



WSOLC – Western Seminary Online Campus

Course Number: THS 501E – Fall 2014
Course Title: Knowing the Triune God: Theology I
Instructor: Gerry Breshears, Ph.D.
Credit Hours: 4

COURSE SCHEDULE

This course is only offered in a 16 week schedule. You can see a “Course Schedule by Week” in this syllabus. After enrollment in the course you can see a course schedule with specific dates in the learning center for your assignments.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

You will begin to cultivate your ability to think theologically by exploring how theology is done in various approaches in order to develop a practical theological method. Then you will probe God's progressive revelation focusing on the nature and authority of Scripture before pondering God's triune nature and work. Your passion for carrying out God's mission in His world will expand as you begin to understand how the Father's revelation has impacted the world He created. 4 credit hours.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- A. You will develop a gospel-centered understanding of revelation, God and Jesus and the major historical and evangelical perspectives on these topics.
- B. You will be able to articulate clearly and defend biblically your own position on these doctrines.
- C. You will be able to assess contrary theological perspectives on these issues fairly and biblically.
- D. You will apply these theological truths to contemporary issues in life, ministry, and culture.
- E. You will develop a deeper spiritual life as you come to know God, his plans, and his purposes better.

TEXTBOOKS

M. Erickson, [*Christian Theology*](#), 3rd Ed. ISBN: 0-8010-3643-7; Retail Price: \$49.99

{optional alternative B. Demarest & G. Lewis, *Integrative Theology* ISBN: 0-310-20915-3; Retail Price: 69.99}. MSRP: \$49.99.

W. Elwell, [*Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*](#) Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001.
13: 978-0801020759. MSRP: \$59.99.

T. Tennent, [*Theology in the Context of World Christianity*](#). ISBN: 9780310275114;
Retail Price: \$24.99

Important Note: Required and recommended course texts are subject to change at any time. You are encouraged to purchase these titles through the Amazon.com associate program; you may use the links provided above, or the search option found on the Western website under "Students/Online":

<http://www.westernseminary.edu/students/online>

COURSE FORMAT

1. Course Audio/Video Materials.

Shortly after your course registration, you will receive instructions about how to download your course using the Integr@te program (not earlier than three weeks from your start date).

2. Learning Center.

You will also be given access to a web-based learning center which functions as your classroom for the course. There you will find:

- The course syllabus. **Please Note:** The syllabus in your learning center is the governing course syllabus. Syllabi downloaded from the seminary website, or received from any other source, are for informational purposes only.
- A week-by-week schedule to help you successfully complete the course on time with the least amount of stress. To discuss changing the assignment due dates within the schedule, please contact Jon Raibley: jraibley@westernseminary.edu.
- A progress report for each lesson, by which you will indicate whether you completed your lesson requirements. While still allowing great scheduling flexibility, progress reports help us help you should you begin to fall behind.
- Assignment summaries and links for uploading assignments.
- Links to discussion forums, your course instructor and other students, the distance learning support team, as well as links to other helpful communication and instructional resources.

3. Responsibilities.

Before the end of the first week of the session, you need to log onto the online learning center to complete and upload the course affirmation file. By federal law, we now need to ensure that students participate in courses for the full length of the course. So failure to complete the course affirmation on-time will result in a loss of course points and may impact your financial aid eligibility.

Students will receive on-time completion points for finishing their course work according to the schedule. This means students in the 8 week sessions are required to have all their course work into their course instructor by the end of week 7. Students in the 16 week sessions are required to have all their work into their course

instructor by the end of week 15. If you have not been granted an extension, graded assignments turned in after 8:00 a.m. on Monday of the final week may be subject to a late penalty of up to 10% per day. No online completion points will be granted after that time.

4. Course Instructor.

You will be assigned a course instructor who will participate as appropriate in classroom activities; review, grade, and provide feedback on course assignments; and interact with you on any questions you have about the course. When you receive your course materials, you will also receive contact information for your course instructor. Please contact your course instructor within two weeks of your course start date and maintain regular contact throughout the course.

ASSIGNMENTS

- 1. Participation Requirements.** For each lesson, complete the items as instructed in your learning center, and submit the progress report verifying that you've done so. These progress reports are our primary means of verifying your attendance, and each is worth up to one point toward your final grade. If the progress report is submitted by the due date on your course schedule, you'll receive 100% of the report grade. If you submit the progress report late, but within two weeks of the due date, you will receive 80%. If you submit the progress report more than two weeks late, you will receive 50%. And, of course, if you fail to submit a progress report at all, you will receive 0%. Certain changes are allowed within the course schedule, to allow for flexibility. You may contact Jon Raibley for details: jraibley@westernseminary.edu.

In addition, you are to complete three activities that will allow us to verify your participation at key points within the course, in compliance with federal regulations. Failure to complete these activities within the designated times may impact the amount or timing of federal financial aid you receive.

- First week participation: Within the first week of the posted course dates, complete and upload the affirmation file.
- On-time verification. By the date listed in the schedule, submit your final assignments and complete the verification assignment, to confirm that you finished the course work on time.
- Course evaluation and reflection. Within the final week of the posted course dates, complete the course evaluation and reflection assignment; a link will be emailed to you at that time.

Points: **35** points possible (23 for progress reports, 2 for affirmation file, 10 for on-time verification)

1. Reading Assignments

- a. The assigned reading is listed near the end of this syllabus.
- b. Read the three articles from *EDT* in each lesson's listing which will be most beneficial to you.

- c. Certain reading assignments are required for students who desire an A grade and optional for others. These are marked as such in the reading list.
- d. All assigned readings will be done at the mastery level. Reading at this level will average about 20 pages per hour and assumes careful reflective interaction with the ideas, note taking and will lead to accountability in class, papers and tests at a mastery level. 1000 pages = 50 hours.
- e. Each reading assignment should be completed before the class lesson so that you will be able to benefit from the class discussion. Completion of the reading assignments will be reported on the form provided.
- f. Reading is considered on time if it is done before the test for its section. Assignments completed on time will earn 3 points per lesson. Assignments completed late (i.e., after viewing the lecture) will earn 2 points each per lesson.
- g. Class notes: Each lesson contains two sets of notes: a fill-in-the-blank version and a full outline.

Time: **55** hours estimated time.

Points: **69** points possible.

2. Scripture Meditation

You will spend time meditating on biblical passages relevant to the various topics we will cover in the class. You will thoughtfully, prayerfully and theologically read each lesson's passage for two periods of about 15 minutes each. This is to preserve the impact of the meditation, journal your personal reflections on the passages. Rather than summaries of the passages, focus on how our lives and ministries have been (or should be) impacted by the truths we have meditated on. We'd like you to share these with your grader as a point of accountability and as a way of letting him or her get to know you better. Your online learning center contains links for uploading your journals.

Time: **18** hours estimated time.

Points: **26** points possible.

3. Phone Discussions

Three times during the course, prior to taking each exam, you will have a telephone conversation with Gerry. This is an opportunity for you to ask questions, clarify issues, and for him to help finalize your understanding of key ideas before the exam. Your course website will walk you through the process of scheduling these calls.

Time: **15** hours estimated time.

Points: **30** points possible.

4. Doctrinal Statements

You will write a succinct statement of *your own* personal doctrinal commitment for each section of the course: (double spaced)

- A statement covering **revelation and inspiration** less than two pages long will be due with the first examination,

- A statement covering **person and work of God** about two pages long will be due with the second exam,
- One covering the **person of Christ** about one page long will be due with the third exam.
- You should review the handout, provided with your course materials, for issues to be covered. You will also see examples of doctrinal statements can be found at the links below. These are not to be copied, but will help you see some formatting and content options.

Time: **15** hours estimated time.

Points: **90** points possible.

5. Examinations

Three examinations will be given. The first will cover the prolegomena and revelation section of the course. The second will cover doctrine of God. The third will cover the person of Christ. Examples and study guides can be found in the course folder.

The first section of each exam will be specific multiple choice or short answer questions covering the content of both readings and class discussions in that section of the course (60 points). The second section will be a state and defend question (20 points). Several possible questions are listed on the study sheet. On state and defend questions you will be expected to state your own position on a specific question carefully, to support it with Scripture and relevant arguments, and to answer significant objections.

Time: **24** hours estimated time.

Points: **240** points possible.

GRADING SCALE:

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-
99-100%	95-98%	93-94%	91-92%	88-90%	86-87%
C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-
84-85%	81-83%	79-80%	77-78%	74-76%	70-73%

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

Assignment	Apx. Hours	Due by Lesson	Points Possible
1. Participation Requirements	53	Weekly	23
Course Lectures			
Policy Affirmation, On Time Verification, Course Evaluation			12

2. Reading	55	End date	69
3. Scripture meditation	18	End date	26
4. Conference calls		Approximately:	
Prolegomena/revelation	5	10	10
Person and work of God	5	19	10
Person of Christ	5	End date	10
5. Doctrinal statements			
Prolegomena/revelation	5	10	30
Person and work of God	5	19	30
Person of Christ	5	End date	30
6. Exams			
Prolegomena/revelation	8	10	80
Person and work of God	8	19	80
Person of Christ	8	End date	80
Total	180		490

COURSE SEQUENCE

Important: See the course schedule in the learning center for the due dates of your assignments.

Week	Lessons	Assignments & Notes
1	1. Laying the Foundation of Theology	(For each lesson, complete the progress report) Evangelical Dictionary of Theology. Read the following: Dogmatics, & Systematic Theology (Required for those pursuing an "A", found in your reading packet on your course disk or in the learning center: Stott, "Theology: Multidimensional Discipline"; Kantzer, "Systematic Theology as a Practical Discipline")
2	2. Theological Method 3. World Views	Systematic theology text: All students read the following: Lewis & Demarest, 7-58. Students reading Erickson: read Erickson, chapters 1-3: pp. 3-67 [Second Edition: 17-84]. Students reading Lewis/Demarest also read Erickson, 45-67 [Second Edition: 62-84] Evangelical Dictionary of Theology. Read the following: Naturalism, Secularism, & Civil Religion Reading Resources, contained in the Reading Packet: "Bible and World Religions" <i>ESV Study Bible</i> 2623-2630; Kirk, "'A Secular Age' In A Mission Perspective" <i>Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies</i> July 2011 vol. 28 no. 3 172-181, Paul Hiebert, "American World View" Tennent, <i>Theology in the Context of World Christianity</i> , 1-22, 249-272 (Required for those pursuing an "A", found in your reading packet on your course disk or in the learning center: Stott, <i>Decisive Issues Facing Christians Today</i> , 29-60") Meditation Journal Passage: Galatians 3:16 – 4:6
3	4. Systems in Theology	Systematic theology text: Erickson, chapters 4-5: pp. 68-117 [Second Edition: 115-173] Evangelical Dictionary of Theology: Read three of the following: Barth, Dispensationalism, Myth, Bultmann, Evangelicalism, Neo-Orthodoxy, Calvin, Existentialism, Nihilism, Calvinism, Fundamentalism, Orthodox Tradition, Covenant, Liberation Theology, Process Theology, Covenant

6	<p>10. Knowing God</p> <p>11. Attributes of God</p>	<p>Evangelical Dictionary of Theology: Read three of the following: Agnosticism Dualism God pages 500-508 (1st edition, pp 451-468) Atheism, Essence, Monotheism, Deism, God, Argument for the Existence of, Theism Reading Resources contained in the Reading Packet: A.W. Tozer, "The Knowledge of the Holy"</p> <p>Systematic theology text: Erickson, chapters 12-13, pp. 254-290 [Second Edition: 309-345] OR Demarest & Lewis 215-248 Tennent, <i>Theology in the Context of World Christianity</i>, 25-49 Reading Resources, contained in the Reading Packet: Pinnock, <i>The Openness of God</i>, pp. 101-125" (Required for those pursuing an "A": Bruce Ware, "An Evangelical Reformulation of the Doctrine of the Immutability of God" http://www.etsjets.org/files/JETS-PDFs/29/29-4/29-4-pp431-446_JETS.pdf)</p> <p>Meditation Journal Passage: Isaiah 40:1-31 Doctrinal Statement 1: Revelation & Inspiration Due Exam #1 Due</p>
7	<p>12. Reflecting on God's Attributes</p> <p>13. Trinity</p>	<p>Evangelical Dictionary of Theology. Read three of the following: Eternity; Glory; Good; Impassibility of God; Love; Natural Theology; Nominalism; Pantheism; Panentheism; Polytheism; Realism Reading Resources, contained in the Reading Packet: Boyd, <i>God of the Possible</i>, 89-112; Bruce Ware, "On Opening What's Closed & Closing What's Open" Matt Chandler, "Forgiveness Jam" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kOafjgExUUE</p> <p>Meditation Journal Passage: Exodus 34:1-9</p> <p>Systematic theology text: Erickson, chapter 14 pp. 291-313 [Second Edition: 346-367] OR Demarest & Lewis 251-289 Evangelical Dictionary of Theology: Read three of the following: Chalcedon - Council of, Hypostasis, Preexistence of Christ, Eternal Generation, Monarchianism, Subordinationism, Filioque, Nicea -Council of, Trinity, Holy Spirit, Only Begotten, Homoousian, Perichoresis (Required for those pursuing an A: Plantinga, "The Threeness/Oneness Problem of the Trinity")</p> <p>Meditation Journal Passage: John 14:1-31</p>
8		
9	<p>14. Decree</p> <p>15. Election</p>	<p>Systematic theology text: Erickson, chapter 15, pp. 317-336 [Second Edition: 371-390] OR Demarest & Lewis 293-335 Evangelical Dictionary of Theology: Read three of the following: Cause, Causation, Sovereignty of God, Will of God, Decrees of God Reading Resources, contained in the Reading Packet: A.W. Tozer, "The Sovereignty of God"; Cottrell, "The Classical Arminian View Of Predestination." Introduction, Sections I and III, conclusion [pp. 1-19, 23- 41, 49]; Piper, "Are There Two Wills in God?" at http://www.desiringgod.org/resource-library/articles/are-there-two-wills-in-god McCall, "I Believe in Divine Sovereignty" http://bit.ly/LqzeQs</p> <p>Evangelical Dictionary of Theology: Read three of the following: Elect, Election, Freedom, Free Will, Determinism, Foreknowledge, Predestination, Will of God</p> <p>Meditation passage: Psalm 33 Exam 2 Due before Lesson 19 (schedule a call with Gerry before the exam).</p>

		<p>Watch the debate between Tim Callahan and Gary Habermas on Youtube, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yCsPpRp63Nc and http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UewOU4CuiXo&NR=1 You can find more of Dr. Habermas' material beginning here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YsrqFmEPUnw</p> <p>Meditation passage: Luke 23:33-24:53 Call 3: Christology</p>
14		<p>Reading Report Due Exam 3: Christology (also okay in week 15) Doctrinal Statement 3: Christology (also okay in week 15)</p>
15		<p>On-time Verification Due</p>
16		<p>Course Evaluation and Reflection. If you have not been granted an extension, graded assignments turned in after 8:00 a.m. on Monday of the final week may be subject to a late penalty of up to 10% per day.</p>

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance and Late Assignments: Student will receive on-time completion points for finishing their course according to the schedule. Students in the 8 week sessions are required to have all their course work into their course instructor by end of week 7. Students in the 16 week sessions are required to have all their work into their course instructor by end of week 15. If you have not been granted an extension, graded assignments turned in after 8:00 a.m. on Monday of the final week may be subject to a late penalty of up to 10% per day. No online completion points will be granted after that time.

Copyright Violation and Plagiarism: Research in secondary sources for the written project is permitted and welcomed. However, any appropriation of either ideas or wording taken from other sources, whether print or electronic, must be properly footnoted. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism which can result in substantial grade reduction or failure. Any unauthorized copying or use of copyrighted materials, including downloaded files of various kinds, can result in criminal charges and fines. For a fuller explanation of these issues or WS's copyright policy, see the Copyright Issues and Cheating" section of the Student Handbook: <http://www.westernseminary.edu/academic/handbook-copyright>.

Incompletes/Extensions:

In the case of serious illness, family emergency, or other extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control, students may request one course extension of no more than 4 weeks. Registration for a distance education course is conditional upon the successful completion of any current course you are taking. If you have received an extension for your current course, you are expected to finish your current courses before your next Online Campus course start date to stay registered.

If students face a personal emergency that requires requesting an extension going beyond the end of the semester, it may affect their ability to receive financial aid in the next semester, and they may face the possibility that their next semester's course registrations will be cancelled. Please contact the Financial Aid Office for assistance.

Audit/Enrichment Students: Enrichment students are encouraged, but not

obligated, to participate in assignments and class discussions. Professors are not obligated to grade participation for these students, but may opt to do so depending on class size.

The Availability of Disability Services at Western Seminary: Western Seminary is committed to responding to the needs of students with disabilities as outlined in both the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Western students are assisted individually as their needs dictate. It is the responsibility of students with disabilities to identify themselves and the nature of the disability. Any student who has a disability should contact the seminary's Disability (Section 504) Coordinator, Ashley Mitchell, at 503-517-1819/1-877-517-1800, ext. 1819. Her office is at the Portland campus. Students at the northern California campuses may contact Student Services Coordinator – San Jose or Director of Student Services – Sacramento, or they may contact Ms Mitchell directly. Appropriate forms will be provided and must be submitted to the Disability Coordinator's office.

Questions regarding this course or its materials should be directed to:

Western Seminary Online Campus
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Attn: Jon Raibley, Email: jraibley@westernseminary.edu
1-800-893-8567 - In Portland: 503-517-1899