

**203.715 Theology: God and Creation**  
**Course Assessment and Delivery Outline**

**Campus:** Distance Learning  
**Tutor:** Alister Gill

Semester SS, 2017-18  
NQF Level: 7, 15 credits

**CONTENT OVERVIEW:**

The existence and nature of the triune God; biblical overview of the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit; God in creation and providence; the problem of evil; humans made in the image of God; the nature and origins of sin; dialogue with some contemporary and scientific reflections on creation and humanity; angels and powers and principalities.

At the end of the course students will be able to:

1. Give evidence of wide reading about, and critically appropriate theological engagement with, the doctrines of God, creation, anthropology and pneumatology.
2. Show evidence of a deepening understanding and appropriately critical application of theological method.
3. Formulate a discerning theological response to some contemporary discussion of God, creation and humanity.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

<b>Semester Week</b>	<b>Week start</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assessment Task</b>	<b>Word count</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>% Final grade</b>
1	27/11/17	The Nature and Attributes of God Part 1				
2	4/12/17	The Nature and Attributes of God Part 2	Discussion Forum	200+50	10/12/17	1/6 of 20%
3	11/12/17	The Holy Spirit Part 1				
4	18/12/17	The Holy Spirit Part 2	Discussion Forum	200+50	24/12/17	1/6 of 20%
5	25/12/17	The Triune God Part 1	Discussion Forum	200+50		1/6 of 20%
6	1/1/18	The Triune God Part 2	Essay	2000	7/1/18	35%
7	8/1/18	God and the World: Creation			14/1/18	
8	15/1/18	God and the World: Providence			21/1/18	
9	22/1/18	Providence and Theodicy	Discussion Forum	200+50	28/1/17	1/6 of 20%

10	29/1/18	Humanity as Created	Discussion Forum	200+50	4/2/18	1/6 of 20%
11	5/2/18	Humanity as Fallen: Sin Part 1				
12	12/2/18	Humanity as Fallen: Sin Part 2	Discussion Forum	200+50	18/2/18	1/6 of 20%
			Research Essay	3500		45%

### Notes:

1. The standard course schedule has been compressed for summer school. There is no break, even over the Christmas/New year period. We recommend you plan to do your work well in advance of days you intend to take off.
2. The library will be open 8am-5pm except over the period from 23/12/17 to 7/1/18. Loan periods will be adjusted to compensate for the closure. Please ensure you obtain any resources required for the assignment before the close down.
3. Academic support will be available every weekday except the statutory holidays. You will be advised on who to contact.

## LEARNING HOURS

Course materials, readings and reflection	70 hours
Discussion forum	15 hours
Essay – Holy Spirit	25 hours
Research essay	40 hours
<b>Total</b>	<b>150 hours</b>

## ASSESSMENT TASKS DETAILS

### 1. Discussion Forums

Length:	200 words per initial post, at least 50 words for response posts.
Percentage weighting of final grade:	20%
Due date:	11.55 pm Sunday, end of weeks 2, 4, 5, 9, 10 and 12.
Learning outcomes:	1, 2, 3
Learning hours:	15

Discussion forums will require you to engage with various themes and topics. The purpose is to create an opportunity for students to discuss aspects of the course in a well-informed but informal way.

Typically you will be required to prepare an initial post in response to a reading and/or some question/s. Over the 7 days following your initial post, you are to engage in genuine conversation with one or two other students by posting response(s) to what they have written, and either responding to those who have commented on what you have written, or entering into any further dialogue about the topic. Specific instructions will accompany each discussion forum.

As a minimum requirement to pass this assessment task, in addition to your initial post you need to respond to at least one other student's post, but you are encouraged to have a meaningful and constructive dialogue with others.

A link to further details about expectations for discussions online, and their grading, can be found within each discussion forum on Moodle.

*Criteria for Assessment (major criteria are in bold.)*

1. <b>Engagement with material</b>	<b>Comments show excellent understanding of the topic. Reasoning and connections are clearly articulated.</b>
2. <b>Constructive engagement with others</b>	<b>Meaningful contribution to the online community is shown by both considering and responding to issues raised by others in a timely way, using thought provoking questions as appropriate.</b>
3. Structure and presentation	Clear, well-formed structure. Accurate spelling and grammar. Concise writing.

## 2. Essay – Holy Spirit

Length:	2000 words
Percentage weighting of final grade:	35%
Due dates:	11.55PM Sunday end of Semester Week 6
Learning outcomes:	1, 2
Learning hours:	20

Write an essay on the Holy Spirit. In your essay, explore the place of the Holy Spirit within the Trinity. Also, explore how the Holy Spirit acts within the world, and in both Christian and non-Christian lives.

As a guideline, in your essay, refer to at least six scholarly sources such as books or academic journal articles.

*Criteria for Assessment (major criteria are in bold)*

<b>Coverage of topic</b>	<b>Insightful and accurate description of the Holy Spirit within the Trinity, and balanced discussion of the action of the Holy Spirit in the world and in peoples' lives, demonstrating advanced theological understanding.</b>
<b>Effective interaction with literature</b>	<b>Suitable choice of scholarly material to research, and critical interaction with this. Material is appropriately referenced.</b>
Structure and presentation	Clear grammar and language use, overall coherence, correct referencing

## 3. Research Essay

Length:	3500 words
Percentage weighting of final grade:	45%
Due dates:	11.55 pm Sunday at end of Week 12
Learning outcomes:	1, 2, 3
Learning hours:	40

Write an essay in which you research, and write about one of the following three topics:

- Does a loving God exist? In your answer, consider the problem of evil. Refer to the witness of Israel and the Church, as well as the arguments given by philosophers and theologians. Address the views of at least one of the following groups: atheists, agnostics or pantheists.

- b) What is sin and where does it come from? In your discussion, consider Scripture, church traditions, and the work of recent theologians. Also consider individual and societal elements.
- c) What does it mean to be made in the image of God? Discuss in the light of contemporary concerns, artificial intelligence, virtual reality and evolutionary history.

As a guideline, in your essay refer to around 12-15 resources, at least 9 of which should be scholarly sources such as books or academic journal articles (including the readings provided with your course materials). The others may be lighter sources such as news and magazine articles (or their online equivalent).

*Criteria for Assessment (major criteria are in bold)*

<b>Essay addresses the question</b>	<b>Chosen topic is critically examined and effectively explored. All aspects of the question are addressed.</b>
<b>Advanced theological method used</b>	<b>Key theological issues raised by the question are engaged with through the proficient use of Scripture, experience, reason and tradition. Demonstrated ability to analyse, critically evaluate and compare different positions.</b>
<b>Research resources skilfully used</b>	<b>Appropriate readings are used as sources in support of the essay arguments, in demonstrating an advanced understanding of the topic, and in critically evaluating a range of perspectives.</b>
Structure and presentation	Clear grammar and language use, overall coherence, correct referencing.

## TEXTBOOKS:

### Required text:

Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013.  
**This edition is available as an E-book from the Laidlaw Library.**

## NOTES

- All assignments need to be presented according to the Laidlaw College “Guidelines for Written Assignments”.
- Assignments are to be submitted to Moodle no later than 11.55pm on the due date, unless otherwise noted.
- Assignments must comply with the standards set out for assessment in Laidlaw College’s “General Information and Regulations”.
- Please see these regulations for guidance on extension requests, submission of late work, and plagiarism.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY:

### General Theology and Reference.

These texts will be helpful for any other theology studies you do.

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Dyrness, William A. and Veli-Matti Karkkainen, eds. *Global Dictionary of Theology*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2008.

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- Rayment-Pickard, Hugh. *50 Key Concepts in Theology*. London, UK: Andrews UK Ltd, 2007. **E-book.**

### **The Attributes of God**

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- Fiddes, Paul S. *The Creative Suffering of God*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.
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## **Pneumatology**

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