

CTH 5520: CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD

ASHLAND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Spring 2025, January 6 – May 1

Tuesdays 1p-4p; In-person

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Office hours: Teams or in person by appointment

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course addresses the traditional topics of systematic theology as a narrative of salvation history. It is designed to equip students with a comprehensive and coherent theological frame.

Further information: This course uses Blackboard for assignment submission. See the assignment chart for due dates; **all assignments must be submitted by 11:59pm on the date they are due.** To access Blackboard, go to <https://ashland.blackboard.com> and login. Please contact the professor **immediately** if on the first day of the semester you cannot access the Blackboard course. If you have questions, send me an email to schedule virtual office hours via Teams. ☺

II. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1-3 Not assessed

4a. Articulate basic theological concepts.

4b. Analyze theological claims in light of Scripture, tradition(s), and experience.

4c. Describe the foundation of their own theology.

4d. Reflect theologically on a particular issue of interest.

5-6 Not assessed

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Required Textbooks

Daniel Migliore. *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, *4th edition (required edition). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2023. ISBN: 978-0802882851

Maria Clara Bingemer. *Latin American Theology: Roots and Branches*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2016. ISBN: 978-1626981843

Walter Brueggemann. *Peace*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2001. ISBN: 978-0827238282

Donald Kraybill, *The Upside Down Kingdom*. 5th edition. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2011. ISBN: 9781513802497 *a more recent edition is advised

Karin Spiecker Stetina. *How to Read Theology for All Its Worth: A Guide for Students*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2020. ISBN: 978-0310093824

B. Assignments/Assessments of Student Learning

This course includes weekly in-person lectures and discussion, assigned reading and viewing of media content, and completing assignments by the due date. All course content will be organized and posted in modules on Blackboard (i.e. Week 1, Week 2, Week 3). Please log in and complete the course readings and assignments in preparation for class time and to meet the requirements for the course each week. **Attendance of each class is required.** Completing the week's reading assignments before attending class is required to participate in class discussion. **All assignments must be submitted by 11:59pm on the due date to avoid late penalty.** The late penalty is 10% for 1-7 days the assignment is late.

For all assignments, any sources **must** be appropriately documented **in the text**. All such material must be quoted exactly using quotation marks or paraphrased completely and a proper citation. Any biblical references should be documented in parentheses in the text. All written assignments should include correct formatting: one-inch margins on all sides, 12-point font only, and standard academic fonts should be used—times new roman or arial. Papers should use gender-inclusive language about people and should conform to SBL (Society of Biblical Literature) writing style. You can find the SBL Citation handbook [HERE](#):

Overview of Assignments:

1 - Examination of Theologians & Textbooks

- Brueggeman, *Peace* = 20%
- Kraybill, *Upside Down Kingdom* = 20%
- Bingemer, *Latin American Theology* = 20%

2 - Final Analysis Paper = 40%

Detailed Course Assignments:

1 - Examination of Theologians & Textbooks - Three Reports on the

The student will complete and Examination of three theologians and textbooks (Brueggemann, Kraybill, and Bingemer) using the manual, *How to Read Theology for All Its Worth* by Karin Spiecker Stetina. A full assignment guide and grading rubric will be provided during the second week of the semester. See attached Assignment Chart for due dates for each report.

2 – Five Stage Final Analysis Paper

The student will complete a *theological analysis* of a particular question or problem that interests them. The purpose of the project is for the student to develop **their own theology** about the topic based on retrieval of resources, including theological, biblical, tradition, and experiential in nature. Feedback will be given on each step of the assignment. A full assignment guide and grading rubric will be provided during the fifth week of the semester. See attached Assignment Chart for due dates for each report.

Overview of the Final Theological Analysis Paper (12-15 pages): Discuss the results of your investigation **using the following seven headings**. The questions below should help to describe the contents of each section. Each section will stand more or less on its own and should make an argument in your own voice, presenting your own claims and conclusions backed up with solid supporting evidence from your research. (40% of final project)

1 – Description of the Study. What is your research question, and why did you want to investigate it? Why might it be a significant question to answer (and for whom)?

2 – Theological Resources: What recent theological writings deal with your topic? Is it often or rarely discussed? What different perspectives on your topic have you discovered? Is there any consensus? What have you concluded about your research question from your study of theological resources?

3 – Resources from Tradition: What events or writings from church history (including your own tradition) illuminate your topic? Has your topic been especially important at certain times or places? Is there a consensus about your topic in church history? Has it been a matter of controversy? What have you concluded about your research question from your study of historical sources?

4 – Biblical Resources: What biblical passages or themes shed light on your topic? What have you concluded about your research question from your study of scripture and biblical study resources?

5 – Resources from Experience: Are there any other disciplines that shed light on your topic? Do you have any personal experience that has a bearing on your topic? What have you concluded about your research question from experiential sources?

6 – Conclusions: What do you conclude from your research and thinking? What is the answer to your research question? This is your thesis statement: the one-sentence answer to your research question. You should expand upon your thesis statement to explain it more fully. Are there still unanswered questions? Do you see any need for further research or thinking?

7 – Application: How might your conclusions make a difference in the lives of individual Christians, the church, or the world?

Rubric for Final Analysis Paper

Grading Criteria	Meets Expectations	Mostly Meets Expectations	Meets Minimal Expectations	Does not Meet Expectations
1 – Completion	All stated requirements of the assignment are addressed (15 points)	One requirement is met, second is superficially addressed (12 points)	One requirement is missed, or both superficially addressed (8 points)	Fails to address the requirements of the assignment (0 points)
2 – Sources	A thorough amount of evidence is drawn upon to support claims	Provides reasonable amount of evidence (28 points)	Provides minimal amount of evidence (21 points)	Fails to provide evidence (0 points)

	(authors, quotes, paraphrases, and citations plus bibliography) (35 points)			
3 – Analysis	Provides a substantial, detailed analysis of presented ideas and demonstrates a nuanced and substantial understanding of author’s key concepts (35 points)	Provides some thoughtful, detailed analysis of ideas (28 points)	Provides minimal analysis of ideas (21 points)	Fails to provide analysis or connections of ideas and themes (0 points)
4 – Writing	Writing is clear and free from grammatical, spelling, and mechanical errors and follows required formatting (15 points)	Writing has a few errors and typos, but does not impact readability (12 points)	Writing has repeated grammatical errors that makes paper difficult to understand at times (8 points)	Writing has extensive grammatical errors that makes paper unreadable (0 points)

C. Calculation of Grade and Connection of Learning Outcomes

Assignment	Percentage	Student Learning Outcome
Reports of the Examination of Theologians & Textbooks		4a, 4b
Brueggeman	20%	4a,4b
Kraybill	20%	4a, 4b
Bingemer	20%	4a, 4b
Final Analysis Paper	40%	4b,4c,4d
Total	100%	

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE

<i>Wk</i>	<i>Week of...</i>	<i>Lecture/Topics</i>	<i>Readings/Assignments</i>
1	1/6	Welcome & Introductions Introduction to the Task of Theology	Migliore, "A Letter to My Readers" Migliore, chap 1
2	1/13	What is Revelation?	Migliore, chap 2; Appendix E Stetina, chap 1-2
3	1/20	The [<i>problem of</i>] Authority of Scripture	Migliore, chap 3 Stetina, chap 3-5
4	1/27	The Triune God	Migliore, chap 4 Stetina, chap 6-8
5	2/3	The Good Creation	Migliore, chap 5 Brueggemann Report due, Th 11:59pm
6	2/10	Sin; Evil and Suffering; Vandalism of Shalom:	Migliore, chap 6
7	2/17	Humanity as Creature, Sinner, and New Being: Theological Anthropology	Migliore, chap 7 Research Topic due, Th 11:59pm
8	2/24	The Person & Work of Jesus: Christology and Soteriology	Migliore, chap 8 Bingemer Report due, Th 11:59pm
	3/3	Spring Break – No class	
9	3/10	Confessing Jesus Christ in Context: Flourishing, Political/Feminist Theologies; Cosmic Redemption	Migliore, chaps 9-10 Research Proposal due, Th 11:59pm
10	3/17	The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life: Pneumatology	Migliore, chap 11 <i>Research & Writing Workshop</i>
11	3/24	Church as New Community: Ecclesiology	Migliore, chap 12 Stage 3 due, Th 11:59pm
12	3/31	Church as Kingdom Community: Mission, Purpose, Sign & Instrument	Franke, chap 3-4 Kraybill Report due, Th 11:59pm
13	4/7	Preaching and Practices of the Community	Migliore, chap 13 Stage 4 due, Th 11:59pm
14	4/14	Christian Hope	Migliore, chap 15

15	4/21	Last Things & Review	Migliore, Appendices A-D
--	4/28	No class	Final Analysis Paper, Monday 4/28

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

It is challenging for scholars and ministry leaders to keep up with the current literature in theology and church practices. We cannot read the vast amount of published content made available to us every year. Instead, you may find it a helpful practice to request the spring and fall catalogues from key publishing houses and browse the titles and short descriptions of the most current published books to keep abreast of the broad conversations in the field of theology. Invest time in the books and authors which are most applicable to your interests and ministry context. Additionally, there are book review sites by scholars (www.readingreligion.org; www.catholicbooksreview.org) and peer reviewed journals made available to further help you decide where to invest your time. A bibliography at the end of the syllabus provides many resources that may prove helpful in this journey.

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. ATS Grading Scale

Grade	Quality	Percent	Description
A	4.0	97-100	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 verbalized in class.
A-	3.7	92-96	
B+	3.3	89-91	
B	3.0	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-	2.7	83-85	
C+	2.3	80-82	
C	2.0	77-79	Acceptable work completed, satisfactory achievement of course objectives, demonstrating at least some ability to utilize course knowledge, satisfactory class contribution.
C-	1.7	74-76	
D+	1.3	71-73	
D	1.0	68-70	Passing but minimal work, marginal achievement of course objectives, poor performance in comprehension of work submitted, inadequate class contributions.
D-	0.7	65-67	
F	0.0	Below 65	Unacceptable work resulting in failure to receive class credit, inadequacy of work submitted or of performance and attendance in class.

C. Attendance

Attendance for the entirety of every class session (whether in-person or online) and full engagement in learning activities is required, except in the case of an emergency or with prior approval from the instructor. Attendance in online courses includes full participation in all assignments, such as viewing videos and posting in forums. Any work missed due to an excused absence must be made up by the student (quizzes, tests, papers, etc.). All work missed due to an unexcused absence may not be made up. Missing more than 13% of the class (e.g., equivalent to 6 hours of participation for a 3 credit course) will result in the course changing to audit. Any student missing more than 33% of a course (e.g. the equivalent of 5 weeks) will be dropped from the course or may choose to audit the course. Failure to follow the class assignment timetable can also result in penalties. Appropriate childcare must be arranged to allow for full class attendance, whether in-person or online. Legal and safety issues prevent students from bringing children to campus/class.

D. Attendance Reporting:

Students are required to participate in a course related activity in the first and third weeks of the course. Students may be administratively withdrawn from the course and/or may lose financial aid benefits if a qualifying activity has not occurred between the student and the course work or faculty within the first three days of the course. Simply logging into a course online via the Learning Management System (LMS) is not considered a qualifying activity.

Student non-participation during the first 8 days of a course may initiate the administrative course withdrawal process. Student non-participation, mid-course, for 14 consecutive days may also initiate the administrative course withdrawal process.

According to policies and procedures set forth by Ashland University's Department for Veterans' Services, AU will grant any service member requiring more than a 30-day leave a release from coursework. Contact the Office of Veterans' Services for more information regarding this process.

E. Accessibility Resources and Accommodations

It is Ashland University's goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on a disability, please contact the Student Accessibility Center at [419-289-5904](tel:419-289-5904), or send an email to au-sac@ashland.edu. The Student Accessibility Center office and the course instructor will work together in order to establish accommodations and to meet your learning needs.

F. ATS Library

The Ashland Theological Librarians are available to help with your research project or assignment in-person or online. How? Schedule an appointment, email Sarah Thomas or Daniel O'Brien at ats-library@ashland.edu, or call at 419-289-5169.

G. Writing and Communication Center (WCC)

The Writing and Communication Center (WCC) can help you brainstorm, draft, and revise your writing and communication assignments in your graduate classes. All graduate consultants have a graduate degree and extensive experience with writing center theory and practice and can advise you online or in person. The aim of our service is to support and mentor students as they explore ways to improve their graduate-level academic writing and communication skills.

- Receive one-on-one feedback from a WCC graduate consultant on any project that involves communication— essays, speeches, group presentations, lab reports, poster presentations, video productions, and much more!
- Our default type of appointment for graduate students is conducted asynchronously via email. In other words, after you make an appointment through our online scheduler (WCOOnline), you attach a draft to the appointment. Then, within 48 hours of the scheduled appointment, one of our consultants reviews your paper and emails you feedback. We also offer synchronous (live) appointments via Zoom or in person upon request.
- To schedule an asynchronous appointment, go to www.ashland.mywconline.com (you will need to create an account the first time you use the scheduler).
- To schedule a synchronous (live) Zoom appointment, please email us at wcc@ashland.edu. Visit our homepage for more information: www.ashland.edu/wcc

VII. Selected Bibliography

Theological Dictionaries

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González, J. (2005). *Essential theological terms*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox.

Grenz, S. J. Guretzki, D., and Nordling, C. F. (1999). *Pocket dictionary of theological terms*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.

Wright, D. F., Ferguson, S. B., and Packer, J. I., eds. (1988). *New dictionary of theology*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.

Theological Method

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Systematic Theology

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Ethics

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