Systematic Theology Survey for Counseling Students  
2ST501A & B

Reformed Theological Seminary - Orlando  
Fall 2014 and Spring 2015  
Instructor: Justin S. Holcomb  
E-mail: jholcomb@rts.edu

PURPOSE

To understand and wrestle with the major doctrines of the Christian faith in light of the unique challenges and context of Christian counseling and soul care. The first part of the course (Fall 2014) will cover doctrines of God, revelation, creation providence, humanity, sin, Christ, and salvation. The second part of the course (Spring 2015) will cover doctrines of salvation, Holy Spirit, Christian life, church and sacraments, and eschatology.

OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this course, students will:
1. More fully value the importance of systematic theology.
2. More articulately express the theological underpinnings and implications of Christian counseling and soul care.
3. More fully grasp the depth and scope of God’s redemptive plan for the cosmos, and humanity in particular.
4. More confidently engage with various counseling theories and understand their theological consequences.

FORMAT

Teaching will include lecture, discussion, small group interactions, student presentations, and guest lectures.

REQUIRED TEXTS
- Delighting in the Trinity (Michael Reeves) ISBN: 9780830839834
- Not the Way It’s Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin (Cornelius Plantinga) ISBN:9780802842183
- “Systematic Theology Tools: How and Why to Think Theologically” in Biblical Theology in the Life of the Church (Michael Lawrence) [an electronic version of this will
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

PART I: Fall 2014

1. DISCUSSION: Students will be present and participate actively throughout class presentations and discussions. Differing perspectives and questions will not be ignored, but are encouraged to be shared with the whole class. Discussion will be a major component of the class.

2. THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK PAPER: In Not the Way It’s Supposed To Be, Plantinga talks about sin as a “vandalism of shalom.” Write a 1,000-1,250-word double-spaced paper following APA style guidelines using Plantinga’s book and relating the concepts to one of your clients, or one area of counseling interest or expertise (e.g. eating disorders, sexual addiction, depression, marital issues, abuse). Using the concepts in Plantinga’s book (e.g. vandalism, perversion, pollution, corruption, masquerade, folly, addiction, attack, flight, etc.), discuss this issue from a theological perspective and not a DSM-5 behaviorally descriptive perspective. (Example: a sex addict. What was God’s intent for human sexuality? How did sin “pervert” it? How does this relate to your client? What is God’s vision for restoration? Etc.)

Please submit hardcopies of your paper on November 21, 2014. Your paper must have the word count on the first page. If this is missing 10 points will be deducted from the grade.

3. READING: Students are asked to engage in various topics through this class. Students will turn in a reading report stating what percentage of the readings they have read with reasonable care. This means actually reading it. Turn in with your Theological Integration Paper. There may be other readings assigned that would be helpful with class.

4. THEOLOGICAL INTEGRATION PAPER: Students choose one psychological theory of interest and write a 1,500-1,750-word critique of that theory using theological categories. The paper must follow APA style guidelines. The paper should be written in three parts:

- Part 1: Explain the theory, positively explaining its own theological categories from
its own world view (i.e., its view of human, sinfulness, salvation, telos/purpose)

- Part 2: Critique the theory using the biblical and theological categories we’ve discussed in the class. Here you would not only critique some of the points from the previous part, but you could also bring up other parts of the theory that our biblical and theological categories critique.

- Part 3: Finally, here you will talk about the ways in which you would or wouldn’t use this theory in your own clinical work. You may find it very useful, or at least many parts. You may also find it entirely unhelpful. The goal is for you to understand what integration can look like practically using a theory you have an interest in. This is to be a research paper and should be treated as such. Feel free to use resources outside the class works as you see fit.

Please submit hardcopies of your paper on December 10, 2014. Your paper must have the word count on the first page. If this is missing 10 points will be deducted from the grade.

PART II: Spring 2015

1. DISCUSSION: Students will be present and participate actively throughout class presentations and discussions. Differing perspectives and questions will not be ignored, but are encouraged to be shared with the whole class. Discussion will be a major component of the class.

2. THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK PAPER: Write a 1,000-1,250-word double-spaced paper following APA style guidelines using either Murray’s or Schmemann’s book and relating the concepts to one of your clients, or one area of counseling interest or expertise (e.g. eating disorders, sexual addiction, depression, marital issues, abuse). Using the concepts in either book, discuss the vision for hope and healing for your selected counseling issue from a theological perspective and not a DSM-5 behaviorally descriptive perspective.

Please submit hardcopies of your paper on April 24, 2015. Your paper must have the word count on the first page. If this is missing 10 points will be deducted from the grade.

3. READING: Students are asked to engage in various topics through this class. Students will turn in a reading report stating what percentage of the readings they have read with reasonable care. This means actually reading it. Turn in with your Integration Paper. There may be other readings assigned that would be helpful with class.

4. THEOLOGICAL INTEGRATION PAPER: Students choose one psychological theory of interest and write a 1,500-1,750-word critique of that theory using theological categories. The paper must follow APA style guidelines. The paper should be written in three parts:
• Part 1: Explain the theory, positively explaining its own theological categories from its own world view (i.e., its view of human, sinfulness, salvation, telos/purpose)
• Part 2: Critique the theory using the biblical and theological categories we’ve discussed in the class. Here you would not only critique some of the points from the previous part, but you could also bring up other parts of the theory that our biblical and theological categories critique.
• Part 3: Finally, here you will talk about the ways in which you would or wouldn’t use this theory in your own clinical work. You may find it very useful, or at least many parts. You may also find it entirely unhelpful. The goal is for you to understand what integration can look like practically using a theory you have an interest in. This is to be a research paper and should be treated as such. Feel free to use resources outside the class works as you see fit.

Please submit hardcopies of your paper on May 15, 2015. Your paper must have the word count on the first page. If this is missing 10 points will be deducted from the grade.

READING ASSIGNMENTS and CLASS SCHEDULE

PART I: Fall 2014

Week 1 – 9/8
Horton, 11-79

Week 2 – 9/15
Horton, 80-112
Lawrence, “Systematic Theology Tools: How and Why to Think Theologically” in Biblical Theology in the Life of the Church

Week 3 - 9/22
Horton, 113-222

Week 4 – 9/29
Horton, 223-272

Week 5 – 10/6
Horton, 273-308
Reeves, 9-38

10/13 – Reading Week

Week 6 – 10/20
Horton, 309-323
Week 7 – 10/27
Holcomb and Holcomb, *Is It My Fault?*

Week 8 – 11/3
Horton, 324-372
Reeves, 39-62

Week 9 – 11/10
Horton, 373-407

Week 10 – 11/17
Horton, 407-445

Week 11 – 11/24
Horton, 446-482

Week 12 – 12/1
Horton, 483-550

Week 13 – 12/8
Murray, 9-78

**PART II: Spring 2015**

Week 1 – 2/9
Reeves, 63-84
Murray, 79-87

Week 2 – 2/16
Murray, 88-182

Week 3 – 2/23
Horton, 551-619

Week 4 – 3/2
Horton, 620-647

Week 5 – 3/9
Horton, 648-687
Reeves, 85-108

Week 6 – 3/16
Horton, 688-710
Reeves, 109-130
Holcomb and Wilkerson, “The Ministry of the Holy Spirit”

3/23 – Spring Break

Week 7 – 3/30
Holcomb and Holcomb, *Rid of My Disgrace*

Week 8 – 4/6
Horton, 711-827

Week 9 – 4/13
Schmemann

Week 10 – 4/20
Schmemann

Week 11 – 4/27
Horton, 828-905

Week 12 – 5/4
Horton, 906-956

Week 13 – 5/11
Horton, 957-990

GRADING SCALE

Listed below are the assignments that will determine your final course grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation and Attendance</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theological Framework Paper</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Report</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration Paper</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A (97-100), A- (94-96), B+ (91-93), B (88-90), B- (86-87), C+ (83-85), C (80-82), C- (78-79), D+ (75-77), D (72-74), D- (70-71), F (below 70)

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

If you should miss a class, you are expected to contact another student regarding the information covered.

Writing format: APA style, 6th edition.

Late papers will be graded down 33% for each 24 hours late.