

\* 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

Winter 2011

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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

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

*The Divine Embrace* (by Robert Webber)

*The True Story of the Whole World* (by Mike Goheen and Craig Bartholomew)

NOT REQUIRED BUT STRONGLY RECOMMENDED

*Foundations of Soul Care*, Eric Johnson

*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. **READING REFLECTIONS:**
  - a. **Theology: The Basics:** In 1-2 pages, write about one theological concept from the book that struck you as relevant to therapeutic work.
  - b. **True Story of the Whole World:** In 1-2 pages, describe the six acts of God's drama of redemption. How do the authors suggest we participate in this great drama? Include 2-3 practical takeaways for your own life and ministry.
  - c. **The Divine Embrace:** In 1-2 pages and focusing on chapters 7-10, describe "union" or "participation" in Christ. How does this theological concept apply to growth and maturity in your own life, and in your client's lives?
  
4. **EXAM:** The final exam will be essay in nature, and cover important topics and concepts from the course.

### READING ASSIGNMENTS and CLASS SCHEDULE

Please begin reading the required texts prior to the December course. All work is due by January 15, so get started as soon as possible.

### GRADING SCALE

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

|                                    |           |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Class Participation and Attendance | 20 points |
| Paper                              | 30 points |
| Reflections                        | 30 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.