

ST. PETER'S SEMINARY / KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
at Western University
Fall 2013

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

John Dool, 432-5726, x272, jdool@uwo.ca
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

A reading and reflection paper on the nature of faith (source article on reserve in library); due **Oct. 23** (5-6 pages, 6 pages **maximum**) (25%)

A reading and reflection paper on the nature of revelation according to *Dei Verbum*; due **Nov. 13** (5-6 pages, 6 pages **maximum**) (25%)

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

Participation in discussions. Each class students will submit a written comment or question (one paragraph) based on the week's readings (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. 11): Introduction; Philosophy and Theology; Mystery
Recommended Reading: John Haught, "Mystery", *What is God?*

Week 2 (Sept. 18): Mystery and Revelation in Word and Event
Required Readings: *Dei Verbum (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation)*; Richard Gaillardetz and Catherine Clifford, "A Theology of Divine Revelation", *Keys to the Council: Unlocking the Teaching of Vatican II*, pp. 31-38.

Week 3 (Sept. 25): Faith; Tradition: Content and Dynamic Process
Required Readings: Congar, pp. 9-33

Week 4 (Oct. 2): Tradition and Traditions; The Spirit as Subject of Tradition

Required Readings: Congar, pp. 33-58

Week 5 (Oct. 9): The Church as Subject of Tradition: Magisterium and the Faithful

Required Readings: Congar, pp. 58-81; Jared Wicks, "The Levels of Teaching by the Catholic Magisterium", *Doing Theology*, pp. 237-39.

Recommended Reading: Aidan Nichols, "The Sense of the Faithful", *The Shape of Catholic Theology*.

Week 6 (Oct. 16): Scripture and Tradition; The Canon of Scripture

Required Readings: Congar, pp. 83-111

Week 7 (Oct. 23): Tradition as Historical; Development of Doctrine

Required Readings: Congar, pp. 112-128

Recommended Reading: Gerald O'Collins, "Does Vatican II Represent Continuity or Discontinuity?", *Theological Studies*, v.73, #4, 2012, p. 768-94.

Week 8 (Oct. 30): Doing Theology and Being a Theologian

Week 9 (Nov. 6): 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. 13): 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. 20): Apologetics Today; The Nature of Dialogue

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

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

Week 12 (Nov. 27): Apologetics and Atheism

Required Readings: Nicholas Lash, "Where Does the God Delusion Come From?" *New Blackfriars*, v.88, Sept. 2007, pp.507-21.; Neil Ormerod, "Theology and the New Atheism: Science, Religion, and Metaphysics", *Theology*, v.116, no.3, 2013, pp.187-94.,.

Week 13 (Dec. 4): 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.