

**THEOLOGY IN THE CONTEMPORARY CHURCH
COS #522
SYLLABUS**

**COURSE OF STUDY SCHOOL OF OHIO
3081 Columbus Pike
Delaware, Ohio 43015**

Spring Term, 2024

**ON-LINE/ VIRTUAL
April 12-13, 2024
May 3-4, 2024**

Rev. Dr. William H. Wilson (Bill)
DrBillWilson@aol.com

See syllabus on Populi for cell phone number and address

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION: COS 522 – Theology in the Contemporary Church

This course covers significant individuals, movements, events, and theological developments from the nineteenth century to the present. Students will read selected primary sources.

Students will be able to:

- 1. Understand the origins and theological tenets of liberalism from the early 19th century to the present, including its influence on ecumenism and process theology.*
- 2. Understand and distinguish reactions to liberalism, including Fundamentalism, Neo-Orthodoxy, and Evangelicalism.*
- 3. Understand the historical development and theology of the Holiness Movement, Pentecostalism, and the Charismatic Movement.*
- 4. Understand the origins and tenets of Liberation and Contextual theologies.*

* Objectives, COS Revised Curriculum (2014)

II. TEXTBOOKS:

Required Reading:

Migliore, Daniel, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, Wm.B.Eerdmans, 2023 edition; ISBN: 978-0802882851 (**edited to update edition**).

Hordern, William E., *A Layman's Guide to Protestant Theology (revised edition)*, Wipf/Stock Publishers, Oregon, 2002, (originally MacMillan, 1955); ISBN: 157910925X

(ALSO, the student will select only one of three contemporary contextual theology books to read and use for a final paper.)

Reference: (Recommended)

Bettenson, Henry & Maunder, Chris: *Documents of the Christian Church*, Oxford University Press, 2011; ISBN: 9780199568987.

Miller, Ed. L & Grenz, Stanley J., *Fortress Introduction to Contemporary Theologies*, Augsburg/Fortress, Minneapolis, 1998; ISBN: 9780800629816.

REQUIRED SELECTIONS: for Final Paper (contemporary contextual theology)

NOTE: Student will select **one** of the following to review, reflect, and analyze in a paper:
(selection of one is required reading, others supplemental)

Cone, James, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, Orbis Books, New York, 1986 (original 1970); ISBN: 9781570758959.

Fiorenza, Elisabeth Schussler, *In Memory of Her (A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins)*, Crossroad, New York, 1990 (original 1983); ISBN: 0824506677

Gutierrez, Gustavo, *A Theology of Liberation – History, Politics, and Salvation*, Orbis Books, New York, 1988 (original 1973); ISBN: 0883445425

III. GOAL OF COURSE:

This course will seek to assist the student to understand significant individuals, movements, events and theological developments from the 19th century to the present. The intention will be to integrate learnings into the student's context of ministry, and assist in developing theological thinking in light of the integration. The course asks why, what is involved, what is learned from contemporary theologies that form and inform the work of professional ministry. The student will continue to develop the skill sets to think and work theologically as a pastoral leader.

IV. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- The class will examine and discuss the significant individuals, movements, events and theological developments from the nineteenth century to the present.
- Students will improve their theological skills through biblical reflection, formative reading, focused dialogue and discussion, critical reflection, and discussion of contextual integration.
- The student will explore a variety of contemporary theologies, and specifically select one theology to review, reflect, examine analytically, and show how integrated into their own theology & practice of ministry.

V. CALENDAR OF CLASS & TOPICS AND READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS:

APRIL 12 – 13, 2024

ASSIGNMENTS prior to the weekend:

A. Introduction-Theological Autobiography (ITA) (due Fri, April 12, 8 pm, EDT)
(see detail of assignment – syllabus page 7, section VII.B)

B. READ prior to & during first weekend of class:

- Hordern, A Layman’s Guide to Protestant Theology - Intro & pp. 1-149
- Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding – Prefaces & pp. 1-66, 66-94; & Appendix B: pp. 390-403.

CLASS OUTLINE FOR THE WEEKEND: (on-line ZOOM)

Friday – April 12

- Class Session 1 (7:00pm-9:00pm ET) Introductions
Syllabus review/assignments
Contemporary theology?
“theological method”

Saturday – April 13

- Class Session 2 (9:00am - 11:00am ET) Orthodoxy –Growth & threats
Defense of Orthodoxy & Response
“Conservative vs Liberal”

Saturday – April 13

- Class Session 3 (1:00pm - 3:00pm ET) Neo-orthodoxy
Karl Barth

**DUE BEFORE NEXT CLASS: Reflection paper #1 -“theology, revelation, Scripture”
(due Fri, April 19, 8 pm)**

Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding, Prefaces & pp.1-65
(see detail of assignment – syllabus page 7-8 , section VII.C)

MAY 3 – 4, 2024

ASSIGNMENTS for the 2nd weekend:

A. Written assignment due:

Reflection paper #2 - “pluralism and hope” (due Friday, May 3, 8:00pm, EDT)

Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, pp.314-374

(see detail of assignment – syllabus page 7- 8, section VII.C)

B. READ prior to this week:

•Hordern, *A Layman’s Guide to Protestant Theology* - pp. 150-258

•Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, “new community”, pp. 259-285;
“pluralism and hope”, pp. 314-374

CLASS OUTLINE FOR THE WEEKEND: (on-line ZOOM)

Friday – May 3

➤	Class Session 4 (7:00pm-9:00pm ET)	Reinhold Niebuhr Dietrich Bonhoeffer Neo-liberalism “rediscovery of orthodoxy”
---	------------------------------------	---

Saturday – May 4

➤	Class Session 5 (9:00am - 11:00am ET)	Feminist Theology Liberation Theology Black Theology
---	---------------------------------------	--

Saturday – May 4

➤	Class Session 6 (1:00pm - 3:00pm ET)	Post modernism Remnant Christianity Where are we? Our task as pastor? “theologian in residence”
---	--------------------------------------	---

**NOTE: Final paper due to instructor by Friday May 17, 11:59pm in Populi
(see page 8-9, syllabus for instructions regarding the Final paper)**

SUMMARY OF DUE DATES FOR ALL ASSIGNMENTS

(SEE ADDENDUM, PAGE 11)

VI. CLASS STANDARDS:

A. Wesleyan “Rule of Life”:

- Do no harm.
- Do good.
- Attend to ordinances of God (spiritual discipline).

(General Rules, Discipline 2016)

B. Inclusive language

It is expected that students be committed to equality for women and men of every racial and ethnic background. Students and instructor are to use language which exemplifies respect, dignity and equality in conversations with colleagues, in public discourse, in classroom discussions and in writings. Class participants will be expected to use inclusive language in all writings and during class discussion & participation. If you have specific questions, please see the instructor. (Helpful resource, *Words that Hurt, Words that Heal (new edition)* (Cokesbury.com download, original 1980 resource)

C. Academic Integrity

Student integrity regarding all work assigned in this class is a basic expectation of the learning community. (see page 31, *COS Student Handbook, 2013* – “Academic responsibility”) Also, guidelines for writing, page 25, *COS Handbook*.

D. Attendance

Instructor expects timely participation of students; tardiness is a sign of disrespect to others. Extenuating circumstances should be reported to instructor and COS Dean immediately. (see COS Attendance Policy – page 15, *COS Student Handbook, 2013*)

E. Confidentiality

It is imperative that students do not share information that is confidential, privileged, or proprietary in nature. In addition, students are expected to honor the privacy and confidentiality of their classmates by not disclosing conversations with those outside of the classroom.

VII. ASSIGNMENTS, GRADING, AND EVALUATION:

Note: All assignments are due and expected on time. (If because of some extenuating circumstances you are unable to meet a given deadline, you must contact the instructor before the deadline in question is expected. Failure to do so will result in a lower grade for the assignment.) No Incomplete grade can be granted in this class.

- A. **Class participation (25% of final grade)** COS requires that students attend all class sessions in order to receive credit for the course. No “cuts” or “excused absences” are allowed for church, community, family or other business. In extreme cases, such as serious illness or a family emergency, an additional paper on the reading material of the missed session will be required and negotiated with the instructor.

NOTE: On-line discussion board assignments are factored into participation grading.

- a) Timely, careful reading and completion of assignments in preparation for class participation is expected.
- b) Class discussion through verbal contributions including any small group is expected; respectful and hospitable listening to contributions by others is a class norm. It is the duty of each class member to contribute regularly to discussions without monopolizing the time.

B. Introduction-Theological Autobiography (ITA) (20% of final grade) -- (due Friday, April 12 by 8:00pm EDT)

An autobiography (ITA) must be posted in Populi by April 12. The paper must be 6-8 pages long, double spaced. No more than 8 pages. The following guidelines are provided to help organize your thoughts: *(you do not need to use this order, but your paper must include these themes; be creative; those with an asterisk * must be answered)*

- What is briefly your family history? Family of origin?
- Describe succinctly any significant central events in your life.
- When were you first aware of God? How and who invited you to become a disciple of Jesus Christ? How did it happen? What have been a few of the major events in your walk with Christ?
- *What significant religious, spiritual, theological concepts have formed your calling into ministry?
- What influence has Scripture and the Church had on your life?
- *How would you describe your present basic theological position or stance?
- *Can you name individuals, movements, theologies and doctrines that have formed you to the present?
- *What theological & cultural biases, prejudices, and assumptions do you bring to this class?
- What are the growing edges of your life? How have your growing edges, and areas of change impacted your entry into and experience of ministry?

C. Reading reflection papers (two) (30% of final grade) - each paper 15%

Required reading: Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding;

1. Both papers are to be individually 3-5 pages in length – no more than 5 pages;

2. based on reading, Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding;

NOTE: Based on the assigned reading, these two papers should address the following questions:

- State a brief review of the topic of the assigned reading;
- What issue or issues are raised for you from the reading?
- What do you agree with in Migliore's writing?
- What do you disagree with and why?
- What one learning, for you, can you lift up from the assigned reading?

Reflection paper #1 - “theology, revelation, Scripture” (due Friday, April 19 by 8:00pm EDT, in Populi)

Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding, Prefaces & pp.1-65

Reflection paper #2 - “pluralism & hope” (due Friday, May 3 by 8:00pm EDT, in Populi)

Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding, pp.314 – 374

D. Final Paper – Book Review & Theological Overview (25% of final grade)

✓ **Paper due posted in Populi by Friday, May 17 ; 11:59pm**

1) Student is to select one of the following books to read, review, report and reflect by a report:

Cone, James, A Black Theology of Liberation, Orbis Books, New York, 1986 (original 1970); ISBN: 9781570758959.

Fiorenza, Elisabeth Schussler, In Memory of Her (A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins), Crossroad, New York, 1990 (original 1983); ISBN: 0824506677

Gutierrez, Gustavo, A Theology of Liberation – History, Politics, and Salvation, Orbis Books, New York, 1988 (original 1973); ISBN: 0883445425

2) Paper should be at least 8-10 pages in length; and no more than 10 pages.

3) The following issues and questions must be addressed in the paper:

- Give an overview of the basic concepts of the theology as presented by the author.
- What reason do you give for selecting the book?
- What aspects of the theological method, premise, concept and principles do you identify with?
- Where do you struggle or differ with the theology presented in the writing? Why?
- How might you integrate the concept of the theology into your practice of ministry?
- Any unanswered questions that the author left you with?

**E. Asynchronous learning requirement (for virtual/ on-line) 8 hours
Discussion Board & Video reflections (posted in Populi)**

(see addendum, page 9 - 10)

COS #522 – THEOLOGY V
Theology in the Contemporary Church
On-line, Spring 2024 – 2 Weekends COS
Dr. Bill Wilson

ADDENDUM TO SYLLABUS
(Asynchronous required 8 hours)

DISCUSSION BOARD & VIDEO REFLECTION (Populi)
April 8 to May 3

Discussion posting Instructions: Each required discussion question and video reflection - you are to post a response of 100 words or less; and also reply/respond with no more than 100 words to at least two (2) of your fellow students and their response; throughout the class term. You must have responded to each of the class members.

Deadline for each daily question or video: post must be done by 8:00pm (EDT) unless otherwise noted. Class participation grade (25% of final grade) will be factored by full participation in the discussion board requirements.

Video instruction: You are to view the video clip, and then reflect and respond in 100 words or less to the questions asked; NOTE: feel free to discuss by reply to other class members, but for video responses, this is not required.



Week 1 (before on-line class sessions) (April 8 - 12): post in Populi by Friday, April 12 8:00pm, EDT.

- **Discussion Question** – *What has been the most influential religious belief, cultural experience or personal/family issue that has influenced your ministry?*
- **View video – YouTube:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMESAoFywKs>
“Wesley Quadrilateral” - theological method (30-minute video)
- **Respond to video:** *How do you experience using the theological method known as “Wesley Quadrilateral” in your preaching and teaching?*

Week 2 (Monday, April 15 – Friday, April 19) post in Populi by Friday, April 19, 8:00pm

- **Discussion Question** – *How do you interpret and explain to others as a pastoral theologian that the Bible is “the inspired Word of God” and has authority for us?*
- **View video – YouTube:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dk7Ti8wmZxk>
“Bonhoeffer” by Tom Greggs (15-minute video)
- **Respond to video:** *What one idea, insight was helpful? What is one takeaway concept you like from this clip? Any issues?*

Week 3 (Monday, April 22 – Friday, April 26) post in Populi by Friday, April 26, 8:00pm

- **Discussion Question** - *What do you consider “fundamental” to you theologically? Does it become “orthodox” for you? Where do you compromise? (Remember, you need to explain why.)*
- **View video: YouTube** - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FnVvx2U9BhM>
“Reading Barth Together”: Willimon & Hauerwas discussion (one hour video)
- **Respond to video:** *What one idea, insight was helpful? What is the one takeaway concept you like from the video clip? Any issues?*

Week 4 (Monday, April 29 – Friday, May 3) post in Populi by Friday, May 3, 8:00pm

- **View video: YouTube:**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dkLG6_e_oms&t=2811s
“Polarization”, Dr. Lee Barrett, Professor of Systematic Theology, Lancaster Theological Seminary (50-minute video)
- **Respond to video:** *What one idea, insight was helpful? What is the one takeaway concept you like from the video clip? Any issues?*
- **Final Discussion Question** - *What is the most difficult task of ministry today dealing with our contemporary culture?*

SUMMARY OF COS 522/Theology ASSIGNMENT DEADLINES

(all assignments due by 8:00pm (EDT) on date, unless otherwise noted)

April 8 - 12	Discussion question posting (Populi) (Influence) Video reflection posting #1 “Wesley Quad”
Friday, April 12	“Introduction-Theological Autobiography” paper
Friday, April 19	Discussion question posting (Populi) (Scripture) Video reflection posting #2 “Bonhoeffer” Reflection paper #1 (Migliore) “revelation/Scripture”
Friday, April 26	Discussion question posting (Populi) (Basic belief) Video reflection posting #3 “Barth discussion”
Friday, May 3	Discussion question posting (Populi) (challenges) Video reflection posting #4 “Dr. Barrett- polarization” Reflection paper #2 (Migliore) “pluralism”
Friday, May 17 <u>(posted by 11:59pm)</u>	Final paper – contextual theological book selected - (Black or Liberation or Feminist theologies)

*God, give me grace to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed,
Courage to change the things which should be changed, and
Wisdom to distinguish the one from the other.
Living one day at a time,
Enjoying one moment at a time,
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace,
Taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is,
Not as I would have it,
Trusting that You will make all things right,
If I surrender to Your will,
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life,
And supremely happy with You forever in the next.
(Reinhold Niebuhr, 1943)*

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.
(adapted version)

COSSO Academic Honor Policy

The Course of Study School of Ohio requires that all material submitted by a student in fulfilling his or her academic requirements be the original work of the student.

Violations of academic honor include any action by a student indicating dishonesty or lack of integrity in academic ethics. Violations in this category include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly passing off work of another as one's own.

Cheating includes seeking, acquiring, receiving or passing on information about the content of an examination prior to its authorized release or during its administration. Cheating also includes seeking, using, giving or obtaining unauthorized assistance in any academic assignment or examination.

Plagiarism is the act of presenting as one's own work with the work of another whether published or unpublished (including the work of another student). A writer's work should be regarded as his or her own property. Any person who knowingly uses a writer's distinctive work without proper acknowledgement is guilty of plagiarism.

A student found guilty of a violation of the academic honor code, after a review of the case, may be subject to one or more of the following sanctions: (1) warning; (2) failing grade for the assignment and/or course; (3) probation; (4) suspension; (5) dismissal from the Course of Study School of Ohio. In severe or repeat cases (regardless of the sanctions) a letter will be sent to the student's District Superintendent and Board of Ordained Ministry representative.

COSSO Attendance Policy

National policy from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) states that a student is expected to attend every class session. Unexcused absences may be cause for loss of credit or dismissal from the school. A student missing 20% or more of the classroom work shall not receive credit for the class. In the event of extenuating circumstances which require the student to miss up to 20% of the synchronous course time (whether in-person or on Zoom), the student should contact both the instructor and the Director prior to the start of the class to get approval and discuss make-up work. (Extenuating circumstances include emergency situations, illness, and dire circumstances, for example. Students are to provide back-up coverage at the local church while attending COS classes.)

Cancellation and Withdrawal: Student must notify the COSSO office if they will be unable to attend class for which they are registered. Although there is no penalty when withdrawing more than two weeks in advance of the beginning of a term, registration fees are nontransferable and nonrefundable. A \$50.00 late withdrawal fee is charged for all withdrawals within two weeks of the start of a class. All tuition and housing payments are applied to a future term.

Students withdrawing after the start of a term will be assigned a grade of AW (Administrative Withdrawal) and will be responsible for the full \$300.00 tuition amount. Any annual conference scholarship applied to the student billing record becomes the student's responsibility and is due by the end of the term. Housing payment is non-refundable.

NO SHOWS: Except in cases of immediate and dire emergencies, if a student misses any class without notifying the COSSO office, tuition and housing fees are due immediately, a \$50.00 no show fee is charged, and the student will receive an "F" in the class.