxx.

January 18 (Week #2) – The Nature, Task and Purpose of Theology

- Readings: BFJ: “1. Speaking of God,” 11-29.
 CTR: 1.24 (Barth), 1.32 (Gutierrez), 1.34 (Lindbeck).

- Discussion Reading: Mark A. McIntosh, “How God Makes Theologians,” in *Divine Teaching: An Introduction to Christian Theology* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 3-15. <available on Populi course page>

January 25 – Day of Prayer (no class)

February 1 (Week #3) – Theological Sources

- Readings: BFI: “2. Knowing God: Doctrines of Revelation and Scripture,” 31-53.
CTR: 1.6 (Apostles’ Creed), 1.23 (Harnack), 1.35 (Staniloae), 2.2 (Irenaeus), 2.4 (Clement), 2.9 (Jerome), 2.10 (Vincent), 2.15 (Luther), 2.18 (Calvin), 2.44 (Childs), 2.46 (Meyendorff), 2.50 (Wright).
- Discussion Reading: Iain W. Provan, “‘How Can I Understand Unless Someone Explains it to Me?’ (Acts 8:30-31): Evangelicals and Biblical Hermeneutics,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 17 no. 1 (2007): 1-36. <available on Populi course page>

February 8 (Week #4) – The Doctrine of God; Theology & Science Guest Lecture with Dr. Ross Hastings

- Readings: CTR: 1.12 (Luther), 1.33 (Gerrish), 2.16 (Luther), 2.17 (Calvin), 2.37 (Barth), 2.38 (Brunner), 2.47 (Packer), 2.48 (Torrance), 3.18 (Anselm), 3.19 (Richard), 3.20 (Alexander), 3.21 (Aquinas), 3.23 (Julian), 3.24 (Ockham), 3.29 (Barth), 3.30 (Moltmann), 3.38 (Jewett), 3.40 (Johnson).
- Discussion Reading: *When God and Science Meet*.
- **Book Report Due.**

February 15 (Week #5) – Christology

- Readings: BFI: “6. The Personal Jesus Christ: Christology,” 117-139.
CTR: 1.5 (Nicene Creed), 2.34 (Gore), 4.1 (Ignatius), 4.2 (Irenaeus), 4.4 (Tertullian), 4.7 (Arius), 4.8 (Athanasius), 4.9 (Apollinarius), 4.10 (Gregory), 4.12 (Nestorius), 4.14 (Leo), 4.15 (Chalcedon), 4.16 (John), 4.20 (Luther), 4.21 (Turretini), 4.23 (Schleiermacher), 4.25 (Tyrrell), 4.29 (Sayers), 4.34 (Hooker), 4.35 (Wright)
- Discussion Reading: James B. Torrance, “The Sole Priesthood of Christ, the Mediator of Worship,” in *Worship, Community and the Triune God of Grace* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1996), 42-67. <available on Populi course page>

February 22 – Intrasession (no class)

March 1 (Week #6) – The Holy Spirit

- Readings: BFI: “8. The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life,” 167-191.
CTR: 3.8 (Basil), 3.10 (Athanasius), 3.15 (Cyril), 3.16 (John).
- Discussion Reading: Clark H. Pinnock, “Spirit and Church,” in *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1996), 113-147. <available on Populi course page>

March 8 (Week 7) – Trinity

- Readings: BfJ: “3. The God We Worship: Doctrine of the Trinity,” 55-76.
CTR: 3.3 (Irenaeus), 3.7 (Gregory), 3.12 (Augustine), 3.14 (Epiphanius), 3.17 (Toledo), 3.33 (Jenson), 3.42 (Coakley)
- Discussion Reading: John D. Witvliet, “What to Do with Our Renewed Trinitarian Enthusiasm,” in *Trinitarian Theology for the Church: Scripture, Community, Worship*, edited by Daniel J. Treier and David Lauber (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2009), 237-253. <available on Populi course page>

March 15 (Week 8) – Creation

- Readings: BfJ: “4. A Delightful World: Doctrines of Creation and Providence,” 77-96.
CTR: 2.51 (McGrath), 3.1 (Athenagoras), 3.2 (Irenaeus), 3.4 (Tertullian), 3.6 (Origen), 3.13 (Augustine), 3.26 (Calvin), 3.43 (Hart).
- Discussion Reading: Colin Gunton, “The Doctrine of Creation,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine*, ed. Colin E. Gunton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 141-157. <available on Populi course page>

March 22 (Week 9) – Theological Anthropology

- Readings: BfJ: “5. Reflecting God’s Image: Theological Anthropology,” 97-116.
CTR: 6.1 (Irenaeus), 6.3 (Origen), 6.9 (Augustine), 6.11 (Pelagius), 6.13 (Council of Orange), 6.32 (Edwards), 6.37 (Niebuhr), 6.38 (Saiving), 6.39 (Vatican II), 6.41 (Benedict).
Videos: “Frontiers of Neuroscience: Charting the Complexities of our Brains,” DoSER/AAAS, <https://sciencereigiondialogue.org/resources/frontiers-of-neuroscience-charting-the-complexities-of-our-brains/>
“Caring for the Health of Your Brain,” DoSER/AAAS, <https://sciencereigiondialogue.org/resources/caring-for-the-health-of-your-brain/>
“Is the Human Mind Predisposed to Religious Thought,” DoSER/AAAS, <https://sciencereigiondialogue.org/resources/is-the-human-mind-predisposed-to-religious-thought-2/>
- Discussion Reading: Brad D. Strawn and Warren S. Brown, “Liturgical Animals: What Psychology and Neuroscience Tell Us About Formation and Worship,” *Liturgy* 28, no. 4 (2013): 3-14. <available on Populi course page>

March 29 (Week 10) – Soteriology

- Readings: BfJ: “7. The Work of Jesus Christ: Soteriology,” 141-165.
CTR: 4.32 (Torrance), 5.2 (Irenaeus), 5.5 (Athanasius), 5.13 (Anselm), 5.14 (Abelard), 5.23 (Wesley), 5.28 (Aulén), 5.29 (Lossky), 5.31 (Pannenberg), 5.32 (Packer), 5.34 (Gunton), 5.38 (Weaver).
- Discussion Reading: N.T. Wright, “Saving the World, Revealing the Glory: Atonement Then and Now,” ABC Religion and Ethics, April 12, 2017, <https://www.abc.net.au/religion/saving-the-world-revealing-the-glory-atonement-then-and-now/10095866>.

April 5 (Week 11) – Ecclesiology

- Readings: BfJ: “9. Church in a Diverse World: Ecclesiology,” 193-216.

CTR: 7.3 (Cyprian), 7.4 (Cyril), 7.6 (Augustine), 7.13 (Luther), 7.17 (Calvin), 7.24 (Barmen), 7.27 (Vatican II), 7.29 (Dulles)

- Discussion Reading: Simon Chan, "The Ontology of the Church," in *Liturgical Theology: The Church as Worshiping Community* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2006), 21-40. <available on Populi course page>

April 12 (Week 12) – Eschatology

- Readings:
 - BFJ: "10. Resurrection Hope: Eschatology," 217-238.
 - CTR: 10.1 (Irenaeus), 10.2 (Theophilus), 10.9 (Nyssa), 10.11 (Augustine), 10.14 (Benedict XII), 10.16 (Donne), 10.18 (Edwards), 10.19 (Wesley), 10.23 (Bauckham), 10.26 (Tanner).
- Discussion Reading: J. Louis Martyn, "The Apocalyptic Gospel in Galatians," *Interpretation* 54 (2000): 246-266. <available on Populi course page>

April 19 (Week 13) – Student Presentations and Course Wrap-up

V. Selected Bibliography

A Selected Bibliography will be provided for students in class.