



# COURSE SYLLABUS

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## SECTION 1: COURSE INFORMATION

**Format:** Eight weeks.

**Course ID:** THEO 2123

**Course Title:** Christian Thought and Practice

**College:** College of Unrestricted Education - Department of Ministry & Theology

**Prerequisites:** Old Testament Interpretation, New Testament Interpretation

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Instructor:** See the online course in MyFIRE for instructor contact information and availability.

### Course Description

This course surveys the history of Christian thought and practices. Doctrinal topics introduced in the course include the doctrines of God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, humanity, salvation, the church, scripture, and last things. The course explores the application of Christian practices and spiritual disciplines such as prayer, communion, baptism, and social responsibility to the students' community.

## Course Overview

Over the next eight weeks, we will explore the ways Christians speak of, reflect on, and act on their experience of God (do theology). Hopefully, you will come away from this course realizing that theology is the task/responsibility of every Christian (not just professional theologians). We will approach the study of theology from multiple angles and learning methods: readings (including brief readings in the Bible and longer readings in our course texts), hearing from scholars (the required videos), holding class conversations that unpack the weekly content in creative ways (discussion forums), and activities that will help us further internalize what we have learned (weekly quizzes and guided critical reflection activities). Additionally, we will engage in some practices that cultivate Christian thought into practices that shape our relationship with God and our community.

## Course Workload

Time spent on course assignments will vary by student depending on familiarity with course content, reading rate of speed, writing rate of speed, and other individual factors. Based on averages for most students, it is estimated that the course workload estimate for this course is 55.52 (6.94 hours per week).

## Course Materials

1. Introduction to Christian Theology by Justo L. Gonzalez and Zaida Maldonado Perez
2. Essential Theological Terms by Justo L. Gonzalez Required and optional textbooks are accessed and ordered through [SEU's bookstore](#).

**Disclaimer:** The resources utilized in this course provide information, thoughts and insights that should encourage critical thinking on the part of the student. Please note as well that as an Assembly of God institution, Southeastern University does not necessarily endorse specific personal, religious, philosophical, or political positions found in these resources.

## Course Topics

**The purpose of this course is to introduce, reinforce, and measure learning on the following topics:**

- Defining Christian Thought and Theology
- God - The Focus of Christian Thought
- God – The Creator of All
- Being Human
- Hope in Jesus Christ
- Christian Life in Community
- The Future
- Living Out Christian Thought and Practice

## Intended Learning Outcomes

**As a result of reading, study, and assessments in this course, the student should be able to:**

1. Articulate the purpose and meaning of Christian theology to contemporary contexts.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the various aspects of Christian thought with regard to personal practices and practices of the church, including the significance of these practices for society.
3. Articulate the purpose and meaning of Christian theology to contemporary contexts, and articulate basic theological concepts along with their biblical origins and historical development through the historic creeds, regarding the doctrines of God, Christ, the Spirit, humanity, salvation, the church, Scripture, and last things.

## Late Work

**Work ahead:** For planned events (mission trips, vacations, surgeries) you are invited to work ahead in order to submit work by the due date. No permission is needed.

**Request an extension:** If you know you will not be able to turn work in on time, contact your professor at least 24 hours before the assignment is due. Let the professor know about your circumstances and when you can turn the work in. If the professor decides to grant you an extension and you get the work in when you say you will, there will not be a penalty. You should only request an extension when something unforeseen comes up that you have no control over; a professor has no obligation to grant an extension and will be less inclined to do so if you are asking for one every week.

**Late work:** without prior arrangements, late work\* submitted within one week of the original due date will be considered for partial credit. Work will ONLY be accepted for the first seven days after it is due. NO WORK will be accepted past the last day of the course.

\*Discussion Posts: late participation in discussion forums is not accepted for late credit. The purpose of the discussion forum is to engage with your classmates on substantive ideas related to the course material, and your classmates will not revisit forums past the due dates. Similarly, professors will not revisit forums to grade past discussion due dates.

Professors of Foundational Core courses have been instructed to follow this policy to ensure fairness across all FC classes. Your professor will work with you if true emergencies occur, but your busy schedule will not be considered an emergency. If you have travel, a vacation, a wedding, or any other plannable event, it is up to you to communicate with your instructor to avoid grade penalties.

### **Extra Credit**

None accepted.

## **SECTION 2: SOUTHEASTERN POLICIES**

### Academic Policies

View this link to see Southeastern's Policies regarding SEU's Mission and Vision Statements, Title IX Statement, Student Services, Class Participation, Official Email, MyFIRE Use, Technical Difficulties, Technical Support, Disability Statement, Academic Honesty, Course Evaluation, Official Withdrawal, Grading Scale, and Netiquette.

## SECTION 3: COURSE SCHEDULE

The **Course Schedule** provides a listing of your work in this course. The assessments are listed by Module and include the due dates and point values.

**Note:** Assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. EST on the due date, unless otherwise noted.

### AIM, LEARN, AND APPLY DESCRIPTIONS

#### Aim



When you see the Aim icon, you will be introduced to topics and ideas that will be covered throughout this module. The AIM will also provide you with a glimpse into your learning objectives and an introduction to this module.

#### Learn



When you see the Learn icon, all of your reading assignments will be listed and may include additional resources that your instructor is providing to help you complete the activities and assessments for the module.

#### Apply



When you see the Apply Icon, it will be time to demonstrate your learning for the module. The items here are those in which you'll be graded and may include discussions, activities, assignments, quizzes, exams, and projects.

**MODULE 1**

**XX/XX/XX – XX/XX/XX**



- Define Christian thought and theology by understanding its nature, purpose, and its task.
- Identify the four major sources of Christian theology: the Bible, tradition, reason, and experience.
- Analyze one's context and discuss its impact on one's theological outlook.
- Create a short prayer that shows an awareness of the limitations of God-talk or God-thought (theology).



- [Exodus 3:1-22](#)
- *Introduction to Christian Theology*: Chapter 1 (pp. 9-31)
- *Essential Theological Terms*: "Theology" (p. 170), "Doctrine" (p. 47), "Scripture" (pp.157-159), "Tradition" (pp. 172-173), Faith (pp. 61-62), "Reason and Faith" (pp.145-148)
- "The Sources of God-Talk (Theology): Scripture, Tradition, Reason, and Experience" Video
- [Alister McGrath – Why Study Theology?](#) YouTube video



- Personal Context Survey
  - Due: Before other assignments
  - Points: Required, but ungraded
- Meet the Class Forum

- Due: Thursday, Saturday
  - Points: 10
- Week 1 Discussion Forum
  - Due: Friday, Tuesday
  - Points: 30
- Week 1 Christian Practice Journal Entry
  - Due: Tuesday
  - Points: 20

**MODULE 2:**  
**XX/XX/XX – XX/XX/XX**



- Define the basic concepts about the doctrine of God.
- Review key terms related to the doctrine of God.
- Distinguish between natural and special revelation.
- Create a short prayer using an analogical term for God.
- Demonstrate comprehension of the Week 1 and 2 content through the Unit 1 exam.



- [Exodus 33:12–22](#)
- *Introduction to Christian Theology*: Chapter 2 (pp. 33–54)
- *Essential Theological Terms*: “God” (pp. 67–69), “Trinity” (pp. 175–176), “Holy Spirit” (pp. 164–165), “Attributes” (pp. 22–23), “Revelation” (pp. 152–153), “Word of God” (p. 183)
- [Athanasian Creed](#)
- [Three Minute Theology 2.1: What is Divine Revelation?](#) YouTube video



- Week 2 Discussion Forum
  - Due: Friday, Tuesday
  - Points: 30
- Week 2 Christian Practice Journal Entry

- Due: Tuesday
- Points: 20
- Unit 1 Exam
  - Due: Tuesday
  - Points: 80

**MODULE 3:**  
**XX/XX/XX – XX/XX/XX**



- Define the basic concepts about the doctrine of creation.
- Review key terms related to the doctrine of creation.
- Discuss a problematic view of creation and why it is important to affirm the goodness of God’s creation.
- Strategize a personal creation care plan.



- [Genesis 1-2](#)
- *Introduction to Christian Theology*: Chapter 3 (pp. 55–64) Note: We are only reading the first few pages of Chapter 3; the rest of Chapter 3 will be dealt with in Week 4.
- *Essential Theological Terms*: Read the following definitions: “Creation” (pp. 41–42)
- [Apostles’ Creed](#) (Only read the first paragraph.)
- [Evangelical Declaration on the Care of Creation](#)
- [Science and Creation: N. T. Wright, John Polkinghorne, Alister McGrath](#)  
YouTube video



- Week 3 Discussion Forum
  - Due: Friday, Tuesday
  - Points: 30

□ Week 3 Christian Practice Journal Entry

○ Due: Tuesday

○ Points: 20

**MODULE 4:**  
**XX/XX/XX – XX/XX/XX**



- Define what it means to be human in light of God’s creative work, God’s ongoing relationship with the world, and in the face of sin.
- Review key terms related to theology of humanity.
- Recognize the universal nature of sin.
- Identify a contextual example of sin.
- Demonstrate comprehension of the Week 3 and 4 content through the Unit 2 exam.



- [Genesis 1:26-30; 2:4-25; 3:1-24](#)
- *Introduction to Christian Theology*: Chapter 3 (pp. 64–76)
- *Essential Theological Terms*: “Image of God” (pp. 82–83), “Fall” (p. 62), “Sin” (pp. 160–161), “Theodicy” (p. 169)
- [The Doctrine of Sin: Matt O’Reilly](#) YouTube video
- [The Problem of Evil: Seven-Minute Seminary](#) YouTube video



- Week 4 Discussion Forum
  - Due: Friday, Tuesday
  - Points: 30
- Week 4 Christian Practice Journal Entry

- Due: Tuesday
- Points: 20
- Unit 2 Exam
  - Due: Tuesday
  - Points: 60

**MODULE 5:**  
**XX/XX/XX – XX/XX/XX**



- Recognize the significance and scope of salvation.
- Review key terms related to Christology and soteriology.
- Discuss the scope of salvation.
- Construct and present your story of salvation.



- [Romans 5:12–19](#)
- *Introduction to Christian Theology*: Chapter 4 (pp. 77–95)
- *Essential Theological Terms*: “Christology” (pp. 34–35), “Incarnation” (pp. 84–86), “Gnosticism” (p. 67), “Adoptionism” (p. 2), “Arianism” (pp. 16–17), “Redemption” (p. 149), “Soteriology” (pp. 162–163), “Justification” (p. 91), “Sanctification” (p. 155)
- [Apostles’ Creed](#) (Only read the first and second paragraph.)
- [Amos Yong on Healing](#) YouTube video



- Week 5 Discussion Forum
  - Due: Friday, Tuesday
  - Points: 30
- Week 5 Christian Practice Journal Entry
  - Due: Tuesday
  - Points: 20

**MODULE 6:**  
**XX/XX/XX – XX/XX/XX**



- Learn about the nature of the church and the work of the church in the world.
- Review key terms related to ecclesiology.
- Discuss what it means for the church to be both unified and diverse.



- [Acts 2:42–47](#)
- *Introduction to Christian Theology*: Chapters 5–6 (pp. 97–137)
- *Essential Theological Terms*: “Church” (pp. 35–36), “Ecclesiology” (pp. 49–50), “Catholicity” (p. 32), “Apostolicity” (p. 15), “Sacrament” (pp. 154–155), “Baptism” (pp. 26–27), “Eucharist” (pp. 56–58)
- [Christian Community: Living in Connection with Other Believers](#) video
- [Amos Yong on Hospitality](#) YouTube video



- Week 6 Discussion Forum
  - Due: Friday, Tuesday
  - Points: 30
- Week 6 Christian Practice Journal Entry
  - Due: Tuesday
  - Points: 20

**MODULE 7:**

**XX/XX/XX – XX/XX/XX**



- Identify the broad Christian views about the future and its relationship to the present.
- Review key terms related to eschatology.
- Discuss how Christian views about the future shape life in the present.



- [I Thessalonians 4:16-17](#)
- *Introduction to Christian Theology*: Chapter 7 (pp. 139–158)
- *Essential Theological Terms*: “Eschatology” (pp. 54–55), “Eternal Life” (p. 55), “Heaven” (p. 72), “Kingdom of Heaven” (pp. 92–93), “Parousia” (p. 127)
- [Apostles’ Creed](#) (Read the whole creed and especially focus on the last paragraph.)
- [The Hope of Heaven](#) YouTube video



- Week 7 Discussion Forum
  - Due: Friday, Tuesday
  - Points: 30

**MODULE 8:**  
**XX/XX/XX – XX/XX/XX**



- Learn about why theology is important to the Christian life and the Christian community.
- Discuss how you see your explorations of Christian theology playing into your own life.
- Complete a short guided reflection paper.
- Demonstrate comprehension of the Week 5, 6, and 7 content.



- [Sarah Coakley – Why Study Theology?](#)



- Guided Reflection Video
  - Due: Tuesday
  - Points: 100
- Unit 3 Exam
  - Due: Tuesday
  - Points: 80

## **SECTION 4: ASSESSMENTS**

### **Discussion Forums**

#### **Description**

The weekly discussion forums are the space where students and their instructor dialogue over an issue related to the course content from each week. These discussions are one of the key components of the class because they are where academic learning conversations occur. Students will be given a prompt to respond to by Friday at 11:59 PM EST of the course week. After submitting their initial response, students will submit at least 2 responses to their classmates by Tuesday at 11:59 PM EST of the course week.

#### **Total Possible Points**

220

#### **Grade Weight**

30%

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### **Guided Reflection Video**

#### **Description**

Please create a 5 minute guided reflection video where you describe one area of Christian thought, describe how you understood this area of Christian thought prior to taking this class, describe how you understand this area of Christian thought now, and reflect on how your new understanding of this area of Christian thought will shape the way you live in God's world.

#### **Total Possible Points**

100

#### **Grade Weight**

20%

## SECTION 4: ASSESSMENTS

### Christian Practice Journal

#### Description

Throughout this course, students will complete guided Christian Practice Journal entries in order to integrate Christian thinking into concrete actions. It is recommended that students review the practice in the beginning of each course week that one is assigned so they are aware of its requirements.

#### Total Possible Points

120

#### Grade Weight

20%

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### Exams

#### Description

In order to further internalize the course content (readings, viewings, etc.) students will complete three unit exams. The unit exam questions are a mixture of true/false, multiple choice, and fill-in-the-blank. In order to study for these unit exams, students should keep notes of significant concepts, people, and other key information from the course content. Please note: notes and other resources cannot be referenced during the exams.

#### Total Possible Points

220

#### Grade Weight

30%