

ST. PETER'S SEMINARY / KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
at *The University of Western Ontario*
Winter 2016
Systematic Theology 5212B
Doctrine of God
Monday 9:30-12:20, Room 102

John Dool - 432-5726, x272, jdool@uwo.ca
Office hours by Appointment

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The development of the Church's understanding of God as Triune. Biblical, patristic, medieval, and contemporary approaches to the mystery of God are considered. Special attention is given to the connection of Trinitarian doctrine to the experience of salvation. (3 hours; antirequisite: the former Dogmatic Theology 201A).

B. GOALS

This course will assist students to grow in the following knowledge, skills and attitudes:

Knowledge:

To gain an appreciation for the biblical foundations, key historical developments, and contemporary questions and avenues of thought in regard to the mystery of the Triune God.

To gain a sound understanding of the key trinitarian teachings of the church, how and why they developed, and the erroneous positions to which they responded.

To gain a sound understanding of the intertwining of the doctrine of the Trinity and the mystery of human salvation.

Skills:

To learn to integrate principles of Trinitarian thought into one's independent exploration of theological issues.

To learn to relate traditional teachings to contemporary questions and issues.

To learn to identify and constructively critique the Trinitarian perspective in a given text or thinker.

Attitudes:

To grow in recognition of the benefit of shared dialogue and shared exploration of theological issues.

To develop a sensitivity to the nature and limitations of our language about God.

To grow in a sense of the centrality of the mystery of the Trinity to Catholic faith and practice and to develop an openness to ongoing exploration of that mystery.

C. ASSESSMENT

Take home test distributed Feb. 1, to be returned **Feb. 8** (20%)

A research paper, (10-12 pages, 12 pages **maximum**) on a topic of your selection, due **April 4** (35%)

A final, written examination will be during the exam period (30%)

Participation in discussions (15%).

D. READINGS OR TEXTBOOKS

Required:

Gerald O'Collins, *The Tripersonal God*. New York: Paulist Press, 2nd ed., 2014.
Course package.

E. SCHEDULE, TOPICS & READINGS or STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

Section 1: The Mystery of God and Scriptural Foundations

Week 1 (Jan. 4):

- Introduction and Overview: The Mystery of God
- God in the Old Testament (O'Collins, ch. 1)

Week 2 (Jan. 11):

- The Trinity in the New Testament (O'Collins, chs. 2, 3, and 4)
- Summary and Introduction to the Fathers

Section 2: Patristic Developments

Week 3 (Jan. 18):

- The Pre-Nicene Fathers: Justin and Irenaeus (O'Collins, ch.5)
- The Pre-Nicene Fathers: Tertullian (Tertullian, *Against Praxeas*); Origen and the Alexandrian Tradition

Week 4 (Jan. 25):

- The Arian Controversy (Thomas Marsh, from "The Great Controversy", *The Triune God*; selection from Athanasius, *Orations Against the Arians*)
- Nicea and Constantinople (O'Collins, ch.6 and ch.7, pp.127-34); Introduction to the Cappadocian Fathers

Week 5 (Feb. 1):

- The Cappadocian Fathers (Catherine LaCugna, from *God For Us: The Trinity and Christian Life*; selections from Basil of Caesarea, Gregory Nazianzus)
- Summary of Patristic Developments

Section 3: Medieval Trinitarian Theology

Week 6 (Feb. 8):

- Augustine (Eugene Teselle, *Augustine the Theologian*; Augustine, selection from *On the Trinity*)

Reading Week

Week 7 (Feb. 22):

- Richard of St. Victor (Ewert Cousins, "A Theology of Interpersonal Relations", *Thought*, v. XLV, spring, 1970; Richard of St. Victor, *Book Three of the Trinity*)

Week 8 (Feb. 29):

- Aquinas (Brian Davies, from *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas*; selections from *Summa Theologiae*)
- Summary of Medieval Theology (O'Collins, pp.135-51)

Section 4: Appropriating the Tradition Today

Week 9 (Mar. 7):

- The Contemporary Trinitarian Renewal; The Trinitarian Mystery of Love (Walter Kasper, from "The Trinitarian Mystery of God", *The God of Jesus Christ*)
- Trinitarian Persons, Actions, and Missions (Gilles Emery, from "Returning to the Creative and Saving Action of the Trinity", *The Trinity: An Introduction to Catholic Doctrine on the Triune God*; O'Collins, ch.10)

Week 10 (Mar. 14):

- The Person of the Spirit (O'Collins, ch. 9; Yves Congar, from *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, v.3)
- The Procession of the Spirit (Alasdair Heron, "The Filioque Clause", *One God in Trinity*)
- Trinity and Grace (Anne Hunt, "Trinity, Grace, and the Moral Life", *The Trinity: Nexus of the Mysteries of the Christian Faith*)

Week 11 (Mar. 21):

- In the Image of The Triune God (Stefan Oster, from "Becoming a Person and the Trinity", *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology*)
- The Paschal Mystery and the Triune God (Bruno Forte, "The Trinitarian History of Easter", from *The Trinity as History*)

Week 12 (Mar. 28):

- Deification and Life in the Trinity (Daniel Keating, "Trinity and Salvation: Christian Life as an Existence in the Trinity", *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity*)
- Trinitarian Communion, Church, and Eucharist (Michael Figura, "Church and Eucharist in the Light of the Trinitarian Mystery")

Week 13 (Apr. 4):

- Naming the Mystery (O'Collins ch. 11)
- Celebrating the Mystery (Recommended: Catherine LaCugna, "Making the Most of Trinity Sunday", *Worship*, 60, no. 3, May 1986, p 210-224; Permalink: http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct_true&db_rfh&AN_ATLA0000964217&site_ehost-live)
- Teaching the Mystery (Richard Gaillardetz, "To Teach of the Trinity")

F. UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS

Students are responsible for knowing the University's academic policies and regulations and any particularities of their own course of study. These can all be found at the University's website (<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>). Ignorance of these policies is not an excuse for any violation thereof. The following policies are particularly important to note:

Submission of Assignments and Tests: Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the dates as given above. Assignments may not be dropped off at King's or submitted electronically.

It is the responsibility of the student to organize his or her work so that the assignments are completed on time. For a serious reason, a student may approach the professor before the due-date, and may be granted an extension at the discretion of the professor. Any medical reasons will be confirmed by proper documentation as approved by the Dean's Office. A penalty of 10% of the value of the assignment will be deducted for each day it is overdue without permission.

No electronic devices will be allowed during tests or the examination, unless approved in advance by Student Services at the University or King's.

Students who miss tests will negotiate a "make-up" date with the professor. Any medical reasons will be confirmed by proper documentation as approved by the Dean's Office.

Plagiarism: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt by quotation marks and/or footnotes. Plagiarism is a major academic offense. Students may be required to submit their work in electronic form for plagiarism checking.

Selection and Registration of Courses: Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded, that all prerequisite course(s) have been successfully completed, and that they are aware of any anti-requisite course(s) that they have taken.