

Syllabus for Engaging Theology
May 23-27, 2022, 8:00-12:00 pm
Instructor: Geoffrey Moore

Course description:

In this course, students will explore theological foundations for the Christian faith and Christian ministry. Students will encounter a diverse body of theology, empowering them as theologians to engage theology both charitably and critically and equipping them to teach Christian doctrine by communicating the content and meaning of our faith and heritage to others. Students will be given the opportunity to discuss, reflect on, and apply theological doctrines to the socio-cultural and faith issues in the lives of persons in their ministry context and practice applying these skills likewise.

Required texts:

Uche Anizor, *How to Read Theology: Engaging Doctrine Critically and Charitably* (Baker Academic, 2018). [ISBN: 978-0-8010-4975-0](#)

Adam Neder, *Theology as a Way of Life: On Teaching and Learning the Christian Faith* (Baker Academic, 2019). [ISBN: 978-0-8010-9878-9](#)

William C Placher, ed., *Essentials of Christian Theology* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2003). [ISBN: 0-664-22395-8](#)

Pre-Assignment due Friday, Jan 6, by 5pm:

- Read *How to Read Theology*
- Read Placher, pp 1–7, 51–130
- Write a 5-paragraph paper (approximately 500–750 words of 2 to 3 pages) following the guidelines below that details your ministerial narrative by describing:
 - your current ministerial context
 - why you are seeking a certification (and the particular certification you are seeking)
 - your experience with engaging theology with respect to the criteria outlined in the course description above

Guidelines for 5-paragraph Paper

The five paragraphs of the paper are to be organized in the following way:

Paragraph 1. The first paragraph should be about 5–10 sentences in length and should introduce yourself in general but more specifically with respect to your ministerial journey. The **final sentence** of the first paragraph will be the paper's main point and *will state **three (3) major motifs*** (see above) *that have led you to this course*. Please keep your statement of these motifs general, not specific ideas that you discuss below, and consider how they might relate together thematically or narratively.

Paragraphs 2, 3, and 4. The central three paragraphs (each approximately 5-10 sentences in length) will all have the same general form. The **first sentence** of each paragraph will introduce **one** of the major motifs mentioned in the last sentence of the first paragraph. The remaining sentences of the paragraph will discuss how you see this aspect of the narrative as significant to your ministerial journey.

Paragraph 5. In the **first sentence** of the last paragraph, reiterate the three themes you discussed in the previous three paragraphs. Provide by way of a conclusion a general discussion of *how these themes function together* in your ministerial journey.

Daily assignments, Tuesday–Friday:

You will be required to write one (1) short response paper each day, Tuesday–Friday, based on the topics of the day. More guidelines will be distributed and discussed on Monday.

Daily Class Schedule

Monday

Introductions

Prolegomena (Neder, Anizor, Placher 1–7)

Theologies:

—God (Placher 51–92)

—Creation and Providence (Placher 93–130)

Tuesday

Discussions:

—God

—Creation and Providence

Theologies:

—The Work and Person of Jesus Christ (Placher 183–219)

—The Work and Person of the Holy Spirit (To be distributed)

Wednesday

Discussions:

—Jesus Christ

—Holy Spirit

Theologies:

—Human Nature and Human Sin (Placher 133–180)

—Eschatology (Placher 327–364)

Thursday

Discussions:

—Human Nature and Human Sin

—Eschatology

Theologies:

—The Christian Life (Placher 257–294)

—The Church (Placher 221–254)

Friday

Discussions:

—The Christian Life

—The Church

Theology, Doctrine, and Faith

Epilogue

Final Project, due Friday, Feb 3, by 5pm.

Theological Study for a Ministry Setting

Description

Utilizing the course materials and discussions in addition to materials and sources from your own context, construct a minimum four-lesson discipleship study for your ministry context. The final project should be clear about the objectives for each lesson, clearly describe the approach to and presentation of the material, and demonstrate theological engagement, both in the structure of the material and in what is asked of the participants.

Criteria for Success

- At least **four discrete lessons** are present
- All four lessons may focus on **a single locus** (e.g., creation) but must evince engagement/intersection with at least **two other loci** (e.g., creation and God, creation and Christian living, creation and eschatology, etc.)
- At least **three theological sources** must be used (and referenced) in building the project
 - One source must be a reading or discussion from the course
 - One source may be the Bible
 - At least one source must be from your ministry context
- **Objectives/goals/intentions** for each lesson should be clearly stated
- Each lesson must contain enough material (i.e., writing) to clearly describe the approach to and presentation of the **theological subject**
- Each lesson must demonstrate **theological engagement** on the part of the author
- Each lesson must call for some degree of **theological engagement** on the part of the participants