Course Description
Introduction to the classical themes of Christian theology (revelation, God, creation, sin, Jesus Christ, salvation, church, etc.) and their interrelationship, critical reflection on these beliefs, and examination of debates about the meaning of Christian beliefs in contemporary contexts.

Course Objectives
- to introduce the history, language, sources, norms and methods of theology
- to understand the basic content of Christian belief and to enter into debate about this content
- to practice what it means to think, speak, and write theologically
- to read theological texts carefully and critically
- to make connections between Christian theology and contemporary issues
- to understand the diversity of practices and beliefs in the contemporary church
- to develop interest in advanced courses in theology/religious studies

Required Texts
- Occasional articles, available fulltext through the ATLA (American Theological Library Association) database on the UW Library site. Find “Resources for Research,” then “Research Databases,” then “A,” then “ATLA.” Enter the title of the article, which should take you to a link for a PDF.

Requirements
1. Engaged participation and responsibility for your own learning
This means careful and critical reading of assigned texts before class, attending class, taking notes during lectures, asking questions, contributing your ideas and opinions in a respectful way. You will not do well in this course if you do not do the required readings and attend class. The outlines of all lectures (handouts) will be posted on LEARN. If you miss a class, you are responsible for the material that was covered. I will not give mini-lectures on what you missed, nor will I distribute my own lecture notes.

Please consider others: do not come and go during class, switch off all phones/smartphones, use laptop/tablet for taking notes only (not playing games, watching videos, surfing, etc.- you may be asked to leave class if you violate this requirement). If there are legitimate reasons for exceptions (medical conditions, devices to support specific learning needs, etc.); please speak to the instructor in advance.
2. **One test: 25%**
The test will include T/F, short answer, and essay-type questions. Oct. 18.

3. **Two short essays, 5-6 pages each, 2 x 20%**
See attachment for specific guidelines. Due Oct. 30 and Nov. 20.

*Option:* If you have interest in researching a particular topic, you may write one research paper (10 pages) in lieu of the two short essays. Due Nov. 20. You must have the specific approval of the instructor by Oct. 25 in order to take this option. Guidelines for the research paper will be provided on LEARN.

4. **Final Exam: 35%**
Short answer and essay-type questions. The exam will be weighted towards material covered since the test, but may include material from the entire course. An exam review sheet will be distributed in class but will *not* be posted on UW-ACE. This exam will be scheduled by the university and is subject to all university regulations for exams, including changes for conflicts. *Student travel plans are not acceptable grounds for granting an alternative final examination time.*
See [www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/exams/index.html](http://www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/exams/index.html).

Papers are due *at the start of class*. All assignments must be submitted in hard copy, double-spaced, standard margins and 12-point font, with no report covers. Include page numbers. Late assignments will be penalized 3% per 24 hour period or portion thereof (including weekends), and can be accepted no later than Dec. 3 except in exceptional circumstances for which documentation is required. Late papers must be submitted to the Grebel front office between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday. You may “stop the clock” by emailing an assignment to me over the weekend, but *only* if you submit it in hard copy to the front office on the next business day. (E.g. A paper is due Thursday in class, that is, at 1 p.m. If you email me a copy on Saturday morning, and hand in a hard copy on Monday, it will be considered 2 days late. However, if you email me a copy on Saturday but hand in a hard copy on Tuesday morning, then it will count as submitted on Tuesday morning, that is, 5 days late.) I will make every effort to return as soon as possible papers that have been submitted on time.

If you have questions or concerns about any of the tests or assignments, please contact me before the due dates. *There are no “make-up assignments” in this course.*

**LEARN**
I will be using LEARN for several elements of this course. All students must familiarize themselves with the LEARN platform and check it regularly.

News – Class cancellations, changes, reminders, etc. will be posted on the News section of this course.

Content – All handouts in class, including the regular course outline, will be posted in LEARN, usually prior to class. If you miss a class, there is no need to ask me for a handout. If you wish to record lectures, please check with me first.

Discussion – There is no requirement to participate in any online discussion. However, I will start by making two forums available. “Ask a Question” is the place to ask the instructor about course content and/or course requirements. “Start/continue a conversation” is a place to start or continue a conversation about a particular topic. This forum is primarily for students, though the instructor will monitor it, and may contribute from time to time.

Dropbox – The two written assignments (or one research essay) must be submitted in both of TWO formats. First, a hard copy, in class. Secondly, through the LEARN dropbox. I will mark and return the hard copy version. The dropbox submission is required as a mechanism of accountability and to detect and prevent plagiarism from the assignments of other students in this and other years. Please note that an assignment is considered submitted only if submitted in both of these ways.

Grades – All grades will be recorded and calculated in LEARN.
Outline of classes and required readings

1. Sept. 11 – Introduction

2. Sept. 13 – Historical points of reference / What is theology?

3. Sept. 18 – Finding a Way In
   *Understanding Christian Doctrine*, 1-3, 5-22

4. Sept. 20 – The Theistic Claim
   *Understanding Christian Doctrine*, 23-47

5. Sept. 25 – Revelation and Bible
   *Understanding Christian Doctrine*, 71-74

6. Sept. 27 – The Nature of God (and Doctrine)
   *Understanding Christian Doctrine*, 48-69

7. Oct. 2 – The Trinity
   *Understanding Christian Doctrine*, 74-87
   *God Does Not...*, 131-150

8. Oct. 4 – Creation
   *Understanding Christian Doctrine*, 102-113

9. Oct. 9 – Theological Anthropology, Sin
   *Understanding Christian Doctrine*, 113-119

10. Oct. 11 – Jesus Christ
    *Understanding Christian Doctrine*, 120-132

11. Oct. 16 – Popular conceptions/misconceptions of God
    *God Does Not...* 9-19, 83-105
    Discussion of the short essay assignment

12. Oct. 18 – TEST

13. Oct. 23 – Salvation
    *Understanding Christian Doctrine*, 133-149

    *Understanding Christian Doctrine*, 88-101

15. Oct. 30 – Resurrection
    **FIRST SHORT ESSAY DUE**

16. Nov. 1 – Holy Spirit
    *Understanding Christian Doctrine*, 150-158
17. Nov. 6 – Church
   *Understanding Christian Doctrine*, 158-166

18. Nov. 8 – Sacraments and the Life of Virtue
   *Understanding Christian Doctrine*, 167-178

   *Understanding Christian Doctrine*, 179-195

20. Nov. 15 – Mission

21. Nov. 20 – [theme to be determined by the class]
   **SECOND SHORT ESSAY DUE**

22. Nov. 22 – Hope Beyond the Grave
   *Understanding Christian Doctrine*, 196-207

23. Nov. 27 – The End of the Age
   *Understanding Christian Doctrine*, 208-226

24. Nov. 29 – Wrapping Up, and Review
   *Understanding Christian Doctrine*, 222-226

**FINAL EXAM** – to be scheduled by the University during the exam period.
**Academic Integrity**: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

**Discipline**: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm)

**Grievance**: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm)

**Appeals**: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm)

**Academic Integrity website (Arts)**: [http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html)

**Academic Integrity Office (University)**: [http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity](http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity)

**Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**:  
**Note for students with disabilities**: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.