

CAREY THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
THEO 618 SYLLABUS
Theological Integration for Mission and Ministry

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January 9-March 17, 2017
Onsite dates: January 17-20, 2017
TWThF 9-5
3 credit hours

Course Description

Christian ministry and mission lives by participation in God's redemption of creation. Our participation in that work is guided and deepened by our theological convictions. In this course we will reflect intentionally and intensely on the ways that our ministry and history shape our theological convictions and the ways that those convictions shape our ministry and mission so that we may become more faithful, hopeful, and loving participants in and witnesses to God's redemption of creation. By doing so, we may also become more faithful at calling others into this life and encouraging and guiding them on the way.

Learning Objectives

The primary goal of this course is to integrate theology, that is, our vision of God's identity and work, with the practice of mission and ministry to which we are called as servants among God's people.

After completing this course, you will be able to:

1. Recognize and express the generous orthodoxy of Christian faith that enables you to identify God's redemptive work in the world.
2. Develop and apply a workable method of engaging theologically with the context in which you live and minister.
3. Prepare and employ pinpointing the theological convictions that are operative in ministry and mission and develop expertise in drawing from solid theological convictions to meet the challenges of mission and ministry in today's (and tomorrow's) world.
4. Cultivate a deeper desire for God as you reflect on who God is, what God is doing, and your participation in God's redemption of creation.

Required Reading

Vincent J. Donovan, *Christianity Rediscovered* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 25th anniv. edition, 2003).
Jonathan R. Wilson, *A Primer for Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005).

OR

Stanley J. Grenz and Jay T. Smith, *Created for Community* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 3rd edition, 2014).

Note: If you have previously completed a course in Christian Doctrine, read Wilson; if you have not, read Grenz and Smith.

N.T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope* (San Francisco: Harper One, 2008).

Course Requirements, Time Commitment & Evaluation (135 hours)

Prior to the course

On **January 9**, sign onto the Connect website for THEO 618 and introduce yourself to the other students and the professor by following the instructions on the website. (Click on Discussions in left menu on your course homepage.)

1. Write an essay on “Theological Issues Then and Now”

Due January 16, midnight; submit online as Assignment 1 through the Connect website)

Review the scope of Christian theology and its significance for ministry and mission by reading Jonathan R. Wilson, *A Primer for Christian Doctrine* or Grenz and Smith, *Created for Community*. Then reflect on your local context and engage in conversation with friends (colleagues in ministry, other students, strangers, those to whom you minister), with the goal of pinpointing some specific issues that your community is confronting. Think about the actual issues that you identify, how those issues and responses to them may reveal theological strengths and weaknesses in the church. Then draw on your reading to identify which area of Christian doctrine may provide the best resources for faithful witness in thought, word, and deed in your setting.

Summarize your most significant findings in an essay of 1000 words. This essay should be carefully written and include analysis as well as description. Sources should be identified by an appropriate reference system and bibliography. Identify the one or two local issues that you judge to be most important to the mission of God in the world. Then identify the doctrine that may best guide theological reflection in this context and empower Christian ministry and mission. This essay will form the basis for a discussion the morning of the first day of our course. It is intended to be a preliminary exercise to prepare you for the work that we will do. The week of class sessions will be devoted to developing the knowledge, character, and skills that this exercise introduces.

Presentation DUE: January 17, beginning of class.

Reading: 5 hours
Writing: 10 hours
10% of final grade

During the course:

2. Class attendance

Attend all class sessions as an informed, active participant. Note that attendance at all sessions is mandatory. Please arrange to clear your calendar completely for the week of the class.

28 hours
10% of final grade

After the course:

3. Theological Integration essay 1

Due February 10, midnight; submit this essay through Assignments in the left menu bar of this course in the Connect website, as Assignment 2

Read N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope*. Participate in the online discussion of this book that begins on **January 23**. As you participate, identify a situation or issue in your ministry context that requires theological reflection for faithful action. In conversation with Wright, write a 1500-2000 word academic essay exploring this issue. In this essay (1) clearly identify and describe the situation or issue that you are addressing, (2) identify and analyze the characteristics of the context that relate to the situation or issue, (3) clearly state the guidance that Wright's book gives for faithful mission and ministry in that context, (4) integrate the situation into the story that Wright tells and (5) describe the practice(s) of mission and ministry to which such integration calls us.

Reading and reflecting: 18 hours
Writing: 12 hours
25% of final grade

4. Theological Integration essay 2

Due February 27, midnight; submit as Assignment 3

Read Vincent Donovan, *Christianity Rediscovered*. Participate in the online conversation about this book that begins on **February 13**. In conversation with Donovan write a 1500-2000 word academic essay *integrating* Donovan's story with your context for mission or with your own understanding of mission and ministry.

Reading and reflecting: 18 hours
Writing: 12 hours
25% of final grade

5. "Theological Integration in Mission and Ministry" essay (Due March 17, midnight; submit as Assignment 4)

For the final assignment, reflect at length on the classes and the theological integration essays that you have written by participating in the online discussion that begins **February 28**. Read a minimum of 200 pages on mission and theology. Write an essay that integrates all that you have learned into a paper of 2000-2500 words on "The Integration of Theology, Mission, and Ministry."

The basic topic of this essay ought to be the interface of theology and your mission and ministry. The essay should offer a clear statement of theological convictions and the ways in which the practice of

theology integrates with other practices to guide your mission and ministry.

Reflecting and reading: 16 hours

Writing: 16 hours

25% of final grade

Note: ACADEMIC WRITING requires you to be thoughtful and clear in your communication. God's grace is no excuse for lazy, careless, or undisciplined thinking and writing. To reinforce good writing and improve bad writing, I recommend the following books.

Patricia T. O'Conner. *Woe is I: The Grammarphobe's Guide to Better English in Plain English*. Riverhead Trade, 1998. \$12.50.

ISBN: 1573226254

Patricia T. O'Conner. *Words Fail Me: What Everyone Who Writes Should Know about Writing*. Harcourt Trade Publishers, 2000. \$17.95.

ISBN: 0156010879

Joseph M. Williams. *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*. Longman, 2002. \$49.00

ISBN: 0321095170

All prices are in CAD. Less costly editions may be available. In particular, Joseph Williams' book is available used in earlier editions, which from the second edition on are just as helpful as the latest edition. (This is one of those examples of a publisher producing a "new" edition annually to cut down on the resale market among student textbooks.) Watch out for the nearly identical title by Williams, *Style: Toward Clarity and Grace*, which is much cheaper but also less helpful.

Course Outline

Onsite Intensive

Tues AM Course introduction

A. The nature and purpose of theology

B. The nature and purpose of the course

I. The theological enterprise and the contemporary context

A. Theological issues in the church today (assignment #1)

Tues PM B. Constructing local theologies

Wed AM C. Theological practices: how do we engage in theology and theological reflection?

II. Case studies

- A. Christology
- Wed PM** B. Atonement
- C. Creation
- Thu AM** III. Missional church in local context
 - A. Viewing ministry theologically and missionally
 - B. Practicing the art of theological reflection in ministry
 - 1. Reflecting theologically in the midst of life situations
- Thu PM** INTERLUDE: Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- Fri AM**
 - 2. Reflecting theologically when faced with ethical challenges
 - 3. Reflecting theologically within the life of the church (case studies)
- Fri PM** IV. Theological reflection and the future: Making theological reflection an integral part of life, ministry, and mission
 - V. Theology as wisdom: biblical and historical nourishment

Tuesday and Wednesday will be devoted to reviewing and refining an understanding of theology and its practice in the mission and ministry of the church. Thursday will continue this process with significant input from students' ministries where appropriate. Friday will be a time of reflecting on what students have learned during the week and preparing them for continuing to mature in the practice of theology in the midst of ministry. The topics below are subject to change depending upon the discernment of the professor as to the contexts and work of students.

Bibliography

Resources for Theological Integration

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- _____. *God in Creation*. Harper & Row, 1985.
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Academic Policies

Please see the **Carey Academic Catalog** for more details:

<http://www.carey-edu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Academic-Catalog-2016-2017-FINAL.pdf>

Course Attendance

Students are expected to attend all scheduled class sessions to fulfil degree requirements. This includes on-line webinars and/or live-streamed portions of courses.

Carey Grading Scale

See the Carey Academic Catalogue for details on the Carey grading scale.

Course Withdrawal Policy

A student who withdraws after the period for which tuition refunds are available within the first half of the course will receive a “W” on their transcript. Beyond those dates, they will receive an “F.”

Extensions

Extensions for course work will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. If an extension will make it impossible for the professor to submit the final grade no later than one month following the final assignment, the student must petition the Registrar’s Office. If the Registrar’s Office grants such a request, the final extension deadlines will be clearly established. Work granted an extension may receive a grade reduction of up to one-third of the final mark.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is honest and responsible scholarship. Students are expected to submit original work and give credit to other peoples' ideas. Academic dishonesty is acting in a manner to gain unearned academic credit. Examples of academic dishonesty are:

- Plagiarizing by misrepresenting the work of another person (in whole or in part) as a student’s own work or failing to give credit for either wording or ideas that belong to another.
- Submitting the same material for credit in more than one course (whether the earlier submission was at Carey or another institution).
- Using unauthorized aids of any sort in examinations, completing work in unauthorized collaboration with others, or the unauthorized recording and use of class lectures.

Penalty for a lack of academic integrity may include a failing grade in the assignment, examination or course, depending on the severity of the offense. All students are responsible

for knowing and practicing academic integrity and must become familiar with the plagiarism student resource at: <http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/academic-integrity/>.

Gender Language

As language usage changes, the church must discern where its language must change in order to bear faithful witness to the gospel. Modern English usage has moved away from using masculine terms to refer to groups that include women. Using of such terms in worship, writing, or conversation miscommunicates the invitation of the gospel and the nature of the church. Assignments that don't conform to the gender language policy will be returned to the student for resubmissions.

See the Carey Academic Catalogue for more details on this policy.