

## **Introduction to Theological Thinking** **Spring, 2012**

**I. Course:** Th 4322 Instructor: Michael Weed      office 476-2772    home 837-5441  
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office hours by appointment

### **II. Course Description**

This course is an introduction to the nature and tasks of Christian theology in the life of the church. Attention will be given to select doctrines to illustrate the manner and methods of Christian theological reflection.

The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to the nature, tasks, and language of Christian reflection upon the Christian faith, i.e., theology. After examining the general tasks of Christian theology, special attention will be given to foundational issues and doctrines of the Christian faith. Time permitting, the course will conclude with an examination of a central theological problem or issue.

**Course Objectives** 1) students will develop an appreciation for the necessity [and risks] of theological reflection in the life of the church; 2) students will learn basic terminology of Christian theology; 3) students will develop an appreciation for the importance of select doctrines in the construction of Christian theology and in the life of the church.

**Course Goals** Students will learn to articulate the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith with reference to emphases of major theological traditions within the Christian movement. Students will also formulate a philosophy of ministry that relates foundational theological perspectives of the practice of Christian ministry.

### **III. Required Texts**

*Who Needs Theology*, Grenz & Olson  
*A Handbook of Theological Terms*, Van A. Harvey

### **IV. Course Outline**

- A. Introduction
- B. Theology
  - 1. Defining theology: negative images
  - 2. The necessity of theology
  - 3. The context of theology
  - 4. The tasks of theology

5. The resources or formative factors
  6. "Divisions" of theology
  7. Risks of Theology (Thielicke)
  8. Ministers as theologians
  9. Theology today
- C. Foundational Christian Beliefs
1. Revelation/Scripture
  2. God
  3. Creation
  4. Creature
  5. Estrangement/ Sin
  6. Salvation
  7. Person and Work of Christ
  8. Church
  9. Eschatology
- D. A Central theological problem, or issue.

#### **V. Requirements and Grading**

- A. Regular class attendance is required. [Tardiness and excessive absences will reflect in student's grade.]
- B. Read text and other readings as assigned.
- C. Demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of the material covered in assigned readings and lectures on three quizzes.
- D. Write an interactive review of Grenz & Olson's *Who Needs Theology*.
- E. Grades will be based upon students' performance on the following: 3 quizzes will count 25% each, the review will count 25%. Over two absences and excessive tardiness may reduce final grade.