Course description
The systematic character of theology typically refers to the coherence and interrelation of its themes, or loci. By focusing on a single work by a significant author, we will delve into one doctrinal locus—the doctrine of God—and through it to other loci in theology.

This course will consist of a careful and close reading of one of the pivotal volumes of Karl Barth’s *Church Dogmatics*, widely regarded as the most significant work of theology in the 20th century. Volume II, part 2 is noted for its revolutionary relocation of the doctrine of election in the doctrine of God, for grounding Christian ethics in dogmatics, and for its consistent Christological centre. The course will be conducted as a seminar.

Objectives
- to think theologically about the coherence of Christian theology and the interrelation among doctrines
- to reflect on the particular character of the God whom Christians confess
- to investigate the theological basis for Christian ethics
- to locate Barth’s thought in the history of theology and in contemporary debates
- to practice close reading of a text
- to learn together in a collaborative seminar format
- to develop research and writing skills in theology

Texts
Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, volume II, part 2. (Commonly referred to as CD II/2.)

It is imperative that each student have a copy of this text at every class meeting. Though it is expensive, I strongly encourage you to purchase your own copy, and then to mark it liberally as you read. There are several ways of obtaining a copy.

Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* II/2, The Doctrine of God (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1957). Not currently in print from T&T Clark, but available used. This version has been reprinted by Hendrickson which sells only the whole set. See www.christianbook.com

or

Additional required reading:

A number of secondary texts will be on 3-day reserve at the Grebel library. I do encourage you to consult one or more throughout the course.

Eberhard Busch, The Great Passion: An Introduction to Karl Barth’s Theology (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2004).
John Webster, Barth, 2nd ed. (London: Continuum, 2004).

Requirements
1. Attendance at all classes, reading the required texts, informed participation.

2. Leading seminar discussions on assigned sections of the text (12-20 pages), approximately 20-25 minutes in length. The precise number of seminars assigned to each student will depend on the class size, but I expect each student will do between six and eight. Some things to keep in mind:
   - assume that everyone has read the text carefully
   - explain the “architecture” of Barth’s argument, key assumptions, key moves, key passages, etc.
   - you don’t need to have all the answers: identify the tough sections—what needs to be unpacked with the help of the class in order to make sense of the argument?
   - keep the focus on your particular pages—don’t “zoom out” too quickly—though you may certainly make connections with what we have already read in CD II/2
   - especially at the beginning of course, the focus will be less on critique and more on understanding
   - make a proposal: what has Barth achieved in these particular pages
   - develop discussion questions that are more specific than “any responses to this?”
     - sources, Biblical interpretation, excurses
     - omissions
     - unstated assumptions
     - “Is Barth saying here that…?”
     - “An implication of Barth’s assertion that… seems to be…. Is that your reading too?”
     - “Does Barth here really reject the idea that….?”

I will not be grading each individual seminar, but will assign a grade for your seminars as a whole. I will give written feedback after you have led about two of them. 30%

3. Three 3-4 page theological analysis/reflection papers on an issue arising directly from the text. No additional research is required. Each paper should include some summary of the relevant argument, delimitation of a specific issue, and analysis of its sources, significance, or implications. This is not primarily a personal reflection on the text, though I do welcome reflections on the significance of a particular passage on pastoral practice and the life of the church—bearing in mind what Barth is and is not intending to do in the CD. Due by the end of each month (January 25, March 1, March 29), though I encourage you to work on and to submit them earlier than the deadlines. 30%

4. One 15-18 page essay on a theme arising from the course. It might extend a topic in II/2 through another volume of CD, compare Barth in II/2 with another theologian, or engage with a particular critique
Further notes about assignments:

- Citation of sources **must** be Chicago Style, footnote/bibliography format. See Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. 7th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007, or a previous but recent edition.
- Use inclusive language when referring to people.
- Add page numbers.
- All assignments must be submitted in hard copy. Electronic submission will be permitted only in exceptional cases, and only with prior approval of the instructor.
- My general rubric for marking the research paper is as follows: 1/3 for a fair and accurate representation of your sources, 1/3 for your critical analysis, 1/3 for the quality of writing and use of scholarly apparatus.
- Late submission of the reflection/analysis papers or the research paper will be penalized 3% per calendar day if alternate arrangements have not been made *in advance* of the due date.

**Schedule of classes and required reading**

1. January 4 - Introduction
   Overview of the course
   Relation of systematic theology and doctrine
   Introduction to Barth
   *Church Dogmatics* as a whole
   Scheduling seminar presentations


2. January 11 - Orientation to the Doctrine of Election
   Reading: CD II/2, §32, 1-2

3. January 18 - The Election of Jesus Christ
   Reading: CD II/2, §32, 3; §33, 1

4. January 25
   Reading: CD II/2, §33, 2; §34, 1
   **First reflection paper due**

5. February 1 - The Election of the Community
   Reading: CD II/2, §34, 2-4

6. February 8 - The Election of the Individual
   Reading: CD II/2, §35, 1-2

7. February 15 - The Election of the Individual, continued
   Reading: CD II/2, §35, 3-4
READING WEEK

8. March 1 - Ethics as a Task of the Doctrine of God
Reading: CD II/2, §36
Second reflection paper due

9. March 8 - The Command as the Claim of God
Reading: CD II/2, §37

10. March 15 - The Command as the Decision of God
Reading: CD II/2, §38

11. March 22 - The Command as the Judgment of God
Reading: CD II/2, §39

12. March 29 - Review
Third reflection paper due

Final paper due April 15

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 Director of the Theological Studies program. 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

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

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

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

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.