

RGT6/3333HF Transforming Dynamics of Grace

Regis College, Toronto School of Theology

Course Identification

Course Number: RGT6/3333HF
Course Name: Transforming Dynamics of Grace
Campus: Regis College

Instructor Information

Instructor: Gordon Rixon, SJ, PhD
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Course Prerequisites or Co-Requisites

None.

Course Description

Participants explore the biblical sources, historical development, systematic elaboration, ecumenical context and transformative social implications of the doctrine of grace. The course concludes with three case studies that explores contemporary issues in a theology of grace: providence after a secular age, beauty and justice, and the autonomous social agency of indigenous peoples.

Course Methodology

Written assignments are varied in order to help participants to identify and refine their approach to the different tasks involved in doing theology and progress toward a final synthetic case study. 3000 Level: assigned readings, online bulletin board postings, lectures, two quizzes, two short papers and a synthetic case study. 6000 Level: assigned readings, online bulletin board postings, lectures, book review, research bibliography, seminar, research paper. The 6000 level seminars will be scheduled in up to two additional sessions.

Course Itinerary

Unit One – Narrative Development: Grace and Justice in the Scriptures

13 Jan 2016 – Session One: Introduction and the Tanac

20 Jan 2016 – Session Two: Paul and Temporal Metaphors

27 Jan 2016 – Session Three: John and Spatial Metaphors

Unit Two - Doctrinal Development: Grace in the Early Church

03 Feb 2016 – Session Four: Gregory of Nyssa - Life of Moses

10 Feb 2016 – Session Five: Augustine – Confessions

17 Feb 2016 – Reading Week

24 Feb 2016 – Session Six: Controversy – Grace and Freedom

Unit Three – Theological Development: Synthesis and Dialectic

02 Mar 2016 – Session Seven: Aquinas on Scripture

09 Mar 2016 – Session Eight: Aquinas and Theological Synthesis

16 Mar 2016 – Session Nine: Luther / Trent

Unit Four -- Addressing Contemporary Issues

23 Mar 2016 – Session Ten: Providence after a Secular Age

30 Mar 2016 – Session Eleven: Beauty, Justice and Grace

06 Apr 2016 – Session Twelve: The Autonomous Agency of Indigenous Peoples: Recognition and Social Reconciliation

Reading and Assignment Schedules for each unit will be available on the course Blackboard website (by January 4, 2016), which is accessed through the student portal www.portal.utoronto.ca

Class Preparation and Mandatory Bulletin Board Participation

Attendance at class is required. Weekly reading assignments should be completed prior to each class. Students submit questions based on the readings to the online course bulletin board by 11:59pm on the Monday prior to the 11:00am class on Wednesday. Students may comment on other students' question by the Monday following class. Students are not allowed to make more than three postings in any given week. The professor will review bulletin board exchanges on a regular basis and generally respond during the class lectures.

Due Dates for Graded Work

3000 Level

Bulletin Board Participation (weekly as noted above)

Unit One Quiz (completed by beginning of Session Four)

Reflection Paper (submitted by beginning of Session Six)

Unit Two Quiz (completed by beginning of Session Seven)

Systematic Paper (submitted by beginning of Session Ten)

Case Study (submitted by 11:59pm on 13 Apr 2016)

6000 Level

Bulletin Board Participation (weekly as noted above)

Book Review (submitted by beginning of Session Six)

Research Bibliography (distributed at beginning of seminar presentation)

Seminar (to be scheduled)

Research Paper (submitted by 11:59pm on 20 Apr 2016)

Detailed instructions for each assignment and criteria for grading will be available on the course website. Please submit assignments electronically (using Word or PDF file) via the appropriate assignment link under course materials on the course website.

Please, papers should be type-written, doubled spaced, left-justified, and have one inch margins on all sides and no more than 12 characters per inch (ie, a standard font, size 10-12 is acceptable). Do not exceed the page limit. Extensions for assignments are to be negotiated with the professor prior to the due-date. All sources must be documented in accord with accepted academic practice such as that described in Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 5th Edition, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987. An excellent guide to style is presented in Joseph M. Williams, *Style: Toward Clarity and Grace*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990. For additional writing assistance, consult <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/>

Course Outcomes

Second Entry Undergraduate Program Level (MDiv and MTS): At the successful completion of this course students will have

Personal and Spiritual Formation

reflected intentionally on their encounter with religious texts within their cultural/religious context;

identified, articulated and assessed their intellectual and affective responses to a text;

developed pastoral agency by relating their own voice as theologians to the word spoken by the tradition;

Religious Heritage

distinguished and interrelated the doctrinal and systematic functions of theology;

identified, differentiated and located within their cultural horizon representative treatments of grace in the Tanach, the Pauline corpus and the Johannine corpus;

identified and evaluated key moments of the development of the doctrine of grace in the eastern and western Christian traditions;

Cultural Context

identified and assessed the secular/religious horizons within which they interpret texts and respond to pastoral needs;

analyze a contemporary cultural horizon and develop a personal narrative that brings selected elements of the doctrine of grace to some positive light;

Public Leadership

collaborated effectively in diads and small groups;

applied learning about the doctrine and theology of grace to explore the dynamics of social-cultural change.

Research and Scholarship

distinguished text as data for interpretation and text as hypothetically interpreted;
accessed and assessed relevant secondary literature to assist in their interpretation of texts;
developed a synthetic overview of one approach to a theology of grace;
distinguished spiritual, pastoral, theological and methodological reflection.

Graduate Research Programs

Masters of Theology: at the successful completion of this course students will have

Knowledge of the area of concentration

sufficiently understood the development of the doctrine and theology of grace to participate in a more advanced course (5000 level);

understood in broad terms the importance of intentionality analysis, historical consciousness and statistical investigation for contemporary scholarship;

Ability with scholarly tools and skills

employed an advanced critical methodology (such as rhetorical analysis, genetic analysis, source reading, clarification by contrast, dialectical analysis and systematic reasoning) to pursue a research question;

used a library and electronic resources to construct a bibliography of sufficient scope to support the drafting of a research paper;

made informed judgments on complex interpretative issues;

employed standard conventions of style for scholarly writing;

Ability to carry out specialized research

identified a relevant research question or problem;

constructed an appropriate method of investigation;

collected primary evidence and selected secondary sources;

formulated a well-defined thesis elucidated by a reasoned argument;

evaluated the evidence supporting a thesis statement;

identified implications of research for public leadership;

produced a substantial research paper and received constructive feedback;

Preparation for further study or vocational occupation

explored their aptitude for advanced research and teaching.

Doctor of Philosophy in Theological Studies: at the successful completion of this course students will have

Knowledge of the area of concentration

sufficiently understood the development of the doctrine and theology of grace to respond to basic questions as posed by second entry undergraduate students;

Ability with scholarly tools and skills

created a scholarly bibliography to support original research;

conducted a research seminar with peers that presents and explores a defined research question;

produced a substantial research paper and received constructive feedback on its further developed toward publication;

Ability to carry out specialized original research

identified a critical interpretive question about the development of either the doctrine or theology of grace;

pursued a program of independent research that employs an advanced methodology such as rhetorical analysis, genetic analysis, source reading, clarification by contrast, dialectical analysis;

Preparation for a vocation of theological scholarship

recognized the importance of working with scholarly peers and associates in a collegial manner;

recognized the ecumenical character of theological scholarship and its place within the broader world of scholarly discourse;

tested their aptitude for advanced research and teaching.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts

There are no required texts for this course.

Course Website and E-Mail Communication

This course uses Blackboard for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT portal login page at <http://portal.utoronto.ca> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to the portal using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Blackboard-based courses. (Your course registration with ROSI gives you access to the course website at Blackboard.)

Are you ready to manage the learning technology required by this course?

In order to enjoy the learning opportunities offered by this course, and not get too focused on the learning technology that is assumed from the beginning, you will need to be able to manage the following:

- 1) PC Windows or Apple computing environment
- 2) Web browser such as Explorer, Firefox or Safari
- 3) Logging onto UofT resources with your UTORid and password
- 4) Receive and send email on the University of Toronto's @mail.utoronto.ca system
- 5) Download course materials from Blackboard
- 6) Post and read contributions to the course bulletin board (through Blackboard)
- 7) Take quizzes and surveys on Blackboard
- 8) Access written assignment questions, guidelines and rubrics on Blackboard
- 9) Submit written assignments using a .doc or .pdf file on Blackboard, using the appropriate link
- 10) Review instructor feedback and assigned grades for completed work on Blackboard

If you are not familiar with the Blackboard learning system software, please take some time to learn about its various functions, especially the bulletin board and assignment submission features. Using the links found under course materials on the course website to submit written assignments, facilitates receiving graded work in a helpful and timely manner. For information about using the assignment and other features of the course website, please see the following link:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLontYaReEU1uzR5405Nhi_-y5qNCjrK71

Evaluation

3000 Level

The second entry undergraduate level semester score will be allocated as follows: class/bulletin board participation (5%), two online quizzes (10% each), reflection paper (20%), systematic paper (20%), case study (35%).

6000 Level

The graduate research level semester score will be allocated as follows: class/bulletin board participation (5%), book review (10%), research bibliography (15%), seminar (20%), research paper (50%).

Grading System

A+ (90-100)
A (85-89)
A- (80-84)
B+ (77-79)
B (73-76)
B- (70-72)
Failure

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

Late work—Second entry undergraduate programs, including MTS and MDiv. Students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. Instructors are not obliged to accept late work, except where there are legitimate, documented reasons beyond a student’s control. In such cases, a late penalty is normally not appropriate. If accepted, all other late work may be subjected to a 5-mark penalty per day.

Late work—Graduate research programs, including MA, ThM, DMin, PhD. Students are expected to meet the course deadlines of the instructor offering the course and are advised to plan their research projects accordingly. Students who find themselves unable to meet deadlines for completing coursework can, under certain conditions, receive extensions for completing the work after the dates set by the college in which the course is offered. The authority to grant an extension for the completion of work in a course beyond the original TST or college deadline (whichever is earlier) for that course rests with the student’s college Advanced Degree (AD) Director, not the instructor of the course. The instructor’s signature is required for course extension requests to be processed. Students will petition their college AD Director for extensions, using a standard form provided by TST at: www.tst.edu (under “AD Forms”). The deadline for requesting an initial extension is the college deadline for completion of course work and grade submission for courses offered in the relevant session. For more details, see the relevant section of the specific program handbook.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor’s college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University of Toronto grading policy (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/grading.htm>).

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto’s Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker they can obtain assistance.

Maintaining Course Enrolment. To complete registration, a student enrolls in course(s) and pay fees. Courses of students who have not paid fees will be automatically removed (FINCA – financially cancelled) on a specific date each term (see the College website for Dates to Note). If a student’s enrolment record is financially cancelled, he or she is no longer entitled to attend classes.

Library Resources. Please be good stewards of shared library resources. Do not mark, underline, highlight or otherwise alter print materials found in the Regis Library and other libraries in the UT Library system. Students damaging library materials will be accountable for replacement and processing costs and other disciplinary measures, including suspension of library privileges and other sanctions. For more information, see <https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/conduct-regulations>

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/content/handbooks>) and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (available at link below).

Students will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges and available at the following link (http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm).

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of *Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).