



**ONLINE EDUCATION COURSE SYLLABUS FOR
TH 313 CREATION TO NEW CREATION
Edition 1, Published 2019**

3 credit hours

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I. Course Description

The purpose of this course is to provide a biblical and systematic orientation to the second half of the field of Christian theology – God’s creation (first half is covered in the course TH 210 God of the Gospel). This course will cover the doctrines of creation, humanity, sin, salvation, church, and the last things. The overall approach of this course has in mind the practice of the church, both local and global, with its emphasis on the proclamation of the Word and its service to the world.

II. Course Rationale

This course touches on several particular doctrines that are closely connected and involved God’s plan of redemption for his people. It will connect these doctrines to emphasize the grand narrative from Genesis to Revelation. This course attempts to answer the pressing questions concerning God’s good creation and humanity’s role in it. This course, as the name implies, emphasizes the hope that creation will be re-created so that, ultimately, humanity can again enjoy the vertical and horizontal relationship that was lost through her disobedience.

III. Method and Outcomes

At the end of the course, students will:

1. Have a deeper understanding of the aspect of the Christian faith as considered in this course and able to articulate a biblical view on these topics.
2. Develop their critical thinking regarding the considered topics of the Christian faith.
3. Have critically thought through the materials and its relationship to their own faith and community context.
4. Become familiar with the current theological issues and their theological adherents.

IV. Required Course Texts

1. Alexander, Desmond T. *From Eden to the New Jerusalem: An Introduction to Biblical Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2008.

2. Olson, Roger. *The Mosaic of Christian Belief*. 2nd Edition. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016.
3. Lewis, C.S. *The Great Divorce*. New York, NY: HarperOne, 2015.
4. A variety of articles that will be attached to the Units on Brightspace.

V. Performance Evaluation

Course Outcome	Requirement/Assessment Strategy	Value
1, 2, 3	Forum Questions	10%
1, 2, 3	Credo or Statement of Faith	30%
2, 4	<i>The Great Divorce</i> Assignment	10%
1, 2, 3, 4	Research Paper	30%
1, 2, 3, 4	Exams	20%

VI. Course Requirements

1. Forum Questions – 10%

There are four discussion questions posted on the Brightspace Forum. You are to engage and respond to the comments on the Forum. Your responses are to be between 100 and 200 words.

2. Credo Assignment – 30% (15% Each)

To complete this course each student is required to develop his or her own statement of belief, or Credo, covering the doctrines treated in this course. This project is completed in two stages. Clearly cover the following topics listed below.

Note: Use what you learn in the lectures and your readings to complete this assignment. To treat each topic, write a general statement (“I believe...”) followed by a paragraph or so of explanation and defense. Your initial statement must be clear and direct and your explanation should give evidence that you have considered the appropriate norms of Christian doctrine. Be sure to demonstrate that your opinions take Scripture and the church’s historic teaching into account (you are allowed to consult sources of the Church Fathers). Avoid the mistake of proof-texting, which treats Scripture as a jumble of isolated claims and ignores the genre and context. Be consistent throughout so that the Credo hangs together as a whole. Don’t forget that a statement such as this is an act of communication. This means that you need to pay attention to the language that you use. Think of your audience as having minimal exposure to theological vocabulary.

Your Credo will be evaluated on completeness, clarity, coherence and attention to the norms of doctrine. Each credo should be between 100-200 words in length.

Doctrines to be considered:

1. Creation
2. Divine Providence

3. Humanity
4. Sin
5. The objective aspect of salvation
6. The subjective aspect of salvation
7. The Holy Spirit and the Church
8. Eschatology

The first part of the credo dealing with the creation, divine providence, humanity, and sin is due after Unit 3. The second part of the credo dealing with doctrines 5-8 is due at the end of the course.

3. ***The Great Divorce* Assignment – 10%**

Read through C.S. Lewis' book, *The Great Divorce*, and make an honest assessment of what you learned about Lewis' view on heaven and hell. Although this is a fictional work there are some keen theological views that can be extrapolated from it (you must read this book much like you would read Jesus' parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31). This is not a formal critical book review but a personal assessment. Include a short summary and your points of agreements or disagreements in your paper, which must be approximately 750 words in length.

4. **Research Paper – 30%**

You are required to turn in a 3000-4000 word research paper on a topic related to the main doctrines covered in the course. The paper should consist of the following components:

- a. Introduction to the issue under consideration. This issue should be related to the main doctrines covered in the course and considered to be fairly controversial. For example:
 - i. Is it possible to be saved by Christ but be a part of another religion?
 - ii. Should women be ordained to congregational teaching and leadership positions within the church?
 - iii. The nature of the sacraments
 - iv. The role of good works and the final judgement.
 - v. Should hell be eternal?
 - vi. Is it necessary to believe in a historical Adam and Eve?
 - vii. Is evolution compatible with Christianity?
 - viii. Is homosexuality a sin?
 - ix. Is transgenderism a sin?
 - x. Is the idea of "gender fluidity" compatible with biblical Christianity?
 - xi. Are the "supernatural" gifts of the Holy Spirit still active and normative within the church today?
- b. A concise overview of position (P) as advocated by a prominent theologian (or group of theologians, or theological tradition such as Roman Catholicism)

- c. A concise overview of position contrary to P as advocated by another prominent theologian (theologians or tradition)
- d. Your theological evaluation of the debate in light of the opposing voices.
- e. Your attempt to answer the original essay question in light of your analysis.

5. Exams – 20% (10% Each)

There are two exams in this course. The first one is the Midterm Exam consisting of multiple-choice questions and two essay questions. The Midterm deals with the material covered from Unit 1 through Unit 4. The Final Exam is similar to the Midterm but deals with the material covered from Unit 5 through Unit 7. You are to take the Midterm Exam after Unit 4 and the Final Exam after Unit 7.

Exams must be completed in the presence of a proctor, i.e. an exam supervisor. Your proctor must be a responsible adult with a position such as a pastor, chaplain, church leader, administrator, school teacher, or college professor. Your proctor cannot be another student, your spouse, or someone related to you. Send the name, position, and email address of your proposed proctor to the Online Education office (online.ed@prairie.edu) **one week** before you wish to write your exam. After your proctor is approved, he or she will be sent instructions and the exam password.

VII. Academic Policies

Plagiarism

“Plagiarism [is] [t]he presentation or submission of the work of someone else as the student’s own, including but not limited to work in print and electronic media. ‘Substantial plagiarism’ is the use of an author’s phrases, sentences, thoughts, or arguments without adequate citation or credit. ‘Complete plagiarism’ is the copying and presentation of an entire work as the student’s own. ‘Inadvertent plagiarism’ is plagiarism which, to the best of the instructor’s belief, results from the student’s carelessness or ignorance.” There are mild to very serious penalties for this kind of offence and they are spelled out in section 6.2 of the Academic Guide (see Registrar’s page on the Prairie website <https://prairie.edu/current-students/registrars-office/>).

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Number Grade	Rating	Point Value
A+	90-100		4.0
A	85-89	Excellent	4.0
A-	80-84		3.7
B+	77-79		3.3
B	73-76	Good	3.0
B-	70-72		2.7
C+	67-69		2.3

C	63-66	Satisfactory	2.0
C-	60-62		1.7
D+	55-59		1.3
D	50-54	Poor	1.0
F	0-49	Failure	0.0
P	50 or above	Pass	
AU		Audit	
I		Incomplete	
W		Withdraw	

Note: Numerical course grades are not rounded

VIII. Course Schedule

Unit	Topic	Reading	Assignment
Introduction	Introduction to the syllabus and the course		
Unit 1	Creation and New Creation: Genesis and Revelation Creation: Genesis 1 and 2 Creation and science	Pages 9-42 – Desmond Alexander Chapter 7 – Roger Olson Alister McGrath – “Augustine’s Origin of Species”	Unit 1 Forum
Unit 2	The Providence of God	Chapter 8 – Roger Olson	
Unit 3	The Doctrine of Humanity Creation of humanity The Image of God The doctrine of Humanity: Sin	Chapter 9 – Roger Olson “The Search for the Historical Adam” Pages 73-79 – Desmond Alexander Pages 99-120 – Desmond Alexander	Credo 1 Due Unit 3 Forum Question

Unit 4	Salvation in Christ	Chapters 12 and 13 – Roger Olson Chapter 5 – Desmond Alexander	Midterm Exam end of Unit 4
Unit 5	The Doctrine of the Spirit The work of the Spirit	Chapter 11 – Roger Olson	Unit 5 Forum Question
Unit 6	The Doctrine of the Church The role or function of the church The Sacraments of the Church: Baptism and the Lord’s Supper	Chapter 14 – Roger Olson Pages 89-97 – Desmond Alexander	Unit 6 Forum Question
Unit 7	Eschatology Life After Death – Heaven and Hell The Second Coming – Revelation 20-22	Chapter 15 – Roger Olson Ambrose Andreano – “On the Nature of Hell” Read <i>The Great Divorce</i> by C.S. Lewis Chapters 6 and 7 – Desmond Alexander	Credo 2 Due Research Paper Due <i>The Great Divorce</i> Assignment Final Exam