

Point Loma Nazarene University
School of Theology & Christian Ministry
Spring 2022

Point Loma Nazarene University Mission:

To Teach - To Shape - To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education
in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged,
character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith.

Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community
where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

- Course:** Theology 2050. Introduction to Christian Theology.
M-W, 8-9:15 a.m., Wesley Center seminar room.
- Professor:** Dr. Michael Lodahl. Office – Smee 206
Office phone 849-2331, cell (858) 405-3184.
- Texts:** Heidt, Mari Rapela. *A Guide for Writing about Theology and Religion*
Lodahl, Michael. *The Story of God*, 2nd ed. (2008)
Wesley, John. *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*
Yong, Amos. *Learning Theology: Tracking the Spirit of Christian Faith*
Selected primary sources.
- Objectives:** 1) To introduce students, especially (but not only) theology majors, to the
root convictions, methodologies and pressing concerns of classical and
contemporary Christian theological reflection;
- 2) To explore the crucial doctrines of Christian faith in their complex and
rich interrelations, and in relation to Christian life, practice and ministry.
Doctrines to be explored in their interrelationships with one another
include: divine revelation in the history of the people Israel and
particularly in Jesus Christ; scriptural testimony and authority; Scripture
in relation to tradition, reason and experience; the nature and attributes
of God the Creator and Sustainer of all things; human beings in the image
of God; human sin and divine grace; divine predestination and human
agency / responsibility; Christology; ecclesiology; pneumatology;
sacramental theology and eschatology;

- 3) To develop an understanding and appreciation for the distinctive emphases and contributions of the Wesleyan-Arminian theological tradition, particularly in regard to the doctrine of entire sanctification; and
- 4) To become more effective communicators of theological ideas through reading and writing good theological prose.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to

- 1) explain the importance of theological reflection for the life and ministry of the Christian church;
- 2) distinguish among the various sub-disciplines of theology and their corresponding emphases and rationales;
- 3) describe the deep interconnections among the doctrines of Christian faith – especially God, creation, Christology, humanity, and sin; and
- 4) appreciate the rich historical heritage of theological reflection, especially as received and enriched by the Wesleyan theological tradition;
- 5) demonstrate growth and improvement in writing skills pertinent to academic theological studies.

Course Requirements:

- 1) Faithful attendance to class (or Zoom sessions) and reading of assigned materials. Typically, each class session will be 'worth' 10 attendance / participation points, though that may vary depending upon quizzes. You will be held responsible for the assigned reading each day you step into the classroom. On many if not all days, a brief quiz or other form of accountability will be administered that addresses main points in the reading for the day. *It is your responsibility to stay current in the reading.* (CLOs 1-4)
- 2) Close attention to Mari Rapela Heidt's *A Guide for Writing about Theology and Religion*. You will be held accountable for reading and internalizing Heidt's very helpful book by sending to your professor, via e-mail attachment, a reading report for each chapter as specified in this syllabus's Course Calendar. In that report, you will inform the professor regarding the number of pages you read carefully, and then will list a minimum of three important points or suggestions you learned from the specified chapter. (CLO 5)
- 3) Spiritual autobiography paper, 5-6 pages in length, that introduces your life, significant experiences, sense of calling, particular interests, etc., to your professor. I invite and encourage you to be yourself in this paper. I hope you will feel free also to mention or discuss any theological / spiritual issue or question that is troubling you. This paper is for the purposes of my getting to know you better – and also to give you an early indication of possible opportunities for

improvement in your writing. **This paper is due no later than midnight, January 29.** (CLO 1)

- 4) A reflection paper, 5-6 pages in length, on the interrelationship between the doctrine of God the Creator and the doctrines implied in theological anthropology. This paper will incorporate Scripture, class lectures and discussions, as well as the relevant reading from assigned texts. (CLOs 2, 3, 5)
This paper is due no later than midnight, February 19.
- 5) Research term paper, 9-10 pages (not counting the *title page*, which is required, with a suitable and at least minimally creative title), with a minimum of 12 bibliographical resources (books and journal articles) and 300 pages of reading. This paper will address a particular doctrine, theologian, or theological controversy that is relevant to the subject material of the present course. ***All term paper topics are to receive approval from the professor and papers should be written (and will be evaluated) on the basis of Heidt's excellent instructions.*** This paper is due no later than midnight, April 30. (CLOs 3, 4, 5)
- 6) Two examinations as scheduled in Course Calendar. The second exam is the final examination and will be comprehensive. (CLOs 1-3)

Course Grade:

Your grade will be calculated on the basis of attendance / participation, including quizzes and responses to Heidt's book (20%); spiritual autobiography paper (10%); paper on the doctrines of God and humanity (theological anthropology) (14%); research term paper (22%); midterm examination (16%); and final exam (18%).

On Attendance

Each class day attendance is worth 10 quiz points; quizzes will vary in point total, roughly anywhere between another 5 and 15 points on any given day. Extra-credit points are added to the attendance / participation / quizzes category.

On Punctuality

On any writing assignment, if it is handed in during the day past the midnight due date, said paper will receive a 10% drop in grade; in the second day past the midnight due date, paper will receive a 25% drop in grade; in the third day, it will receive a 50% drop in grade; beyond that, paper will receive a zero score. Please be attentive to these ground rules so that there is no confusion on the matter.

On Writing:

I cannot emphasize enough that grammar, spelling and punctuation all play a *highly* critical role in my evaluation of all your papers – and that you are *strongly encouraged* to solicit the benefits of at least one competent proofreader for your assigned papers.

Additionally, the School of Theology and Christian Ministry at PLNU is committed to the equality of women and men, including in the exercise of the gifts and graces of ministry in local church congregations. Recognizing that people have often used language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women and other often marginalized people, the SOTCM strongly urges students, faculty and staff to avoid sexist and racist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions and in written work.

Other Matters:

PLNU Copyright Policy:

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy:

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's efforts. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy:

If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU's Disability Resource Center (DRC) within the first two weeks of class to demonstrate need and to register for accommodation by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at DRC@pointloma.edu. See [Disability Resource Center](#) for additional information.

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy:

Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings (please note that in summer school, this means two days' worth of classes!), the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent (our four day's worth of classes), the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

Semester Academic Work Policy:

Please note that when the semester ends, so do all opportunities to work to improve your grade. No last-minute or after-the-fact appeals for extra credit will be even briefly considered.

All students are expected to meet the standards for this course as set by the instructor. However, students with learning disabilities who may need accommodations should discuss options with the Academic Support Center during the first two weeks of class. The ASC will contact professors with suggested classroom needs and accommodations. Approved documentation must be on file in the ASC prior to the start of the semester.

Course Calendar:

January 11 – Introduction of the course and of ourselves. 1 Corinthians 8.

12 – M.L. King, Jr., as theologian: “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”

19 – Yong, *Learning Theology* preface (xi-xii), 1-11, 89-98

*(Saturday, Jan 22, response to Heidt, c. 1, due no later than midnight.
For 15 points attendance / participation)*

24 – Lodahl, *The Story of God*, 13-39

26 – Yong, 15-51

(Saturday, Jan 29, spiritual autobiography due no later than midnight.)

31 – Lodahl, 40-48; Yong, 53-64

Feb 2 – Lodahl, 49-73.

(Saturday, Feb. 5, response to Heidt, c. 2, due no later than midnight.)

7 – Lodahl, 75-98.

9 – Lodahl, 99-124.

(Saturday, Feb. 12, response to Heidt, c. 3, due no later than midnight)

14 – Lodahl, 125-152.

16 – Lodahl, 153-164 (Please note briefer reading assignment to give a little more time to paper due on Saturday night, below:)

(Saturday, Feb. 19, brief reflection paper on the interrelationship of doctrines of God and humanity in Christian teaching, due no later than midnight.)

21 – Lodahl, 165-190.

23 – Excerpts from “Writers by the Sea” Conference theologians, Nadia Bolz-Weber and Cornel West.

28 – Discussion of “Writers by the Sea” guests, review for midterm.

Mar 2 – Midterm Examination.

Spring Break

14 – Yong, 67-88

16 – Excerpt from Willie Jennings, *After Whiteness: An Education in Belonging*

21 – Excerpt from Willie Jennings, *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race*

23 – Class session today will be to go hear Willie Jennings, 8:30 – 9:20 a.m., Crill Auditorium, for one of his four Wiley Lecture Series addresses. Attendance for this session is required and will be worth 20 points in attendance / participation. ***If you choose to write a brief response paper to this presentation, it will be worth up to 15 points extra-credit.***

Speaking of extra credit: For all of the other three lectures that Jennings will present, for every one you attend and for which you write a summary / response / reflection paper of about 2 to 2 ½ pages, your paper will worth up to 25 points extra-credit in attendance / participation category. There is no limit on how many of these you attend and for which you write papers. However, you must actually be present for the event in order to qualify for extra credit. Here are the other scheduled lectures, all in Crill Auditorium:

Monday, March 21, 11 – 11:50

Monday, March 21, 1:30 – 2:20

Tuesday, March 22, 9:30 – 10:20

(Wednesday’s 8:30 – 9:20 lecture is our class session.)

28 – Lodahl, 191-203, Yong 101-109.

30 – Wesley, 13-28 (editors’ introduction)

(Saturday, April 2, response to Heidt, cc. 4-5, due no later than midnight, 15 points)

April 4 – Wesley, 33-54.

6 – Wesley, 54-77.

(Saturday, April 9, response to Heidt, c. 6, due no later than midnight, 15 points)

11 – Wesley, 70-102

13 – Excerpt from Shelly Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*; Yong, 111-119.

(Saturday, April 16 – Term research paper topic due no later than midnight. This includes proposed title, paper outline, and working bibliography all in proper format. (25 points in attendance / participation category.)

Easter Break: No Class on Monday

20 – Wesley, 102-131.

(Saturday, April 23, response to Heidt, Appendix A, due by midnight, 15 points)

25 – Wesley, 131-160.

27 – Lodahl, 205-236.

Research term paper due no later than Saturday, April 30, midnight.

FINAL EXAM

Friday, May 6, 7:30 – 10 a.m.