

Note:

Course content may be changed, term to term, without notice. The information below is provided as a guide for course selection and is not binding in any form, and should not be used to purchase course materials.

COURSE SYLLABUS

THEO 603

MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN THOUGHT

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of thought from Enlightenment trends to contemporary theological and philosophical developments. The latter subject includes Nineteenth Century liberalism, Twentieth Century new-orthodoxy, existentialism, and post-existential trends such as secular, liberation, and hope theologies. Attention is also given to recent philosophical movements such as logical positivism, linguistic analysis, and process thought. The course stresses the history of major ideas, the system of formative scholars, and the conservative alternative.

RATIONALE

Traditional Christianity has faced numerous challenges throughout its history, many of which are ideological. This course is designed to explain and critically clarify the philosophical and theological emphases of prominent Western theologians and theological movements that have affected—and continue to affect—how the Gospel is understood and presented by Christians in the modern era.

I. PREREQUISITE

For information regarding prerequisites for this course, please refer to the [Academic Course Catalog](#).

II. REQUIRED RESOURCE PURCHASE

Click on the following link to view the required resource(s) for the term in which you are registered: <http://bookstore.mbsdirect.net/liberty.htm>

III. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR LEARNING

- A. Computer with basic audio/video output equipment
- B. Internet access (broadband recommended)
- C. Microsoft Word

V. MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. Identify the major periods and sections of contemporary theology.
- B. Recognize the major theological developments of each contemporary period.
- C. Appraise the more prominent theological formulations of the modern and postmodern eras.
- D. Critically evaluate a select issue or doctrine in contemporary theology.
- E. Formulate a biblical response to select contemporary theologies or philosophies.

VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Textbook readings and lecture presentations
- B. Course Requirements Checklist

After reading the Course Syllabus and [Student Expectations](#), the student will complete the related checklist found in Module/Week 1.

- C. Discussion Board Forums (4)

Discussion boards are collaborative learning experiences. Therefore, the student is required to provide a thread in response to the provided prompt for each forum. Each thread must be 400–600 words and demonstrate course-related knowledge. In addition to the thread, the student is required to reply to at least 2 classmates' threads. Each reply must be at least 200 words. (MLO: D, E)

- D. Research Paper Proposal

The student will submit a paper proposal containing the following elements: (a) a properly-formatted title page according to the SOD Writing Guide, (b) a 1-sentence working thesis statement, (c) 1 or 2 paragraphs (100–200 words) explaining the need for studying the proposed thesis statement, (d) a 1-level working outline, and (e) a working bibliography with at least 8 peer-reviewed sources, not counting the textbook or the Bible. (MLO: C, E)

- E. Book Analyses (2)

The student will write 2 book analyses of 1,000–1,250 words each. The first will cover Karl Barth's *Evangelical Theology: An Introduction*, and the second will cover Gustavo Gutiérrez's *A Theology of Liberation*. Each analysis must include a summary of the content of the book and an appraisal/evaluation of its theological ideas. (MLO: C)

F. Research Paper

The student will write a 4,000–5,000-word thesis-driven research paper in current Turabian format according to the SOD Writing Guide that focuses on at least 1 theologian's attempt to solve a specific theological problem in the modern era. The paper must identify and appraise the theological problem encountered by the theologian, describe the theologian's attempt to solve the problem, and formulate a biblical response to the theologian's handling of the problem. The paper must include at least 8 peer-reviewed sources, not counting the textbook or the Bible. (MLO: D, E)

G. Exams (2)

There are 2 exams in this course. The first exam will cover the videos and assigned Olson textbook readings for Modules/Weeks 1–3, and the second exam will cover the videos and assigned Olson textbook readings for Modules/Weeks 4–8. Each exam will be open-book/open-notes and will contain multiple-choice, true/false, and essay questions. Each exam has a time limit of 1 hour and 15 minutes. (MLO: A, B)

VII. COURSE GRADING AND POLICIES

A. Points

Course Requirements Checklist	10
Discussion Board Forums (4 at 50 pts ea)	200
Research Paper Proposal	50
Book Analyses (2 at 100 pts ea)	200
Research Paper	250
Exam 1 (Modules 1–3)	150
Exam 2 (Modules 4–8)	150
Total	1010

B. Scale

A = 940–1010 A- = 920–939 B+ = 900–919 B = 860–899 B- = 840–859
 C+ = 820–839 C = 780–819 C- = 760–779 D+ = 740–759 D = 700–739
 D- = 680–699 F = 0–679

C. Late Assignment Policy

If the student is unable to complete an assignment on time, then he or she must contact the instructor immediately by email.

Assignments that are submitted after the due date without prior approval from the instructor will receive the following deductions:

1. Late assignments submitted within one week of the due date will receive a 10% deduction.
2. Assignments submitted more than one week late will receive a 20% deduction.

3. Assignments submitted two weeks late or after the final date of the course will not be accepted.
4. Late Discussion Board threads or replies will not be accepted.

Special circumstances (e.g. death in the family, personal health issues) will be reviewed by the instructor on a case-by-case basis.

D. Style Guidelines

All assignments for this course are to be formatted in accordance with the [LUSD Writing Guide](#) and the latest edition of the Turabian style manual (*A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*). Discussion assignments and essay examinations may use the parenthetical citation style. All other written assignments should use the footnote citation style. Supplemental writing aids are available via the [Online Writing Center](#).

E. Extra Credit

No additional “for credit” assignments will be permitted beyond those given in the course requirements stated above.

F. Course Changes

Course requirements are subject to change by the administration of the University at any time with appropriate notice.

G. Disability Assistance

Students with a documented disability may contact Liberty University Online’s Office of Disability Academic Support (ODAS) at LUOODAS@liberty.edu to make arrangements for academic accommodations. Further information can be found at www.liberty.edu/disabilitysupport.

COURSE SCHEDULE

THEO 603

Textbooks: Barth, *Evangelical Theology* (1992).
Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation* (1988).
Olson, *The Journey of Modern Theology* (2013).

MODULE/ WEEK	READING & STUDY	ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS
1	Olson: ch. 1 1 presentation	Course Requirements Checklist Class Introductions DB Forum 1	10 0 50
2	Olson: chs. 2–3 1 presentation	DB Forum 2	50
3	Olson: ch. 4 1 presentation	DB Forum 3 Research Paper Proposal Exam 1	50 50 150
4	Barth: Entire text Olson: ch. 5 1 presentation	Book Analysis 1	100
5	Olson: chs. 6–7 1 presentation	DB Forum 4	50
6	Gutiérrez: Entire text Olson: ch. 9 1 presentation	Book Analysis 2	100
7	Olson: ch. 11 1 presentation	Research Paper	250
8	Olson: ch. 12 1 presentation	Exam 2	150
TOTAL			1010

DB = Discussion Board

NOTE: Each course module/week begins on Monday morning at 12:00 a.m. (ET) and ends on Sunday night at 11:59 p.m. (ET). The final module/week ends at 11:59 p.m. (ET) on **Friday**.