

**LAIDLAW COLLEGE**  
*Te Wananga Amorangi*

**201.515 Theology: Introduction**  
**Course Assessment and Delivery Outline**

Campus: Distance Learning  
Tutor: David Wells

Semester SS, 2017-18  
NQF Level 5, 15 credits

**CONTENT OVERVIEW**

An introduction to theology that answers the question: What do Christians believe and why? The course examines the sources of theological authority; theological method based on those sources; the content of Christian belief; and how theology relates to individual, communal and global life.

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Articulate an understanding of the importance and distinctiveness of theology, and the variety within theology.
2. Describe and employ a balanced form of theological method.
3. Describe the content, unity and diversity of basic Christian beliefs.
4. Demonstrate the relevance of these basic beliefs to discipleship and ministry (individual and communal) in both the New Zealand and global contexts.

**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	Christian belief: Unity and diversity	Discussion forum	200+50	3/12/17	6%
2	4/12/17	Sources and norms of Christian belief: One and many				
3	11/12/17	Divine revelation and good theology: Universal and particular	Discussion forum	200+50	17/12/17	6%
4	18/12/17	God: Great and good				
5	25/12/17	God: Three and one				
6	1/1/18	Creation: Good and fallen	Discussion forum	200+50	7/1/18	6%
7	8/1/18	Humanity: Creature, sinner, and new being in Christ				

8	15/1/18	Jesus Christ: Human and divine	Discussion forum	200+50	21/1/18	6%
9	22/1/18	Salvation: Objective and subjective	Theological assessment	1200	28/1/18	30%
10	29/1/18	Salvation: Gift and task				
11	5/2/18	The church: Visible and invisible, worshipping and missional	Discussion forum	200+50	11/2/18	6%
12	12/2/18	Eschatology: Continuity and discontinuity in the Kingdom	Online Exam	2000	16/2/18	40%

### 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

Core study periods (12 x 4 hours) and Reflection	60 hours
Discussion forums	30 hours
Theological assessment	30 hours
Course review and exam	30 hours
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150 learning hours (15 credits)</b>

Study periods will be centred on the course materials provided. Although this guideline regarding learning hours is not intended to be applied rigidly, it should help ensure a balanced workload.

### ASSESSMENT TASKS DETAIL

#### 1. Discussion Forums

Length:	200 words per initial post, at least 50 words for follow-up posts.
Percentage weighting of final grade:	30%
Due date:	11.55 pm Sunday, Weeks 1, 3, 6, 8, 11
Learning outcomes:	1, 4
Learning hours:	30

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. Theological Assessment

Length:	1200 words
Percentage weighting of final grade:	30%
Due date:	11.55 pm Sunday, Week 9
Learning outcomes:	2
Learning hours:	30

The goal of this assessment is that you will be able to recognise constructive theology, and so better articulate the content of the Christian faith.

Summarise the overall **theological teaching** in one of the articles given below (and also available on Moodle). Do this by identifying the aspects of belief it addresses, and the sources the article draws on to make its points.

Either:

Rae, Murray. "Forgiveness as Foreign Policy." *Stimulus* 15, 3 (August 2007): 7-12.

Or:

Olson, Duane. "Contextualization – Everyone's Doing It." *Word & World* 10, 4 (1990):349-355.

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

1. <b>Comprehension</b>	<b>Clear identification of the aspects of belief addressed, and also of the sources used by the author of the article.</b>
2. <b>Analysis and judgment</b>	<b>Balanced understanding of the text under critique, and evidence of sound theological method in its analysis.</b>
3. <b>Structure</b>	<b>Clear and logical arrangement of ideas and valid conclusions.</b>
4. Communication and presentation	Effective and clear writing, correct spelling, grammar, annotation and bibliography.

### 3. Online Exam

Length:	Four questions, 500 words maximum for each question, total 2000 words maximum.
Learning outcomes:	1, 3, 4
Percentage weighting:	40%
Due date:	9am 15/2/2018 to 9am 16/2/18

The take home exam is designed to assess your overall understanding of the material covered in this course. You will have 24 hours in which to complete the exam, so as to remove the pressure of having to complete it under pressure. It will be an open-book exam which means you may refer to any resources available to you, but you **must** put everything you write totally in your own words. You will be given access to the exam questions on Moodle at a designated time, and will have 24 hours from that time in which to complete the exam, and upload your answers to Moodle. Your answers will be checked for plagiarism by Turnitin. More detail will be given closer to the time of the exam.

Criteria for Assessment

1	Coverage of main points
2	Application of theological method
3	Clarity & development of answer

## TEXTBOOK

The **required text** is:

Olson, Roger. *The Mosaic of Christian Belief: Twenty Centuries of Unity and Diversity*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016.

Additional required and recommended readings are supplied on Moodle.

## NOTES

Please note:

- 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.

## SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

In order to ensure a wide and balanced appreciation of the range of theological opinion found in the Christian community, especially recommended additional works are:

Boyd, Gregory A. and Paul R. Eddy. *Across the Spectrum: Understanding Issues in Evangelical Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2002; 2009.

Dorrien, Gary. *The Remaking of Evangelical Theology*. Louisville, KY: John Knox, 1998.

Dyrness, William A. *Learning about Theology from the Third World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990.

Elwell, Walter A., ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2001.

Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 1998.  
[Available at the Laidlaw Library as an **E-book**]

Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998.

Erickson, Millard J. *Introducing Christian Doctrine*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998.

Ferguson, S.B. and D.F. Wright, eds. *New Dictionary of Theology*. Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1988.

Grenz, Stanley. *Theology for the Community of God*. Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 1994; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000.

Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Grand Rapids, MI; Nottingham: Zondervan and InterVarsity Press, 1994, 2007.

Gunton, Colin E. *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002.

Gunton, Colin E., ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Jenkins, Michael. *Invitation to Theology*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001.

Jones, Gareth, ed. *The Blackwell Companion to Modern Theology*. Oxford, UK; Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004. [Available at the Laidlaw Library as an **E-book**]

Kristiansen, Ståle Johannes and Rise, Svein, eds. *Key Theological Thinkers: From Modern to Postmodern*. Farnham, Surrey, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013. [Available at the Laidlaw Library as an **E-book**]

Lacoste, Jean-Yves, ed. *Encyclopedia of Christian Theology*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2005.  
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- Lewis, Gordon R. and Bruce A. Demarest. *Integrative Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996.
- McFarlane, Ian. David A.S. Fergusson, Karen Kilby, and Iain, R. Torrance, eds. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011. [Available at the Laidlaw Library as an **E-book**]
- McGowan, A.T.B., ed. *Always Reforming: Explorations in Systematic Theology*. Leicester: Apollos, 2006.
- McGrath, Alister E. *Christian Theology: An Introduction*. Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley, 2011. [Available at the Laidlaw Library as an **E-book**]
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- McGrath, Alister E. *Theology: The Basics*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012. [Available at the Laidlaw Library as an **E-book**]
- McKim, Donald K. *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996. [Available at the Laidlaw Library as an **E-book**]
- Migliore, Daniel M. *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology, second edition*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004.
- Milne, Bruce. *Know the Truth: A Handbook of Christian Belief*, 3rd ed. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2009.
- Patte, Daniel, ed. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*. Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. [Available at the Laidlaw Library as an **E-book**]
- Rayment-Pickard, Hugh. *50 Key Concepts in Theology*. London, UK: Andrews UK Ltd, 2007. [Available at the Laidlaw Library as an **E-book**]
- Seitz, Christopher R, editor. *Nicene Christianity: the Future for a New Ecumenism*. Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: Brazos; Paternoster, 2002.
- Stone, Howard and Duke, James. *How to Think Theologically*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006. [Available at the Laidlaw Library as an **E-book**]
- Tennent, Timothy C. *Theology in the Context of World Christianity: How the Global Church is Influencing the Way we Think About and Discuss Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007.
- Warrington, Keith. *Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter*. London: T&T Clark, 2008.
- Willis, David. *Clues to the Nicene Creed: A Brief Outline of the Faith*. Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2005.