THE550  Theology for Counseling I: Christian Worldview  
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I. Course Description

This course examines the fundamental concepts of the Christian worldview and demonstrates how to integrate them into counseling situations. The doctrines of Scripture, God, and humanity are covered, and the foundation laid for Theology for Counseling II.

II. Course Objectives

1. Begin to understand and implement a metanarrative approach to theology and ministry.

2. Value all components of the theological encyclopedia: exegetical, biblical, historical, systematic, and ministry theology.

3. Acquire and demonstrate proper theological method: ability to do systematic theology by incorporating the other aspects of the theological encyclopedia.

4. Grow in understanding and ability to express an orthodox theology of revelation, Scripture, the Triune God, divine perfections, creation, providence, and humanity.

5. Sharpen sensitivity to recognize and correct heresies that challenge each of these doctrines.

6. Establish a theological foundation for authentic worship of the living God and service to his church.

7. Learn to theologically analyze and apply sound doctrine in counseling situations.

III. Textbooks

Books with asterisks are used in both Theology for Counseling 1 and 2.


The Hoch Bookroom (HBR) sells new copies of course textbooks and supplementary texts at costs comparative to online vendors. The HBR is committed to providing textbooks through drop/add week of each semester. After drop/add week it is not guaranteed that all textbooks will remain in stock due to the nature of inventory returns. In addition to purchasing books during store hours, students can call the HBR to order books by phone and pay with a credit card. Books can be shipped to the student for a fee or can be picked up from the front desk of the GRTS Faculty Center. HBR hours and contact information are posted online at https://www.cornerstone.edu/grts-hoch-bookroom.

IV. Course Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case Study</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theological Assessment</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination</td>
<td>35%</td>
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</tbody>
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The quality of the student’s classroom participation and ability to complete the assigned reading may raise or lower his final grade. Per the seminary catalogue, students may miss one class period without penalty (half of a summer class day), but each additional absence will result in one letter grade reduction per absence. It is the specific policy of this professor and generally of the institution to not grant incompletes for coursework.

Papers and Projects in Bible and Theology courses should be formatted and sources documented according to the GRTS Guideline for Papers (see sample footnotes and bibliography on p. 10-13). This guideline is based on the Turabian/Chicago Manual of Style and the SBL Handbook of Style. To access this style guide in EaglesNest: Go to eaglesnest.cornerstone.edu; select GRTS; the GRTS Guideline for Papers is in the Quick Links menu under “Academic Writing Resources”

Copyright Violation and Plagiarism: Copyright violation and plagiarism have serious ramifications for Cornerstone/GRTS students, both legally and ethically. Unauthorized copying or use of copyrighted materials, including downloaded files of various kinds, can result in criminal charges and fines. Plagiarizing another’s words or ideas (passing them off as your own) can result in loss of grade or failure. For a fuller
Email Communication: Email is the official means for communication with every enrolled student. Students are expected to receive and read those communications in a timely fashion. Since the seminary will send official communications to enrolled students by email using their Cornerstone University email addresses (i.e., first.last@cornerstone.edu), students are expected to check their official email addresses on a frequent and consistent basis to remain informed of seminary communications.

Students can access their Cornerstone University email account as follows:
- Go to gmail.cornerstone.edu
- Enter CU username (e.g., n0236522) and password

Students can forward or IMAP their “@cornerstone.edu” email to a preferred address as follows:
- Log into CU email
- Select “Settings” in the upper right hand corner
- Select “Forwarding and POP/IMAP”
- Follow the on-screen instructions

Students are responsible for any consequences resulting from their failure to check their email on a regular basis for official seminary communications.

Disability accommodation: the University will make reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities, in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The purpose of accommodation is to provide equal access to educational opportunities to students affected by disabilities, and the university does not intend that the standards be altered, nor that the essential elements of programs or courses be changed. Students having documented disabilities may apply for accommodations through Student Disability Services (SDS), which is part of the Cornerstone University Learning Center located in Miller Hall on the main campus.

In the event that students have questions regarding whether they are eligible for accommodations, how they might provide appropriate documentation of disabilities, or how they might handle a disagreement with a professor over questions of accommodation, the Director of Academic Support should be contacted immediately at (616) 222-1596 or via email at learningcenter@cornerstone.edu. Further information about applying for and utilizing accommodations is provided in the Student Handbook and on the university’s website.

Inclusive language: as noted in the GRTS academic catalog, writing and discussion should reflect the GRTS policy on inclusive language when referring to other people, regardless of their gender, nationality, culture, social class or religion.
**Student Course Evaluation:** In the last two weeks of each resident course, all students are expected to complete a course evaluation (IDEA Form). This paper-based assessment form will be distributed and completed in class. In Ministry Residency, Counseling Practicum and Counseling Internships, and for all online courses, student evaluations will be completed within Odyssey (see Lessons tab). These assessments provide an opportunity for students to offer feedback to professors on the quality of the learning experience, feedback that informs future offerings of the course. More information about these evaluation processes will be provided late in the given semester.

V. **About the Assignments**

1. **Case Study**
   The case study and its instructions will be distributed in class. It must be submitted via Moodle on the date noted on the course schedule.

   This paper must be submitted via Moodle on the date noted on the course schedule. Read the book *What Is Marriage?* and write a double spaced, ten page paper in 12 point, Times New Roman font with normal, one inch margins, that answers the following questions (do not include this outline in your paper).
   
   a. What is the definition and purpose of marriage? Which marital unions does your view include and which does it exclude? How can you justify drawing the line where you do? This blends into the second question….

   b. On what is your definition of marriage grounded? Individual choice? Society? God? If God, is it revealed by Scripture, nature, or both? Justify your ground. You must, either here or somewhere in the paper, address the key biblical texts on marriage and homosexual practice.

   c. Is marriage an ordinance of the church or state? Does marriage belong to the sphere of redemption or creation? What business or interest might both the church and government have in regulating and administering marriage?

   d. What are the benefits and disadvantages of your definition of marriage? Why would it be good for the world? How would you answer those who think it would be bad for the world?

   e. What are the social implications for your definition of marriage? How will it influence your interaction with family and friends who favor a different definition of marriage (e.g., would you attend the homosexual wedding of a friend or family member?)

   f. How would you advise florists, photographers, or bakers who are asked to provide services for a gay wedding? Explain your reasoning and respond to the best objections to your view.
3. Theological Assessment

Students must evaluate the doctrinal statement of their local church on revelation. Their paper must be submitted via Moodle on the date noted on the course schedule. It should be 5 pages of double-spaced type (12 point, Times New Roman font with normal, one inch margins) and include the following components:

a. Give a brief history of your church and denomination (1/2-1 page). State whether or not you agree with your church’s denominational or theological stance. If not, describe your theological position so I know the perspective you are critiquing the statement from. This section can be the same for each of your critiques.

b. State verbatim the section of your church’s confession that addresses the doctrines in question. This section should be set off (e.g., indented) and single-spaced. It will not count toward your total page count.

c. Provide a commentary and critique of this material (2-3 pages).

1) Consider the following questions as prompts to your thinking: What does the confession say well? What is incorrect? What is missing or needs further development? What is vague or imprecise? What statements need tightening?

2) State what errors or heresies the confession fails to exclude. The confession may have been fine when it was written, but what should be added to guard against contemporary errors?

3) What factors lie behind these issues? Are there historical, denominational, cultural, or other reasons why it says what it says? As far as you can tell, what theological tradition or traditions would affirm or deny your church’s statement?

d. End the paper with a revised version of your church’s confession (1/2-1 page). In other words, based on your critique and commentary, provide a rewritten theological statement that addresses the concerns surfaced in your analysis. Make sure that your revised statement protects against the errors discussed in class (or explain where you disagree with the class presentation) and supplies a solid foundation for Christian ministry. If your church’s statement is brief, you may need to add a lot.

VI. Grading Scale

A: 100-96  B+: 92-90  C+: 81-78  D+: 69-67  F: 59 & below
A-: 95-93  B: 89-86  C: 77-74  D: 66-64
B-: 85-82  C-: 73-70  D-: 63-60
### VII. Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic &amp; Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 14</td>
<td><strong>Prolegomena</strong> Introduction to the Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 21</td>
<td><strong>The Task of Theology</strong> <em>Despite Doubt</em>, p. 9-44, 69-101</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 28</td>
<td><strong>The Tools of Theology</strong> <em>Systematic Theology</em>, p. 21-41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 5</td>
<td><strong>Revelation</strong> <em>Systematic Theology</em>, p. 47-72, 141-55 <em>Despite Doubt</em>, p. 45-51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 12</td>
<td><strong>Scripture</strong> <em>Systematic Theology</em>, p. 73-138 <em>Despite Doubt</em>, p. 61-67</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 19</td>
<td><strong>God</strong> <em>Our Triune God I</em> <em>Systematic Theology</em>, p. 226-61 <em>Delighting in the Trinity</em>, p. 9-38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 2</td>
<td><strong>Perfections of God</strong> <em>Systematic Theology</em>, p. 156-210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 9</td>
<td><strong>Divine Sovereignty/Human Freedom</strong> <em>Systematic Theology</em>, p. 211-25, 315-22 <strong>Due: Theological Assessment on Revelation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 16</td>
<td><strong>Problem of Evil</strong> <em>Systematic Theology</em>, p. 322-54 <em>Despite Doubt</em>, p. 53-59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nov. 23  
**Creation**  
*Becoming Worldly Saints*, p. 9-67  
*Systematic Theology*, p. 262-314

Nov. 30  
**Humanity: Who and What Are We?**  
*Systematic Theology*, p. 439-89

Dec. 7  
**Humanity: Why Are We Here?**  
*Becoming Worldly Saints*, p. 70-107

Dec. 14  
**Due: Final Examination**  
**Due: Case Study**

**VIII. Select Bibliography**

**A. Theology and Counseling**


B. Prolegomena

Introduction to theological method from a conservative evangelical perspective.

Evangelical contribution to issues of prolegomena.

Postliberal approach to theology; originated the term “cultural-linguistic” method.

Vanhoozer, Kevin J. *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical-Linguistic Approach to 

The prequel to *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, this is a contemporary discussion of God, Scripture, and hermeneutics.


_____.*Is There a Meaning in This Text?* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998.  
The best resource of this generation on the subject of hermeneutics.

An apology for knowing historical theology.


Creative discussion on the method of revelation.

C. The Doctrine of Scripture


**D. The Doctrine of God**


Richards, Jay Wesley. *The Untamed God*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press. Addresses controversial perfections of God, such as simplicity and immutability.


Ware, Bruce A. *Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2005.


E. Open Theism


Ware, Bruce A. *God's Lesser Glory*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2000. The first book to respond to open theism, this is a well-reasoned, Reformed response.

**A. Humanity and Sin**


