

HT 140W SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY— **Required:** First-year MDiv/MA students (RL/CL/DL) — Spring 2025
Instructors: Man Hei Yip and Winston D. Persaud — 3 credit-hours; letter grade or credit-no credit

This course will introduce the basic structures of Christian and Lutheran thought, as it explores the relationship between God, humanity and the world in a history of revelation that extends from creation and fall to the consummation of all things and is centered in Jesus Christ. The course will follow the Trinitarian framework of the *Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed*.

OBJECTIVES:

- To begin to be aware of the **resources and methods** for theological thought and to gain an appreciation for the **multi-dimensional content of the gospel** as it addresses the rich **variety of human contexts**.
- To understand the **formative power of basic structures of human thought**, the basic structural themes of **Christian** thought in the context of other religious alternatives, and the structures of **Lutheran** thought within the horizon of ecumenical Christianity.
- To learn to **listen sensitively** to people whose interpretation of the gospel and view of the world differs from our own, including people of other religions, enriching our vision of reality and deepen our understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ and its power to touch human life in all its variety as we struggle to live in the light of the fundamental mystery that is God.
- To appreciate the **cultural and contextual relativity of every formulation of the gospel**, while growing in our awareness of the **universal meaning of God's activity in Jesus Christ for all people**.
- To help students effectively present the **meaning of the gospel and the claim of Jesus Christ in open conversation with the world of religious alternatives** in such a way that they can learn from others without being relativistic.
- To be sensitive to the **significance of the gospel for the human longing for freedom and justice** in the face of violence and oppression, and to understand the relevance of the gospel for **human unity** in the face of the divisive forces at large in the world.

PROCEDURE:

Prolegomena	Lecture Prolog Wk.: TBA &11/13 Feb.	Discussion Group	17/18/20 Feb.
First Article	Lecture 25/27 Feb.&4/6 March	Discussion Group	17/18/20 March
Second Article	Lecture 25/27 March&1/3 Apr.	Discussion Group	7/8/10 Apr.
Third Article	Lecture 21/23 Apr.&29 Apr./1May&6/8 May	Discussion Group	12/13/15 May

• RHYTHMS

- The class will meet two times during the Prolog Week, and on Tues/Thur. 9:00-10:20 a.m., CST (CDT), during the semester. We will follow two basic formats:
 - Plenary
 - 9:00-9:50 a.m. Lecture
 - 9:55-10:20 a.m. Discussion
 - Students who are taking the class in the asynchronous format are expected to view the lectures each week and write a **200-word** summary of each lecture and submit an E-copy to Prof. Yip & Prof. Persaud and Noah Dodd (Student Assistant) within the week when the lecture was given. **If on a given day, a student participates synchronously in the class to hear the lecture and join as a participant in the discussion in a small group, following the lecture, then she/he/they must send an E-mail to the professor and student assistant indicating that this has been done, and so she/he will not need to submit a written summary of the lecture for that day.**
 - Each day, after the discussion in the respective small group, the students in each group are expected to post on the course site—under Discussions—a **75-word** summary in common of the discussion in the group. Students in each group are expected to take turns in sharing the responsibility for writing and posting the summary in common. The summary may include primary questions which were raised. Professor Yip/Professor Persaud will read those postings and may offer brief responses.

EVALUATION:

- Participation in the group process, 20%; examination, 10%
- Creedal Statements, 20%; see schedule for dates: 4 x one-page final drafts are due 16 May
- Paper of **8-10 pp.**, not to exceed 10 pp. in length, 50%; Due **16 May 2025**
- A draft (title + 2 pp. + proposed bibliography) of the final paper is to be submitted on 28 Feb.
- A passing grade for the paper is necessary for consideration of a passing grade for the course.
- Annotated bibliography covering everything read for the course. Read at least 850 pages of material related to three or more different contexts, including one's own.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: **Confessing the One faith*; ***How to Think Theologically*, 4th. ed. (*pre-reading*); ****A Little Exercise for Young Theologians*, by Helmut Thielicke, 2016 ed. (*pre-reading*); *****Christian Dogmatics, 2 vols.*, eds. C. E. Braaten & Robert W. Jenson ****Others will be given/are listed in the syllabus.

In the objectives of the course, HT140W Systematic Theology, there will be significant engagement with numbers 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the Twelve Pastoral-Diaconal Practices.

Twelve Pastoral-Diaconal Practices: Embodying Wartburg Seminary's Mission Statement*

“Wartburg Theological Seminary...”

[Three overarching practices]

1. *Practice of Being Rooted in the Gospel:* Articulates the Gospel in a way that is heard as Gospel. Is publicly Lutheran and Gospel-centered.
2. *Practice of Missio Dei in Word and Sacrament:* Is grounded in Word and Sacrament as the means by which God creates faith in Christ and a community (*koinonia*) for God's mission (*martyria* and *diakonia*) in the world. Pastors exercise faithful worship preparation, evangelical preaching, and sacramental leadership. Diaconal ministers and deaconesses serve as a strategic bridge between church and world. Associates in ministry serve faithfully in their areas of call in relationship to the worshipping community. All the baptized are sent by the Spirit to employ their gifts in God's mission for the life of the world.
3. *Practice of Biblical and Theological Wisdom:* Interprets reality theologically and biblically as a habit. Has a core set of theological concepts that are interpreted with flexibility in different contexts.

“...serves Christ's church through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by being a worship-centered community of critical theological reflection where learning leads to mission and mission informs learning.”

4. *Practice of Ecclesial Partnership:* Displays a healthy sense of connectedness with the whole church. Fosters partnership with the ELCA and ecumenical openness.
5. *Practice of Complex Analysis:* Demonstrates capacity to carefully examine complex social, economic, scientific, and religious issues without oversimplification. Sees relationships from a systems perspective, remaining spiritually centered in the face of ambiguity.
6. *Practice of Curiosity:* Is fundamentally curious, employing creativity in the use of language. Is open to grow beyond current perspectives and eager to pursue learning with intellectual depth.

“The community embodies God's mission by stewarding resources for engaging, equipping, and sending collaborative leaders...”

7. *Practice of Pastoral Concern:* Loves God's people with the compassion of Christ, demonstrating a generous spirit in relating to others, teaching and modeling stewardship. Maintains a clear sense of ministerial identity and desire for excellence in ministry.

8. *Practice of Personal Faith and Integrity*: Lives as person of faith, grounded in a life of prayer and study. Is self-aware in seeing the larger picture, proclaiming hope, leading courageously, and setting healthy boundaries.
9. *Practice of Collegiality*: Leads in a way that is responsive to the situation and promotes team building. Creates collegial groups within and beyond the church for promoting many forms of ministry.

“who interpret, proclaim and live the gospel of Jesus Christ for a world created for communion with God and in need of personal and social healing.”

10. *Practice of Evangelical Listening and Speaking the Faith to Others*: Listens in a way that leads people to deeper faith questions. Engages in thoughtful witness to the Christian message, especially to youth and those outside the faith.
11. *Practice of Immersion in the Context*: Shows awareness of the context through listening to, dialogue with and involvement in the local community. Has ability to interpret texts and contexts with insight.
12. *Practice of Engagement with Cross-Cultural and Global Dimensions*: Engages multicultural issues and religious pluralism in the context of globalization. Understands the inclusive character of the Christian Gospel.

[*Last revised October 2014]