Course Description

An orderly study of Christian theology covering the person and work of Christ, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the application of salvation, the biblical foundations of church life, and the end of all things.

Course Purpose

Knowledge of the teachings of Scripture is essential for those involved in Christian ministry and is beneficial to the spiritual growth of any believer. Utilizing the text of Scripture, the teaching of men about the Scriptures, and human reason, this course will help you gain theological understanding on a more advanced level and the ability to further your theological knowledge.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course the student should:

1) Objective: Identify and summarize key terms and concepts used in systematic theology.
2) Objective: Organize and implement research in theological resources that will enable continued growth in the personal, professional, and academic study of theology.
3) Objective: Create a theological work that examines and explains a specific theological issue within its biblical, historical, and contemporary context.
4) Objective: Evaluate other theologians on a biblical, theological, and philosophical basis.
5) Objective: Engage in personal theological reflection that leads to the articulation of personal theological beliefs.

Course Texts


**Course Requirements**

1. **Reading Reflections**
   Every week by ten minutes before class, submit a brief reflection on Moodle over the week’s reading (no reflection is required on weeks when there is no reading assignment from the textbooks). The four paragraph reflection should include the following: 1) three paragraphs summarizing the main points in the weekly reading (simply reproducing the headings from the chapter is not acceptable) and 2) one paragraph of reaction to or reflection on the reading. The reflection should be approximately the length of a single-spaced page in 12 pt Times New Roman font (you are encouraged to write and save your paper in a word processor before pasting into Moodle). Reflections must be written in proper English. These papers are worth 15% of the final grade. The lowest scoring paper will be dropped in the calculation of your final grade.

2. **Class Participation**
   Every student should come to class prepared to intelligently discuss the assigned reading. Class discussion forms a critical part of the learning experience and good discussion can only occur when both the students and professor prepare for it.

3. **Book Reviews**
   On the dates specified on the schedule submit book reviews on the required books. A book review is five (5) pages, double-spaced, and includes: a brief introduction (1-2 paragraphs), a summary of the book’s contents (3 pages), critical reflection on the book (1-2 pages), and a brief conclusion (1 paragraph). A book review should include full bibliographic information for the book under review at the top of the first page. Quotations from or references to the book being reviewed should be noted with parenthetical page citations. See the sample book review on Moodle for an example of the proper format. The book review will be graded according to the rubric available on Moodle. Each book review is worth 10% of the final grade.

4. **Exam**
   There will be a comprehensive final exam at the end of the semester. The exam will test the student’s comprehension of the assigned readings, class discussions, and lectures. Taking good notes is critical to success on the exams. The exam is worth 15% of the overall grade for the course.
5. **Statement of Faith**
By the end of the course prepare a personal statement of faith covering Christology, pneumatology, soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology. This statement should be the result of your personal theological reflection and must be presented in a series of affirmations. If you have not reached a conclusion on a minor doctrinal point you may omit it or you may affirm both sides of your currently unresolved antinomy. Every affirmation must be supported by relevant Scripture(s) and you may not reference or quote any source besides Scripture. The statement of faith must be at least two single-spaced pages.
For examples of statements of faith you are encouraged to consult numerous ones that are linked on the class Moodle page.
**This is a pass/fail capstone assignment. Students who do not submit a statement of faith that meets the stated requirements will not pass the course.**

6. **Sermon/Research Paper**
The student may submit a sermon preached on a subject selected from the list provided below. The sermon may be delivered to a church audience or recorded solely for the class. It should be designed to introduce and explain from the biblical text the intricacies of a particular doctrine in a way that is comprehensible to a well-educated but non-theological audience. A recording of the sermon may be submitted as a digital file along with an accompanying outline or manuscript and a bibliography of works used in the preparation of the sermon. The student should consult at least twelve relevant monographs, journal articles, commentaries, and scholarly theological works in the preparation of the sermon.
Alternatively, the student may submit a paper of twelve to fifteen (12-15) pages on a subject chosen in consultation with the professor. This project should reflect maturing theological scholarship and thorough knowledge of the subject. The goal of the paper is to examine the subject within its biblical, historical, and contemporary context, critically analyze different views on the issue, and advocate a specific theological viewpoint as the one that best reflects Scriptural teaching. The paper is not to be a mere recital of facts that have been unearthed. At a minimum the paper should reference (via footnote) at least twelve different sources, including at least two monographs and two articles from peer-reviewed journals. Footnotes are expected for virtually every paragraph.
Sermons and papers will be graded according to rubrics available on Moodle. The sermon or paper is worth 20% of the final grade.

**A Non-Exhaustive List of Suggested Paper Topics**
The Virgin Conception
Christ the High Priest
The Work of the Spirit in Salvation
Union with Christ
The Bride of Christ
The Meaning of Baptism
The Meaning of Communion
The New Jerusalem
Course Grades

Book Reviews     30%
Reading Summaries   15%
Exam      15%
Research Paper/Sermon 20%
Statement of Faith    10%
Class Participation   10%

The seminary’s standardized grading scale will be followed in assigning final grades:

A  91-100%
B  81-90%
C  71-80%
D  61-70%
F  0-61%

Course Policies

1. **Attendance and Participation**
   Students are expected to attend every class session. **More than one unexcused absence will result in grade reduction.** Under certain circumstances, such as the severe illness, injury, or death of an immediate family member or your own illness, injury, or death, every effort will be made to accommodate you, provided you contact the professor to explain your situation. Additionally, it is recognized that many of you are engaged in professional Christian ministry, which will sometimes intrude on your academic life. The professor will try to accommodate the needs of your people as you attempt to balance the requirements of ministry and study. Students who arrive for a class session after the roll has been checked (there is normally no oral roll call) have already been marked absent. To have this absence changed to a tardy, it is the student’s responsibility to request the change during a break or immediately after the class session. As specified in the catalog, after accumulating three tardies a student will be given one absence. Personal electronic devices (computers, cell phones, tablets) may be used in class for taking notes only. Using the internet, texting, or taking phone calls during class is strictly prohibited unless given explicit permission to do so. A violation of this rule may result in expulsion from class or the prohibition of electronic devices in the classroom.

2. **Deadlines**
   You are expected to adhere to all deadlines without fail. **Late work is automatically worth zero points.** You have been informed of the various due dates well in advance and are expected to meet them regardless of personal impediments that may arise immediately before something is due. Deadlines are a fact of life. You can choose to plan ahead so that you meet them, or you can be content with the mediocrity of last-minute work. Either way, you still have to be on time.
3. **Grammar and Style**

Papers and book reviews are expected to employ proper English grammar and must conform to the standards in Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed. (on issues that Turabian does not address, consult *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th ed.). **Papers that have more than three grammatical errors or more than two style errors will be returned to the student for correction.** The student must then resubmit a grammatically sound and stylistically proper paper. The grade of the paper will be reduced 10 percentage points every day after their paper has been returned until an adequate paper is produced. Students are encouraged to consult with the professor before submitting their paper to ensure that it will not be returned.

4. **Academic Integrity**

The sanctity of truth is central to those who believe in a God who cannot lie and who forbids false witness. Academic integrity is the application of the sanctity of truth in the academic world. A student who submits work as part of the requirements for a course thereby asserts that the student has personally done that work. Unless credit is explicitly given to sources, the student is asserting that the thoughts are the student's original work. Unless quotation marks are used, the student is asserting that the words are the student’s own work. Academic dishonesty is falling short of these standards. It includes, but is not limited to: cheating, submitting work which was prepared by any other person, not giving credit on papers to sources, and submitting without approval work originally prepared by the student for another course.

5. **Americans with Disabilities Act**

BMA Seminary supports the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with physical or learning disabilities desiring additional assistance must consult with the Dean’s office prior to enrollment or as early as possible after the disability is diagnosed. Procedures for assisting students will require a physician’s written verification of the disability and probable benefit(s) of specific assistance for student learning, a student’s specific written request(s) for assistance from the seminary, and the informing of the seminary faculty. Reasonable accommodations will be given in accordance with the federal and state laws though the Dean’s Office. Contact the Dean’s Office in the main administration building in person or:

- by mail: P.O. Box 670, Jacksonville, TX 75766
- by phone: 800-259-5673
- by email: bmats@bmats.edu

BMA Seminary is dedicated to helping all students we serve to achieve their Christian, educational, and life goals.

6. **Syllabus Disclaimer**

During the course of the term the professor reserves the right to modify any portion of this syllabus as may appear necessary. All such modifications will occur during a regularly scheduled class meeting.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 26</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2</td>
<td>The Person of Christ</td>
<td>Erickson 31, 32, 33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 9</td>
<td>The Work of Christ</td>
<td>Erickson 35, 37, 38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 16</td>
<td>The Holy Spirit</td>
<td>Erickson 39, 40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 23</td>
<td>Salvation</td>
<td>Erickson 42, 43</td>
<td>Book Review: Keathley, <em>Salvation and Sovereignty</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>Salvation</td>
<td>Erickson 44, 45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 8</td>
<td>Salvation</td>
<td>Erickson 46, 47, 48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 15</td>
<td>Salvation</td>
<td>Erickson 44, 45</td>
<td>Book Review: Olson, <em>Arminian Theology</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 22</td>
<td>Ecclesiology</td>
<td>Erickson 49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 5</td>
<td>Ecclesiology</td>
<td>Grudem 46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 12</td>
<td>Eschatology</td>
<td>Erickson 55, 56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 19</td>
<td>Eschatology</td>
<td>Grudem 55, 56, 57</td>
<td>Sermon/Research Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 26</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 3</td>
<td>Flex Week</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 10</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Personal Statement of Faith</td>
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