

Guilford School of Theology

Dr. John W. S. Howard , President & Founder

www.gstheology.org

Doctorate Degree in Theology (ThD)

Course Curriculum :

African-American Theology

Course Description: In this course, students will have the opportunity to explore African American theologies before the Civil Rights movement, the origins and development of Black Theology as a theological movement in the late 1960s against the backdrop of the Black power and Black Consciousness movements, and Womanist Theologies. African American Theology is a theological perspective which draws on the diverse sources, including religious experience, art, literature, music, and lived narratives. These sources will inform our study. Students will engage critical voices that have shaped the movement such as Dr. James Cone , Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker, and others , but also engage critiques of Cone and Black Theology. The course will provide students a thorough introduction to the contours of the movement and its place in late twentieth and early twenty-first century theological discourse. African American Theology will fulfill the requirements of an elective course for a concentration in African American Theology in both the Master of Theology and Master of Arts (Religion) programs. A Doctor of Theology candidate taking this class will, in addition to the reading and reporting requirements for doctoral level work, indicate an advanced level of appreciation for the theoretical and practical perspectives in the content of the course, demonstrate critical reflection on the limitations and assumptions of the materials studied, and show a depth of theological insight into the way the material can be integrated into the candidate's practice of ministry.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will be introduced to the origins, major themes, and developments in AA Theology
- Students will critically reflect on the influence and legacy of AA Theology on the Black Church and contemporary society
- Students will assess the importance of AA Theology for gender, economic, and racial Justice.

This course requires **40** credit hours to complete.

Guilford School of Theology

African-American Theology

Course Textbook: African American Theology by Dr. Frederick L. Ware March 1, 2016

Course Requirements

A. Assignments: Master of Theology and Master of Arts (Religion) Students

1. Read assigned texts. The readings are not very long, because close and careful reading is expected.
2. Attend class. Class will address readings AND present material not found in readings.
3. Actively participate in discussion. This is an important component of the course that will allow further exploration of the primary texts and instruction on how to analyze theological works.
4. Present one reading for the class, including a brief summary and 2-3 questions for discussion. The presenter will be responsible for the first 10-20 minutes of class and will turn in a copy of the presentation.
5. Submit one critical book review. This should be 5-7 pages long and include a summary of the work, and internal critique, and an external critique. Due on March 27
6. Submit one constructive theological paper. This should be 5-7 pages long and argue for a constructive thesis in conversation with one of the texts studied in the courses. Further instructions will be handed out in class. Due on April 24
7. Complete a group, oral final examination.

Grading:

Grades will be determined in the following way:

Class participation 10%

Seminar presentation 15%

Critical book review 25%

Constructive theological paper 25%

Oral exam 25%

Guilford School of Theology

African-American Theology

Introduction: Defining African American Theology 3 Credit Hours

Part 1 History

The Importance of History And Historical Studies in Theology

Origin of African American Theology

African American Theology and Womanist Theology

Black History and Critical Historiography

Part 2

Methods of Correlation 3 Credit Hours

Deep Symbols and Recurring Themes

Paradigms In Contemporary Black and Womanist Theologies

Epistemology :

Faith, Revelation, and Reason

Philosophical Traditions in African American Traditions

Stages of Disciplinary Development

Part 3

Themes and Issues 3 Credit Hours

Origins of African American Monotheism

The Existence and Attributes of God

Trinitarianism and Oneness

God's Work in the World and Solidarity with
the Oppressed

The Quest for God beyond God

The Gift of God's Revelation in the Black Experience

Guilford School of Theology

African-American Theology

Part 4

Human Being 3 Credit Hours

Body-Soul Dualism in the Black Experience

Blackness and the Image of God

Blackness as a “Deep” Symbol

Human Being and Freedom

Conversion and Personhood

Part 5

Religious Experience 3 Credit Hours

The Birth of “Soul-Stuff”

Conversion, Catharsis, and Transformation

The Spirit and the “Shout”

Emotion and Intellect

Part 6

Salvation 3 Credit Hours

Personal and Social Manifestations of Sin

Jesus Christ and Salvation

Metaphors and Models of Salvation

Salvation and Community

Guilford School of Theology

African-American Theology

Part 7

Moral Life and Community 3 Credit Hours

Black Solidarity and Community

The Church as Community and Moral Conscience

The Ethics of Freedom in Church and Society

Violence in the Struggle for Liberation

Part 8

Theology of Hope 3 Credit Hours

Hope as Object and Longing

Utopian and Eschatological Vision

Traditions of Black Millennialism

Heaven and the Afterlife

Eschatology and Verification of Religious Beliefs

Part 9

Nature and Science 3 Credit Hours

People of Color and the Dialogue on Science
and Religion

Ways of Relating Science and Religion

Science in Theological Education

Science and the Humanity of Black People

African American Theologies of Nature

African American Theology's Engagement
with Modern Science

Guilford School of Theology

African-American Theology

Part 10

Christian Diversity and Religious Pluralism 3 Credit

Hours Black Christian Ecumenism

The Black Church Impacted by Migration
and Immigration

Religious Pluralism and Interreligious Dialogue

The Commencement of Dialogue