



**UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTHWESTERN**  
ST. PAUL

OFFICE OF DUAL ENROLLMENT

# **PHI2055**

## **Introduction to Theological Philosophy**

**SUMMER 2023**

**SYLLABUS**

Version: OLG v2:01/23

University of Northwestern – St. Paul  
Office of Dual Enrollment  
3003 Snelling Avenue North  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55113  
[de@unwsp.edu](mailto:de@unwsp.edu)

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# PHI2055 Introduction to Theological Philosophy

University of Northwestern – St. Paul

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the implications of the biblical doctrines of creation, fall, redemption and providence for the study of philosophy. It stresses the Christocentric nature of creation, the whole-person nature of knowledge, and the dependence of the created order upon the providential activity of God. Particular attention will be given to topics such as the Creator/creature distinction, the noetic effects of sin and regeneration, the theological nature of all knowledge, and the relationship between general and special revelation.

**Credits:** 2

**Prerequisites:** None

## INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Please see “Contacting the Instructor” on the course site.

## COURSE OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, a successful student will be able to

1. Define foundational terms and concepts in theology and philosophy.
2. Appraise foundational issues in theology and philosophy using Scripture as the standard.
3. Recognize the centrality of the doctrine of creation to the life of the mind.
4. Defend the justification for approaching philosophy with God and his revelation as the foundation for philosophical reflection.

## MATERIALS

### Required Textbooks and Materials

Green, Bradley G. *The Gospel and the Mind*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010.

### Provided by Student

For this course, students will need access to Microsoft Office (available at no cost to students through the University of Northwestern-St. Paul), a PDF reader, and a standard internet browser. Please refer to the Tech Requirements found in the Technology Help section at the top of the course site for the full requirements.

Students will also need audio recording tools and software.

## GRADING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Course Grade Explanation

#### Assignments

Reading Summary & Reflections (3)

Discussion Forums (5)

#### Grade Weight

15

25

Exploration Showcase Discussions (2)	10
Exams (3)	30
Reflection Essay	<u>20</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

## Grading Scale Percentages

A	≥ 93	B	≥ 83	C	≥ 73	D	≥ 63
A-	≥ 90	B-	≥ 80	C-	≥ 70	D-	≥ 60
B+	≥ 87	C+	≥ 77	D+	≥ 67	F	< 60

## Late Work

All assignments are due as described in the course syllabus and the course site. Students are responsible for meeting assignment deadlines. Late assignments will be automatically deducted one letter grade. The assignments will drop an additional grade per day it is late, up to a 50% deduction in grade; late assignments will not be accepted for a grade beyond one week past the original deadline. Forum discussion activities must be completed on time to earn points. Late forum posts will earn zero points. Students should contact the instructor via e-mail if an extenuating circumstance exists.

## Feedback Expectations

Students should expect feedback for their submitted assignments within 5 days of the assignment due date or the time of their submission, whichever is later.

## INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND SERVICES

### Guidelines and Information

Students are responsible for all content of the DE Student Handbook. The most recent version of the DE Student Handbook is located on [confluence.unwsp.edu](http://confluence.unwsp.edu) and includes the following policies and procedures:

- Deadlines for Dropping or Withdrawing
- Student/instructor Communication
- Appeals, Exceptions, Disciplinary Process, & Grievances
- Assignments (late work and plagiarism)
- Examinations
- Grading System

Instructors may have course-related expectations that further detail the policies and procedures outlined in the DE Student Handbook. Any such expectations must be provided to students in writing (e.g., handout, course site posting) prior to or at the beginning of the class.

Traditional undergraduate students enrolled in DE courses are subject to the traditional undergraduate student handbook for all non-course-specific policies and procedures.

### Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is theft—theft of someone else's words or ideas. It is claiming another's work as one's own. This would also include the following:

- Using the words or work of a former or current student in this class
- Recycling previously submitted assignments from a previous course attempt
- Using outside literature support sites such as, but not limited to, SparkNotes, Enotes or Schmoop that provide literary analysis of the texts we read throughout the semester

Students found plagiarizing are subject to discipline. The standard response ranges from loss of credit for the plagiarized assignment to earning an immediate “F” for the course to being placed on disciplinary probation. We should be committed to conducting ourselves with integrity in all things. Please refer to the DE Student Handbook for more detailed information about UNW’s honesty and integrity policies.

In every course, students are required to view the Understanding Plagiarism video and complete the Understanding Plagiarism Quiz prior to completing any of the course content. These items are part of the course orientation.

## Academic Achievement

UNW students requesting academic accommodations in association with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are directed to notify [Disability Services](#) to begin the application process. Academic Achievement also provides the following: [Writing Tutoring](#), [Subject Tutoring](#), advocating, transitional skill building, [Academic Coaching](#) (organization, time management, test taking, etc.).

Contact Academic Achievement for more information: [AcademicAchievement@unwsp.edu](mailto:AcademicAchievement@unwsp.edu) | 651-628-3316 | N4012 (Revised 07/22).

## Support Services

Links to support services are available found in the Student Services section at the top of the course site.

## COURSE POLICIES AND INFORMATION

### Email and Announcements

Students are responsible to regularly check their Northwestern student email and the announcements in the course site in order to receive updates and information.

### Attendance

Students are expected to participate in all course activities. Students must contact the faculty member in advance or as soon as possible if unable to participate in all or part of the course activities for a given week because of a medical (which includes having to quarantine or isolate due to COVID-19 exposure or confirmed illness), family, or work-related emergency. Students should refer to their course syllabus and/or faculty member for specific requirements. Students who do not participate in course activities and fail to withdraw from the course will receive a failing “F” grade.

### Submission Standards

All written assignments should adhere to the following DE guidelines. Documents should be in the following format **unless directed differently by the syllabus or course instructor**:

- Submitted on the course site in Microsoft Word document format (.doc or .docx)
- Set in a traditional typeface 12-point font
- Double-spaced (unless the syllabus instructs otherwise)
- Set with one-inch margins

- Formatted in APA style for in-text citations and reference page (LIT1100 may ask for MLA documentation style)
- Labeled and submitted with the following information (APA papers require this information on a cover sheet, as detailed in A Pocket Style Manual): Student Name, Course Code and Title, Instructor Name, and Date.

## Critical Response to Alternate Viewpoints

When students are reading or viewing course materials, they may encounter viewpoints, words, or images that their instructors would not use or endorse. Students should know that materials are chosen for their value in learning to read, write, and view critically, not because the materials are necessarily Christian.

## ASSIGNMENTS

See the course site for complete details on the assignments.

### Reading Summary and Reflection

For each Reading Summary and Reflection include three elements:

1. **Summary:** The first is a 200 word summary of the reading. This should not include personal reflection or analysis, but merely describe the author's position and a synopsis of their arguments.
2. **Quotation:** The second element is a 1- to 3-sentence-long quotation from the reading. The selected quotation should make a point that is especially insightful, interesting, confusing, or controversial.
3. **Reflection:** The third element is a reflection on the selected quotation, and its connection to the broader themes of the essay being summarized. This reflection should be around 150 words. For the reflection, the important thing is to interact deeply with the material and demonstrate a mastery of the ideas being presented.

For grading details, see the Reading Summary and Reflection Rubric on the course site.

### Discussion Forums

For weeks where a discussion forum is assigned, participate in weekly Discussion Forums to wrestle with questions intended to help you deepen your understanding of philosophy through interaction with your classmates and instructor.

Your first post should be a 200-word initial response to the prompt question by Wednesday. Thereafter, by Friday, respond to three of your classmates' posts with substantive consideration using specific examples and scholarly questions wherever possible.

Unless otherwise noted in the syllabus or course site, post your initial responses by 11:59 p.m. CT on Wednesday of each week and respond to your classmates (at least 3 per discussion) by 11:59 p.m. CT on Friday of each week.

For grading details, see the Discussion Forum Rubric on the course site.

### Exploration Showcase Discussions

Twice throughout the course, you are invited to explore ways course concepts appear in daily lived experience. See the directions in each forum and share your exploration results as directed with your

classmates. Through collective explorations and perspectives, these activities aim to deepen our understanding of and appreciation for practical, personal implications of some of the more abstract concepts raised in this course.

For grading details, see the Discussion Forum Rubric on the course site.

## **Exams**

Three examinations will be given during the course. Carefully read through the Exam Instructions. Each exam has a 60 minute time limit. 30% of your final grade is based on the examinations. Note that no late examinations will be given.

## **Reflection Essay**

One Reflection Essay will be turned in near the end of the quad. Using Bradley Green's book *The Gospel and the Mind*, you are to write a reflection essay of 750-900 words in length in which you:

1. Articulate the central arguments of the book and summarize how they are developed throughout Green's analysis; and
2. Explain why you think evangelical philosophers either should or should not take the arguments of the book seriously.

You are expected to interact thoughtfully with the text, citing page numbers whenever you either refer to or quote a point Green makes in the book. You should have at least 6 references to the book, either quotations or direct references to the text. Avoid a chapter-by-chapter overview, trying instead to write an integrated essay that considers the content of the work holistically and illustrates the author's perspective by frequently referring directly to his claims. Please note that papers should be carefully proofread; quality of your writing (including presentation, organization, word selection, grammar and style, etc.) is important.

See the Reflection Essay Rubric for grading details.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **Format**

Everything needed to successfully complete this course in fifteen weeks is explained on the course site. Each assignment has been designed to work together during each week. When studying, be sure to follow the suggested format explained for each lesson.

For this course, students will receive access to each week's work as the semester progresses. There will be due dates during the week, but most weekly assignments will be due by 11:59 p.m. on Friday. Please refer to the schedule for the due dates of assignments.

Generally, for college-level work, students should expect to have an average of 5 hours of homework per week.

The last official class day in Week 15 varies from semester to semester. Please refer to the Semester Calendar found in the Academic Information section at the top of the course site for the actual last day of class. All course work must be completed and submitted by that day.

## Due Dates

All written assignments (outlined below) are to be submitted on the course site by 11:59 p.m. CT on Sundays at the end of each week in which they are assigned, unless otherwise noted.

For any questions regarding these assignments, contact the instructor.

## Orientation

- Read the Getting Started Page
- Participate in the Introductions Forum
- View and Complete Understanding Plagiarism Presentation and Quiz
- Complete Student Responsibilities Exercise

## Unit 1: Philosophy and the Unfolding Plan of Redemption

### Week 1

#### Lesson 1: Creation and the past

- Read Green, Introduction and Chapter 1
- Post and respond in the Week 1 Discussion Forum

### Week 2

#### Lesson 2: Understanding the cross

- Read Green, Chapter 3
- Post and respond in the Week 2 Discussion Forum

### Week 3

#### Lesson 3: All truth is God's truth

- Read "It's all God's Truth" — Litfin (on course site)
- Complete and submit Reading Summary & Reflection 1 on course site

### Week 4

#### Lesson 4: A *telos* to all things

- Read Green, Chapter 2
- Post and respond in the Week 4 Discussion Forum

### Week 5

#### Lesson 5: Culture and Christianity

- Read "Truth and our Culture" — Corduan (on course site)
- Read "Culture and Christianity" — Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity (on course site)
- Read or view one of the following
  - "Are Christianity and Society in Conflict?" —Watkin
  - Video: Are Christianity and Society in Conflict? (20:45)
- Presentation: Christianity & Culture — Sickler (10:12)
- Complete and submit Exam 1

## Unit 2: The Whole-Person Nature of Knowledge

### Week 6

#### Lesson 6: Faith and reason

- Read Chapter 3 of *Doing Philosophy as a Christian* —DeWeese (on course site)
- View video: Religion: Reason and Faith —Ganssle (8:38)
- Post and respond in the Week 6 Discussion Forum

### Week 7

#### Lesson 7: Reason and the heart

- Read "Evidence and the Heart" —Wainright (on course site)
- Read "The Lordship of Christ in the Realm of Knowledge" — Bahnsen, Ch 4–5 (on course site)
- Post and respond in Exploration Showcase: Knowledge and the Heart

### Week 8

#### Lesson 8: Moral nature of knowledge

- Read Green, Chapter 6
- View video: The Moral Nature of Knowledge — Sickler (10:39)
- Post and respond in the Week 8 Discussion Forum

### Week 9

#### Lesson 9: Words, language, and modern culture; A Christian understanding of words

- Read Green, Chapter 4–5
- Complete and submit Reading Summary & Reflection 2 on course site

### Week 10

#### Lesson 10: Relativism, postmodernism, and knowledge

- View Presentation: Truth and Postmodernism (8:53)
- Read "The Dangers and Delights of Postmodernism" — Carson (on course site)
- Complete and submit Exam 2

## Unit 3: Divine and Human Action in the Created Order

### Week 11

#### Lesson 11: Christianity and science

- Read *God on the Brain*, Chapters 2–3 — Sickler
- View video: Science and Religion — Craig (10:26)
- Post and respond in the Week 11 Discussion Forum

### Week 12

#### Lesson 12: God's sustaining activity

- Read "Law, Cause, and Occasionalism" — Plantinga in *Reason and Faith: Themes from Richard Swinburne* (on course site)
- Post and respond to Exploration Showcase: Laws of Nature



## **Week 13**

### **Lesson 13: Human nature, materialism, and dualism**

- Read "The Uniqueness of Humanity" — Groothuis, Chapter 17 (on course site)
- View video: Explaining (Away?) Religion: Cognitive Science and Christian Belief — Sickler (33:09)
- Post and respond in the Week 13 Discussion Forum

## **Week 14**

### **Lesson 14: Providence and freedom**

- Read "True Freedom: The Liberty that Scripture Portrays as Worth Having" — Talbot (on course site)
- View video: The Providence of God — Piper (10:20)
- Video: Is the Doctrine of Providence Biblical? — Piper (10:17)
- Video: Middle Knowledge — Craig (9:39)
- (Optional) "God Causes All Things" — Helseth
- Complete and submit Reading Summary & Reflection 3 on course site

## **Week 15**

*The final week varies in length based on the semester. Please refer to the Semester Calendars found in the Academic Information section at the top of the course site for details.*

### **Lesson 15: Putting it all together**

- Complete and submit Reflection Essay on course site
- Complete and submit Exam 3