

**Theology for the Contemporary Church TH 3XC3
(CC/CT/CW/PS)**

**McMaster Divinity College
Winter 2020
Campus and Hybrid
Mon 6:30–8:20**

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I. Description:

This course discusses significant issues related to the contemporary Church and Christian life from a theological perspective. It explores the theological issues and implications of the current *context* and *approaches* to Christian ministry and discipleship and considers ways that theological reflection can contribute to these current approaches. The book of Revelation encourages Christians to “hear what the Spirit” is saying to the churches. This course endeavors to discern the work and direction of the Spirit through contemporary approaches to the Christian life and ministry.

Note: This class weekly alternates traditional class room and online learning—see course outline for campus and online learning dates.

DPT Students

Doctor of Practical Theology students who wish to apply for this course as an Advanced Elective for their degree program must consult with the Program Director of the DPT and the course instructor in order to develop an Advanced Elective approach to the course that fulfills the specific elements required by the DPT program. Once the elements of the Advanced Elective have been agreed upon by the student, the Program Director, and the instructor, a formal application can be made for an Advanced Elective in connection with this course. Once the application is accepted, DPT students can proceed with the course as part of their degree program.

II. Course Objectives:

A. Knowing:

1. Know key movements in contemporary Christian ministry and life.
2. Know key books that are shaping contemporary Christian ministry and life.
3. Know key trends within contemporary impacting the contemporary church.

B. Doing:

1. Become familiar with significant movements and people shaping contemporary Christian life and ministry.

2. Research and discuss a contemporary movement or figure shaping Christian life and ministry.
 3. Engage in the process of constructive theological reflection on a significant issue facing the contemporary church and Christian life.
- C. Being:
1. Appreciate the role of theological reflection for Christian life and ministry.
 2. Embrace a deeper understanding of the nature of Christian ministry and living.
 3. Develop a sense of the Holy Spirit's work in the world.

III. Textbook:

Student Selected Textbook:

Select **one** text that treats a significant issue related to contemporary Christian life and/or Ministry:

** If you have ideas for a book not listed below, please consult with me. **

- 1) Christian life possible selections:

Rod Dreher, *The Benedict Option: A Strategy for Christians in a Post-Christian Nation* (Sentinel: 2017)

David Fitch, *Faithful Presence: 7 Disciplines That Shape the Church for God's Mission* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2016).

or (with Geoff Holsclaw), *Prodigal Christianity: 10 Signposts into the Missional Frontier* (San Francisco: Wiley, 2013).

Albert Y. Hsu, *The Suburban Christian: Finding Spiritual Vitality in the Land of Plenty* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2006).

Miroslav Volf, *A Public Faith: How Followers of Christ Should Serve the Common Good* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2011).

Graham Ward, *The Politics of Discipleship: Becoming Postmaterial Citizens*, The Church and Postmodern Culture series, ser. ed. James K. A. Smith (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009).

- 2) Christian ministry possible selections:

Michael Frost & Alan Hirsch, *The Shaping of Things to come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st Century Church* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2003).

Eddie Gibbs and Ryan K. Bolger, *Emergent Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Cultures* (Grand Rapids: BakerAcademic, 2005).

Kate Bowler, *Blessed: A History of the American Prosperity Gospel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

David Kinnaman & Gabe Lyons, *UnChristian: What a New Generation really thinks about Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007).

Stefan Paas, *Church Planting in the Secular West: Learning from the European Experience* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016).

Sam Reimer and Michael Wilkinson, *A Culture of Faith: Evangelical Congregations in Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2015).

IV. Course Performance Criteria:

Assignment	Percent	Due
A. Blended Learning Assignments • Each assignment is worth 10 points.	50%	
1) Postmodern Artifact		Jan 15
2) Post-Christendom Artifact		Jan 29
3) Op-ed/Blog Religious Pluralism		Feb 12
4) Op-ed/Blog Science and Religion		Mar 18
5) Capstone Collaboration		April 1
B. Student Selected Textbook	20%	Feb 24
C. Capstone Project/Paper	30%	Apr 6
	Total: 100%	

V. Assignment Descriptions:

General Guidelines:

- Please submit all assignments in the Avenue to Learn folder.
- All papers and assignment should conform to the [MDC Writing Style Guide](http://mcmasterdivinity.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/mdcstyleguide.pdf) <http://mcmasterdivinity.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/mdcstyleguide.pdf>

A. Blended Learning Assignments:

1. Postmodern Artifact Assignment

Prior to F2F (face to face):

- Read “Postmodernism,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/postmodernism/>).
- Watch video resources on Avenue to Learn on postmodernism.

Reading this article and listening to the video resources provide the background information for selecting and analyzing the postmodern artifact—see third bullet point.

- Post artifact and analytic annotation/description on Padlet (if your artifact is not material, post a concrete example—e.g., Starbucks cultivation of third space ethos reflects community emphasis in contrast to individualism).

During F2F:

- Collaborate—practicing postmodern pedagogy. Postmodernism emphasizes the communal nature and social construction of knowledge and identity.
- Come prepared to discuss your insights on the challenges and/or opportunities that postmodernism represents for ministry leaders.

After F2F:

- Integrate postmodernism: building on your work identifying postmodernism (artifact and analytic annotation), creative and collaborative postmodern pedagogy, integrate your new understanding of postmodernism in your creative capstone project.

2. Post-Christendom Artifact

Prior to F2F:

- Watch video resources on Avenue to Learn on post-Christendom.
- Identify an example in culture or church, important data-set (statistical data and analysis—e.g., Pew surveys), research article, blog, or some other artifact that discusses/demonstrates post-Christendom in North America
- Post artifact and analytic annotation on Padlet. Your analytic annotation can be text, audio, or video using the post function within Padlet.

During F2F:

- Collaborate: Come prepared to discuss your insights on the challenges and/or opportunities that post-Christendom represents for ministry leaders.

After F2F:

- Integrate post-Christendom: building on your work identifying ramifications of post-Christendom (artifact and analytic annotation), creative and collaborative pedagogy, integrate your new understanding of post-Christendom (where applicable) in your creative capstone project.

3. Op-ed/Blog Religious Pluralism

1) *Research:*

- Select an important issue for the relationship between Christian mission in the context of religious pluralism and multiculturalism.
- Find and read two or three resources (e.g., articles, lectures, statistical reports) and integrate them in your op-ed/blog.
- For an example of an op-ed/blog related to this topic, see my “[Fort Hood and the Myths of Secularism](#)” on Christianity.ca
- The online resources listed below are helpful for sparking ideas and finding resources.

2) *Write* an opinion piece (op-ed/blog) on the topic. The audience for the op-ed is not academic. It should effectively deliver the contribution of your research to a popular audience. Length: 500 words. Be concise, clear, and interesting.

3) *Post* your op-ed/blog to the course Padlet.

4) *Interact:* Comment on at least one of the op-eds/blogs posted by your class colleagues. You can contribute with the text or audio/audio-video within Padlet.

4. Op-ed/Blog Science and Religion

1) *Research:*

- Select an important issue for the relationship between science and religion.
- Find and read two or three resources (e.g., articles, lectures, statistical reports) and integrate them in your op-ed/blog.
- The online resources listed below are helpful for sparking ideas and finding resources.

➤ The Veritas-Forum (<http://www.veritas.org/>)

➤ BioLogos (<http://biologos.org/>)

➤ Canadian Scientific and Christian Affiliation (<http://www.casca.ca/>)

- 2) *Write* an opinion piece (op-ed/blog) on the topic. The audience for the op-ed is not academic. It should effectively deliver the contribution of your research to a popular audience. Length: 500 words. Be concise, clear, and interesting.
 - 3) *Post* your op-ed/blog to the course Padlet.
 - 4) *Interact*: Comment on at least one of the op-eds/blogs posted by your class colleagues. You can contribute with the text or audio/audio-video [VoiceThread](#).
5. Capstone Collaboration
- 1) *Write* a one paragraph interaction for each of your colleagues' project/paper presentations. These interactions are based on the in-class project presentations the previous week (see week 12, March 26 in the syllabus course outline)
 - 2) *Interact*: Your interaction should be dialogical rather than descriptive.
 - 3) *Identify* strengths and areas for development.
 - 4) *Recommend* sources and ways to enhance strengths and improve areas that need development.
- B. Student Selected Textbook—Summarize, Correlate, Critique, Challenge (SCCC):
- This assignment develops analytical, synthetic, and critical skills.
 - In your textbook on Christian life/ministry (see above III), complete the following:
 1. Summarize: Present the primary content, arguments, and problems and solutions identified in the book. 1 page maximum.
 2. Correlate: based on your observations of contemporary church life, ministry, and the nature of Christian life today, identify correlations with the themes discussed in the book. 1 page maximum.
 3. Critique: identify and describe several critical observations, such as areas/issues that the book misses about the nature of contemporary Christian life and ministry. 1 page maximum.
 4. Challenge: Where do you think the book is wrong about contemporary Christian life and ministry? Is its description of the “problem” and its proposed “solution” misguided, blinkered, one-sided? Identify, describe, and make your suggestions for alternative solutions. 1 page maximum.

C. Constructive Capstone Project or Paper:

1. General guidelines:

This assignment constitutes the “major paper” and presentation of the course. The purpose of the paper/project is vocational development. It should advance your vocational trajectory. Selecting whether to prepare a *project* or a *paper* is an important step in the process.

Should I do a paper or a project?

If you anticipate further graduate work or writing a thesis as part of your MTS or MDiv, then an academic research-thesis paper is an excellent option. A research-thesis paper provides skill development in conducting the concentrated study on a particular research topic necessary for advanced academic work. If your vocational track is the field of ministry or an alternative professional field, then a project may be an effective option. Completing a project provides skill development in contextualizing and applying the fruit of theological research and reflection.

If you have an idea for a paper or creative project that does not neatly fit into the parameters of your specialization’s assignment description, please come and discuss your idea with me. I am open to papers/projects that cohere with the essence of the course and are suited to your research field and interests.

◆ Please consult the assignment description for your degree specialization ◆

2. Specialization focus: CC/CT/CW/PS

a. Christianity and Culture

This specialization focuses on the intersection of the church and its cultural setting. Developing the ability to interpret culture *and* to specify an appropriate Christian response and interaction with it is the purpose of this assignment. Discerning appropriate ways to embody the Gospel of Jesus Christ in terms of a specific cultural location is an essential feature of Christian discipleship and ministry and this assignment provides the opportunity to develop these skills. The paper/project analyzes a contemporary issue, cause, phenomenon, or movement from a Christian perspective. Careful and accurate description of the issue, as well as thoughtful assessment and response from a Christian perspective is essential. An alternative approach is to consider the influence of cultural context on a particular type of Christian theology.

Possible topic/s: what are the cultural assumptions and contexts that lead to the mega-suburban all-inclusive campus church, on the one hand, and the gentrifying urban hipster church, on the other hand? How does cultural background shape the practices, values, and theology of these different approaches to church life? How can religious institutions navigate the tension of certain civil rights issues and maintaining fidelity to biblical morality? What is the political role of the church in an increasingly post-Christian, multicultural, and religiously plural society?

- b. **Christian Thought and History**
 Considering the contribution of past figures and movements in the history of Christianity for the church today is essential to this specialization. Students in this specialization write a paper or create a project that investigates a select figure, topic, or event (or combination of those elements). This paper/project facilitates development in resourcing the Christian tradition for contemporary issues and questions facing the church. Depending on your vocational goals, the paper/project can be written with an academic and scholarly way (i.e., students considering thesis writing) or with an eye toward bringing the paper topic into conversation with a contemporary issue of Christian life and ministry

Possible topics: How do historical understandings/conflicts between science and religion contribute to the current tensions and questions? How does the revival theology of a historical figure/movement—e.g., Jonathan Edwards’ revival theology—contribute and/or challenge contemporary church growth and revival theology.

- c. **Christian Worldview**
 This specialization relates to the ways Christians understand the world with an awareness of Christianity’s intellectual environment—historical, contemporary, and global—of contemporary Christianity. Select an area of theology, a figure, and/or event and show how it contributes to an area of Christian worldview. The paper/project can focus on contemporary issues or look at historical ones. The paper/project should be constructive and not only descriptive. The heart of this assignment is your creative proposal on the contribution this person, figure, event offers to a Christian worldview.

Examples of topics: Discuss Walter Rauschenbusch’s articulation of the Social Gospel in the context of late-nineteenth urban poverty and the rise of labor movements and state sponsored social assistance—how did they shape him or he shape them? “Tommy” Douglas and the development of Canada’s public health system is another example topic on the interplay between culture and Christian worldview. How does the culture of North America, both its legacy of racism and notions of individual liberty, form the context for the theology of civil rights in a leader such as Martin Luther King, Jr. and alternately, how did King’s biblical faith shape his political and social vision?

- d. **Pastoral Studies**
 This specialization focuses on vocational ministry. Prepare a sermon/message/curriculum appropriate for a given ministry audience related to a contemporary issue facing Christian life and/or ministry. You can draw on a historical or contemporary figure, an event, and/or a topic in the Protestant tradition. The content of the sermon draws from theological resources, but expresses the yield of that theology in language and terms that are appropriate for

a ministry audience. Documentation of research will be provided in footnotes and an annotated bibliography (an annotated bibliography provides a paragraph description for each resource used in the project).

Alternatively, if you have an idea for contextualizing a figure/event/theological topic for ministry in a format other than a sermon, please talk with me so we can design a project that enables you to maximize your work in the class for your ministry context and meets the goals of the specialization in Pastoral Studies.

Possible topics: A sermon on the how retain the integrity of faith and hospitality in a multicultural but ironically also increasingly politically polarized society. Prepare a break out session presentation for a group of ministry leaders on a lesson from a figure or event for ministry in post-Christendom Canada.

3. Class Presentation:

You will present and facilitate a discussion of your paper/project (I encourage multi-media, audio, audio-visual methods when appropriate). *Length of presentation and discussion will be determined based on final class roster.* Normally presentations are 15–20 minutes followed by 5–10 minutes of class discussion (for a total time of 20–30 minutes)

4. Written submissions

1) Papers:

a) Content and argument:

- Detail a clear thesis (the view that your paper supports).
Example of a thesis statement: Luther's theology of the priesthood of all believers supports flat/non-hierarchical approaches to leadership in missional/emerging congregations.
- Describe your topic under consideration.
- Write an essay that coherently demonstrates your view.
- Detail major alternatives and/or criticisms of the position and interact with them vis-à-vis your view (where appropriate and in so far as space allows).

b) Presentation:

- Write a stylistically clean and academic paper—e.g., avoid colloquialisms (academic is different than conversational voice),

passive voice (use active). Research-thesis papers must have a thesis statement (stated in the introduction), an introduction, content section, and a conclusion to the paper.

- Use and document a *minimum* of ten scholarly resources (book, journal articles, book essays). Internet resources can be utilized, if they are scholarly and/or professional sources.
- Accurately document sources according to the College's Style Guide:
- Paper length: 10–12 pages.
- Provide a bibliography (list only the books cited in the footnotes of the paper).

2) Projects/Sermons:

- a) Annotated bibliography of research sources: an annotation is a paragraph or two that describes the content of the book, essay, or article and how it relates to your project.
- b) Sermon: submit a manuscript of your sermon/message that includes footnotes, which detail where and how you applied and adapted your theological research.
- c) Double-spaced pages, 12 point Times New Roman font.
- d) Use and document at least 10 scholarly resources (e.g., books, journal articles, and essays). Internet resources can be utilized, if they are scholarly and/or professional sources.
- e) Document sources with footnotes and follow the College's Style Guide.

C. Participation:

Developing a community of learners through online posts and discussion is central to the class experience. Each student contributes to the online learning community of the class. See syllabus outline for discussion topics and assignments for posts.

The online venue is McMaster University's Avenue to Learn

VI. Course Outline (*tentative*):

Week & Format	Date	Topic
1 Class	Jan 6	Introduction to the Course I. The Context of Contemporary Christian Life and Ministry A. Modernism (see Avenue to Learn for video lectures)
2 Online	Jan 13	B. Postmodernism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Prior to F2F Postmodern Artifact Assignment. • Post Postmodern Artifact on Padlet by Wednesday Jan 15 at midnight
3 Class	Jan 20	C. Post-Christendom & Disenchantment with the Church/Christianity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F2F Postmodernism Artifact (class discussion)
4 Online	Jan 27	<i>Post-Christendom continued</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-Christendom Artifact Contribution and Interaction.
5 Class	Feb 3	II. Current Issues in Christian Life & Ministry A. Emerging Adults and Spirituality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F2F Post-Christendom Contribution and Interaction
6 Online	Feb 10	B. Christian Mission in the Context of Religious Pluralism and “Tolerance” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Op-Ed/Blog on Religious pluralism and Christian mission.
7	Feb 17	Family Day and Reading Week/Intensive Hybrid Week (Feb 18–22)
8 Class	Feb 24	C. Thought Leaders of Contemporary Christian Life Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Fitch, <i>Faithful Presence: 7 Disciplines That Shape the Church For God’s Mission & Prodigal Christianity</i> (Reclaiming the Mission blog) • Scott McKnight, <i>Jesus Creed</i> (Jesus Creed blog) • Francis Chan, <i>Crazy Love</i> • David Platt, <i>Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream</i> (website: www.Radical.net)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tim Keller (website: http://www.timothykeller.com) • SCCC on Student Selected Textbook. • Group discussion on Student Selected Textbook. 																		
9 Online	Mar 2	<p>D. Social Justice & Creation Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review online lecture and resources 																		
10 Class	Mar 9	<p>E. The Simple Way or the Suburbs?</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>1.</td> <td>Project/Paper Presentation:</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.</td> <td>Project/Paper Presentation:</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3.</td> <td>Project/Paper Presentation:</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	1.	Project/Paper Presentation:		2.	Project/Paper Presentation:		3.	Project/Paper Presentation:										
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3.	Project/Paper Presentation:																			
11 Online	Mar 16	<p>F. Religion and Science</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review online lecture. • Op-Ed/Blog on Science and Religion. 																		
12 Class	Mar 23	<p>Class Presentations and Discussion Groups</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>4.</td> <td>Project/Paper Presentation:</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>5.</td> <td>Project/Paper Presentation:</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>6.</td> <td>Project/Paper Presentation:</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>7.</td> <td>Project/Paper Presentation:</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>8.</td> <td>Project/Paper Presentation:</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>9.</td> <td>Project/Paper Presentation:</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	4.	Project/Paper Presentation:		5.	Project/Paper Presentation:		6.	Project/Paper Presentation:		7.	Project/Paper Presentation:		8.	Project/Paper Presentation:		9.	Project/Paper Presentation:	
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13 Online	Mar 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capstone Collaboration 																		
14 Class	Apr 6	<p>Conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Evaluations 																		

VII. Policies:

A. Textbook Purchase

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College’s book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore, 5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, Ontario M9W 6H3: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

- B. Academic Honesty
 Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/rules-regulations/>
- C. Gender Inclusive Language
 McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as the following: NRSV (1989), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), TNIV (2005), and the Common English Bible (CEB 2011).
- C. Style
 All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses <http://mcmasterdivinity.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/mdcstyleguide.pdf>
 Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

VIII. Late-Assignment and Exam Policy:

- A. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date specified in the syllabus.
- B. Students take exams on the date and at the time scheduled in the syllabus
- C. Late assignments are reduced five percentage points for each day late (e.g., if the grade is 90 and it is one day late, the grade will be reduced to 85).
- D. Assignments and exams will be accepted without penalty after the specified date in the syllabus **only** in the case of an excused absence. If a student misses an exam or assignment submission due to a reason that he/she believes is excusable, then he/she must notify the instructor and schedule an exam date and/or late-assignment submission date within twenty-four hours of the beginning of the missed class session.
- E. Assignments and exams will not be accepted late on the basis of the student's involvement with school-approved activities. If you are not able to be in class for an exam or assignment submission, then you must pre-arrange with the instructor to take the exam and/or submit the assignment before the scheduled date in the syllabus.

Disclaimer:

This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.

Appendix 1: Research Degree Requirements (MA & PhD)

I. Major Paper/Project:

A. Description:

Advanced degree students will write an academic thesis paper or prepare a project that integrates the course topic (theological challenges facing contemporary Christian church and life) and their research agenda/s. If you have an idea for a paper or creative project, please come and discuss your idea with me. I am open to papers/projects that cohere with the essence of the course and are suited to your research field and interests.

B. Purpose:

This assignment gives you experience writing article, essay, and chapter length theological papers and presenting research in an oral form similar to that performed at academic conferences.

C. Guidelines for the Paper:

The paper should include (description categories below correspond to those of the grading rubric) . . .

1. Content and argument:

a. Detail a clear thesis (the view that your paper supports).

- Example of a thesis statement: the Emergent church movement is an authentic Christian way of being the church in a postmodern and post-Christian culture.

b. Describe your topic.

c. Write an essay that coherently demonstrates your view.

d. Detail major alternatives and/or criticisms and interact with them vis-à-vis your view.

2. Presentation:

a. Write a stylistically clean and academic paper—e.g., you should avoid excessive first person discourse, colloquialisms (academic is different than conversational voice), passive voice (use active).

b. Use and document a *minimum* of fifteen scholarly resources.

- c. Accurately document sources according to the College's Style Guide.
- d. Paper length: 20–25 pages. Not to exceed 7,000 words.
- e. Provide a bibliography (list only the books cited in the footnotes of the paper).
- f. Use footnotes.

D. Guidelines for the Paper Presentation:

- Note: depending on class size, PhD/MA may separately with the professor to discuss papers.

1. Time:

The paper presentation takes a thirty-minute segment of the class. Each presentation includes two parts:

- a. The paper presentation (15–20 minutes)
- b. The response and facilitation, which is led by another student (10 minutes, see below for more details on the response and facilitation).

2. Presentation content:

You should articulate the paper's thesis, topic, and argument. You can use PowerPoint, etc. if you wish. The purpose of this assignment is to give you experience with presenting papers as might at an academic conference. You should prepare and present your paper for that type of venue. I encourage you to consider presenting your paper for this class at a conference and/or the Theological Research Seminar of the Divinity College.

II. Response and Facilitation (due day of presentation):

A. Purpose:

Provides experience in responding to and moderating academic presentations and discussions, such as one might do at an academic society meeting.

B. Description:

Each student *prepares a critique* and *facilitates a discussion* of a thesis paper presentation.

1. The critique:

- a. Remember to be charitable; not only Christian, but since academia is a

small guild, it is self-preservation.

b Critical (includes highlighting and discussing problems *and* strengths):

The critique should explore the following sorts of issues:

- Does the paper have a thesis?
- Does the content develop and support the thesis?
- Does it use appropriate sources?
- Does it interact with the relevant secondary literature?

2. The discussion:

You should keep the presentation to time limit and effectively manage student discussion (do not let one person dominate the interaction; move on to a new issue if discussion begins to go off on tangents and run down rabbit trails). Be sure to elicit comments from all people present. You might want to have some prepared questions and discussion prompts to facilitate the initial discussion.

C. Guidelines for Facilitator:

1. The presentation and discussion typically include the following items:

- a. Presenter presents the paper: approximately twenty minutes.
- b. Response: approximately ten minutes.

You can go through point by point as a monologue or start by raising and offering your thoughts on the paper's primary contributions and arguments and invite discussion based on your remarks and interaction with the paper and then so forth through the rest of the points you have identified.

- c. Class discussion of the paper and response: approximately five to ten minutes.

2. A written submission/outline is not required but is encouraged as it may be beneficial to other students in the course.

II. Lecture & Syllabus: (due day of scheduled presentation):

A. Purpose:

This assignment provides experience *preparing* a syllabus and *delivering* a lecture for teaching in an undergraduate setting. The preparation of the syllabus also fulfill one of the requirements of the Mastery Checklist.

B. Description:

You will prepare a syllabus and lecture on a topic related to course topic. The lecture should be one of the lectures listed in your syllabus. You may use this assignment to investigate an area that will promote your research program (e.g., prepare for doctoral comprehensive exams and MA thesis/PhD dissertation topics). You should, however, *gear the syllabus and the lecture toward an undergraduate audience.*

C. Guidelines:

1. Research:

a. Research for the lecture and syllabus development will account for the supplemental reading for research degree students (approximately 5,000-6,000 pages)

b. Documentation of reading:

Please provide an annotated bibliography of the reading consulted in the preparation of the lecture (the annotations for the texts should be about one paragraph—identify the key thesis and contributions of the text).

2. Lecture:

a. The lecture should present and discuss the primary content points of the topic (or sub-topic)

b. Lecture handouts/outlines and PowerPoint/Prezi are helpful, but not required

c. Length:

The lecture and discussion will take either a thirty or fifty-minute period of the course, depending on final student numbers in the course.

D. Evaluation:

Grading of the lecture and discussion session will be based on the following . . .

1. Please submit to the professor a copy (electronic on Avenue to Learn) of the syllabus, the lecture notes, and annotated bibliography used to develop the lecture.
2. Does the lecture accurately present and discuss the topic?
3. Does the lecture engage in critical evaluation/discussion of the content?

4. Does the lecture highlight the transcendent value of the material—e.g., does it have value for contemporary Christian thought, life, and ministry?
5. Does the lecture facilitate student discussion?

III. Class Leadership:

A. Purpose:

A significant part of your future or current work will likely include teaching in an academic and/or church context. Taking a leadership role in the course will provide an opportunity to develop teaching skills for your current/future vocational work.

B. Description:

1. Group discussions:

- a. The course will have regular in-class group discussions of the assignments and readings.
- b. Advanced students will have the opportunity to facilitate these group discussions. You do not need to play the role of expert, but facilitate the discussion by asking questions, offering short insightful thoughts on the subject, and drawing on course readings that will relate to the discussion and spark group discussion.

2. De-brief meetings:

- a. Advanced students will meet three times (probably weeks four, nine, and twelve) during the semester with the professor to discuss teaching style, content, purpose of chosen content, rationale of approach, experience leading the group discussions, evaluation of lectures, etc.
- b. I envision these meetings as times when we can prompt each other to consider and hone our teaching styles, approach to teaching the content for this course, and theological viewpoints
- c. Length: approximately thirty minutes.

IV. Course Performance Criteria:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Due</u>
A. Major Paper/Project:	50%	One week after presentation
1. Presentation	20%	

2.	Paper	30%	
B.	Lecture and Syllabus:	30%	Day of lecture
C.	Annotated Bibliography: * See lecture assignment	5%	Day of lecture
D.	Response and Facilitation	15%	Day of presentation
		Total: 100%	