

**ST. PETER'S SEMINARY / KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE**  
**at *The University of Western Ontario***  
**Fall 2011**

**Systematic Theology 5111A**  
**Fundamental Theology**  
**Monday, 9:30-11:20, Room 108**

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Office hours by Appointment

**A. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A foundational course considering the nature of divine revelation, faith as humanity's response to God's revealing activity, the inspiration and interpretation of scripture, the nature of tradition, and theological method. (2 hours; antirequisite: the former Dogmatic Theology 101A)

**B. GOALS**

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

**Knowledge:**

To gain a sound understanding of how God's revelation in Jesus and the Spirit is made known to us through scripture and the tradition and how we respond to that revelation through both faith and reason.

To gain an understanding of the relationship of the roles of authority, scholarship, and personal exploration in the theological tradition.

To gain an understanding of the continuity and development of the theological tradition.

**Skills:**

To learn to balance the quest for certainty with the sometimes limited and developmental character of theological understanding.

To learn to integrate philosophical approaches into a theological framework.

To learn to reflect on how to express the Christian faith in the context of contemporary cultural challenges and opportunities.

**Attitudes:**

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

To exhibit a sense of wonder and a desire to probe more deeply into the mysteries of the faith.

## C. ASSESSMENT

Research essay outline (2-3 pages) and annotated bibliography, **Oct. 24** (10%)

A research paper, due **Nov. 28** (10-12 pages, 12 pages **maximum**) on a topic of your selection (40%)

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

Participation in discussions (20%).

## D. READINGS OR TEXTBOOKS

Required:

Yves Congar, *The Meaning of Tradition*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004 (available at the UWO bookstore). Additional required and recommended readings will be put on reserve in the library.

Documents of Vatican II

## E. STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

Week 1 (Sept. 12): Introduction; Philosophy and Theology

Week 2 (Sept. 19): Mystery, Revelation, and Faith

Required Readings: *Dei Verbum*; Gerald O'Collins, "Dei Verbum", *Retrieving Fundamental Theology*

Recommended Reading: John Haught, "Mystery", *What is God?*

Week 3 (Sept. 26): Tradition: Content and Dynamic Process

Required Readings: Congar, pp. 14-36

Week 4 (Oct. 3): Tradition and Traditions; The Spirit as Subject of Tradition

Required Readings: Congar, pp. 36-58

Week 5 (Oct. 10): Thanksgiving

Week 6 (Oct. 17): The Church as Subject of Tradition: Magisterium and the Faithful

Required Readings: Congar, pp. 58-78

Recommended Reading: Francis Sullivan, "Evaluating the Level of Authority Exercized in Documents of the Magisterium", *Creative Fidelity*; Aidan Nichols, "The Sense of the Faithful", *The Shape of Catholic Theology*.

Week 7 (Oct. 24): Scripture and Tradition; The Canon of Scripture

Required Readings: Congar, pp. 79-96

Week 8 (Oct. 31): Tradition as Historical; Development of Doctrine

Required Readings: Congar, pp. 105-19

Recommended Reading: Dulles, "The 'Irreformability' of Dogma", *The Survival of Dogma*

Week 9 (Nov. 7): The Contemporary Cultural Milieu

Required Readings: *Gaudium et Spes*, sections 1-22; John Dool, "Authenticity and Ecclesiology: Charles Taylor and the Post-Conciliar Challenge", pp.1-16

Recommended Reading: Charles Taylor, *The Malaise of Modernity* (also known as *The Ethics of Authenticity*)

Week 10 (Nov. 14): Understanding Vatican II

Required Readings: Dool, pp.16-21; John O'Malley, "Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?", *Theological Studies*, v.67, 2006, pp. 3-33.

Week 11 (Nov. 21): Apologetics Today; The Nature of Dialogue

Required Readings: Francis Cardinal George, "Making All Things New: Notes on a New Apologetics", *The Difference God Makes: A Catholic Vision of Faith, Communion, and Culture*

Recommended Reading: Bishop Donald Bolen, "Giving an Account of Our Hope", *Origins*, v.41, no.6, June 2011

Week 12 (Nov. 28): Apologetics and Atheism

Required Readings: Richard Dawkins, selection from *The God Delusion*; Nicholas Lash, "Where Does the God Delusion Come From?"

Week 13 (Dec. 5): Conclusion and Review

## 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.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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