



HARDING SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

5400 SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, Fall 2023, Tues. 6:00-8:45 p.m.
Prof. Mark E. Powell

Course description

A study of foundational Christian beliefs in light of the teaching of scripture, key historical formulations, and contemporary culture with the goal of helping students understand the historic Christian faith and reflect on contemporary issues in a Christian manner.

The course contributes to the following degree outcomes:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the primary elements of Christian theology. (MACM)
- Demonstrate the skills required for theological reflection. (M.Div.)
- Demonstrate the ability to integrate the scriptures and theological tradition with diverse contemporary cultural contexts. (MACM and M.Div.)

Additional course objectives

- Reflect on the implications of Christian theology for one's own life and ministry.
- Develop and present one's own understanding of the Christian faith.

Required textbooks

Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000).
Mark E. Powell, John Mark Hicks, and Greg McKinzie, *Discipleship in Community: A Theological Vision for the Future* (Abilene: ACU Press, 2020).

Choose one of three:

James H. Evans, Jr., *We Have Been Believers: An African American Systematic Theology*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012).

Catherine Mowry LaCugna, ed., *Freeing Theology: The Essentials of Theology in Feminist Perspective* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993).

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

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 insure 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 Canvas. To access the Canvas course page, go to <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

Office: Ijams Administration Building 114

Requirements and grading

1. Reading of assigned texts and class participation

2. Three essay papers (15% each)

3. Book review (20%)

4. Statement of faith (35%)

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

Students should complete all readings before the session for which they are assigned and should be prepared to contribute to the discussion of the readings in class. Students may be penalized up to ten points (one letter grade) off the final grade for missing two class sessions or being late for three class sessions.

Late assignments will receive one point off per day late for the first two days, and then three points off per day late (excluding Sundays), up to 20 points total.

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 Dr. Steve McLeod, the Associate Dean, at 901-432-7733.

Library resources

If you have not taken 5990 (Advanced Theological Research) or took it 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, 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.

Course schedule

August 15 Introduction to the study of Christian theology

- (1) Grenz, Introduction
- (2) Powell, Hicks, and McKinzie, ch. 1
- (3) Evans, Introduction, ch. 1; OR LaCugna, Introduction, ch. 1; OR Tennent, ch. 1.

August 22 The Trinity

- (1) Grenz, ch. 2
- (2) Powell, Hicks, and McKinzie, ch. 2, Appendices 1-2.
- (3) Evans, ch. 3; OR LaCugna, ch. 4; OR Tennent, ch. 2.

August 29 The attributes of God

- (1) Grenz, ch. 3
- (2) Ron Highfield, *Great is the Lord: Theology for the Praise of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), ch. 11, pp. 375-389.

September 5 Creation

- (1) Grenz, ch. 4, pp. 139-150, ch. 6
- (2) Powell, Hicks, and McKinzie, ch. 3
- (3) Evans, ch. 5; OR LaCugna, ch. 6; OR Tennent, ch. 4.
- (4) Essay paper 1 due on Monday, September 11 at 11:59 pm (CST)

September 12 Sin and evil

- (1) Grenz, ch. 7, pp. 447-460
- (2) Mark E. Powell, *Centered in God: The Trinity and Christian Spirituality* (Abilene: ACU Press, 2014), ch. 16.
- (3) John Mark Hicks, "Mediating the War between Arminians and Calvinists on Election and Security: A Stone-Campbell Perspective." *Stone-Campbell Journal* 6 (Fall 2003): 163-184.

September 19 The identity of Jesus

- (1) Grenz, chs. 9-11
- (2) Marcus J. Borg and N. T. Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions* (New York: Harper One, 2007), chs. 4, 8, 9.
- (3) Evans, ch. 4; OR LaCugna, ch. 5; OR Tennent, chs. 5-7

September 26 The ministry of Jesus (NO CLASS MEETING: RECORDED LECTURE)

- (1) Grenz, ch. 12
- (2) Essay paper 2 due on Monday, October 2 at 11:59 pm (CST)

- October 3 The Holy Spirit
- (1) Grenz, ch. 13, pp. 411-422
 - (2) Robert C. Kurka, "The Role of the Holy Spirit in Conversion: Why Restorationists Appear to Be out of the Evangelical Mainstream," in *Evangelicalism and the Stone-Campbell Movement*, ed. William R. Baker (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), ch. 6.
- October 10 STUDY BREAK
- October 17 Divine revelation and Scripture
- (1) Grenz, pp. 132-139; ch. 14
 - (2) Powell, Hicks, and McKinzie, ch. 4
 - (3) Evans, ch. 2; OR LaCugna, chs. 2-3; OR Tennent, ch. 3
- October 24 The church
- (1) Grenz, ch. 17
 - (2) Powell, Hicks, and McKinzie, chs. 5-6
 - (3) Evans, ch. 6; OR LaCugna, chs. 7-8; OR Tennent, ch. 8
 - (4) Statement of faith prospectus due
- October 31 Worship and mission
- (1) Grenz, ch. 18, pp. 531-541
 - (2) Powell, Hicks, and McKinzie, ch. 7, review ch. 6
 - (3) Powell, *Centered in God*, ch. 8
 - (4) Essay paper 3 due on Monday, November 6 at 11:59 pm (CST)
- November 7 The consummation of creation
- (1) Grenz, chs. 21-22
 - (2) Powell, Hicks, and McKinzie, review ch. 2
 - (3) Evans, chs. 7-8; OR LaCugna, chs. 9-10; OR Tennent, chs. 9-10
- November 14 Living in hope
- (1) Grenz, chs. 23-24
 - (2) Book review due on Monday, November 20 at 11:59 pm (CST)
- November 21 THANKSGIVING BREAK
- November 28 Final lecture
- (1) Powell, Hicks, and McKinzie, ch. 8, pp.165-184
- December 5 Statement of faith due at 11:59 pm (CST)

Essay papers

Students are required to write three essays, each 750-900 words (or approximately three 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.

Book review

Students are required to submit a book review, approximately 900-1200 words (or 3-4 pages), on the text you chose by Evans, LaCugna (ed.), or Tennent.

The first part of the review (300 words or 1 page) should present the basic approach and central concerns of the text. The second part (600-900 words or 2-3 pages) should critically interact with at least two main chapters, or doctrines (not introductory or concluding chapters), covered in the book in light of the course material. The review should strike a balance between careful exposition of the text, critical evaluation, and constructive suggestion. Students should submit the book review on Canvas by 11:59 p.m. (CDT) on the due date given in the course schedule.

Statement of faith

Each student will construct a statement of faith on his or her understanding of the Christian faith. The paper should be submitted as a PDF document in Canvas by Tuesday, December 5 at 11:59 pm (CST) and should be no longer than 3600 words, or approximately 12 pages, in length. This is a strict word-count requirement. Writing and revising to meet this requirement is an essential part of the assignment. The word-count requirement does not include the title page or bibliography.

The emphasis of this paper is on reading and reflecting upon the materials that are central to the course. The student should refer to outside resources (such as the recommended resources at the end of the syllabus), but the paper is quite literally to be constructed by the individual student, expressing the understanding of the Christian faith which he or she—not some other or others—has arrived at as a result of his or her total study to date.

In keeping with the focus of this course, the statement of faith should be organized around the central topics of systematic theology, though the student will have to discern which specific issues to cover, and in what order.

Students are encouraged, but not required, to submit a prospectus in Canvas email by October 24. The prospectus may be informal and should include (1) the orienting concern (or, integrative motif) of the statement and why this concern was chosen (how does it relate to both the Christian faith and a contemporary cultural context), (2) a basic outline of the statement of faith (what topics will be covered and in what order), and (3) a preliminary bibliography. The prospectus gives students an opportunity to receive feedback from the professor before submitting the paper for a grade.

Statement of Faith Grading Rubric

Criterion (equal weight is given to each)	Above Expectations (Grade of A)	Meets Expectations (Grade of B or C)	Below Expectations (Grade of D or F)
Draws from and interacts with scripture and Christian tradition	Carefully and critically interacts with scripture and Christian tradition.	Interacts with scripture and Christian tradition, but sometimes in a shallow and uncritical manner	Little interaction with scripture and Christian tradition; or interaction is generally shallow and uncritical
Theological depth and richness	Displays solid understanding of and appreciation for the themes of Christian theology. May show creativity or new insight.	Displays a general understanding of and appreciation for the themes of Christian theology.	Treatment of the themes of Christian theology tends to be shallow and trite.
Organization and coherence	Organization clearly shows the connection of the various ideas of Christian thought. No major contradictions.	Shows general awareness of the connection of various ideas of Christian thought; may have a minor contradiction.	Organization is unclear and does not show the connection between various ideas of Christian thought; or major contradiction(s).
Shows relevance of the Christian faith for a contemporary cultural context	Clearly shows how the gospel relates to the urgent questions of a contemporary cultural context.	Shows general awareness of how the gospel relates to the urgent questions of a contemporary cultural context.	Shows little awareness of how the gospel relates to the urgent questions of a contemporary cultural context.
Scholarly support	Has strong scholarly support and interaction with course material. References 15 sources or more.	Has adequate scholarly support and interaction with course material. References 10 (B) or 5 (C) sources or more.	Has inadequate scholarly support and interaction with course material.

Penalties:

Style and grammar

Does not follow assignment guidelines

Late

Recommended resources

I. Texts in systematic theology

- William J. Abraham, *Divine Agency and Divine Action*, vol. 3, *Systematic Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).
- Michael Allen, ed., *New Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022).
- Carl Braaten and Robert Jenson, eds. *Christian Dogmatics*, 2nd rev. ed., 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2011).
- Jack Cottrell, *The Faith Once For All: Bible Doctrine For Today* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2002).
- Beth Felker Jones, *Practicing Christian Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2023).
- Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013).
- Francis Schussler Fiorenza and John P. Galvin, eds., *Systematic Theology: Roman Catholic Perspectives*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011).
- Justo L. Gonzalez and Zaida Maldonado Perez, *An Introduction to Christian Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002).
- Colin E. Gunton, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
- Tony Lane, *Exploring Christian Doctrine: A Guide to What Christians Believe* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014).
- Gerald R. McDermott, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Evangelical Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
- Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 6th ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2016).
- Daniel L. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2014).
- Richard J. Plantinga, Thomas R. Thompson, and Matthew D. Lundberg, *An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023).
- Daniel J. Treier, *Introducing Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019).
- John Webster, Kathryn Tanner, and Iain Torrance, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

II. Reference works

- F.L. Cross, E.A. Livingstone, and Andrew Louth, eds., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022).
- Daniel J. Treier and Walter A. Elwell, eds., *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017).
- David Ford, ed., *The Modern Theologians*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2005).
- Chad Meister and James Beilby, eds., *Routledge Companion to Modern Christian Thought* (New York: Routledge, 2013).
- Alister E. McGrath, ed., *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Thought* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993).
- Jaroslav Pelikan and Valerie Hotchkiss, eds., *Creeds and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition*, 4 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

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.

Students new to HST LIVE should watch the HST LIVE orientation video before the first day of class. The HST LIVE orientation video can be found at <https://hst.edu/students/canvas-online-learning/>.

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 EarPods with the appropriate connector/plug work well.
- 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.