

## **Principles of Christian Theology (Rel 230 01)**

Benedict College  
Columbia, South Carolina  
Fall 2011

**Instructor:** Dr. Harry Singleton

**Office:** HRC 101; **Phone:** e4689

**Office Hours:** M-W 12pm-2pm; T-Th 12:30pm-2:30pm or by appointment

**Email:** singletonh@benedict.edu

### **Catalogue Course Description**

This course introduces the student to the nature, purpose, aims, and content of Christian theological reflection. Sources, methodologies, doctrine, and major figures and movements will be examined, both in historical and contemporary settings.

### **Extended Course Description**

This course introduces the student to the nature, purpose, aims, and content of Christian theological reflection. Careful attention will be given to the nuances and process of systematic theological construction beginning with an examination of major theologians definitions of theology and Christian theology, in particular. Sources for theological construction, theological method, doctrines, major figures and theological “schools” will be examined in both historical and contemporary settings. The course will also introduce the student to the theological perspectives of several of the major theologians of the twentieth century for the purpose of determining why their theological legacies endure to the present day. The ultimate aim of the course will be to expose the student to the various ways in which Christian faith has been articulated throughout its history with an eye toward understanding why sound theological reflection is crucial for the survival and flourishing of the faith.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to identify:

- 1) definitions of theology and Christian theology by major thinkers;
- 2) the components and process of systematic theological construction;
- 3) the major thinkers and schools of Christian theology in the twentieth century.

### **Course Requirements**

Four Exams (33% each - lowest exam score dropped)

### Exams

Learning outcomes will be determined primarily through objective exams, i.e., they will primarily consist of multiple choice questions with the possibility of some short answer questions as well. The exam material will be primarily taken from class lectures and discussions with the remaining material taken from the textbook. Students are required to take all exams on the days designated by the instructor. **Make-up exams will be given only in cases of emergency (to be determined by the instructor). If a student wishes to take a make-up exam, he/she must consult with the instructor before the scheduled exam.** Only in rare instances will the instructor permit a make-up exam if consulted after the scheduled exam.

Students have up to the next class meeting after the scheduled exam to take the make-up. No make-ups will be given after that! Students not taking either the scheduled or make-up exam will be given a numeric grade of zero for that exam. Students are also required to be on time and ready to take the exams before they are administered. Students entering the classroom after the exam has been administered will **NOT** be allowed to sit for the exam and will be given a numeric grade of zero for that exam.

#### Grade Scale

- A 100-85
- B 84-70
- C 69-60
- D 59-50
- F 49-below

#### Cheating

Cheating on exams or other assignments will not be tolerated. It will result in your immediate dismissal from this class and a failing grade for the course. These measures will be taken in addition to whatever action(s) Benedict College deems appropriate.

#### Attendance

Given that the majority of the exam material will come from class lectures and discussions, regular attendance is imperative for student success. **Therefore, students will be allowed three unexcused absences. After the third unexcused absence, a point will be deducted from the student's final average for each subsequent absence!** When in class, students are expected to take lecture notes and participate in class discussions. Students doing neither of these and constantly disrupting the general decorum of the classroom may be dismissed from the classroom by the instructor.

#### Electronic Devices

Other than a laptop or recording device for lectures, electronic devices are strictly prohibited in the classroom. **In particular, cell phones and listening devices are prohibited from use during class!** They are to be turned off before entering the classroom and not used for the duration of the class. Students in violation will be disciplined or dismissed from the class.

#### **Required Course Texts**

- Jones, Gareth, Christian Theology: A Brief Introduction. Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, Incorporated, 1999. (Originally published by Polity Press, Cambridge, England.)
- Miller, Ed L., and Stanley J. Grenz, Fortress Introduction to Contemporary Theologies. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998.

## Course Outline

### Phase I - Theology: Its Nature and Tasks

<u>Week(s)</u>	<u>Reading(s)</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>
1	Jones, Introduction	Course Introduction and Syllabus What is Theology?
2-3	Handout: Definitions Jones, Chapters 1-2	What is Christian Theology? The Nature and Necessity of Theological Reflection Review, Examination One
<u>Week(s)</u>	<u>Reading(s)</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>
4	None	<b>EXAMINATION ONE</b> Monday, September 12

### Phase II - Christian Theology: The Building Blocks

<u>Week(s)</u>	<u>Reading(s)</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>
5-6	Jones, Chapters 3-6 Handout: The Process of Theological Construction	Point of Departure Theological Method Sources of Theological Reflection
7	Jones, Chapter 7	Doctrine and Theology Review, Midterm Exam
8	None	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b> Wednesday, October 12
<b>9</b>	<b>Fall Break</b>	<b>No Classes</b>

### Phase III - Major Thinkers - The First Half of the Twentieth Century

<u>Week(s)</u>	<u>Reading(s)</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>
10	Miller, Grenz Chapter 1	Karl Barth
11	Miller, Grenz Chapters 3,4	Rudolph Bultmann Paul Tillich
12	Miller, Grenz Chapter 5	Dietrich Bonhoeffer Review, Examination Three <b>EXAMINATION THREE</b> Wednesday, November 9

**Phase IV - Major Thinkers - The Last Half of the Twentieth Century**

<u>Week(s)</u>	<u>Reading(s)</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>
13	Miller, Grenz Chapters 8-9	Jurgen Moltmann Wolfhart Pannenberg
14	AAR, Thanksgiving	NO CLASSES
15	Course Wrap-up	Review, Examination Four <b>EXAMINATION FOUR</b> Wednesday, November 30

**\*\*\*Senior Examinations\*\*\*** Monday, November 28 - Wednesday, November 30

**\*\*\*Common Final Examinations\*\*\*** Friday, December 2 - Saturday, December 3  
8AM-6PM

**\*\*\*Final Examinations\*\*\*** Monday, December 5 - Friday, December 9

**\*\*\*Commencement\*\*\*** Saturday, December 10

Although this is the stated outline, it is subject to change as dictated by either time availability or unforeseen circumstances.