



HARDING SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

5555 SEMINAR IN THEOLOGY: THE TRINITY, Spring 2021, Mon. 8:15-10:55 a.m.
Prof. Mark E. Powell, Ijams Administration Building 209
Office phone: 901-432-7725 Email: mpowell@harding.edu

Course description

An advanced seminar on the doctrine of the Trinity and Trinitarian theology, with an emphasis on contemporary discussion of the doctrine. Prerequisite: 5400 Systematic Theology or the permission of the instructor.

Course objectives

1. Exhibit an understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity as developed in the history of Christianity and discussed in contemporary theology.
2. Exhibit an understanding of several contemporary theological movements.
3. Carefully present and critically interact with contemporary proposals on the doctrine of the Trinity.

This course contributes to the following M.Div. degree outcomes:

- Demonstrate the skills required for theological reflection.
- Demonstrate the ability to integrate the scriptures and theological tradition with diverse contemporary cultural contexts.

Required texts

Augustine, *The Trinity*, trans. Edmund Hill (New York: New City Press, 1991).

Wesley Hill, *Paul and the Trinity: Persons, Relations, and the Pauline Letters* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015).

Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, trans. Joseph Donceel (New York: Crossroad Herder, 1999).

Sarah Coakley, *God, Sexuality, and the Self: An Essay 'On the Trinity'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Textbooks can now be ordered through a link on the HST website. The Textbooks tab can be viewed on the navigation bar on any page of the website. Check the book list provided under the Textbooks tab (<http://hst.edu/students/textbook-services/>) for correct ISBN's and editions to ensure correct ordering. A link provided there will take you to Amazon where you will only need to enter the ISBN to order your books.

Additional readings, course notes, a place to submit assignments, and grades are available on the Canvas course page at <http://elearning.harding.edu>.

Accessibility

HST professors are accessible to local and distance students. Please use the following to arrange appointments with me (in person or by phone):

Email: mpowell@harding.edu

Office Phone Number: (901) 432-7725

Requirements and grading

1. Reading of assigned texts and class participation

2. Class presentation (10%)

3. Three essay papers (60%)

4. Research paper (30%)

Grading scale: 100-90 (A), 89-80 (B), 79-75 (C), 74-70 (D), 69 and below (F)

All readings should be completed before the session for which they are assigned. Students should come to class prepared to contribute to the discussion of the readings. Students may be penalized up to ten points off the final grade for missing more than two class sessions or being late for more than three class sessions.

Academic integrity

Academic dishonesty in all its forms is inconsistent with Christian faith and practice, and will result in penalties which could include a failing grade for the assignment, a failing grade for the course, dismissal from the course, and even dismissal from the school.

Credit hour workload

For every course credit hour, the typical student should expect to spend at least three clock hours per week of concentrated attention on course-related work, including but not limited to time attending class, as well as out-of-class time spent reading, reviewing, organizing notes, preparing for upcoming quizzes/exams, problem solving, developing and completing projects, and other activities that enhance learning. Thus, for a three-hour course, a typical student should expect to spend at least nine hours per week dedicated to the course.

Students with disabilities

It is the policy of Harding University to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. Students with disabilities are also encouraged to contact Steve McLeod, the Associate Dean, at 901-761-1353.

Library resources

If you have not taken 5990 (Advanced Theological Research) or took that class more than a year ago, go to the HST Web site (www.hst.edu) for information concerning library services to students. Under the "library" tab you will find a link to and instructions for searching the HST online catalog. There are also instructions for using the following databases available through the library: OCLC FirstSearch, EBSCOhost, Infotrac, PsycINFO, and *Religious and Theological Abstracts*. Contact the library for passwords to these databases. Also available are the research guides distributed in 5990. These annotated bibliographies list basic tools you will find helpful in your research.

Class schedule

PART 1: BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS

- Jan. 11 Introduction to the class; Biblical foundations of the doctrine of the Trinity
- (1) Mark E. Powell, *Centered in God: The Trinity and Christian Spirituality* (Abilene: ACU Press, 2014), ch. 3.
 - (2) Robert Letham, *The Holy Trinity: In Scripture, History, Theology, and Worship* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2004), ch. 1.

Wed., Jan. 20 Historical development of the doctrine of the Trinity

- (1) Powell, *Centered in God*, ch. 2.
- (2) Arius, *Letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia*, in *The Trinitarian Controversy*, ed. and trans. William G. Rusch (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 29-30.
- (3) Athanasius, *Discourses Against the Arians*, 1.1-36.
At: <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/28161.htm>
- (4) Athanasius, *Tomus ad Antiochenos*
At: <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2818.htm>
- (5) Gregory of Nyssa, *Concerning We Should Think of Saying That There Are Not Three Gods*, in *The Trinitarian Controversy*, 149-61.

Jan. 25 Historical development of the doctrine of the Trinity (cont.)

- (1) Augustine, *The Trinity*, 1.1-6, 8.1-15.51 (pp. 65-69, 241-255, 270-282, 286-299, 303-318, 322-337, 342-365, 371-392, 395-437)

Feb. 1 Special session: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the Pauline literature

- (1) Hill, *Paul and the Trinity*.
- (2) Essay paper 1 due on Monday, February 8 at 11:59 p.m. (CST)

PART 2: CONTEMPORARY PROPOSALS

Feb. 8 Karl Rahner

- (1) Rahner, *The Trinity*, pp. 9-48, 103-115.

Feb. 15 Karl Barth

- (1) Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, I/1, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975), §§ 8-9 (pp. 295-384).

Feb. 22 Eastern Orthodoxy

- (1) Boris Bobrinskoy, *The Mystery of the Trinity* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1999), 261-316.
- (2) John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, (Crestwood, NT: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985), 27-65.

Mar. 1 Intensive course and study week

Mar. 8 Spring Break

Mar. 15 Jürgen Moltmann and Miroslav Volf

- (1) Jürgen Moltmann, *Collected Readings*, ed. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014), 41-101.
- (2) Miroslav Volf, “‘The Trinity is our Social Program’: The Doctrine of the Trinity and the Shape of Social Engagement,” *Modern Theology* 14:3 (July 1998): 403-23.
- (3) Research paper prospectus due

Mar. 22 The Trinity and Society

- (1) Leonardo Boff, “Trinitarian Community and Social Liberation,” trans. Paul Burns, *Cross Currents* 38 (1988): 289-308.
- (2) Catherine Mowry LaCugna, “God in Communion With Us: The Trinity,” in *Freeing Theology: The Essentials of Theology in Feminist Perspective*, ed. Catherine Mowry LaCugna (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993), 83-114.
- (3) Robert Letham, *The Holy Trinity: In Scripture, History, Theology, and Worship*, 377-406.
- (4) Karen Kilby, “The Trinity and Politics: An Apophatic Approach” in *Advancing Trinitarian Theology: Explorations in Constructive Dogmatics*, eds. Oliver D. Crisp and Fred Sanders (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 75-93.
- (5) Essay paper 2 due on Monday, March 29 at 11:59 p.m. (CST)

Mar. 29 Postliberal Theology

- (1) Bruce D. Marshall, “Trinity,” in *Blackwell Companion to Modern Theology*, ed. Gareth Jones (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 183-203.
- (2) Bruce D. Marshall, “What is Truth?” *Pro Ecclesia* 4 (1995): 404-430.

Apr. 5 Special session: Sarah Coakley on the Trinity, Sexuality, and Gender

- (1) Coakley, *God, Sexuality, and the Self*, Prelude, pp. 88-92, chaps. 3, 5-7, Coda.

Apr. 12 Canonical Theism

- (1) William J. Abraham, Jason E. Vickers, and Natalie B. Van Kirk, eds., *Canonical Theism: A Proposal for Theology and the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 1-7, 156-174.

PART 3: THE TRINITY AND THE STONE-CAMPBELL MOVEMENT

Apr. 19 The Trinity and the Stone-Campbell Movement

- (1) Alexander Campbell, *The Christian System*, chs. 2-5, 23.
At: https://webfiles.acu.edu/departments/Library/HR/restmov_nov11/www.mun.ca/rel/restmov/texts/acampbell/tcs2/TCS200.HTM
- (2) Barton W. Stone, *An Address to the Christian Churches in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Ohio*, 2nd ed., Sections 1-2.
At: https://webfiles.acu.edu/departments/Library/HR/restmov_nov11/www.mun.ca/rel/restmov/texts/bstone/ADDR-2ND.HTM

(3) Mark E. Powell, John Mark Hicks, and Greg McKinzie, *Discipleship in Community: A Theological Vision for the Future* (Abilene: ACU Press, 2020), 25-33, 39-45, 159-163.

(4) Research paper due at 11:59 p.m. (CST)

Apr. 26 Final session

May 3 Essay paper 3 due on Monday, May 3 at 11:59 p.m. (CST)

Class presentation

Students are required to lead one class discussion on the readings assigned for the session. The presentation should strike a balance between careful exposition of the readings, critical evaluation, and constructive suggestion. The presentation should include a one-page handout that highlights key points from the readings.

The handout should be submitted as a PDF document on Canvas before the class session so other students have access to it. The presentation should last 10-15 minutes to allow time for class discussion of the readings.

Essay papers

Students are required to write three essays, each 750-900 words (or approximately 3 pages) in length. Essay questions will be posted on Canvas during the week of class that they are listed. Each essay should be submitted on Canvas by 11:59 p.m. (CST) on the due date given in the course schedule.

Research paper

Students are required to submit a research paper, approximately 4500 words (or 15 pages) in length, on an issue related to the doctrine of the Trinity. The research paper should carefully follow Turabian's *Manual* and may be penalized up to ten points for style. Electronic copies of the paper are due in Canvas on April 19 at 11:59 p.m. (CST). Late papers will be penalized one point per day late for the first two days, and then three points per day late (excluding Sundays), up to 20 points total.

Possible topics include a detailed treatment of any issue covered in class, the Trinitarian beliefs of a major historical or contemporary figure, and Trinitarian reflections on a theological issue (such as creation, revelation, scripture, holiness, and suffering).

Students are encouraged to submit a prospectus (this can be informal and sent by email) that includes (1) the topic to be investigated and (2) a preliminary bibliography, by March 15.

Students will have 20 minutes to present their research paper (approximately 15 minutes) and field questions (approximately 5 minutes) on the final class session. This will allow the entire class to benefit from student research.

Research paper grading rubric

Criterion	Above Expectations (Grade of A)	Meets Expectations (Grade of B or C)	Below Expectations (Grade of D or F)
Presentation and interpretation of topic	Rich and critical presentation and interpretation of the topic.	Adequate presentation and interpretation of the topic.	Shallow and uncritical presentation and interpretation of the topic.
Critical analysis	Rich critical interaction that both displays appreciation and identifies areas of concern. May include constructive suggestion for the future.	Adequate critical interaction, showing either appreciation or identifying areas of concern.	Very little or no critical interaction.
Research and scholarly support	Excellent research in the key sources on the topic (at least 15 scholarly sources).	Adequate research in the key sources on the topic (at least 10 scholarly sources).	Weak and inadequate research on the topic (less than 10 scholarly sources).

Penalties:

Style and grammar

Does not follow assignment guidelines

Late

Use of technology

Canvas Online Learning System

In addition to the live video platform Zoom.us (see below), this course uses Harding's *Canvas Online Learning System*, which is accessed at <http://elearning.harding.edu>. If you have problems gaining access to Canvas, contact HU technical support (501) 279-4545. You will need your HST username and your password to log into Harding Pipeline. These are the same credentials you use to register for classes via Pipeline.

When you need to contact your professor via email, you may use the email system contained in the Canvas learning management system or email your professor directly at mpowell@harding.edu.

Harding University gives each student an email address that also utilizes your user name. Many students use other email addresses as their preferred address. You can set your Harding G-mail account to forward messages to an alternative email address if you want; however, it is your responsibility to check your Harding email account regularly because this is the official Harding email address to which all Harding-related email will be sent.

HST Live Interactive Video Education (HST LIVE) via ZOOM

In addition to Canvas (see above), this HST-Live course is supported with the video platform Zoom.us. For new Zoom platform users, go to <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/categories/200101697-Getting-Started> for helpful video tutorials about using this platform.

The HST LIVE/Zoom Meeting ID for this course can be found on Canvas at the top of the home page.

Students new to HST LIVE should attend the HST LIVE orientation session scheduled for January 4 at 6:00-7:30 p.m. For more information on LIVE orientation, contact bscurtis@harding.edu.

Equipment Requirements for LIVE Sections:

- Internet access using a latest version of a web browser such as Firefox (preferred).
- Latest version of Zoom software. This changes periodically without notification. If you already have Zoom, use that account. Basic Zoom.us is available free.
- Laptop or tablet with camera or desktop computer with camera.
- Ear buds with microphone - Apple MD827LL/A EarPods with Remote and Mic work well. Order on Amazon.com, <https://goo.gl/jLYfBG>.
- Additional monitor – Live video conferencing is best facilitated with two monitors.

LIVE Etiquette:

- HST Live is a convenience for distance broadcast and attendance. In terms of responsibilities, it is no different than on-campus participation. Attendance at all class sessions is required just as if in residence on the Memphis campus.
- “Making up” a missed session by watching the recording will be granted only in extreme cases such as illness or family emergency (the same policy for those on the Memphis campus). Please make arrangements in your ministry context or employment to be in attendance for all scheduled sessions (e.g. a staff meeting is not an excused absence). The same applies to arriving late or leaving early.
- Be seated in an environment that approximates a classroom setting (for example, a chair at a desk in your office). Create a distraction free environment. It is not acceptable to sit or lie down on your bed or in a recliner, lounge on your deck or on the beach, or sit in a coffee shop, etc.
- Remain stationary at your computer during the class session except during breaks. If you must go to the restroom & mute your audio/video, Then return to your screen, un-mute, and resume the class.
- Arrange for your HST Live environment to be distraction free (for example, no family noise, TV, etc.).
- Failure to observe these and related etiquette matters will result in grade reductions at the professor’s sole discretion.