

CONTEMPORARY THEOLOGY
COS #522

COURSE OF STUDY SCHOOL OF OHIO
West Virginia Extension

Spring Term, 2022

ON-LINE

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

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Critical reflection upon significant individuals, movements, decisive events, and fundamental tenants of the Christian faith which in the past century, or so, have shaped contemporary theologies. Through study of varied theological expressions in modern decades, the student enters into the church's enduring task of interpreting, articulating, and enacting the gospel for contemporary life. Attention will be given to selected primary sources.

**Students will be able to:*

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

(from COS Spring Heights, Student Handbook &
* Objectives, COS Revised Curriculum-2014)

II. TEXTBOOKS:

Required Reading:

Caputo, John, *What Would Jesus Deconstruct?*, Baker Book House, 2007;
ISBN:9780801031366.

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.

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 may be supplemental/reference**)

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.

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:

NOTE: SEE “ADDENDUM” PAGE 11 - WEEKLY DISCUSSION BOARD/ VIDEO SCHEDULE

MARCH 19, 2022 9:00AM – 11:00AM ZOOM SESSION #1

ASSIGNMENTS PRIOR TO ZOOM SESSION #1 :

- A. INTRODUCTION-THEOLOGICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY (ITA) -- (DUE FRIDAY, MARCH 18)
(SEE THE DETAIL OF ASSIGNMENT – SYLLABUS PAGE 8, SECTION VII.B)
- B. READ PRIOR TO CLASS:
 - HORDERN, A LAYMAN’S GUIDE TO PROTESTANT THEOLOGY - INTRO & PP. 1-149
 - MILLER/GRENZ, INTRO TO CONTEMPORARY THEOLOGIES - PP. 1-34

ZOOM SESSION #1

9:00AM - 9:45AM	INTRODUCTIONS SYLLABUS REVIEW/ASSIGNMENTS CONTEMPORARY THEOLOGY? “THEOLOGICAL METHOD”
15-MINUTE ON-LINE BREAK	
10:00AM – 11:00AM	ORTHODOXY –GROWTH & THREATS

APRIL 9, 2022 9:00AM – 11:00AM ZOOM SESSION #2

ASSIGNMENTS PRIOR TO ZOOM SESSION #2:

- A. READ PRIOR TO CLASS:
 - MIGLIORE, FAITH SEEKING UNDERSTANDING – PREFACES & PP. 1-66, 66-94;
APPENDIX B: PP. 390-403.
- B. REFLECTION PAPER #1 - “THEOLOGY, REVELATION, SCRIPTURE” (DUE FRIDAY, APRIL 8)
MIGLIORE, FAITH SEEKING UNDERSTANDING, PREFACES & PP.1-65
(SEE DETAIL OF ASSIGNMENT – SYLLABUS PAGE 9 , SECTION VII.C)

ZOOM SESSION #2

9:00AM – 9:45AM	DEFENSE OF ORTHODOXY & RESPONSE
15-MINUTE ON-LINE BREAK	
10:00AM – 11:00AM	CONSERVATIVE VS LIBERAL PENTECOSTAL & HOLINESS MOVEMENTS

APRIL 23, 2022 9:00AM – 11:00AM ZOOM SESSION #3

ASSIGNMENTS PRIOR TO ZOOM SESSIONS #3 & #4:

A. READ PRIOR TO CLASS:

- 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

REFLECTION PAPER #2 - "PLURALISM AND HOPE" (DUE BY FRIDAY, APRIL 22)

MIGLIORE, FAITH SEEKING UNDERSTANDING, PP.314-374

(SEE THE DETAIL OF ASSIGNMENT – SYLLABUS PAGE 9, SECTION VII.C)

9:00AM – 9:45AM

**RESPONSE TO CONSERVATISM
LIBERALISM
PAUL TILLICH**

15-MINUTE ON-LINE BREAK

10:00AM – 11:00AM

**NEO-ORTHODOXY
KARL BARTH**

APRIL 23, 2022 1:00PM – 3:00PM ZOOM SESSION #4

1:00PM – 1:45PM

KARL BARTH, CONTINUED

15-MINUTE ON-LINE BREAK

2:00PM – 3:00PM

**REINHOLD NIEBUHR
DIETRICH BONHOEFFER
NEO-LIBERALISM
"REDISCOVERY OF ORTHODOXY"**

MAY 7, 2022 9:00AM – 11:00AM ZOOM SESSION #5

ASSIGNMENT PRIOR TO ZOOM SESSION #5

READ, JOHN CAPUTO, WHAT WOULD JESUS DECONSTRUCT?

REFLECTION PAPER #3 - CAPUTO'S BOOK (DUE FRIDAY, MAY 6)

CAPUTO, JOHN D. WHAT WOULD JESUS DECONSTRUCT?

(SEE THE DETAIL OF ASSIGNMENT – SYLLABUS PAGE 9, SECTION VII.C)

9:00AM – 9:45AM

**FEMINIST THEOLOGY
LIBERATION THEOLOGY**

15-MINUTE ON-LINE BREAK

10:00AM – 11:00AM

**POST MODERNISM

WHERE ARE WE?
OUR TASK AS PASTOR –
“THEOLOGIAN IN RESIDENCE”**

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 the 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. **NOTE: Posting required reflection on the Discussion Board weekly is the major factor in the participation grading. (see the weekly question for posting and instructions)**
- 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. Each class member must contribute regularly to discussions without monopolizing the time.

- B. **Introduction-Theological Autobiography (ITA) (20% of final grade) -- (due Friday, March 18)**

An autobiography (ITA) must be submitted on Friday, March 18.

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 (three) (30% of final grade) - each paper 10%**

Required reading: Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding;
Caputo, What Would Jesus Deconstruct?

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

2. Two will be 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 Fri, April 8)

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

Reflection paper #2 - “pluralism & hope” (due Friday, April 22)

Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding, pp.314 – 374

3. The third reflection paper will be based on Caputo, What Would Jesus Deconstruct?

Reflection paper #3 - Caputo book (due Friday, May 6)

- Give a brief overview summary of the assigned reading;
- What issue or issues are raised for you from the reading?
- What do you agree with in Caputo’s writing?
- What do you disagree with and why?
- What one learning, for you, can you lift up from the assigned reading?

COS #522 – THEOLOGY V ADDENDUM TO SYLLABUS

(Asynchronous required 6.5 hours)

DISCUSSION BOARD & VIDEO REFLECTION (Facebook Group)

March 13 – May 6, 2022

Instruction: Each required discussion question and video reflection - you are to post a response of 100 words or less; and, also reply/respond with no more than 100 words to at least two (2) of your fellow students and their response; throughout the class term, you must have responded to each of the class members.

Deadline for each weekly question or video: post must be done by 12noon weekly on Fridays. unless otherwise noted.

Class participation grade (25% of final grade) will be factored by full participation in the discussion board requirements.

Video instruction: You are to view the video clip, and then reflect and respond in 100 words or less to the questions asked; NOTE: feel free to discuss by reply to other class members, but for video responses, this is not required.

Week 1 (March 13-18)

- What has been the most influential religious belief, cultural experience, or personal/family issue that has influenced your ministry?
- View video – YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMESAoFywKs> “Wesley Quadrilateral” - theological method (30-minute video)
- Respond to video: What one idea, insight was helpful? What is the one takeaway concept you like from the video clip? Any issues?

Week 2 (March 20-25)

- How do you experience using the theological method known as “Wesley Quadrilateral” in your preaching and teaching?

Week 3 (March 27 - April 1)

- What do you consider “fundamental” to you theologically? Does it become “orthodox” for you? Where do you compromise? (Remember, you need to explain why.)
- View video – YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dk7Ti8wmZxk> “Bonhoeffer” – Prof. Tom Greggs, British Methodist theologian (25-minute video)
- Respond to video: What one idea, insight was helpful? What is the one takeaway concept you like from the video clip? Any issues?

Week 4 (April 3 - 8)

- How do you interpret to others as a pastoral theologian that the Bible is the “inspired Word of God” and has authority for us?

Week 5 (April 10 - 15) Holy Week, 2022

- A theology professor once said, “more former students call/write me asking about what to preach on Easter”. Respond to that statement.

Week 6 (April 17 - 22) Easter – April 17

- We are reminded in our reading – “one of the best known lines from Karl Barth is: ‘We must hold the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other.’” How do you see that comment related to our world, the culture, and our experiences today?
- View video: YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FnVkx2U9BhM> “Reading Barth Together”: Willimon & Hauerwas discussion (one hour video)
- Respond to video: What one idea, insight was helpful? What is the one takeaway concept you like from the video clip? Any issues?

Week 7 (April 24 - 29)

- If we are living in these “post-modern times” with the concept that there are “no absolutes”, what is your role as preacher, teacher, and pastoral theologian?
- View video: YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ABEuQXQbs0> “Postmodernism lecture”, Prof. John Caputo (30-minute video)
- Respond to video: What one idea, insight was helpful? What is the one takeaway concept you like from the video clip? Any issues?

Week 8 (May 1 - 6)

- What is the most difficult task of ministry today dealing with our contemporary culture?
- View video: YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hZtpSN8Bsuc> “The State of Contemporary Theology”, Dr. Jong Chun Park, Korea (10 min)
- Respond to video: What one idea, insight was helpful? What is the one takeaway concept you like from the video clip? Any issues?

SUMMARY OF COS 522/Theology ASSIGNMENT DEADLINES

March 13– May 6	WEEKLY DISCUSSION BOARD Reflection posting
Friday, March 18	Video reflection posting #1 “Wesley Quad”
Friday, March 18	“Introduction-Theological Autobiography” paper
Friday, April 1	Video reflection posting #2 “Bonhoeffer”
Friday, April 8	Reflection paper #1 “theology, revelation, Scripture”
Friday, April 22	Video reflection posting #3 “Barth discussion”
Friday, April 22	Reflection paper #2 “pluralism”
Friday, April 29	Video reflection posting #4 “Post-modernism”
Friday, May 6	Reflection paper #3 Caputo, “deconstructionism”
Friday, May 6	Video reflection posting #5 “Dr. Jong Chun Park”
Friday, May 20	Final paper - theological book selected - (Black, Liberation or Feminist theologies)

**ANY QUESTIONS OR CLARIFICATION REGARDING THESE
INSTRUCTIONS SHOULD BE EMAILED TO INSTRUCTOR,
DrBillWilson@aol.com;
or CALL at 304-633-0954.**