

**THEOLOGY IN THE CONTEMPORARY CHURCH
COS #522
SYLLABUS**

**COURSE OF STUDY SCHOOL OF OHIO
3081 Columbus Pike
Delaware, Ohio 43015**

Summer 2-Week Term, 2019

Rev. Dr. William H. Wilson (Bill)
#4 Cherokee Court, Huntington WV 25705
DrBillWilson@aol.com
(C) 304-633-0954

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION: COS 522 – Theology in the Contemporary Church

This course covers significant individuals, movements, events, and theological developments from the nineteenth century to the present. Students will read selected primary sources.

Students will be able to:

- 1. Understand the origins and theological tenets of liberalism from the early 19th century to the present, including its influence on ecumenism and process theology.*
- 2. Understand and distinguish reactions to liberalism, including Fundamentalism, Neo-Orthodoxy, and Evangelicalism.*
- 3. Understand the historical development and theology of the Holiness Movement, Pentecostalism, and the Charismatic Movement.*
- 4. Understand the origins and tenets of Liberation and Contextual theologies.*

* Objectives, COS Revised Curriculum (2014)

II. TEXTBOOKS:

Required Reading:

Migliore, Daniel, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, Wm.B.Eerdmans, 2014
ISBN: 9780802871855.

Hordern, William E., *A Layman's Guide to Protestant Theology (revised edition)*, Wipf/Stock Publishers, Oregon, 2002, (originally MacMillan, 1955); ISBN: 157910925X

Miller, Ed. L & Grenz, Stanley J., *Fortress Introduction to Contemporary Theologies*, Augsburg/Fortress, Minneapolis, 1998; ISBN: 9780800629816.

(ALSO, the student will select one of three contemporary theology books below.)

Reference: (Recommended)

Bettenson, Henry & Maunder, Chris: *Documents of the Christian Church*, Oxford University Press, 2011; ISBN: 9780199568987.

REQUIRED SELECTIONS:

NOTE: Student will select **one** of the following to review, reflect, and analyze in a paper:
(selection of one is required reading, others supplemental)

Cone, James, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, Orbis Books, New York, 1986 (original 1970); ISBN: 9781570758959.

Fiorenza, Elisabeth Schussler, *In Memory of Her (A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins)*, Crossroad, New York, 1990 (original 1983); ISBN: 0824506677

Gutierrez, Gustavo, *A Theology of Liberation – History, Politics, and Salvation*, Orbis Books, New York, 1988 (original 1973); ISBN: 0883445425

III. GOAL OF COURSE:

This course will seek to assist the student to understand significant individuals, movements, events and theological developments from the 19th century to the present. The intention will be to integrate learnings into the student's context of ministry, and assist in developing theological thinking in light of the integration. The course asks why, what is involved, what is learned from contemporary theologies that form and inform the work of professional ministry. The student will continue to develop the skill sets to think and work theologically as a pastoral leader.

IV. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- The class will examine and discuss the significant individuals, movements, events and theological developments from the nineteenth century to the present.
- Students will improve their theological skills through biblical reflection, formative reading, focused dialogue and discussion, critical reflection, and discussion of contextual integration.
- The student will explore a variety of contemporary theologies, and specifically select one theology to review, reflect, examine analytically, and show how integrated into their own theology & practice of ministry.

V. CALENDAR OF CLASS & TOPICS AND READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS:

August 5 - 9, 2019

ASSIGNMENTS prior to the week:

A. Introduction-Theological Autobiography (ITA) -- (due Monday, August 5)

(see detail of assignment – syllabus page 7, section VII.B)

B. Reflection paper #1 - “theology, revelation, Scripture” (due Monday, August 5)

Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding, Prefaces & pp.1-65

(see detail of assignment – syllabus page 7-8 , section VII.C)

C. READ prior to this weekend:

- Hordern, A Layman’s Guide to Protestant Theology - Intro & pp. 1-149
- Miller/Grenz, Intro to Contemporary Theologies - pp. 1-34
- Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding – Prefaces & pp. 1-66, 66-94; & Appendix B: pp. 390-403.

CLASS OUTLINE FOR THE WEEK:

Monday – August 5

- Class Session 1

Introductions
Syllabus review/assignments
Contemporary theology?
“theological method”

Tuesday – August 6

- Class Session 2

Orthodoxy –Growth & threats

Wednesday – August 7

- Class Session 3

Defense of Orthodoxy
Conservative

Thursday – August 8

- Class Session 4

Pentecostal & Holiness movements

Friday – August 9

- Class Session 5

Liberalism
Karl Barth
Paul Tillich

Written assignment due during the second week :

Reflection paper #2 - “ pluralism and hope” **(due Monday, August 12)**

Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding, pp.314-374

(see detail of assignment – syllabus page 8, section VII.C)

August 12 – 15, 2019

ASSIGNMENTS prior to the week:

READ prior to this week:

- Hordern, A Layman's Guide to Protestant Theology - pp. 150-258
- Miller/Grenz, Intro to Contemporary Theologies - pp. 87-123; 142-176
- Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding, "new community", pp. 259-285;
"pluralism and hope", pp. 314-374

Monday – August 12

- Class Session 6

Review Karl Barth

Neo-orthodoxy

Reinhold Niebuhr

"rediscovery of orthodoxy"

Tuesday – August 13

- Class Session 7

The World

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Ecumenism

Wednesday – August 14

- Class Session 8

Feminist Theology

Liberation Theology

Thursday – August 15

- Class Session 9

Post modernism

Where are we?

Our task as theologians?

**NOTE: Final paper due to instructor by Sunday August 25, 11:59pm by email or mail.
(see page 8-9, syllabus for instructions regarding the Final paper)**

SUMMARY OF DUE DATES FOR PAPERS

Monday, August 5 (at class)

Introduction-Theological Autobiography

Monday, August 5 (at class)

Reflection paper #1 – "theology, revelation, Scripture"

Monday, August 12(at class)

Reflection paper #2 – "pluralism & hope"

Sunday, August 25 (mail or email)

Final paper - Book review & theological reflection

VI. CLASS STANDARDS:

A. Wesleyan “Rule of Life”:

- Do no harm
- Do good
- Attend to ordinances of God (spiritual discipline).

(General Rules, Discipline 2012)

B. Inclusive language

It is expected that students be committed to equality for women and men of every racial and ethnic background. Students and instructor are to use language which exemplifies respect, dignity and equality in conversations with colleagues, in public discourse, in classroom discussions and in writings. Class participants will be expected to use inclusive language in all writings and during class discussion & participation. If you have specific questions, please see the instructor. (Helpful resource, *Words that Hurt, Words that Heal (new edition)* (Cokesbury.com download, original 1980 resource)

C. Academic Integrity

Student integrity regarding all work assigned in this class is a basic expectation of the learning community. (see page 31, *COS Student Handbook, 2013* – “Academic responsibility”) Also, guidelines for writing, page 25, *COS Handbook*.

D. Attendance

Instructor expects timely participation of students; tardiness is a sign of disrespect to others. Extenuating circumstances should be reported to instructor and COS Dean immediately. (see COS Attendance Policy – page 15, *COS Student Handbook, 2013*)

E Confidentiality

It is imperative that students do not share information that is confidential, privileged, or proprietary in nature. In addition, students are expected to honor the privacy and confidentiality of their classmates by not disclosing conversations with those outside of the classroom.

VII. ASSIGNMENTS, GRADING, AND EVALUATION:

Note: All assignments are due and expected on time. (If because of some extenuating circumstances you are unable to meet a given deadline, you must contact the instructor before the deadline in question is expected. Failure to do so will result in a lower grade for the assignment.) No Incomplete grade can be granted in this class.

Helpful hint - make a copy of all written work mailed and turned in to instructor.

- A. **Class participation (25% of final grade)** COS requires that students attend all class sessions in order to receive credit for the course. No “cuts” or “excused absences” are allowed for church, community, family or other business. In extreme cases, such as serious illness or a family emergency, an additional paper on the reading material of the missed session will be required and negotiated with the instructor.

- a) Timely, careful reading and completion of assignments in preparation for class participation is expected.
- b) Class discussion through verbal contributions including any small group is expected; respectful and hospitable listening to contributions by others is a class norm. It is the duty of each class member to contribute regularly to discussions without monopolizing the time.

B. Introduction-Theological Autobiography (ITA) (20% of final grade) -- (due Monday, August 5 at class)

An autobiography (ITA) must be submitted on the first day of class (Monday, August 7). The paper must be 6-8 pages long, double spaced. No more than 8 pages. The following guidelines are provided to help organize your thoughts: *(you do not need to use this order, but your paper must include these themes; be creative; those with an asterisk * must be answered)*

- What is briefly your family history? Family of origin?
- Describe succinctly any significant central events in your life.
- When were you first aware of God? How and who invited you to become a disciple of Jesus Christ? How did it happen? What have been a few of the major events in your walk with Christ?
- *What significant religious, spiritual, theological concepts have formed your calling into ministry?
- What influence has Scripture and the Church had on your life?
- *How would you describe your present basic theological position or stance?
- *Can you name individuals, movements, theologies and doctrines that have formed you to the present?
- *What theological & cultural biases, prejudices, and assumptions do you bring to this class?
- What are the growing edges of your life? How have your growing edges, and areas of change impacted your entry into and experience of ministry?

C. Reading reflection papers (two) (30% of final grade) - each paper 15%

Required reading: Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding;

1. Both papers are to be individually 3-5 pages in length – no more than 5 pages;

2. based on reading, Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding;

NOTE: Based on the assigned reading, these two papers should address the following questions:

- State a brief review of the topic of the assigned reading;
- What issue or issues are raised for you from the reading?
- What do you agree with in Migliore's writing?
- What do you disagree with and why?
- What one learning, for you, can you lift up from the assigned reading?

Reflection paper #1 - “theology, revelation, Scripture” (due Monday at class, August 5)

Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding, Prefaces & pp.1-65

Reflection paper #2 - “pluralism & hope” (due Monday at class, August 12)

Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding, pp.314 – 374

D. Final Paper – Book Review & Theological Overview (25% of final grade)

Paper due by mail or email to instructor by Sunday, August 25 by 11:59pm NOTE: Provide a self addressed stamped envelope for paper to be returned to you if not emailed.

1) Student is to select one of the following books to read, review, report and reflect by a report:

Cone, James, A Black Theology of Liberation, Orbis Books, New York, 1986 (original 1970); ISBN: 9781570758959.

Fiorenza, Elisabeth Schussler, In Memory of Her (A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins), Crossroad, New York, 1990 (original 1983); ISBN: 0824506677

Gutierrez, Gustavo, A Theology of Liberation – History, Politics, and Salvation, Orbis Books, New York, 1988 (original 1973); ISBN: 0883445425

2) Paper should be at least 6-8 pages in length; and no more than 10 pages.

3) The following issues and questions must be addressed in the paper:

- Give an overview of the basic concepts of the theology as presented by the author.
- What reason do you give for selecting the book?
- What aspects of the theological method, premise, concept and principles do you identify with?
- Where do you struggle or differ with the theology presented in the writing? Why?
- How might you integrate the concept of the theology into your practice of ministry?
- Any unanswered questions that the author left you with?

*God, give me grace to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed,
Courage to change the things which should be changed, and
Wisdom to distinguish the one from the other.
Living one day at a time,
Enjoying one moment at a time,
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace,
Taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is,
Not as I would have it,
Trusting that You will make all things right,
If I surrender to Your will,
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life,
And supremely happy with You forever in the next.
(Reinhold Niebuhr, 1943)*

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference.
(adapted version)