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ST603 SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY 3

Spring 2008
Wednesdays 1-4 PM

3 Semester Credit Hours
Professor: R. J. Gore, Jr., Ph.D.
PO Box 594, Due West, SC 29639

SPRING 07 OFFICE HOURS:

Tuesday: 1-4:30PM

Other times by appointment: Contact me at rgore@erskine.edu for appointment

For e-mail assignments: please forward to: inaliam@gmail.com

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course concludes a systematic presentation of the Christian faith. Using Biblical constructs, historical developments, and confessional statements, students explore the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit and Salvation, the Doctrine of the Church and Sacraments, and the Doctrine of Last Things.

COURSE PURPOSE:

The purpose of this course is to further the student's study of Systematic Theology; to continue a dialog with various theological traditions; to consider attempts to formulate and integrate doctrine in terms of biblical, theological and historical dynamics; and to consider the claims set forth by Reformed Theology as a comprehensive system of thought, belief, and practice.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to educate persons for service in the Christian Church. As a part of that mission, one goal is that graduates **write and speak using theological language that is clear, well-considered, disciplined, and meaningful for those to whom they minister**. Another goal is that graduates **be prepared to communicate the Bible's message through preaching and evangelism, so as to make clear that its meaning is relevant for today**. Furthermore, **we seek to create an educational climate that brings about growth in Christian character and fosters the spiritual formation of students, faculty, and staff**. In this course conventional theological language and various methods of doing theology are emphasized. Specific objectives for this course are that, by the end of the course, students will:

1. **Know** the nature and constructs of systematic theology needed in order to **identify significant doctrinal issues**.
2. **Know the various options proposed for resolving doctrinal issues** and develop a methodology for handling theological tensions

3. Be able to **explain the major doctrines of the church** and illustrate them in light of the student's own theological commitment.
4. Be able to **relate the major doctrines of the church to current discussions** and **apply them in authentic ministry opportunities**.
5. Be able to **develop and to formulate biblical and theological constructs** that **reflect the student's faith tradition** and theological commitments.
6. Be able to **critique systematic theological formulations** and to determine their degree of conformity to biblical, theological, and historical criteria.
7. **Grow** in their intellectual understanding of the Christian faith and **deepen** their spiritual awareness of the Reformed faith and their own faith tradition.

POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS [Click Here](#)

DOCTRINE OF SALVATION NOTES [Click Here](#)

CHURCH AND SACRAMENTS NOTES [Click Here](#)

LAST THINGS NOTES [Click Here](#)

SAMPLE PAPER SALVATION [Click Here](#)

SAMPLE PAPER CHURCH [Click Here](#)

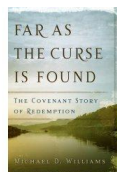
SAMPLE FOOTNOTES [Click Here](#)

INTERNET RESOURCES [Click Here](#)

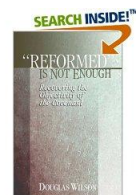
COURSE TEXTBOOKS: To order, go to www.ecampus.com/erskine



Calvin, John. *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols. Philadelphia: Westminster Press.

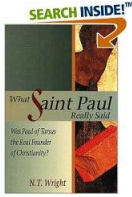


Williams, Michael. *Far as the Curse is Found*. Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2005.



Wilson, Douglas. *"Reformed" is Not Enough*. Moscow, IA: Canon Press, 2002.

Christian Commitment and Excellence in Learning



Wright, N.T. *What Saint Paul Really Said*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.

RECOMMENDED COURSE TEXTBOOKS:

House, Wayne. *Charts of Christian Theology and Doctrine*. Grand

Rapids:

Zondervan, 1992.

Leith, John. *Creeeds of the Churches*, 3rd edition . Atlanta: John Knox, 1982.

COURSE METHOD:

The purpose and objectives of this course will be achieved through three learning components. The first is the Content Component, the student's own mastery of material, accomplished by completing the required readings and measured objectively by a Final Examination. The ability to do theological study is determined directly by the student's competency in using conventional theological language and contextualizing theological discussion.

The second is the Discussion Component. Each class will incorporate discussion and lecture. A vital exchange of ideas is essential to the process of exploration. Students will build on their classroom preparation (the Content Component) by participating in the discussion of theological issues. Such participation presupposes the student's familiarity with material from the assigned reading.

The third is the Research and Reflection Component. All students will research and prepare a series of documents that, collectively, will constitute a personal statement of faith. One of these statements will suffice to fulfill the portfolio requirement for a statement of faith. Drawing from the student's mastery of the content of theological study and building on the lessons learned from the interchange of ideas in classroom discussions, the student will engage in original research, theological reflection, and positive formulation.

These three components will provide a well-rounded learning experience for the thoughtful student. The total out-of-classroom commitment is expected to be approximately 80-90 hours per student for the semester.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Requirement One (100 points): Attend class regularly and participate in the opening dialogs. Students who miss more than a total of three hours will be assigned additional work at the rate of 3 hours of work for every hour missed. Students will be expected to complete the required reading in the course notes prior to each class and will take a Final Exam that covers Selected Questions for Systematic Theology 3, most of which are addressed in the course notes. Those Selected Questions may be

accessed at the following site: [Questions for Systematic Theology 3](#) . The Final Exam counts 100 points towards the course total of 600 points.

Requirement Two (50 points): Each student will read *Far as the Curse is Found* and will write a 2-3 page (double-spaced) critical response to the presentation. As part of the response, the student will select three-to five (3-5) **issues** concerning covenant theology and discuss their significance for theology and Christian living. Due date: Feb. 27. The point of this exercise is to enable the student to grasp the coherent structure of Scripture as well as the nature of covenant relationship as established by God.

Requirement Three (50 points): Each student will read *Reformed is Not Enough* and will write a 2-3 page (double-spaced) critical response to Wilson's presentation. In response, the student will select two or three issues that confront the church today and give the student's own response to the issue. The point of this exercise is to help the student reflect on issues that are currently agitating the Reformed community and reach mature decisions about how to address controversial matters. Due date: Mar. 26.

Requirement Four (50 points): Each student will read *What Saint Paul Really Said* and the on-line response to the New Perspective located at http://www.alliancenet.org/partner/Article_Display_Page/0,,PTID307086|CHID560462|CID1660662.00.html The student then will write a 2-3 page (double-spaced) critical response to the question: Should we abandon the Reformation understanding of justification. The point of this exercise is to lead the student to examine the strength of the historic Reformed faith on justification and to assess the value of contemporary challenges. Due date: Apr. 23.

Requirement Five (50 points): All students will complete the reading of Books III and IV of Calvin's *Institutes*. Students will keep a Reading Log, documenting the dates and times spent reading the texts. Students will keep handwritten account of any new learning, challenges to their beliefs, or other significant findings. Failure to do the preparatory reading may negatively influence the student's final grade by a least a full letter. The Reading Log will count a maximum of 50 points toward the course total of 600 points. Total estimated time required for successful completion: 40 hours.

Requirement Six (300 points): Each student will research and prepare a series of three Reflection Papers that, collectively, will constitute a personal statement of faith. These Reflection Papers should be adequate for presentation to an examining board or church judicatory as a summary of the student's theology. These papers will be a minimum of six (6) full pages in length and a maximum of eight (8) pages in length. The papers will be double-spaced and proper footnote form will be followed (using 6th ed. Turabian, *Manual for Writers*). **NOTE: Do NOT use Parenthetical Reference form.** Each paper will count a maximum of 100 points towards the final course total of 600 points. Scripture references may be numerous, but Scripture quotations, if used at all, will be infrequent and brief. Total estimated time required for successful completion: 40 hours. **ALTERNATIVE ASSIGNMENT:** In lieu of the **third statement of faith** on "Last Things," students who wish to do so, may do a manuscript sermon on one of the

following. 1) Death of a child; 2) Death of a long-time church member, or 3) death of an unchurched neighbor. The student will make use of standard homiletic devise, including illustrations, but will also make use of creeds and confessions to indicate the student's belief about last things. More details re this assignment will be given in class.

Note: Requirement Six can meet a Professional Assessment Portfolio and Graduation Requirement for all students who began seminary in the Fall of 2002 or afterwards. It is the student's responsibility to turn in a clean, corrected copy of their paper to the seminary office for inclusion in your portfolio. Failure to do so will delay your graduation. Portfolio requirements are listed on the back of the academic worksheet of all degree programs. This satisfies the portfolio requirement for a Statement of Faith from a theology class. **Moreover, this requirement helps the student develop the skills needed to relate doctrine at the theoretical level to personal spiritual awareness and growth in the student's own faith tradition.**

All Students: Reflection Papers will include, as a minimum-

***Scripture references**

***Conventional theological language**

***Reference to the student's own denominational confession or statement of faith**

***Reference to at least four Reformation/Post-Reformation confessions**

***Reference to early church creeds, where appropriate**

***Reference to key issues noted below- where appropriate to YOUR system of belief**

PAPERS THAT DO NOT MEET THESE MINIMUM STANDARDS WILL BE GRADED DOWN ACCORDINGLY. See Sample Attached at end of syllabus

CRITERIA FOR GRADING RESEARCH :

Writing that is grammatically correct and stylistically clear
A form that adheres to the guidelines in Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers* (6th edition)

Adherence to the parameters of the assignment (length, scope)

Use of primary and secondary sources besides textbooks and lecture notes

Analysis of historical and theological information, not just summary of that information

Depth and creativity in handling the assignment

Grading Scale:

100-95	A	83-80	C
94-93	A-	79-78	C-
92-91	B+	77-76	D+
90-88	B	75-72	D
87-86	B-	71-70	D-
85-84	C+	69-0	F

EXTRA CREDIT:

Read the following on-line article about the Auburn Avenue controversy and the New Perspective on Paul. Write a two-three page (double-spaced) critical response to it. Students may have as much as 10 points added to the total of points earned:

http://www.biblelighthouse.com/covenants/within_the_bounds_of_orthodoxy.htm

Reflection Papers: Topics and Due Dates:

12 March: Doctrine of Salvation- Person of Holy Spirit, Work of the Holy Spirit, Union with Christ, Regeneration, Justification, Adoption, Sanctification

16 April: Doctrine of Church and Sacraments- Attributes and Marks of the Church, Sacraments or Ordinances, Baptism, Lord's Supper

7 May: Doctrine of Last Things- Intermediate State, Second Advent, Judgment, Heaven, Hell

STANDARDS FOR ALL PAPERS:

- A.....No more than 4 misspellings or grammatical errors in total
Identified the most significant articles, books in bibliography
Used research materials expertly, leaving no unanswered questions
Thesis statement clear and proved
- B.....No more than 2 misspellings or grammatical errors per page
Identified a number of important articles, books in bibliography
Used research material fairly, addressed most problem areas
Thesis statement clear and sustained
- C.....No more than 3 misspellings or grammatical errors per page
Used the minimum required number of bibliographical entries
Used research material adequately
Thesis statement not clear and/or not sustained
- D.....More than 3 misspellings or grammatical errors per page
Failed to use minimum number of bibliographical entries
Research poorly done
What thesis statement?

SEMINARY POLICIES:

Registration: Once a student has completed, signed, and submitted his/her registration to the Registrar for this class, it is a binding contract, and billing will be based on this registration. If the student decides not to take this class, a "drop/add" form must be completed and the appropriate signatures must be secured. Failure to withdraw from the class properly

will result in the student's receiving a grade of "F" for the course, and full tuition charges will apply. No exceptions will be made to this policy.

Inclusive Language: The Seminary encourages all students to make use of language, in reference to human beings, that is inclusive rather than needlessly exclusive. It is a mark of a good communicator to build bridges rather than barriers; therefore, such language should be used in all written work and oral presentations. The Seminary Catalog stands as an example of recommended usage.

Form of Written Work: For the research paper, students are required to follow the form and style guidelines found in Turabian, *A Manual for Writers* (6th edition). These guidelines are summarized in the Erskine Seminary document "Style and Form Guidelines for all Masters Level Programs."

Plagiarism: Any student who commits plagiarism is in violation of Seminary policy and is liable for dismissal. See Seminary Catalog for complete information.

Late or Incomplete Work: Any work not submitted by close of business on the due date will be assessed a late penalty. 10% will automatically be deducted from the grade when the work is finally submitted. The final deadline for submitting all late work and make-up work is noon on Monday, May 12. Any work not received by this deadline will be given a grade of "0," unless the student has made prior arrangements to take an incomplete for the course. Incomplete (I) marks will be handled in accordance with policy statements in the Catalog. In particular, one should note that the student does not automatically have the privilege of taking an incomplete. Rather, it is the professor's prerogative to give an incomplete, and only when the student has completed most of the work for the course and has been providentially hindered from completing the remainder.

Returned Papers

FEDERAL PRIVACY GUIDELINES DO NOT ALLOW THE RETURN OF STUDENT DOCUMENTS TO AN UNSECURED MAIL BOX UNLESS THE STUDENT GRANTS PERMISSION IN WRITING. STUDENTS WHO WISH TO HAVE THEIR WORK RETURNED AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE TO THEIR STUDENT MAIL BOXES WILL PLACE THEIR STUDENT BOX NUMBER ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THEIR SUBMISSIONS. THIS WILL BE VIEWED AS WRITTEN PERMISSION TO RETURN DOCUMENTS IN THIS MANNER. STUDENTS WHO DECLINE TO GIVE SUCH PERMISSION WILL RECEIVE THEIR SUBMISSIONS AT A LATER TIME.

Chapel Attendance: for on-campus students is a requirement for graduation. In accordance with current policy, all students who have morning classes will be required to attend chapel. By way of further clarification of current policy, the following particulars are binding upon all students.

One morning class: 9 chapels required
Two morning classes: 17 chapels required
Three morning classes: 24 chapels required

Students who have two afternoon classes (6 hours) will be required to attend a total of 9 chapels on any day or combination of days. In accordance with previous seminary policy, chapel attendance will be taken by daily attendance slips (circulated during chapel).

COURSE WEIGHTING:

Paper on Salvation 100 points
 Paper on Church 100 points
 Paper on Last Things 100 points
 Calvin Reading 50 points
 Williams Reading 50 points
 Wilson Reading 50 points
 New Perspective Reading 50 points
 Exam 100 Points Extra Credit: Up to 10 points added

COURSE OUTLINE: LECTURES and ASSIGNMENTS:

Date	Lecture Topic	Assignment Due
Feb 6	Holy Spirit and Salvation	
Feb 13	Holy Spirit and Salvation	
Feb 20	Holy Spirit and Salvation	
Feb 27	Holy Spirit and Salvation	<i>Williams Response</i>
Mar 5	Holy Spirit and Salvation	
Mar 12	Holy Spirit and Salvation	Salvation Paper
Mar 19	Holy Week Break – No Class	
Mar 26	Church and Sacraments	<i>Wilson Response</i>
Apr 2	Church and Sacraments	
Apr 9	Church and Sacraments	
Apr 16	Spring Conference	Church/Sacrament Paper

Apr 23	Church and Sacraments	<i>N.T. Wright Response</i>
April 30	Last Things	
May 7	Last Things	Last Things
May 14	Final Examination	

All make-up and late work due 12 May