

**CAREY THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE**  
**SYLLABUS**  
**THEO 520: Doctrinal Heritage of the Church**  
**Spring 2017 Online**

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April 3 – June 9, 2017  
3 graduate credits  
135 hours

## Course Description

Effective Christian pastoral ministry demands that we live and minister “theologically,” that is, that we view life and ministry through the lens of Christian commitment. To do so requires a solid theological foundation consisting of an informed understanding of the core convictions that we share as Christians, from which we draw implications for living. This course surveys the central Christian doctrines as set forth in the biblical message and taught in the church throughout its history, and views them in the context of the contemporary world in which God calls us to live and minister. In so doing, the course seeks to help participants develop expertise as theologically informed Christian ministers who can connect stated beliefs with life and ministry.

\* Please note: the online THEO 520 course was developed and is usually taught by Carey’s resident theologian, Dr. Jonathan Wilson. This spring, Dr. Wilson is on leave of absence, and I have been asked to teach the course in his place. To preserve good continuity in the curriculum, and in recognition of the excellent materials Dr. Wilson has prepared, we will rely heavily on his course structure and content even in Dr. Wilson’s absence this year. His imprint will be obvious at some points in the course (e.g., several lectures on video), and more subtle in others (written comments in a number of modules). From the outset I want to acknowledge my appreciation to Dr. Wilson for allowing us to make use of what he has prepared. The presence of two faculty “voices” will add depth to the course as well as smoothing its fit into students’ academic programs. If I sense that this will create confusion, I will attempt to clarify which of our “voices” you hear speaking at any given point. – *Ken R*

## Learning Objectives

After completing this course, you will:

1. Recognize and express the sound teaching of the gospel that leads to love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith.
2. Formulate and illustrate an awareness of the implications of Christian vision and practice for serving Christ and his people in the context in which God has called you.
3. Relate to and practice the life of faith, hope, and love in the Good News of God’s redemption of creation for New Creation and become passionate about proclaiming that good news in word and deed.
4. Connect theological learning with desiring and serving God.

## Required Reading

Required readings for this course will be drawn from the following texts. Instructions about timeline and which sections to read will be provided in the weekly online learning modules.

### All Graduate Programs

Athanasius. *On the Incarnation* (available online; ebook; print—various publishers).

Bible (NRSV or NIV preferred)

Bondi, Roberta. *To Love as God Loves* (Fortress, 2008).

Grenz, Stanley. *Created for Community* (Baker, 2014).

Lim, Eng Hoe. *The Gospel of the Kingdom* (Createspace; kindle and paperback, 2012).

Wilson, Jonathan R. *God's Good World: Reclaiming the Doctrine of Creation* (Baker Academic, 2013). May be available from Carey for \$20 and postage.

\_\_\_\_\_. *God So Loved the World* (Baker Academic, 2001). May be available from Carey for \$15 and postage.

### M.Div. and Diploma

Tennent, Timothy. *Theology in the Context of World Christianity* (Zondervan, 2007).

### M.A.S.F.

Bondi, Roberta. *Memories of God* (Abingdon, 1995).

## Course Requirements

To complete this course successfully, you will:

### 1. Work through all the online learning modules that comprise the course

This course is structured in 6 units, the first 5 of which contain 5 to 12 learning modules each. These can be accessed using the “Learning Modules” link on the left-hand side of the course website. You will work through the learning modules, following the course schedule which is summarized in this syllabus and spelled out in more detail elsewhere. See the course schedule and/or the calendar which can be accessed by a link on the left side of the website.

Some of the learning modules simply provide text for reading and reflection. Some include links to other resources: online readings, videos to watch, etc. Please go through all these materials thoughtfully, as they provide most of the content for our class.

The learning modules also include instructions for the assignments you will be doing as the course progresses: readings from the textbooks, online discussions, quizzes, and essays. Your course grade will be

based on these assignments, not on your review of the learning modules as such. But your success with the assignments, and your learning through the course as a whole, will depend on your efforts to engage with the sequence of learning modules.

## 2. Participate consistently and effectively in the online forum discussions

One of the most stimulating and important elements of graduate study is peer-to-peer learning. The men and women in this course are mature individuals with rich life experiences and significant ministry gifts. Even though we will not be talking together in the same room, it is important for us to get to know each other and to learn from each other through discussion.

To make this possible, each unit will include a number of structured discussions using the online forum mechanism built into the course website. This can be found under the “Discussions” link on the left-hand menu.

Specific guidelines for each discussion can be found in the learning modules. Some general principles apply to all.

- Normally the discussions are built around materials you have just read or watched as part of working through the current unit. Be sure to engage these materials thoughtfully. Also, while it’s OK for the discussions to branch out in different directions, it is important for us all to keep the main topic in view as we interact.
- In most cases, you are asked to begin participation in a discussion by making one or more substantial posts, where you offer comments or respond to questions as directed. A “substantial post” is a post of 150 words or more (or 2-3 well-formed paragraphs). The goal is to launch meaningful discussions using thoughtful and well-crafted initial statements, comments, questions, etc. *These are not tweets of the Twitter variety.* Please be sensitive to the workload created by the forums and try to avoid multiplying excessively long posts. But it is also important to avoid the opposite (and more significant) problem of posting comments that are too short to contribute meaningfully to a serious discussion.
- In most cases, you are also asked to offer a response to one or more post by other students. These do not necessarily need to run as long, but they should engage with what has been posted in a meaningful way. Once again, this is not the place for a 2-word Twitter response of “Oh, cool!” or “Right on!” or “Get serious!” Sometimes you will also be asked to reply to the response(s) of your peers. The same principle applies.
- As with good in-class discussion, our goal is to maintain a healthy balance between efficiency and detailed engagement. You should feel free to raise points that are interesting and important to you, whether or not these are part of the official agenda built into the learning module. Also, when discussions are going really well, generally students write more posts than the minimum number required, and at times they engage at some length. At the same time, remember the general expectation that you and your classmates will follow along with the discussions, meaning that exceptionally long posts and a significant multiplication in the number of posts can add to everyone’s overall workload. To help manage this, if the class size is large we will divide into discussion groups for most of our interaction.
- Of course, it also goes without saying that all forum interaction should be courteous, respectful, constructive (even when it involves critical engagement with the issues), encouraging and allowing everyone to speak without dominating or undermining the conversation.

Your grade for forum participation will be assigned at the end of the class and based on overall engagement—particularly on consistent participation and on the general quality of your contribution. I will endeavor to give mid-course feedback on progress. Do not hesitate to ask how you are doing if you are wondering.

Approximate hours: 27  
15% of final grade

### 3. Complete the quizzes in units 2 and 3

The learning exercises in units 2 and 3 include completion of two quizzes, one on the doctrine of Christ (unit 2, module 3) and the other on the doctrine of Trinity (unit 3, module 4). Effective completion of both quizzes is worth 5% of the final course grade. (Note that these quizzes are self-evaluated learning exercises. Your grade for the assignment is not based on how well you score on the quizzes, but on effective participation in the exercise of doing the quizzes.)

Quiz 1: Due **April 7**

Quiz 2: Due **April 21**

Approximate hours: 6  
5% of final grade

### 4. Prepare four unit essays in units 2 through 5

After each major doctrinal unit, you will prepare an essay reflecting on one or more key idea or issue related to that area of Christian doctrine. These are not research papers; you are not required to do additional research beyond the reading and other work required in the modules leading up to the essay. The goal is to help you clarify and synthesize what you have been studying, and to reflect on its significance in your own life and ministry as well as in the teaching of the Church.

Specific instructions and possible topics are discussed in the relevant learning modules. The general subject areas and parameters for the essays are:

- Essay 1: Jesus Christ (Due **April 17**)
- Essay 2: Doctrine of God (Due **May 1**)
- Essay 3: Doctrine of Creation (Due **May 15**)
- Essay 4: Doctrine of Salvation and New Creation (Due **June 2**)

Each essay is to be 1500-1750 words in length (6-7 pages; 1000-1250 words for Certificate students). Each is worth 15% of the overall final grade.

Approximate hours: 27  
60% of final grade

## 5. Prepare the final essay

Whereas units 1-5 present and explore various areas of subject matter, unit 6 is dedicated entirely to the preparation of a final essay designed to help you synthesize and summarize your overall understanding of Christian doctrine as it has been shaped by this course.

Think of this exercise as the preparation of a personal “statement of faith” in which you summarize your understanding of the essentials of Christian theology. Or, if it would be more helpful, you can frame the paper as a summary of the points you would teach if you were delivering a class on the essential elements of Christian theology. Naturally, this paper will build on the other essays and assignments you have prepared for this course, but it should move beyond their narrow focus to offer a synthesis of all you have been studying. The full scope of Christian doctrine is much larger than what can be captured in a paper of this size, so you will need to concentrate on the big ideas and the things that would be viewed as essentials in the doctrinal heritage of the church, and particularly in the Evangelical Protestant movement. Do not let the project become distracted by a review of historical options, alternatives, and arguments in each doctrinal area. Focus on the faith commitments that need to be understood and taught; these will easily fill the space you have for this assignment.

Also, do not let the goal of presenting the “essentials” deceive you into thinking that the best essay would be one that gives a highly “generic” summary of Christian doctrine or one that is simply lifted out of an orthodox historical source. This summary should be your own. This not only means that you ought to understand the points you offer and that you should be conscious of their personal significance for you; it also means that the summary should balance concern for historical orthodoxy with a commitment to personal relevance. In other words, it should reflect your own personality, background, and ministry context as well as the course materials and sources you engage.

More suggestions and guidelines for the essay will be provided as we go, especially in the unit 6 section of the learning modules.

**Note:** though the essay comes as a final, synthesizing exercise at the end of the class, I highly recommend that you keep notes and sketch out thoughts on the various doctrinal areas as we go through them in each section of the course. This will enrich your study along the way, and it will make the final essay much easier to construct.

This final project should be 2500-3500 words (10-14 pages) in length (1800-2200 words for Certificate students). In no case, shall a paper exceed 4000 words (16 pages).

**Due June 9**

Approximate hours: 13  
20% of final grade

## 6. Other General Information on Course Assignments, etc.

- I will follow the official Carey letter-grade system in assessing assignment and course grades. I do my own background grading calculations numerically in order to arrive at these letter grades. My normal grading process uses the following percentage-to-letter-grade scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
F	Below 70

- Unless otherwise indicated, assignments submitted electronically are due by midnight at the end of the date when they are due. The Carey Academic Policy on extensions (see syllabus p. 8) applies to all assignment deadlines. If circumstances warrant a possible extension, you must contact me to discuss the extension request *prior to the date the assignment is due*. Late work is assessed a penalty of 5% of the overall assignment score for each work day beyond the due date.

## Course Outline

A more detailed schedule for course units and learning modules, topics, and assignments will be posted in document form on the course website and in the course calendar.

Date	Topic(s)
Week 1 (Apr 3-8)	Unit 1: Introduction Unit 2: Jesus Christ – the Coming of God (Modules 1-4)
Week 2 (Apr 9-15)	Unit 2: Jesus Christ (Modules 5-9)
Week 3 (Apr 16-22)	Unit 3: Father, Son & Holy Spirit – the Identity of God (Modules 1-4)
Week 4 (Apr 23-29)	Unit 3: Identity of God (Modules 5-12)
Week 5 (Apr 30- May 6)	Unit 4: Creation – the Work of God (Modules 1-3)
Week 6 (May 7-13)	Unit 4: Creation (Modules 4-6)
Week 7 (May 14-20)	Unit 5: New Creation (Modules 1-2)
Week 8 (May 21-27)	Unit 5: New Creation (Modules 3-4)
Week 9 (May 28-June 3)	Unit 5: New Creation (Modules 5-6)
Week 10 (June 4-9)	Unit 6: Final Essay

## Time Investment & Evaluation

Requirements	Time Investment (approx.)	Evaluation Percentage
Learning modules (including readings, videos, etc.)	62 hours	NA
Online forum participation	27 hours	15%
Quizzes 1 and 2 (in units 2, 3)	6 hours	5%
Four unit essays (in units 2-5)	27 hours	60%
Final essay (unit 6)	13 hours	20%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>135 hours</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 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.