Systematic Theology Survey for MAC
2ST501

Reformed Theological Seminary - Orlando
January 4 to January 8, 8:00AM – 5:00PM
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. This course will cover doctrines of God, revelation, creation providence, humanity, sin, Christ, salvation, Holy Spirit, Christian life, church and sacraments, and eschatology. This is a four credit hour course. Three credit hours will be taught in during January 4-8, 2016. One credit will be taught through an online format to be explained at the beginning of the course.

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, 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

- John Calvin, *Institutes*, II. 6, 9, 12, 14-16 (available online or in library if you do not have a copy of Calvin’s *Institutes*)

- “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 be made available] ISBN: 9781433515088


- *Rid of My Disgrace* (Justin Holcomb and Lindsey Holcomb) ISBN: 9781433515989


COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. 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. Due Feb 5, 2016.

2. CALVIN QUESTIONS: The questions are at the end of the syllabus. Answer each question with at least 250 words. Due January 11, 2016.

3. MURRAY QUESTIONS: The questions are at the end of the syllabus. Answer each question with at least 250 words. Due January 11, 2016

4. THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK PAPER: In *Not the Way It’s Supposed To Be*, Plantinga talks about sin as a “vandalism of shalom.” Write a 1,250 to 1,500-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 Feb 5, 2016. Your paper must have the word count on the first page. If this is missing 10 points will be deducted from the grade.

Save as YourLastName.TFP. (Sample: Smith.TFP).
5. THEOLOGICAL INTEGRATION PAPER: Students choose one psychological theory of interest and write a 2,000-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 Feb 5, 2016. Your paper must have the word count on the first page. If this is missing 10 points will be deducted from the grade.

Save as YourLastName.TIP. (Sample: Smith.TIP).

CLASS SCHEDULE (the readings listed are not on these days but listed to show how reading and course material relate)

Monday

Introduction to Systematic Theology
- Horton, pages 13-24

Theological Method
- Horton, chapter 1
- Lawrence, “Systematic Theology Tools: How and Why to Think Theologically” in Biblical Theology in the Life of the Church

Scripture
- Horton, chapter 2

God’s Attributes
- Horton, chapter 3
Tuesday

Trinity
- Horton, chapter 4
- Reeves, pages 9-38

Creation and Providence
- Horton, chapter 5
- Reeves, pages 39-62

Humanity
- Horton, chapter 5

The Fall and Sin
- Horton, chapter 6

Wednesday

The Person of Christ
- Horton, chapter 7

The Work of Christ
- Horton, chapter 8

Redemption
- Murray, entire book
- Reeves, 63-84

The Holy Spirit
- Horton, chapter 9

Thursday

Election
- Horton, chapter 10

Union with Christ
- Horton, chapter 11

Justification and Adoption
- Horton, chapter 12

Sanctification and Perseverance
- Horton, chapter 13
- Reeves, 85-108
Glorified
  • Horton, chapter 14
  • Reeves, 109-130

Friday

Word and Sacraments
  • Horton, chapter 15

Baptism and Lord’s Supper
  • Horton, chapter 16

Ecclesiology
  • Horton, chapter 17

Eschatology
  • Horton, chapter 18-19

GRADING SCALE

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Report</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calvin questions</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Murray questions</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theological Framework Paper</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theological Integration Paper</td>
<td>35</td>
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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.
READING REPORT (due before Feb 6, 2016)
For Dr. Justin Holcomb

BY (Insert Your Name)
(Insert Contact Information)

DATE: (Insert date completed)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Percentage read</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pilgrim Theology (Horton)</td>
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<td>Delighting in the Trinity (Reeves)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Redemption Accomplished and Applied (Murray)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not the Way It’s Supposed to Be (Plantinga)</td>
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<td>Rid of My Disgrace (Holcomb and Holcomb)</td>
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<td>Is It My Fault? (Holcomb and Holcomb)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Systematic Theology Tools”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Ministry of the Holy Spirit”</td>
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Questions about the readings in Calvin’s *Institutes*

Calvin, *Institutes* II. 6, 9, 12

1. Discuss briefly Calvin’s assertion that “even the old covenant declared that there is not faith in the gracious God apart from the mediator.”
2. What does Calvin mean when he says, “God has preferred us to the holy patriarchs”?
3. What are two reasons that Calvin says it was necessary that the mediator should be God and become man? Discuss briefly.

Calvin, *Institutes* II. 14-16

1. What does Calvin mean by the phrase “the communicating of properties”? Give an example.
2. Discuss briefly the blessings of Christ’s kingly office.
3. What does Calvin mean by his statement that God “loved us even when he hated us”?
Questions about John Murray’s *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*

**Part 1, chapters 1 and 2**

What are the two answers that Murray gives to the necessity of the atonement? Explain each briefly. To which views does he hold?

What does the term “passive obedience” mean?

Murray gives three aspects to the relationship between propitiation and love. What are they?

**Part 1, chapters 3 and 4**

In what way does Murray say that Roman Catholic sacrifice of the Mass contradicts what scripture teaches about the finality and the glory of Christ’s atonement?

In light of the reading, what would you say to someone who pointed to the words “all,” “ever,” and “whole” in Isaiah 53:6, Hebrews 2:9, and 1 John 2:2 to show that the atonement was universal?

Is the doctrine of limited atonement inconsistent with the full and free offer of Christ and the Gospel? Why or why not?

**Part 2, chapters 1-3**

What does Murray find to be the order of the actions in the application of redemption?

List three of the reasons that Murray lists for thinking that Calling is the first step in the application of redemption.

Does the priority of regeneration mean that a person could be regenerated and yet not converted? Explain.

**Part 2, chapters 4-6**

What does Murray mean by the statement, “The emphasis which the Scripture places upon faith as the condition of salvation is not the be construed as it faith were the only condition.”?

How is justification both a declarative and a constitutive act of God’s free grace? Give support from scripture.

What are the four things that can be said about the relationship between adoption, regeneration, and justification?
Part 2, chapters 7-9

What is the relationship between God’s working in us and in the process of salvation? Explain.

Someone comes to you with a question regarding Hebrews 6:4-6. They are concerned because the passage seems to indicate that it is possible to lose your salvation. How do you respond?
## Course Objectives Related to MAC Student Learning Outcomes

**Course:** ST501 Systematic Theology Survey for MAC  
**Professor:** Dr. Justin S. Holcomb  
**Campus:** Orlando  
**Date:** Winter 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAC Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOUNDATIONS</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Most of this courses is focused on one dimension of this learning outcome: “biblical and theological framework for counseling and soul care”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understands and applies the basic knowledge needed to be an effective counselor including: the history and philosophy of counseling/soul care, a variety of counseling models and theories, ethics and professional standards of practice, and a psychological, biblical and theological framework for counseling/soul care.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>COUNSELING, PREVENTION, AND INTERVENTION</strong></td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Some readings touch on this.</td>
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<td>Able to describe and apply the principles of mental and spiritual health, including prevention, intervention, consultation, education, and advocacy, as well as the operation of programs and networks that promote mental health in a cultural/global society.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DIVERSITY AND ADVOCACY</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>The readings regarding sexual assault and domestic violence cover this.</td>
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<td>Understands and demonstrates how living in a cultural/global society affects clients who are seeking clinical mental health counseling services, as well as the effects of sin such as racism, discrimination, sexism, power, privilege, and oppression on one’s own life and career and those of the client.</td>
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<td><strong>ASSESSMENT</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understands and applies various models and approaches to clinical evaluation and their appropriate uses, including diagnostic interviews, mental status examinations, symptom inventories, and psychoeducational and personality assessments, and is sensitive to the complications of diagnosis and interpretation of formal and informal evaluation.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RESEARCH AND EVALUATION</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Both papers require and course readings research cover this. Particularly the biblical worldview dimension.</td>
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<td>Understands and demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate research relevant to the practice of clinical mental health counseling through a biblical worldview.</td>
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<td><strong>DIAGNOSIS</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>One paper requires engagement with DSM for the purposes of evaluating through biblical and theological framework</td>
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<td>Knows and applies the principles of the diagnostic process, including differential diagnosis, and the use of current diagnostic tools, such as the current edition of the <em>Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders</em> (DSM), and evaluates them through a biblical and theological framework.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>INTEGRATION</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>One paper (the main paper for the course) is exactly this learning outcome. The class discussions are all focused on this point.</td>
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<td>Integration of biblical &amp; theological concepts with counseling practices.</td>
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