

\* Students – please EMAIL me when you receive the syllabus indicating that you have received it, and have read it completely.

## Systematic Theology Survey for Counseling Students 2ST501

Reformed Theological Seminary - Orlando

Fall, 2010

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### PURPOSE

*To understand and wrestle with the major doctrines of the Christian faith in light of the unique challenges and context of Christian counseling and soul care.*

### OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this course, students will:

1. More fully value the importance of systematic theology
2. More articulately express the theological underpinnings and implications of Christian counseling and soul care.
3. More fully grasp the depth and scope of God's redemptive plan for the cosmos, and humanity in particular.

### FORMAT

Teaching will include lecture, discussion, and video and visual aids where applicable.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

**Theology: The Basics (by Alistair McGrath) – paperback edition**

**Paperback:** 248 pages

**Publisher:** Wiley-Blackwell; 2 edition (November 9, 2007)

**Language:** English

**ISBN-10:** 1405167548

**ISBN-13:** 978-1405167543

**Not the Way Its Supposed To Be: A Breviary of Sin (by Cornelius Plantinga)**

**Paperback:** 216 pages

**Publisher:** Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company (January 1995)

**Language:** English

**ISBN-10:** 0802842186

**ISBN-13:** 978-0802842183

**The Divine Embrace (by Robert Webber)**

**Paperback:** 288 pages

**Publisher:** Baker Books (October 1, 2006)

**Language:** English

**ISBN-10:** 0801065550

**ISBN-13:** 978-0801065552

### **NOT REQUIRED BUT STRONGLY RECOMMENDED**

*Foundations of Soul Care*, Eric Johnson. (especially helpful for essays)

*Desiring the Kingdom*, James KA Smith

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. **DISCUSSION:** Students will be present and participate actively throughout class presentations and discussions. Differing perspectives and questions will not be ignored, but are encouraged to be shared with the whole class. Discussion will be a major component of the class.
2. **THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK PAPER:** In *Not the Way It's Supposed To Be*, Plantinga talks about sin as a "vandalism of shalom." Write a five (5)-page double-spaced paper using Plantinga's book and relating the concepts to one of your clients, or one area of counseling interest or expertise (e.g. eating disorders, sexual addiction, depression, marital issues). Using the concepts in Plantinga's book (e.g. vandalism, perversion, pollution, corruption, masquerade, folly, addiction, attack, flight, etc.), describe this counseling issue not in DMS-IV terms, but in theological terms. (Example: a sex addict. What was God's intent for human sexuality? How did sin "pervert" it? How does this relate to your client? What is God's vision for restoration? Etc.) DUE: 2 weeks after the final day of class.
3. **WEEKLY REFLECTIONS:** Students will EMAIL Chuck by Friday at noon each week with reflections and/or questions on Tuesday class lecture and discussion. Responses will be approximately 150-250 words in length.
4. **WEEKLY "OFFLINE" ASSIGNMENTS and DISCUSSIONS:** We are going old-school on this, and using email (not a discussion forum) to interact on content from the class, popular topics, essays, audio/video, or other relevant material I will indicate throughout the course. We are doing this because RTS requires 4 hours a week of class time. Each week, I will assign you something to spur thinking on the topic of the week.

5. **EXAM:** The final exam will be essay in nature, and cover important topics and concepts from the course.

### READING ASSIGNMENTS and CLASS SCHEDULE

August 25 - Semester begins  
August 31 - Class 1 – Introduction to Theology  
September 7 – Class 2 – Understanding Scripture  
September 14 – Class 3 – Understanding God  
September 21 – Class 4 – Understanding God’s Creation  
September 28 – Class 5 – Understanding Sin  
October 5 – Class 6 – Understanding Covenant – God’s Restoration Plan  
October 11-15 Reading Week  
October 19 – Class 7 – Jesus and the Kingdom  
October 26 – Class 8 – Individual and Cosmic Redemption and Restoration  
November 2 – Class 9 – Sanctification  
November 9 – Class 10 – Ecclesiology – Understanding the Church  
November 16 – Class 11 – Ecclesiology – Understanding Community and Mission  
November 23 – Class 12 – Ecclesiology – Understanding the Sacraments  
November 25-26 - Thanksgiving Holidays  
November 30 – Class 13 - Eschatology  
December 6 - Last day of fall semester classes

### GRADING SCALE

Listed below are the assignments that will determine your final course grade.

Class Participation and Attendance	20 points
Paper	20 points
Reflections	20 points
Offline Work	20 points
Final Exam	20 points

A (97-100), A- (94-96), B+ (91-93), B (88-90), B- (86-87), C+ (83-85), C (80-82), C- (78-79), D+ (75-77), D (72-74), D- (70-71), F (below 70)

### ACADEMIC STANDARDS

If you should miss a class, you are expected to contact another student regarding the information covered.

Plagiarism/cheating will result in the failure of the course.