THEO 303 — THEOLOGY AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE
Azusa Pacific University, Haggard School of Theology, Undergraduate Department of Theology
Spring 2008, 3 units

The following statements on this page are required by the University and the Department

THE APU MISSION STATEMENT: “Azusa Pacific University is an evangelical Christian community of disciples and scholars who seek to advance the work of God in the world through academic excellence in liberal arts and professional programs of higher education that encourage students to develop a Christian perspective of truth and life.”

DESIRED LEARNING OUTCOMES:
1. Undergraduate students will demonstrate an ability to give thoughtful consideration to current and historical issues in the light of the church’s Scriptures and traditions.
2. Graduates should demonstrate a practice of continual intellectual growth through personal scholarship and development.

DESIRED FAITH INTEGRATION OUTCOME: Most students will demonstrate growth in the ability to think critically about the historical, doctrinal, biblical and practical aspects of the Christian faith, including appreciation, understanding, and valuing the Church. Students will grow into a greater awareness of the personal and social relevance and spiritual richness that informed, disciplined theological reflection can bring to their Christian existence and their own impact upon the world in which they live. This is an application of the university-wide student learning goals that graduates should be able to articulate a Christian worldview of truth and life; should be able to apply biblically-based ethical reasoning skills to problems; should appreciate, understand, and value the Church; should practice a respect for the worth of all persons, with appreciation of individual and cultural differences, demonstrating truth-telling and grace in their relationships; and should be able to articulate the importance of extending genuine community to all peoples locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.

*NOTE: The Department of Theology and Philosophy is involved in assessing student learning, and your paper may be chosen for this. If your paper is one of those randomly selected for evaluation, your name will be removed so that the process is completely anonymous and does not affect your grade.

THE APU ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY: “The mission of Azusa Pacific University includes cultivating in each student not only the academic skills that are required for a university degree, but also the characteristics of academic integrity that are integral to a sound Christian education. It is therefore part of the mission of the university to nurture in each student a sense of moral responsibility consistent with the biblical teachings of honesty and accountability. Furthermore, a breach of academic integrity is viewed not merely as a private matter between the student and an instructor but rather as an act which is fundamentally inconsistent with the purpose and mission of the entire university. A complete copy of the Academic Integrity Policy is available in the Office of Student Life, the Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Programs, and online.
Expectations for this course regarding academic integrity in this class are consistent with those outlined in the academic integrity policy unless specific instructions in this syllabus allow exceptions. Consequences for violations of academic integrity in this class are consistent with those outlined in the academic in the academic integrity policy; see specific instructions in this syllabus.
COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course provides an introduction to the doctrines of the Christian church, focusing on the Christian life and its relationship to theology. The course approaches theology from an inductive method in the Wesleyan tradition, helping the student learn to think theologically from the Scriptures, orthodox ecumenical tradition, experience, and reason. Meets general studies core doctrine requirement for God’s Word and the Christian Response. Prerequisite(s): three units of biblical studies and CMIN 108, or instructor’s permission. (catalog)

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To gain an appreciation for the history and development of the Christian faith since its inception.*

2. To acquire a foundational understanding of basic Christian beliefs so that one can think "Christianly" (with some sophistication) about life and the world.

3. To learn about the various traditions represented within the Christian faith and to be enriched by traditions other than one's own.

4. To experience the struggle of doing theology.

5. To relate Christian beliefs to the issues that arise in the fallen cosmos in which we find ourselves as mere disciples of Jesus.

6. To learn what it means to perform the Scriptures “on the streets” and to learn how to be a better martyr for the Faith.

*See Bakke, A Theology as Big as the City, pp. 26-27 (“...if you can’t tell me where the church has been, you have no business telling me where it ought to go.”)

COURSE TEXTS:

Justo González. Mañana: Christian Theology from a Hispanic Perspective. Abingdon. (JG)
Roger E. Olson. The Mosaic of Christian Belief. InterVarsity Press. (RO)
Ben Quash & Michael Ward (eds). Heresies and How to Avoid Them. SPCK/Hendrickson. (QW)
Dennis Okholm. THEO 303 Course Pack.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Attend class regularly and participate. NOTE: Always bring the Course Pack (since it contains the lecture outlines): sometimes I'll tell you bring one of our other books to class.

2. Read assigned portions of the textbooks.

3. Decide what view you take on any one of the Boyd/Eddy issues listed below. Write an essay of about 800 words (double-spaced) indicating why you side with one of the views over the other(s) in the spectrum represented by the chapter you chose. Make your case using Scripture [the “norming norm”], reason, tradition, and experience—all four. This is due at the beginning of the class period indicated for each question.

   Options:
   1. Does God know everything that is going to happen in the future? (February 4)
   2. Did God create the universe in six 24-hour days or did he use evolution or did he do it in some other way? (February 29)
   3. Does everything [including 9/11 and the Nazi Holocaust] happen because God wills it? (March 7)
   4. Does God predestine people to be saved? (March 28)
   5. Is it okay for a woman to be the head pastor of a church? (April 11)
6. Should we baptize infants? (April 18)

4. Write a 1000-word (double-spaced) essay reflecting on the first 87 pages of González’s Mañana. Specifically, unpack four concepts he develops: (1) the value of his minority perspective; (2) “guilty innocence”; (3) the “new Reformation”; and (4) “reading the Bible in Spanish.” Due on January 25.

5. Watch the movie “Stranger than Fiction” (starring Will Ferrell). Write a 1000-word essay indicating the theological significance of this movie, especially on two points: (1) the relation between God’s story (i.e., the biblical narrative) and our place in that narrative; (2) the possibility that Will Ferrell’s character was meant to be a Christ-figure. Due on February 29.

6. Read one of the following short stories by Flannery O’Connor: “A Good Man Is Hard to Find”; “Parker’s Back”; “The River”; “The Displaced Person”; “A Good Man Is Hard to Find”; or “Revelation.” Write a 1000-word (double-spaced) essay analyzing the story theologically. Specifically, you should identify which topic in theology the story primarily “addresses,” what O’Connor is trying to communicate about that topic, and how it connects with some of the material in this course’s textbooks. Include succinct and poignant quotes from the story and from appropriate textbook material to support your essay. At the end of your paper make sure you indicate the bibliographical source for the O’Connor story you chose. Due on April 23.

7. Attend a Christian worship service and submit a completed evaluation form (attached). If you are a Protestant, the service must be either a Roman Catholic Mass or an Eastern Orthodox Liturgy; if you were reared in the RC or EO church, the service must be a Protestant denomination that is completely unfamiliar to you. (If you have no history with the Christian church attend a Christian worship service that is completely “out of the box” for you.) Turn it in no later than April 16.

8. Compose a statement of faith (not to exceed 1 single-spaced page). It should be informed by Scripture and the church’s teachings throughout its history. It should include some expression of your belief (at this moment—a “progress report”) regarding each of the following: the nature of Scripture and its interpretation, the Trinity, creation, sin, the person and work of Christ, the Holy Spirit, the church, the sacraments/ordinances, the Kingdom of God on earth, and the hope of the life to come (eschatology). It will be graded on thoroughness and consistency, not on agreement with the professor’s views! For full credit, make sure you deal with each of the ten items; you can list them if you’d like. This is due on April 30 (turned in with the final exam).

9. Pass three exams. The exams will focus on the material read, lectured on, and discussed since the previous exam; the final will include a few questions from previous exams. No one is exempt from the final exam, and it must be taken when scheduled by the University. I cannot grant exceptions; those require the written approval of the instructor, department chair, and dean. (The only exception is when you have three finals in one day.) These exams are scheduled for the beginning of class on the following dates: February 13; April 2; April 30 @ 9:45 a.m. or 12:15 p.m.). Make your going-home plans with the final exam period in mind!!!!

RELATIVE WEIGHT OF ASSIGNMENTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight of Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boyd/Eddy essay</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>González essay</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stranger than Fiction essay</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>O’Connor story essay</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worship Evaluation</td>
<td>05%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statement of Faith</td>
<td>05%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Each exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
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GRADING SCALE:
COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance: It is essential that you attend class and group meetings. Excessive absences will affect your test scores. I reserve the right to penalize your grade if you have excessive unexcused absences. If you are absent you are responsible to find out what you missed and to make up any work affected by your absence. Attendance may be taken randomly.

Class decorum: In the interests of creating an optimal atmosphere for learning and out of respect for your peers, please observe the following during class sessions:
1. Do not eat food during the class period. Drinks are okay.
2. If you have a cell phone, turn it off.
3. Refrain from “coming and going.” Please do not get up and leave during the class period unless you’ve let me know you have to leave early, you are hemorrhaging or the building is on fire.

Late work: If you miss one of the exams you can take it at another time if you missed it because of an excused absence (e.g., life-threatening illness, required university sponsored event); arrangements must be made with me before the exam (by phone or email if an illness). (Only in the case of an illness for which you have a physician’s written note can you make arrangements after the exam.) Written assignments are due at the beginning of the class period; the grade will be reduced by a letter grade for each day/weekend late.

Cheating and Plagiarism: Cheating is the use of someone else's work which the student represents as his or her own. Plagiarism is the use of ideas and information (not commonly known) from a specific source without giving credit to that source by allusion, footnoting, or bibliography; it also involves the verbatim use of material that one passes off as one’s own. Cheating or plagiarism will result in an automatic "F" for the assignment or exam.

Sundays: "Business as usual" should not be an option on Sundays (except in cases of unforeseeable circumstances). Please plan ahead in all of your work, and reserve Sundays ("Little Easters") for worship, rest, recreation, and celebration! God made you that way (viz., to work six and rest one) and God expects you to live your life accordingly for your own benefit (Deut 6:24). Note that no assignments or exams are due on Mondays.

Submitting papers: Written work should be submitted to me in a hardcopy format unless you have made other arrangements with me and the circumstances warrant an exception. I only accept emailed work if you have made prior arrangements with me.

Students with disabilities: Students who have a disability that might prevent them from fully demonstrating their learning should meet with an advisor in the Learning Enrichment Center as soon as possible to initiate disability verification and discuss accommodations that may be necessary to ensure full participation in the class and the successful completion of course requirements. It also helps for me to know at the beginning of the semester of any special needs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Assignment</th>
<th>Due at class time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>Who are we and what are we doing here?</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/11, 14, 16, 18</td>
<td>What is the &quot;Christian faith&quot;? What is theology? What is the cultural context?</td>
<td>RO, c. 1; JG, Foreword, cc. 1-5</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/23, 25, 28, 30, 2/1</td>
<td>What are the sources for and the results of doing theology?</td>
<td>RO, cc. 2-4; QW, Prologue &amp; Epilogue, cc. 7, 10; study the spectrum re: inspiration in BE, c. 1</td>
<td>González essay due on 1/25</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/4, 6, 8, 11</td>
<td>Who is God?</td>
<td>RO, cc. 5-6; JG, cc. 6-7; QW, cc. 1, 12; study the spectrum re: God’s foreknowledge in BE, c. 3</td>
<td>BE essay 1 due 2/4</td>
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<td>2/13</td>
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<td>Exam #1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/18, 20, 22, 25, 27</td>
<td>Who is Jesus Christ?</td>
<td>RO, c. 10; JG, c. 10; QW, cc. 2-6; study the spectrum re: the incarnation in BE, c. 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/29, 3/3, 7, 10, 12, 14</td>
<td>How did the world come into existence, what keeps it going, and what is a human being?</td>
<td>RO, cc. 7-9; JG, cc. 8-9; QW, c. 9; study the spectrum re: creation in BE, c. 4, the image of God in BE, c. 5, and divine providence in BE, c. 2</td>
<td>Stranger than Fiction essay due on 2/29</td>
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<td>3/26, 28, 31</td>
<td>What did Christ do for humans?</td>
<td>RO, cc. 11-12; study the spectrum re: nature of the atonement in BE, c. 8, and predestination in BE, c. 9</td>
<td>BE essay 3 due 3/7</td>
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<td>4/2</td>
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<td>Exam #2</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>Who is the Holy Spirit and what does the Holy Spirit do in our lives? (Read detailed course pack for this unit and come prepared to discuss.)</td>
<td>Review RO, c. 12; study the spectrum re: views of sanctification in BE, c. 10, and spiritual gifts in BE, c. 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/7, 9, 11, 14, 16, 18, 21</td>
<td>What is the church?</td>
<td>RO, c. 13; JG, c. 11; QW, c. 8; study the spectrum re: baptism in BE, c. 14, the Lord’s Supper in BE, c. 13, and women in ministry in BE, c. 16</td>
<td>BE essay 5 due 4/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/23, 25</td>
<td>What is the future of the world and of individual humans?</td>
<td>RO, cc. 14-15; study the spectrum re: hell in BE, c. 18 and the end times in BE, c. 17</td>
<td>O’Connor essay due on 4/23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/30</td>
<td>9:45 a.m. 12:15 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Statement of Faith The Final Exam</td>
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</table>
WORSHIP SERVICE EVALUATION

NB: Participate fully in the worship service; fill out this form after you have worshipped (not while). Be as observant as possible: e.g., look around at what is inside the church building; pay attention to movement and ceremony, not just to what is said. (E.g., perhaps the Bible is treated with respect by being paraded or kissed; perhaps Christ's saving work is communicated through what is hanging on the walls as well as through what is preached or eaten; perhaps prayers or the presence of God is symbolized by the ascending smoke of incense) (Use the back only if needed. Only 1 page please!)

1. Where did you go?____________________________________________________
2. When did you go?_________________(date)
3. What about this worship service was new in your experience?

4. If you knew nothing about God before you participated in this worship service, what would you think about God after having experienced worship in this church? (far away? chummy? judging? etc.?)

5. Were you made conscious of sin? How?

6. How was the salvific work of Christ communicated?

7. What role did the people play in this service? Were you made conscious of the community of believers? Were you given the sense that this church was part of something larger than itself (in terms of the past and/or the world)?

8. Were you ever aware of the Holy Spirit? (Was he talked about? experienced in some way? etc.) If so, how was the Spirit related to Christ?

9. What role did Scripture play? (orally, visually, etc.)

10. What would be your impression of the church of Jesus Christ if this one worship service was all you had to go on? (e.g., it is far removed from the world, interested only in saving souls, concerned for justice in society...)