

**SYLLABUS**  
**RTCH 787: TUTORIAL SEMINAR IN THEOLOGY**  
**SUMMER 2007**

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REGENT UNIVERSITY  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY PROGRAM  
SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

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The School of Divinity is committed to providing biblical and theological education and training from a renewal perspective for the spiritual equipping of men and women who will contribute to the renewal of the Church and the evangelization of the world.

**YOUR PROFESSOR FOR THIS COURSE:**

**Wolfgang Vondey, Ph.D.**

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**PERSONAL GREETING FROM THE PROFESSOR**

Welcome to a tutorial seminar in theology. I am a classically trained systematic theologian, and this course reflects that heritage. One of the chief questions we can ask is how we pursue things theologically. What methods do we use? Do we have a methodology? What methods are available? In order to prepare you for your comprehensive exams and dissertation, this seminar allows you to critically evaluate your own methodological presuppositions. If you have been running around in circles, now is a good time to cross the Jordan.

**DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF COURSE**

A tutorial seminar designed to focus students on particular readings that will compliment past seminars and prepare the student for comprehensive exams and dissertation research. Some focus will be given to practical research skills related to theological reflection. Students will meet in one group seminar session and arrange individual meetings with the professor for one-on-one assessment and direction.

## COURSE COMPETENCIES AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completion of this course, students should be able to accomplish the following measurable goals:

1. **Explain** the motivating concerns, goals and criteria of Christian theology in the twenty-first century.
2. **Describe** the larger framework of theological method in light of twentieth century typologies of the theological discipline.
3. **Evaluate** one's theological method in light of contemporary ecumenical methodologies.
4. **Develop** a contemporary theological method in dialogue with the course texts from a Roman Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, and ecumenical perspective.
5. **Articulate** topics and issues for further original research aiding in dissertation topic selection.
6. **Research** available literature for comprehensive exams questions or dissertation.

## PROGRAM COMPETENCIES

This course contributes to the fulfillment of the following Program Competencies:

1. **Articulate** major doctrines, historical perspectives and theological issues, including those related to spiritual renewal as these bear on Christian life and mission.
2. **Interpret** and **articulate** doctrines, history and traditions of the Church and ethical issues in a compelling way, including those relative to the spiritual renewal as these bear on the Christian life and mission.
3. **Apply** spiritual formation practices to one's personal life, professional behavior and the broader context of the Church.
4. Sensitively **respond** to the implications of a biblical and Christian worldview in ways that are consistent with the Church through the ages.
5. **Articulate** contemporary intellectual issues and how the Church at home and abroad can penetrate societies with a Christian worldview.
6. **Demonstrate** a commitment to unity within the body of Christ by modeling respectful appreciation of cultural, ethnic, denominational and traditional distinctives.

## CORE VALUES

The School of Divinity is committed to the following core values:

1. Sound biblical, theological and hermeneutical competence that prioritizes the authority of the Bible as the inspired Word of God and results in “rightly dividing” biblical text and sound theology.
2. The renewal movement that recognizes and encourages the expression of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in personal experience, ministry and missions today.
3. World evangelization that, as a primary biblical mandate, is at the very core of the Christian mission.
4. Students' spiritual formation, which acknowledges that the student's character and personal integrity formulate the primary building block of all Christian ministry and service.
5. Providing quality delivery systems that optimize the theological education experience through both on-campus and online formats.
6. Preparing students to be future leaders in the various roles to which they are called.

## COURSE PROCEDURES

There are several key elements you will need to fully understand prior to enrolling in this course.

1. This course requires extensive online interaction and the completion of assignments according to the assignments schedule during the pre-residential and post-residential periods. Thus, keeping up with the course schedule is required for your success as a doctoral student. Your personal schedule must allow you to keep up with the due dates for the readings and other assignments as found in the Course Schedule in the *Syllabus* and *Assignments* sections of Blackboard (Bb).
2. All courses require completion of assignments according to a weekly schedule. Thus, keeping up with the schedule is essential to your success. Your personal schedule must allow you to keep up with the due dates for the readings and other assignments.
3. You must have continuous access to a working and dependable Internet provider as well as reliable e-mail that can send and receive attachments. You must also have access to Microsoft Word or Word Perfect for writing assignments.
4. All assignments are due on the date stated in the syllabus at the end of the class period. Any assignment submitted after the class period is considered late and may result in a reduction of the course grade.

5. All assignments are to be submitted in electronic format with the name of the author and name of the course in the subject line as indicated section on submission guidelines below.
6. Be sure you can complete this course in the scheduled semester. Incompletes will only be granted for true emergency situations, not for poor planning.

## RESOURCES

**Students are expected to have all required materials by the first day of the semester.**

The Regent University Bookstore web site is <http://www.regentbookstore.net>. Additional materials (e.g., articles, etc.) may be found on electronic reserve and in the *Course Material* section of Blackboard as well as on ATLA where indicated.

### Required Materials: Text Books

Bernard Lonergan. *Method in Theology*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990. ISBN 080206809X.

Avery Dulles. *The Craft of Theology. From Symbol to System*. New York: Herder and Herder, 1995. ISBN 0824514564.

David K. Clarke and John S. Feinberg (eds.). *To Know and Love God: Method for Theology*. New York: Crossway Books, 2003. ISBN 1581344848.

Gillian R. Evans. *Method in Ecumenical Theology: The Lessons So Far*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. ISBN 0521553040.

Daniel B. Clendenin. *Eastern Orthodox Theology: A Contemporary Reader*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003. ISBN 0801026512.

### Additional Suggested Readings:

The following books are a collection of standard texts on theology and methodology suggested for further reading.

Bevans, Stephen B. *Models of Contextual Theology*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1992.

Coward, Harold G. *Derrida and Negative Theology*. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1992.

Farley, Edward. *Ecclesial Reflection: An Anatomy of Theological Method*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982.

Frei, Hans W. *Types of Christian Theology*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.

Hartt, Julian Norris. *Theological Method and Imagination*. New York: Seabury Press, 1977

Kamitsuka, David G. *Theology and Contemporary Culture: Liberation, Postliberal, and Revisionary Perspectives*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

- Kaufman, Gordon D. *An Essay on Theological Method*. Missoula, Mont.: Published by Scholars Press for the American Academy of Religion, 1975.
- Kerr, Fergus. *Theology after Wittgenstein*. New York: Blackwell, 1986.
- Küng, Hans. *Theology for the Third Millennium: An Ecumenical View*. New York: Doubleday, 1988.
- Macquarrie, John. *Thinking about God*. New York: Harper & Row, 1975
- McClendon, James. *Biography as theology: How Life Stories Can Remake Today's Theology*. Nashville, Abingdon Press 1974
- Mueller, J. J. *What Are They Saying about Theological Method?* New York: Paulist Press, 1984.
- Murphy, Nancey C. *Theology in the Age of Scientific Reasoning*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990.
- Nelson, Paul. *Narrative and Morality: A Theological Inquiry*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1987.
- Robinson, James McConkey. *The New Hermeneutic*. New York, Harper & Row 1964
- Schreier, Robert J. *Constructing Local Theologies*. Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books, 1985.
- Stone, Howard W. *How to Think Theologically*. Minneapolis : Fortress Press, 1996.
- Tracy, David. *Talking about God: Doing Theology in the Context of Modern Pluralism*. New York: Seabury Press, 1983.

## COURSE SCHEDULE & ASSIGNMENTS

### PRE-RESIDENTIAL ASSIGNMENTS (May 7 – June 3)

**Pre-Readings:** Read the text books.

#### **Discussion Board Posting:**

- There is **one discussion board** for this seminar in the online section of Blackboard with at least **three required postings**.
1. State your dissertation topic in the form of a thesis statement or question by **May 21, 2007**, in an online post in Blackboard. Explain how you plan to proceed in order to prove your thesis or to answer the question. If you do not yet have a dissertation topic, write about the work you have done over the course of your doctoral studies and identify what they have in common. Formulate a topic from within these experiences and discoveries and explain how you intend to pursue that topic. Your initial post should have 500-600 words.
  2. Respond to **at least two** postings by your colleagues by **May 28**. Your response should be between 100-200 words. It is in dialogue with others that we sharpen our own senses and skills. In your response, be critical but fair. Address how you view the procedure (not the topic). Do you think that the method of procedure outlined in the posting will allow for a successful completion of the work? Does the method address the thesis or research question? Would you add something or change the order?

### **Written Assignments due the first week of the seminar:**

1. Write a book review of 800-1000 words about a book of choice in your field of study. This book should be on the examinations bibliography of the comprehensive exams and must be from either **Exam IV. History and Theology in the Contemporary Period (20th Century)** or **Exam V: Renewal History and Theology**. In your review, explain the thesis of the book and the method of procedure used by the author. (What is the author trying to do and how is the author doing it). The majority of your review should be a critical evaluation of the author's method. Is the author successful? How did the method chosen for the book help or prevent the author's success? Conclude with an indication of what lessons you might learn from this book for your comprehensive exams or your dissertation.
  
2. Begin an initial draft of a literature review and working bibliography for your dissertation. Bring an electronic and hard copy of your draft.

### **POST-RESIDENTIAL ASSIGNMENT**

Compose a **literature review** (3000-5000 words) **and working bibliography** (no word limit) of your dissertation topic. Write an introduction to the literature review of 600-900 words outlining the method or procedure you wish to follow and how the structure of your literature review corresponds to that method.

The literature review should contain references to the standard texts (classics) in your field as well as recent proposals toward the subject matter. What publications have driven the discussion further? What authors cannot be neglected? What are the "big" topics of discussion?

The bibliography should include monographs, journals, and essays. The goal is not to be comprehensive but to cover substantial ground that allows for further expansion in details.

The introduction to the literature review should indicate the starting question for your research and the procedure you want to follow. For example, a recent book on the Holy Spirit in nature proposes that the theology of Gregory of Nazianzus offers a starting point for a contemporary ecology that sees the Spirit as the liberator of nature. The author proposes a method of correlation that allows him to use an ancient source for a modern problem. Consequently, he has three basic areas of literature: writings on the Holy Spirit, texts on or by Gregory of Nazianzus, and works on ecology. As a result, the bibliography could be divided into these three areas.

**RESIDENTIAL SCHEDULE (June 4 – June 15)**

| <b>Date</b>  | <b>Topic</b>                                | <b>What will be discussed ...</b>   |
|--------------|---|---|
| <b>06/04</b> | <b>Fundamental Questions in Methodology</b> | Lonergan, <i>Method in Theology</i>   |
| <b>06/05</b> | <b>Eastern Orthodox Methodology</b>         | Clendenin, <i>Eastern Orthodox Theology</i>   |
| <b>06/06</b> | <b>Evangelical Methodology</b>              | Clarke, <i>To Know and Love God</i>   |
| <b>06/07</b> | <b>Roman Catholic Methodology</b>           | Dulles, <i>Craft of Theology</i>  |
| <b>06/08</b> | <b>Ecumenical Methodology</b>               | Evans, <i>Method in Ecumenical Theology</i>   |
| <b>06/11</b> | <b>Research and Individual Meetings</b>     | Comprehensive examination preparation, dissertation literature review and working bibliography research |
| <b>06/12</b> | <b>Research and Individual Meetings</b>     | Comprehensive examination preparation, dissertation literature review and working bibliography research |
| <b>06/13</b> | <b>Research and Individual Meetings</b>     | Comprehensive examination preparation, dissertation literature review and working bibliography research |
| <b>06/14</b> | <b>Research and Individual Meetings</b>     | Comprehensive examination preparation, dissertation literature review and working bibliography research |
| <b>06/15</b> | <b>Research and Individual Meetings</b>     | Comprehensive examination preparation, dissertation literature review and working bibliography research |

## METHOD OF EVALUATION

- All term papers and essays are academic assignments and not opinion papers or sermons. Papers should dialogue with the academic community unless otherwise stated. This dialogue should be evident in the use of primary and secondary sources, footnotes, and bibliographies.
- All written assignments must follow the format outlined in the latest edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

### Grade Distribution

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Book Review                               | 20% |
| Literature Review                         | 20% |
| Discussion Board Postings (Pre-residency) | 20% |
| Working Bibliography                      | 20% |
| Residency participation                   | 20% |

### Grading Criteria (weight of total grade is indicated in parenthesis)

- 20% Book Review
- on time submission as assigned in the syllabus (10%)
  - length of paper conforms to requirements in syllabus (10%)
  - exercise in systematic theology not a purely historical or biblical approach (10%)
  - bibliographic/citation style and form correspond to Chicago Manual of Style (10%)
  - spelling, grammar and punctuation corresponds to Chicago Manual of Style (10%)
  - clear presentation of thesis (10%)
  - clear outline of method of procedure (10%)
  - critical analysis of the original method (10%)
  - concrete indication of the relation of method and the success (goal) of the book (10%)
  - clear indication of lessons learned (10%)
- 20% Literature Review
- format and presentation as assigned in the syllabus (20%)
  - on time submission as assigned in the syllabus (20%)
  - style, grammar and form correspond to Chicago Manual of Style (20%)
  - clear grasp of the major literature, authors, texts, dialogue partners (20%)
  - bibliography conforms to Chicago Manual of Style (20%)
- 20% Discussion Board Postings (Pre-residency discussion)
- response and dialogue according to syllabus standards (20%)
  - word limits met (20%)
  - number of postings met (20%)
  - format of postings conform to syllabus requirements (20%)
  - response to other students refers to and interacts critically with the method (20%)

- 20% Working Bibliography
- on time submission as assigned in the syllabus (20%)
  - substantive initial draft submitted at residency period (20%)
  - bibliography conforms to Chicago Manual of Style (20%)
  - bibliography contains monographs, journals and articles relevant to the topic (20%)
  - bibliography is structured in an appropriate professional format (20%)
- 20% Residency Participation
- substantive contributions to the discussion (20%)
  - consistent, regular interaction with ideas (20%)
  - reflective of ideas presented in the readings (20%)
  - regular attendance of the sessions (20%)
  - individual interaction with the professor in personal meeting (20%)

## SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS & E-MAILING THE PROFESSOR

**All official Regent correspondence is issued ONLY via the student's Regent e-mail address.** Non-Regent e-mail addresses are not utilized by the University. There are procedures available on the Regent e-mail system for forwarding individual e-mail received on the Regent account to another non-Regent e-mail address. However, this forwarding procedure can be unreliable. Thus it is recommended that the student regularly (i.e. daily) check the Regent e-mail account.

The subject line of **all e-mail messages** related to this course should include the subject of the message, the course number (RTCH 746), and the name of the student (For example: SUBJECT: RTCH 746, John Smith). Further, **each attached document/assignment** should also contain the student's name and course information.

Following these directions enables the professor to quickly identify the student and course and to keep track of assignments, facilitating a timely response. **Students should always include their first and last name at the end of all e-mail messages.** Thank you.

### EMAIL ETIQUETTE

Email may be your primary means of communication with the professor. Please see your email as an expression of your professional character. Your email should always have a subject field (appropriate to the message). In the text of your email, you should always first address the recipient (Dear ....) and not simply begin with the content of your message. At the end of your message, you should add your full name. As a rule of thumb, I will always respond to your email as soon as possible. I expect you to do the same, and I would like a reply from you whenever I send you an email, even if it is just to acknowledge receipt of my message.

## BLACKBOARD INFORMATION

**Blackboard (Bb) has two primary purposes in our courses: (1) to provide a means for students to receive timely information about the course in general, assignments, grades, and announcements from the instructor and (2) to promote thoughtful interaction between the professor and students and among students themselves as they work through course materials.**

For instructions on how to access and use Blackboard, please work through the *Blackboard Tutorial*, which is in the *Resources* section of the Divinity web site (<http://www.regent.edu/acad/schdiv/resources/tutorials/home.cfm>). Students are expected to be proficient at using the various areas of Bb, including the Discussion Board, Chat Tool, and downloading and viewing documents in Adobe (.pdf), PowerPoint (.ppt), Windows Media and Real Audio.

Students complete their weekly assignments as posted in the *Course Schedule* on Bb. They should also post to the *Discussion Board* on weeks when it is assigned, and check the *Announcements* section **each week** beginning the **first week** of the semester. Students are expected to check their Regent e-mail daily to ensure timely receipt of messages from the professor.

After working through the [Blackboard Tutorial](#), if you have problems and/or are not able to login, send an e-mail to [bbdiv@regent.edu](mailto:bbdiv@regent.edu), describe the problem in detail and include your full name, your Blackboard User Name, Password, Regent e-mail address, and telephone number(s).

**Regent University Information Technology (IT) will enroll you in the Blackboard portion of the course a few business days after you register for the course. Note that in order to be enrolled in the Blackboard course you *must first register* for the course through GENISYS. This is required for all courses. If you are having problems registering through GENISYS please contact the University Registrar (757) 226-4047 for registration questions and the Information Technology Helpdesk (757) 226-4076 for technical questions.**

## STUDY SUGGESTIONS

1. Begin with prayer that the Holy Spirit will guide your study.
2. Refer to the Computer Standards  
(<http://www.regent.edu/acad/schdiv/students/compstandards.cfm>)  
and work through the Blackboard Tutorial  
(<http://www.regent.edu/acad/schdiv/resources/tutorials/home.cfm>) on the Divinity web site (<http://www.regent.edu/divinity>) to ensure that you meet the Computer Standards and can use Blackboard proficiently.
3. Familiarize yourself with your textbooks (e.g., table of contents, footnotes, and index).
4. Read texts for meaning before you read for details. Learn to see the forest before you attempt to identify the trees.
5. See the various theologians, writers and thinkers in their respective contexts before you make any judgments on their work.
6. Keep up with the Course Schedule!

## **ATTENDANCE**

Residency is an essential component of the requirements for PhD courses. In order to receive credit for this course, students must attend the entire scheduled residency, as mandated by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). Merely completing the assigned work is not sufficient to receive a grade for courses which have a residency requirement.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Students are on their honor to complete assignments with integrity. This means that all written assignments are to reflect the student's own work and to be submitted for credit only in this course. Where other secondary sources are used, appropriate dependence with the proper use of footnotes must be applied.

Relative to the entire course of study, it must be assumed that cheating and plagiarism are sins contrary to God's laws and the mission of Regent University. Plagiarism is using the intellectual property of others without proper citation, giving the impression that it is the student's own work. Be aware that if assignments are discovered to contain plagiarized materials the assignment will be failed and ordinarily the course as well. This can affect your academic status which may result in dismissal from the School of Divinity. Instructions concerning "take-home" and "closed-book" exams are to be honored.

## **STUDENT PORTFOLIOS**

Each semester, students will have specific writing assignments as outlined by the instructor that must be included in their final portfolio. Before proceeding to comprehensive examinations, all specified assignments from the coursework phase of the program must be included in the student's portfolio. The following assignments for this course will be added to the student's portfolio:

1. Initial Blackboard posts on nine required course texts;
2. One-page presentation handout;
3. Interview reflections;
4. Personal formation reflections;
5. Final research paper (after corrections are made per instructor suggestions).

## **READING LOG**

All students will keep an ongoing Reading Log beginning at the point of their matriculation into the PhD program. This Log will be included in student portfolios. Readings covered in this course should be added to your log.

## **STUDENT COURSE EVALUATION**

Students have the opportunity to provide feedback throughout the course through e-mail, telephone, and on-campus appointments. Near the end of the semester, students will complete an anonymous online course evaluation form. Since the results contribute to improving course design and presentation, it is important that students be honest and constructive in their evaluations. Students will receive an e-mail reminder from the University when it is time to complete these evaluations. Please take time to provide this input. Students can access the online

evaluation system at: <http://eval.regent.edu/regent/survey/students.cfm>. If you have questions about the online evaluation please contact [evaluation@regent.edu](mailto:evaluation@regent.edu).

## **GRADING: PHILOSOPHY AND CRITERIA**

The following evaluation rubric is based on Regent University's Catalog and is in keeping with grading policies at most U.S. graduate schools.

### **A A-**

Work of superior quality in all areas. Work displays an outstanding mastering of the facts, a creative and critical use of the data, and an analysis or evaluation of facts, research, and trends, that shows real scholarship and talent for graduation work at the highest level. Practical or formational implications of work are included, as appropriate.

### **B+ B B-**

Adequate grasp of facts, creativity and analysis, showing good comprehension of the subject. Practical or formational implications of work are included, as appropriate. The grade for such work will vary from B+ to B- according to the quality and quantity of the work.

### **C+ C C-**

The student has shown a minimal grasp of the facts of the course, and does not demonstrate the desired level of creativity, analytical performance, or comprehension. Practical or formational implications of work are included, as appropriate. The grade will vary from C+-C-

### **F**

Not acceptable for doctoral level study. The student's work indicated major deficiencies both in routine learning and in use of data. This grade denotes either unacceptable performance in spite of some effort, or failure to complete the assigned work.

## **PHD GRADING SYSTEM**

| <b>GRADE</b> | <b>PERCENTAGE</b> | <b>QUALITY POINTS</b> | <b>MEANING OF GRADE</b> |
|--------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| A            | 94-100            | 4.00                  | Superior                |
| A-           | 90-93             | 3.67                  |                         |
| B+           | 87-89             | 3.33                  | Very Good               |
| B            | 83-86             | 3.00                  | Good                    |
| B-           | 80-82             | 2.67                  |                         |
| C+           | 77-79             | 2.33                  |                         |
| C            | 73-76             | 2.00                  | Minimal                 |
| C-           | 70-72             | 1.67                  |                         |
| F            | 0-69              | 0.00                  | Failing                 |

## **INCOMPLETE GRADES**

Incomplete Grade Policy: An incomplete grade ("I") will only be given in a regular course for legitimate deficiencies due to serious illness, emergencies or other extraordinary reasons acceptable to the instructor and the Academic Dean, including university equipment problems or shortages, and not because of neglect on the student's part. To request an Incomplete, the student must submit an *Incomplete Request Form*

(<http://www.regent.edu/acad/schdiv/students/academicforms.cfm>) to the instructor prior to the end of the semester. If approved, the instructor will give a regular grade if all requirements for the course are submitted by the end of the following semester. If all work is not submitted by the end of the following semester, a grade of "Fx" will be posted automatically unless the instructor and the Dean officially approve an extension. The student must request an extension by submitting an *Incomplete Request Form* to the Dean's Office and checking the appropriate box to indicate that it is an extension of an existing incomplete.

## **ADDITIONAL COURSE DOCUMENTS**

Additional course documents, including Course Schedule and Bibliography, are available on Bb. Students are responsible for reading the information found in these documents.

*This syllabus is provided to students and participants for their general guidance only. It does not constitute a contract, either express or implied, and is subject to change without notice.*

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