I. Course Description

This course is a survey of Christian theology for students in professional counseling. Building upon key themes in biblical theology, the course gives students an overview of Christian doctrines, with special attention to issues important in counseling. The course is designed to expose students to a variety of theological perspectives so that they can develop a coherent theological framework for themselves as Christian professionals and so that they can engage the religious views of Christian clients with integrity and respect.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

As a result of this course, students will be able to do the following:

I. Knowledge Objectives
   1-8 Not assessed.
   9a. Acknowledge and reflect on the theological lenses through which they view the world.
   9b. Identify the perspectives and contributions of various Christian traditions on significant theological issues.
   9c. Develop a coherent theological perspective from which to engage in the counseling task.

II. Professional Skills Objectives
   1. Not assessed.
   2. Draw upon theological concepts to construct meaning in a representative counseling situation.
   3-6 Not assessed.

III. Personal Attributes Objective
   1. Not assessed.
   2. Engage differing theological views with integrity and respect.
   3-4 Not assessed.

III. Course Requirements

A. Textbooks (in addition to the Bible):

Additional readings and handouts will be required at the discretion of the instructor.
B. Attendance
According to the Student Handbook, attendance at all class sessions is expected, unless the professor has been notified in advance and has approved the absence. Students should be on time and should stay through the duration of all classes. Any student missing more than six class hours (2 weeks) will be required to do additional work, receive a lower grade, audit or withdraw from the class, or be penalized otherwise at the discretion of the professor.

C. Assignments/Assessment of Student Learning

- **Class participation.** In-class time will be heavily devoted to discussion of the readings and application to students’ personal and professional settings. Therefore, please come to class having read the material and be prepared to participate. Participation will be graded on the quality of your contributions to the ongoing conversation.

- **Reading quizzes.** Every week except for the first week, you will be given a short quiz that is worth 10 points and covers the readings due for that week. Quizzes will be made accessible in a take-home format, will be open-book/open-note, and will be due by 5pm on the day of each class.
  - Questions will be multiple choice, matching, fill in the blank, or short answer.

- **Credo.** You will write a statement of faith throughout the quarter on the theological areas covered by the course. The purpose is to integrate the course material from your own perspective. The credo will be submitted in six parts:
  
  - **Part 1:** What are your theological “lenses”? How do your context, theological tradition, and experience affect the way you think theologically? Length: ½-1 page
  - **Part 2:** What do you believe about God, creation, and the problem of evil? Length: 2-3 pages
  - **Part 3:** What do you believe about humanity and sin? Length: 2-3 pages
  - **Part 4:** What do you believe about Jesus and atonement? Length: 2-3 pages
  - **Part 5:** What do you believe about the Holy Spirit, salvation, and the church? Length: 2-3 pages
  - **Part 6:** What do you believe about personal and corporate eschatology? Length: 2-3 pages

Specific questions for you to answer in each part will be distributed in class. Credos will be graded on clarity, coherence, depth of insight, constructive engagement with course content, and faithfulness to Scripture. You need not do any additional research for this assignment, but any sources you do use must be appropriately documented in the text. Any Biblical references should be documented in parentheses in the text. Credos should use gender-inclusive language about people and should conform to APA style. See the ATS Writing Handbook. **Due dates:** See course schedule.
• **Case study.** Choose one of the case studies supplied by the instructor on the first day of class. Discuss the theological issues involved in the case from your own perspective. **Length:** 6-8 pages.
  - In your discussion, draw upon the Bible, course texts, class lectures, and at least three other sources. The secondary resources should represent biblical and theological scholarship rather than scholarly or popular counseling literature.
  - The objective is to develop a coherent and thoughtful theological discussion in your own voice, supported by biblical evidence, careful reasoning, and selected theological scholarship. Don’t simply quote biblical verses but set forth the relevant theological content from your own perspective.
  - *Do not discuss how you would counsel the person in the case study.* *Do not refer to counseling theories or psychological insights.* Instead, construct a theological framework that would equip you to think theologically about this person’s situation. Make sure you connect the theological discussion with the issues in the case study.
  - Include one paragraph that reflects on how your own presuppositions and religious tradition would inform your understanding of the issues.
  - Document all uses of secondary sources (including course texts, lectures, and handouts) in APA style (**must include page numbers**). Any statements taken directly from secondary sources must be enclosed in quotation marks. Biblical references should be documented in parentheses. The paper must conform to the seminary’s Writing Handbook.

**D. Calculation of Grade and Connection of Learning Outcomes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Percent of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>III.2</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>I.9b</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credo</td>
<td>I.9a; I.9c</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>I.9a; II.2</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IV. Course Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Lecture/Topics</th>
<th>Readings/Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aug. 24</td>
<td>Introduction <em>Thinking Theologically as Professional Counselors</em></td>
<td>Holeman, chapter 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stiver, ch.1; ch.2 (pp.52-58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Quiz due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sep. 7</td>
<td>NO CLASS – LABOR DAY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sep. 14</td>
<td>What is God Like? <em>The Trinity</em></td>
<td>Holeman, chapter 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stiver, chapter 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Quiz due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Credo Part 1 due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sep. 21</td>
<td>How Does God Relate to the</td>
<td>Stiver, chapter 5 (pp.163-181)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>Required Reading</td>
<td>Further Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep. 28</td>
<td>World? Creation</td>
<td>Holeman, chapter 3</td>
<td>Quiz due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 5</td>
<td>What Does It Mean to be Human? Humanity</td>
<td>Stiver, chapter 6</td>
<td>Quiz due, Credo Part 2 due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 12</td>
<td>What Is the Human Problem? Sin</td>
<td>Stiver, chapter 6</td>
<td>Quiz due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 19</td>
<td>Why Do Bad Things Happen? The Problem of Evil</td>
<td>Holeman, chapter 7, Stiver, ch. 5 (pp.181-206)</td>
<td>Quiz due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 26</td>
<td>What Is the Solution? I Jesus and the Kingdom</td>
<td>Stiver, chapter 7</td>
<td>Quiz due, Credo Part 3 due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 9</td>
<td>How Can We Become Whole? Salvation I</td>
<td>Stiver, chapter 8, Green, “Salvation as Healing”</td>
<td>Quiz due, Credo Part 4 due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 16</td>
<td>What Does Wholeness Look Like? Salvation II</td>
<td>Holeman, chapters 4-5, Colijn, “Sanctification”</td>
<td>Quiz due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 23</td>
<td>NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 30</td>
<td>Do Our Lives Have Purpose? The Church</td>
<td>Stiver, chapter 9</td>
<td>Quiz due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 7</td>
<td>Do We Have Reason to Hope? Life After Life After Death &amp; The New Creation</td>
<td>Stiver, chapter 10, Van Biema, “Christians Wrong About Heaven”, Holeman, Postscript</td>
<td>Quiz due, Case study due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 14</td>
<td>Benediction Christian Theology and Professional Counseling Revisited</td>
<td></td>
<td>Credo Part 6 due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. Recommendations for Lifelong Learning
For ongoing growth in the ability to think theologically about the counseling context, read some of the books in the bibliography, and search out works by counseling professionals who try to integrate theology into their approach to counseling. Mark McMin is a good example. Take advantage of seminars offered through the seminary. Check out articles in the *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*.

VI. Seminary Guidelines

**A. ATS Academic Integrity Policy**

Ashland Theological Seminary expects each student to uphold the Seminary’s core value of academic excellence by contributing to an environment that is both challenging and supportive. In such an environment a student will neither seek nor offer improper assistance. All students have an obligation to be forthright in their academic endeavors and to respect ethical standards. The work that one submits for academic evaluation must be one’s own, unless an instructor expressly permits certain types of collaboration. Academic integrity requires that each student will use one’s own capabilities to achieve one’s fullest potential and will neither offer nor accept aid that is not in keeping with regularly accepted standards of academic integrity. Failure to conform to this conduct shall constitute academic dishonesty. The full Academic Integrity Policy statement may be found in the *Student Handbook*.

**B. Academic Support Services**

If you need assistance with writing projects for your coursework, contact the ATS Academic Support Center. The center provides free sessions with a peer consultant who can help you with all of your concerns about academic support including writing, critical thinking, documentation, reading skills, study skills, test taking skills, time management. Contact the center if you have a question about how to complete your assignment, if you have documentation questions, or if you would like to have your paper evaluated for areas needing improvement. The ATS Academic Support Center can be reached at 419-289-5162 or by e-mail at atswc@ashland.edu.

**C. Students with Disabilities**

Ashland University makes every effort to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students who have a specific physical, psychiatric or learning disability and require accommodations are encouraged to inform their instructors of their needs early in the semester so that learning needs can be appropriately met. It is the student’s responsibility to document the disability with Disability Services in The Center for Academic Support on the 7th floor of the Ashland University Library, 419-289-5904.

**D. ATS Grading Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>97-100</td>
<td>Superior achievement of course objectives, diligence and originality, high degree of freedom from error, outstanding evidence of ability to utilize course knowledge, initiative expressed in preparing and completing assignments, positive contributions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A-  92-96  verbalized in class.
B+  89-91
B   86-88  Good work submitted, commendable achievement of course objectives, some aspects of the course met with excellence, substantial evidence of ability to utilize course material, positive contributions verbalized in class, consistency and thoroughness of work completed.
B-  83-85
C+  80-82
C   77-79  Acceptable work completed, satisfactory achievement of course objectives, demonstrating at least some ability to utilize course knowledge, satisfactory class contribution.
C-  74-76
D+  71-73
D   68-70  Passing but minimal work, marginal achievement of course objectives, poor performance in comprehension of work submitted, inadequate class contributions.
D-  65-67
F   Below 65  Unacceptable work resulting in failure to receive class credit, inadequacy of work submitted or of performance and attendance in class.

VII. Selected Bibliography

Theological Dictionaries


Systematic Theology


**Ethics**