

The Doctrine of the Trinity
PhD CHTH G105-C04
MA TH 6ZR6

McMaster Divinity College
Winter 2023
In-person
Monday 2:00–3:50pm
Office: 216

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Office hours: Mon Noon–1:00pm, Tues 1:00–
1:50pm, and by appointment and Zoom

I. Course Description

This course is an in-depth study of the doctrine of the Trinity. It considers issues related to theological method and the Trinity as well as the historical development of the doctrine through an examination of central figures, events, and periods. The course will include a virtual seminar format, which invites a high level of student participation through the presentation of student research and discussions.

II. Course Objectives

Knowing

- Learn primary figures in the history of trinitarian theology
- Learn key historical moments in the history of trinitarian theology
- Learn key terms and concepts of trinitarian theology
- Learn key figures and movements in contemporary trinitarian theology
- Learn key contributions to the Trinity from non-Western figures

Being

- Develop a sense for the significance of the Trinity for Christian formation
- Appreciate the value of diverse trinitarian traditions, especially the contributions from non-Western sources

Doing

- Engage in scholarly and professional interaction with colleagues
- Present a scholarly analysis of a primary text related to the Trinity
- Prepare a syllabus and annotated bibliography and present lecture to the class
- Write and present a scholarly research-thesis paper on a topic related to the Trinity

III. Course Texts

- A. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity: Global Perspectives* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007).

- B. Gene L. Green, Stephen T. Pardue, and K. K. Yeo, *The Trinity Among the Nations: The Doctrine of God in the Majority World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015).

IV. Course Assignments

Assignment	Percent	Due Date
A. Primary Text Paper	10%	Jan 30
B. Syllabus, Lecture, & Annotated Bibliography:	40%	
1. Lecture	20%	Feb 27
2. Syllabus & Annotated bibliography	20%	Feb 27
C. Thesis Paper and Presentation	50%	
1. Presentation	15%	March 13, March 27
2. Paper	35%	March 27, April 3
D. Participation:	X	Every class session
Total: 100%		

V. Course Outline

- *Final presentation schedule and lecture outline may vary depending on final course enrolment.*

Week	Date	Topic	Due Dates & Reminders
1	Jan 9	• Personal Introductions and Course Overview I. Introduction to the Trinity	• Select a text for the primary text paper
2	Jan 16	II. The Trinity & Theological Method	
3	Jan 23	III. Trinity and Creation-Redemption	
4	Jan 30	IV. Historical & Contemporary Trinitarian Theology	• Primary Text Paper due Jan 30

		<p>A. Early church and medieval trinitarian theology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student primary text presentations and discussion • Good background reading: Lewis Ayres, <i>Nicaea and Its Legacy</i> and <i>Augustine and the Trinity</i> 													
5	Feb 6	B. Modern Renaissance?													
6	Feb 13	<p>C. Pentecostal Trinitarian Theology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spirit of Christ and Spirit of Pentecost 													
7	Feb 20	Family Day No Class													
8	Feb 27	<p>Student lectures</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="479 1129 1068 1356"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Lecture</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>5.</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Lecture	1.		2.		3.		4.		5.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus and annotated bibliography due Feb 27
	Lecture														
1.															
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9	March 6	Pentecostal Trinitarian Theology continued													
10	March 13	D. The Trinity & Political Theology													

11	March 20	Paper Presentations: <i>Week one</i> <table border="1" data-bbox="440 275 1026 394"> <tr> <td></td> <td>Paper</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		Paper	1.		2.		
	Paper								
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12	March 27	Paper Presentations: <i>Week two</i> <table border="1" data-bbox="440 554 1037 674"> <tr> <td></td> <td>Paper</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4.</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		Paper	3.		4.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week one papers due March 27
	Paper								
3.									
4.									
13	April 3	Conclusion and Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional paper presentations can be presented on in this last session, depending on final course numbers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week two papers due April 3 • Any final papers due April 6 						

VI. Assignment Descriptions:

A. Primary Text Analysis and Presentation:

The assignment sharpens your skills in the close reading and interpretation of primary texts and introduces you to key texts in the history of trinitarian theology.

1. Select a reading from primary text from the list below.
 - Augustine, *The Trinity* books 4, 5, and 15
 - Gregory of Nyssa, *On "Not Three Gods," On the Holy Spirit*
 - Richard of St. Victor, *The Trinity*, book three
 - Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 1a.27-30, 34-38, and 43
2. Write an analysis of the text that identifies the thesis, logic, arguments, key Scriptures, philosophical assumptions, etc. and discusses significant secondary scholarship on the piece.

A sample outline is:

- a. Theological and historical context of and influences on the writing
 - b. Thesis
 - c. Outline of the content
 - d. Critical analysis—does the content support the thesis, is the content consistent, advance a new perspective, etc.?
 - e. Statement of the text's contribution to the doctrine of the Trinity
 - f. Bibliography with critical edition(s), scholarly translations (where appropriate), and key secondary literature on the writing(s) and figure.
3. Class presentation: Jan 30 you will present a summary of the primary text and the class will discuss the concepts and trinitarian theology presented in the primary text.

B. Lecture, Syllabus, and Annotated Bibliography:

1. Purpose:
This assignment provides experience *preparing* a syllabus and *delivering* a lecture for teaching in an undergraduate setting. The preparation of the syllabus also fulfills one of the requirements of the Mastery Checklist.
2. Description:
 - You will prepare a syllabus and lecture on a topic related to the 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.*
 - This assignment also provides experience in preparing and reading a list of sources like you will do for your comprehensive exams.
 - Although this class is on the Trinity, the syllabus and lecture can address broader topics. For example, you may choose to focus on pneumatology, Christology, or the way trinitarian theology impacts another area of theology such as missional theology.
3. Guidelines:
 - a. Research:

- 1) Research for the lecture and syllabus development will account for the supplemental reading for research degree students. A list of approximately ten to fifteen sources.
- 2) 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).

b. Lecture:

- 1) The lecture should present and discuss the primary content points of the topic (or sub-topic)
- 2) Lecture handouts/outlines and PowerPoint/Prezi are helpful, but not required
- 3) Length:
The lecture and discussion will take about 30 minutes, depending on final student numbers in the course.
- 4) Note: The lecture will be presented in the afternoon of the first day of class (Thurs Oct 22). If COVID-19 requires the conversion of this class to all online delivery, you will post a video presentation of your lecture and will have the opportunity to provide feedback to your class colleagues in an online venue.

4. Evaluation:

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

- a. 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.
- b. Does the lecture accurately present and discuss the topic?
- c. Does the lecture engage in critical evaluation/discussion of the content?
- d. Does the lecture highlight the transcendent value of the material—e.g., does it have value for contemporary Christian thought, life, and ministry?
- c. Does the lecture facilitate student discussion?

C. Thesis Paper and Presentation:

1. Each student writes and presents a thesis paper on a topic related to the topic of the course. I encourage you to investigate the issue from the perspective of your discipline and area(s) of research interest—e.g., the Trinity and Ecclesiology or the Trinity in the Synoptics.
2. The purpose of this assignment is to provide students with experience in writing academic conference and journal article length theological papers and to gain experience in presenting research in an oral form similar to that performed at academic conferences.
3. Students are encouraged to use the class as an opportunity to work on papers they can present at academic societies and/or submit for publication.
4. Guidelines:
 - Class presentation: The class presentation consists of two parts. The presentation (25 minutes) and discussion of the paper (20 minutes)
 - Submit final copy of the paper *one week after class presentation*
 - Length: approx. 20 pages or 6,000–7,000 words.
 - Style: conform to MacDiv Style Guide (please use footnotes and include a bibliography of sources cited in the paper).

VII. Policies

A. Textbook Purchase

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, The Hurlburt Family Bookstore, McMaster Divinity College (Across from Cullen Hall). 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, Text: 416 668 3434. fax 416.622.2308; email books@readon.ca. Free Shipping is available to students. 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).

D. 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 [after the beginning of class equals 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.

IX. Bibliography

The bibliography is not exhaustive, but should provide an entry point for literature on the doctrine of the Trinity.

Primary sources

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