

**Christian Theology**  
Theo 5110  
North Park Theological Seminary  
October 23-27, 2017

**Instructor information:**

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**Course Description:**

- An introduction to the doctrines, methods and tasks of Christian theology, seeking active appropriation of Christian faith in the context of the church and in engagement with the world.

**Course Objectives:**

- Students will become familiar with basic Christian doctrine in its historical development and systematic embodiment.
- To practice the tools, texts and tasks of Christian theology.
- To engage in both formal and informal theological conversation, allowing students to explore and deepen their participation in the faith of the church.
- Clearly to connect theology to the life, ministry and mission of the church.
- To grasp the theological dimensions of the various callings of students in the class.
- To investigate the relationship of theology and culture, including clarification of the way cultural processes of production and meaning affect Christian notions of identity.
- To be drawn into the knowledge and love of God, to empower faithful service, and to articulate hopeful witness.

**Course Texts:**

- The Bible. NRSV, ESV, RSV are preferred translations.
- Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*. There are many translations available. I suggest you find one that is readily understandable to you.
- Millard Ericson, *Christian Theology*. This is a standard if not scintillating text.
- Donald Frisk, *Covenant Affirmations*. Frisk was a respected and articulate theologian for many decades, and this volume constitutes both a benchmark and a signpost in the history of the Covenant Church and its theology. This text must be ordered through the Covenant Bookstore.
- Amos Yong, *Hospitality and the Other: Pentecost, Christian Practices and the Neighbor*.
- N.T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church*.

## Course Requirements:

### 1. Class Participation

- The reading of Augustine, Frisk, Yong and Wright is to be accomplished prior to the first class session.
- Be prepared to discuss and ask questions concerning the reading you have completed.

### 2. Essays

- 850 word paper interacting with the Augustine document. Kindly note the five most important questions you believe are raised in the document, why these are important, and finally considerable space devoted to an attempt to answer one of these questions. You may seek other aids to assist in understanding Augustine, but the idea is not to compose a research paper but rather to think on you own. I want to read and to see and to hear what you think, how you think, & how the reading strikes you. This is due Monday, Oct. 9. Kindly email me your paper at [david.nystrom323@gmail.com](mailto:david.nystrom323@gmail.com).
- 500 word summary of either Yong or Wright. No quotations! This should be brought to our first class session in hard copy.
- Draft of a list of ten questions (five from Yong, five from Wright) from which you will choose one as the topic of your final paper. This should be brought to our first class session in hard copy.

### 3. Further essays

- During class materials for three further essays will be disseminated. These are NOT research essays in that no materials beyond what we will have used in class will be required. These essays are intended to be thoughtful, thought-provoking reflections on hypothetical situations pertaining to the interplay of theology with church life. Due dates for these will be discussed in class. These should be short (500-1000 words).

### 4. Final Paper

This assignment should be included in your student portfolio.

- This will be a short (eight to ten pages, double spaced, 12 point font, standard margins please) research paper on a topic pertaining to systematic theology and in particular the interplay of systematic theology with the pastoral endeavor. I expect you to employ at least four scholarly sources, of which any of the textbooks qualify. Kindly consult a standard guide (such as Turabian) and/or the link to the North Park Seminary Writing Handbook concerning proper ways to cite sources, etc. (<https://www.northpark.edu/wp-content/uploads/Writing-Handbook-2017-2018.pdf>.) Hopefully your reading of Wright and Yong will have prompted some questions in your mind, such as...
  - In what ways does Wright's understanding of hope contrast with various traditionally evangelical ways of understanding eschatology?
  - How does pneumatology influence the Covenant and its doctrine (& practice!) of ecclesiology. Is the position of the Covenant licit when contrasted with biblical teaching on the Spirit?
  - What practical ways might be engaged to ensure that a robust and orthodox ecclesiology develop in your congregation?

**Grading:**

Class participation	15%
Augustine essay	15%
Wright/Yong essay	10%
Further essays	30%
Final Paper	30%

**Academic honesty:**

- Plagiarism will not be tolerated. There is no shame in noting the use of sources (even sources accessed online), whether you are quoting a source or making reference to ideas you encountered in a source.
- I am happy for you to help each other develop ideas, etc., but the material you present to me must be your own work.

**Students with Disabilities:**

- In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of North Park Theological Seminary to provide appropriate and reasonable accommodations, or academic adjustments, and services to students with a documented disability to help ensure an equal educational opportunity. Students seeking these services should contact Ms. Laura Ebner Student Services Learning Specialist at [773 244-5737](tel:773-244-5737) or email her at [leebner@northpark.edu](mailto:leebner@northpark.edu) at the earliest possible time with supporting documentation.

**Harassment Policy and Title IX:**

Students who believe they have been harassed, discriminated against, or involved in sexual violence should contact the Dean of Students (773-244-6222) or Director of Human Resources (773-244-5601) for information about campus resources and support services, including confidential counseling services. As members of the North Park faculty, we are concerned about the well-being and development of our students, and are available to discuss any concerns. Faculty are legally obligated to share information with the University's Title IX coordinator in certain situations to help ensure that the student's safety and welfare is being addressed, consistent with the requirements of the law. These disclosures include but are not limited to reports of sexual assault, relational/domestic violence, and stalking. Please refer to North Park's Safe Community site (<http://www.northpark.edu/Campus-Life-and-Services/Safe-Community>) for contact information and further details.