



Online Course Syllabus

THS 512 L1

Prolegomena & Trinitarianism

Fall 2023

Contact Information

Instructor Name: Dr. Tamra J. Sanchez

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Instructor Office Hours: M-F 9:00 – 11:30 a.m., 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. Contacting me first – either by email or voicemail -- is best. Include: (1) the general topic (e.g., question about ____, request appointment, etc.), (2) whether you prefer a phone call or Zoom meeting.

Course Description and Prerequisites

Provides advanced discussions to Prolegomena (including Bibliology), Theology Proper, Christology, and Pneumatology, defining the scriptural views and showing the arguments for them, refuting other views, and emphasizing the relevance of theology to the Christian life and witness. (Prerequisite: BIB 505)

Course Objectives

This course has been designed to fortify and increase students' knowledge in the field of Christian theology and to sharpen their skills in analyzing, articulating, and defending biblical positions regarding the particular subjects listed in the course description and in ways that enhance the Christian student's abilities and opportunities to make disciples. More specifically, by the end of this course, each student should be able to:

1. Study the Bible with increasing depth of love for the triune God who reveals Himself therein and for the people who bear His image – both those who desperately need the gospel and those who need good biblical instruction and training.
2. Define Christian theology, explain its role and purpose in Christian life, and distinguish it from competing disciplines.
3. Define the terms *prolegomena* and *theological method*, articulate the components of an evangelical theological method, and explain the similarities and differences between this method and other major approaches to Christian theology.
4. Identify and clearly explain key biblical texts supporting orthodox Christian doctrinal positions on the theological loci addressed in this course.
5. Articulate a doctrine of Scripture.
6. Understand, define, explain, and incorporate in discourse theological terms and concepts used to (a) discuss the doctrines of Scripture, theology proper, Christology, and pneumatology with precision; (b) discuss and debate issues that reflect competing theological methods, interpretations of Scripture, or other sources of disagreement; and (c) identify and respond appropriately to deficient and heretical positions and arguments.

7. Identify selected highlights in the historical development of orthodox Christian doctrine – including key figures, places, issues, and outcomes – and explain their ongoing significance for contemporary Christianity.
8. Write, speak, and teach about these doctrines in his or her ministry context and in contemporary modes of theological discussion and argument.
9. Recognize, reflect upon, and discuss the biblical interconnections among these doctrines and the other theological loci.
10. Cogently explain the title of this course – i.e., compose a convincing argument for the centrality of trinitarian doctrine as the “grammar” of Christian theology.

Required Textbooks

TIP: I have marked with an asterisk (*) books that are available as complete eBooks to *Scribd* subscribers (Scribd.com); some are also available as audiobooks. In this app, which I use both on my laptop and smartphone, I have discovered and bookmarked (“saved”) numerous books, audiobooks, and other resources (available in this very affordable service) that are useful for theological study and research.

A hard copy of [the Bible](#) (i.e., printed as a book), preferably one that is *not* a study Bible and one in which you will not be reluctant to write as *you* study it as your primary source for Christian theology.

- * Kopic, Kelly M. *A Little Book for New Theologians: Why and How to Study Theology*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012. ISBN: 9780830839759
- * Holsteen, Nathan, and Michael J. Svingel, eds. *Exploring Christian Theology, Volume One: Revelation, Scripture, and the Triune God*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2014. ISBN: 9780764211300
- * Hall, Christopher A. *Learning Theology with the Church Fathers*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2002. ISBN: 9780830826865
Required reading: Chapters 1-5, 7-9.
- * Veeneman, Mary M. *Introducing Theological Method: A Survey of Contemporary Theologians and Approaches*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017. ISBN: 9780801049491
Required reading: Introduction, Chapters 1, 5, and one additional chapter for essay assignment.
- * Barrett, Matthew. *None Greater: The Undomesticated Attributes of God*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2019. ISBN: 9780801098741
- * Butner Jr., D. Glenn. *Trinitarian Dogmatics: Exploring the Grammar of the Christian Doctrine of God*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2022. ISBN: 9781540962332

Course Requirements and Assignments

The final grade for this course will be determined by the total number of points earned out of 1,000 possible points (divided by 10) distributed as follows:

(1) Weekly Assignments **10 of these, 25 points each** **250 points**

For each, instructions will be given the week before due. Assignments will vary but most often will require reflection on or response to the week's assigned reading, class meeting, and/or the professor's video presentation integrated with assessment of **various course objectives**. Within the description of each assignment will be the expectations your work must meet to earn the full 25 points.

DUE: Completed weekly assignments must be posted in Canvas by 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday of Weeks #2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14.

(2) Theological Method Paper and Presentation **150 points**

Detailed Instructions and rubric will be provided Week #2.

This assignment assesses especially **Objectives # 3, 6, and 8** and involves guided research.

Students will compare and contrast evangelical theological method and one of the other approaches introduced in Veeneman's book, whether the focus of one of the other chapters or the approach of a particular theologian discussed in those chapters.

PAPER (100 points) must be submitted to Canvas by 9:00 a.m. on the Tuesday of Week #5.

Length: 1500 words (approximately 5-6 double-spaced pages) *plus* endnotes and bibliography.

PRESENTATION (50 points) delivered in live Zoom class session during Week #5 (date and time TBD).

Length: Maximum 5 min. for each presentation, followed by Q&A discussion.

(3) Doctrinal Blogs **150 points**

Detailed Instructions and rubric will be provided Week #5 (team assignment depending on enrollment).

This assignment assesses especially **Objectives # 4, 5, 6, and 8** and involves guided research.

Each student contributes 3 blog posts, each worth 50 points. Two will focus on different aspects of bibliography; one will present a concise, introductory articulation of a doctrine of Scripture.

Length of each post: 500 words (approximately 1.5-2 double-spaced pages)

All three must be submitted to Canvas by 9:00 a.m. on the Tuesday of Week #8.

(4) Bible Study Plan / Introduction + 1 Lesson + Leader's Guide for the Lesson **150 points**

Detailed Instructions and rubric will be provided Week #8 (team assignment depending on enrollment).

This assignment assesses especially **Objectives # 1, 2, 4, 6, and 8** and involves guided research.

All three components must be submitted to Canvas by 9:00 a.m. on the Tuesday of Week #12.

The study will focus on the attributes of God.

(5) "Final" Exam **300 points**

Detailed Instructions will be provided Week #14.

This assignment consists of 6 components, assessing especially **Objectives # 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10**.

Each component is worth 50 points. All 6 components must be submitted to Canvas by the end of the exam time scheduled for this course during Final Exams Week.

These components will consist *primarily* of essay questions requiring integration and application of the course's content, especially (but not exclusively) focused on: orthodox trinitarianism, theology proper/God the Father, Christology, and pneumatology.

Online Course Information

In an online course at Criswell College:

1. Instructors and all students enrolled in that course meet using video-conferencing technology at scheduled class times through the course of a semester or term in order to meet 25–30% of the direct faculty instruction required by the college's Credit Hour policy.
2. The remaining direct faculty instruction is delivered using other means such as:
 - Lectures/instruction for students to watch asynchronously
 - Online content modules in which instructor provides feedback to student work
 - Tests/quizzes on which instructor provides feedback
 - Discussion boards on which instructor provides feedback

Canvas: Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based learning tool to host/deliver all instructional materials, discussions, assessments, files, and other peripheral tools and applications that support teaching and learning. In online courses at Criswell College, instructors design and use Canvas to:

- organize course content on a module basis using organizational tools within Canvas,
- control the timing of course requirements through module control or assignment due dates to ensure that students are engaged for the full length of the semester or term,
- accept assignments from students only inside the Canvas course (emailed assignments are not acceptable),
- provide written feedback on assignments only within Canvas, preferably through Speedgrader,
- use the Announcement or e-mail feature in Canvas to communicate to the students rather than by broadcasting to a class email listserv outside of Canvas.

Zoom in Canvas is used for all synchronous class sessions.

Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at (844) 358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day.

Course/Classroom Policies and Information

In addition to the policies and information outlined above and below, please note the following policies:

- ANNOUNCEMENTS: Students are responsible for accessing and heeding announcements posted for this course.
- QUESTIONS: If you have *any* questions about the course – including its content, assignments, expectations, procedures, your grade, or anything else relevant to the course – please *do not hesitate* to contact me. However, for some questions, *first* consulting this syllabus, course materials (e.g., assignment instructions and rubrics) and other resources provided by Criswell College may prove to be efficient and considerate.
- ATTENDANCE: In addition to the paragraph below on “Attendance,” note that a student’s formal attendance in (“showing up for”) this course will be marked (and points earned or lost) according to each week’s requirements. The assignments for this course are structured and sequenced to maintain student engagement in and regular attendance to the course content. The course is deliberately designed to maximize student participation and accountability, which naturally result in maximal achievement of the course objectives.

- STAYING UP TO DATE, ON TIME: To stay up to date with the course and fully to achieve the objectives, submitting assignments on time is crucial. An assignment submitted after its due date/time will be penalized 5 points per day, beginning the day due. For example, if a student submits an assignment due by 9:00 a.m. on a Tuesday morning *after 9:00 that morning*, the maximum grade for it will be 20 points instead of 25. If the assignment is submitted more than 24 hours later (after 9:00 the next morning), the maximum grade will be 15 points, and so on.
- PLAGIARISM: Carefully note the paragraph below on “Academic Dishonesty.” Students are expected vigilantly to avoid plagiarism of any kind and therefore to seek out information and ask questions as needed to maintain unquestionable academic integrity. *No credit* will be given for assignments deemed to be the work (in part or whole) of someone (or *something*) other than the student or, for particular assignments, other than the collaborating team.

Attendance

Students are responsible for enrolling in courses for which they (1) anticipate being able to attend every on-campus class session on the day and time appearing on course schedules, or (2) participating in academically related activities as identified in online-course schedules including synchronous class sessions conducted remotely by video, and then making every effort to do so. When unavoidable situations result in absence or tardiness, students are responsible for acquiring any missed information. Professors are not obliged to allow students to make up missed work. Per their independent discretion, individual professors may determine how attendance affects students’ ability to meet course learning objectives and whether attendance affects course grades. Professors apprise students of such information in course syllabi.

Students receiving grants, loans, or scholarships must meet specified requirements of various departments at the college and should consult relevant sections of the *Academic Catalog*. To ensure such funds will not be forfeited, students are responsible for contacting the proper departments to ascertain any specific course participation requirements and consequences of not meeting such requirements. Students receiving grants, loans, or scholarships should consult the Financial Aid office.

While Criswell College is a non-attendance taking institution, it nevertheless must demonstrate that students begin their courses in order to comply with Federal Aid regulations. Accordingly, students must participate in academically related activities during census periods. Failure to meet this requirement will result in students being administratively dropped from courses.

Academically related activity is defined as any course-related activity that may be used as evidence of attendance. Examples include:

- physical presence in a classroom during a class session with the instructor present,
- participation in a synchronous remote video class session with the instructor present,
- submission of an academic assignment, quiz, or exam,
- participation in an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction,
- participation in a study group or discussion board that is assigned by the instructor,
- documentation showing that the student and a faculty member corresponded about the

academic subject of the course.

NOTE: Logging into a Canvas course alone and logging into a Synchronous Online class session without active participation or with the camera off are not considered attendance.

NOTE: A census period begins on the first day of a semester/term and runs through the end of the last day to drop courses. During the census period, attendance data is collected in order to demonstrate compliance with Federal Aid regulations. There is no census period for winter terms since there is no last day to drop courses.

Grading Scale

| | | |
|----|--------|------------------------------------|
| A | 93-100 | 4.0 grade points per semester hour |
| A- | 90-92 | 3.7 grade points per semester hour |
| B+ | 87-89 | 3.3 grade points per semester hour |
| B | 83-86 | 3.0 grade points per semester hour |
| B- | 80-82 | 2.7 grade points per semester hour |
| C+ | 77-79 | 2.3 grade points per semester hour |
| C | 73-76 | 2.0 grade points per semester hour |
| C- | 70-72 | 1.7 grade points per semester hour |
| D+ | 67-69 | 1.3 grade points per semester hour |
| D | 63-66 | 1.0 grade point per semester hour |
| D- | 60-62 | 0.7 grade points per semester hour |
| F | 0-59 | 0.0 grade points per semester hour |

Incomplete Grades

Students requesting a grade of Incomplete (I) must understand that incomplete grades may be given only upon approval of the faculty member involved. An "I" may be assigned only when a student is currently passing a course and in situations involving extended illness, serious injury, death in the family, or employment or government reassignment, not student neglect.

Students are responsible for contacting their instructors prior to the end of the semester, plus filing the appropriate completed and approved academic request form with the Registrar's Office. The "I" must be removed (by completing the remaining course requirements) no later than 60 calendar days after the close of the term or semester in which the grade was awarded, or the "I" will become an "F."

Academic Honesty

Absolute truth is an essential belief and basis of behavior for those who believe in a God who cannot lie and forbids falsehood. Academic honesty is the application of the principle of truth in the classroom setting. Academic honesty includes the basic premise that all work submitted by students must be their own and any ideas derived or copied from elsewhere must be carefully documented.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- cheating of any kind,
- submitting, without proper approval, work originally prepared by the student for another course,
- plagiarism, which is the submitting of work prepared by someone else as if it were his own, and
- failing to credit sources properly in written work.

Institutional Assessment

Material submitted by students in this course may be used for assessment of the college's academic programs. Since programmatic and institutional assessment is done without reference to specific students, the results of these assessments have no effect on a student's course grade or academic standing at the college. Before submitting a student's work for this type of assessment, the course instructor redacts the work to remove anything that identifies the student.

Institutional Email Policy

All official college email communications to students enrolled in this course will be sent exclusively to students' institutional email accounts. Students are expected to check their student email accounts regularly and to respond in an appropriate and timely manner to all communications from faculty and administrative departments.

Students are permitted to setup automatic forwarding of emails from their student email accounts to one or more personal email accounts. The student is responsible to setup and maintain email forwarding without assistance from college staff. If a student chooses to use this forwarding option, he/she will continue to be responsible for responding appropriately to all communications from faculty and administrative departments of the college. Criswell College bears no responsibility for the use of emails that have been forwarded from student email accounts to other email accounts.

Disabilities

Criswell College recognizes and supports the standards set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and similar state laws, which are designed to eliminate discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Criswell College is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualifying students, faculty, and employees with disabilities as required by applicable laws. For more information, please contact the Student Services Office.

Intellectual Property Rights

Unless otherwise specifically instructed in writing by the instructor, students must neither materially nor digitally reproduce materials from any course offered by Criswell College for or with the significant possibility of distribution.

Research and Writing Standards

The default writing style for written assignments in Criswell College Courses is the latest edition of *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations* by Kate Turabian. However, instructors are free to require alternative writing styles in their courses. These styles include but are not limited to the American Psychological

Association (APA), Chicago Manual of Style, Modern Language Association (MLA), and Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) writing guides.

Resources and Support

Student Services: The Student Services Office exists to foster and encourage success in all areas of life—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional. Students are encouraged to reach out for assistance by contacting the office at 214.818.1332 or studentservices@criswell.edu. The Student Services Office also works with local counseling centers to ensure that every student has access to helpful mental health resources. More information can be found at [Criswell College Mental Health Resources](#), and students may contact the Director of Student Services if they have any questions.

Wallace Library: Students can access academic resources and obtain research assistance by contacting or visiting the Wallace Library, which is located on campus. For more information, email the Wallace Library at library@criswell.edu. Offsite login information is available in Canvas in the “Criswell Student Training Course” under “Library Information.”

Tutoring Center: Students are encouraged to consult with tutors to improve and enhance their skills and confidence in any subject matter taught at the college. Tutors have been recommended by the faculty to ensure that the tutor(s) are qualified to serve the student body. Every tutor brings experience and expertise in an effort to provide the proper resources for the subject matter at hand. To consult with a tutor, students can schedule an appointment through Calendly (<https://calendly.com/criswell-tutoringcenter>) or by visiting the Tutoring Center located on the second floor in room E203. For questions, call 214.818.1373 or email at tutoringcenter@criswell.edu.

Course Outline/Calendar

ECT = *Exploring Christian Theology*

| Week # (Mon. date) | Lecture / Class session focus | Required Reading, Assignment Due |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1 (8/21) | Faithful Theology | Kapic’s book ECT: 9-10, 22, 25-30 |
| 2 (8/28) | Prolegomena Theological Method | DUE 8/29: Weekly Assignment #1 Hall: 10-33 (Ch. 1) ECT: 31-56 Veeneman: 1-14, 81-110 |
| 3 (9/4) | Evangelical Theological Method | DUE 9/5: Weekly Assignment #2 ECT: 57-94 Veeneman: Selected chapter “Kickstart” research article |

| | | |
|---------------|---|--|
| 4 (9/11) | Christ and Scripture | DUE 9/12: Weekly Assignment #3 ECT: 95-110 Hall: 34-51 (Ch. 2), 206-23 (Ch. 9) |
| 5 (9/18) | Presentations of Theological Method Paper's content (Zoom) | DUE 9/19: Theological Method Paper Thompson article on Athanasius' doctrine of Scripture C. S. Lewis' intro to Athanasius' <i>On the Incarnation</i> Selected blog entries re importance of Athanasius' theology, <i>On the Incarnation</i> Athanasius, <i>On the Incarnation</i> |
| 6 (9/25) | Doctrine/Theology of Scripture | DUE 9/26: Weekly Assignment #4 ECT: 127-37, 156-63, 190-93 Hall: 53-99 (Ch. 3-4) |
| 7 (10/2) | Christ, Trinity, and Theology Proper | DUE 10/3: Weekly Assignment #5 ECT: 138-55 Barrett: xi-xviii, 1-40 |
| 8 (10/9) | Christology Divine Attributes | DUE 10/10: Doctrinal Blogs ECT: 186-90, 197-202 Barrett: 41-69 (Ch. 3, 4) Hall: 159-89 (Ch. 7) |
| 9 (10/16) | ~~~~~ | DUE 10/17: Weekly Assignment #6 |
| 10 (10/23) | The Holy Spirit | Barrett: 89-160 (Ch. 6-8) ECT: 163-67, 194 Hall: 182-205 (Ch. 8) |
| 11 (10/30) | Trinitarian Pneumatology | DUE 10/31: Weekly Assignment #7 Barrett: 166-229 (Ch. 9-11) |
| 12 (11/6) | Trinity Councils, Creeds, Orthodoxy | DUE 11/7: Doctrinal Bible Study Project ECT: 168-85, 195-96 Barrett: 231-46 (Ch. 12) Butner: 1-44 (Introduction, Ch. 1) |
| 13 (11/13) | Speaking of the Trinity | DUE 11/14: Week Assignment #8 ECT: 202-20 Butner: 47-72, 101-30 (Ch. 2, 4) |
| FALL BREAK | | |
| 14 (11/27) | Trinitarian Grammar | DUE 11/28: Weekly Assignment #9 Butner: 133-97 (Ch. 5-7) |

15
(12/4)

Thoroughly Trinitarian Theology

DUE 12/5: Week Assignment #10
Butner: 199-218 (Ch. 8)

16
(12/11)

FINAL EXAMS WEEK

DUE (date TBD): Final Exam

Selected Bibliography

We will build this resource collaboratively with the professor's guidance throughout the course.