

“The mission of Tyndale Seminary is to provide Christ-centred graduate theological education for leaders in the church and society whose lives are marked by intellectual maturity, spiritual vigour and moral integrity, and whose witness will faithfully engage culture with the Gospel.”

Course	THEOLOGICAL METHOD AND PRACTICE THEO 0552 1S
Date, Time, and Delivery Format	SEPTEMBER 12 – DECEMBER 5, 2024 THURSDAYS, 8:15 – 11:05 AM SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE
Instructor	PATRICK FRANKLIN, PhD Email: pfranklin@tyndale.ca
Class Information	The classes will start on Thursdays at 8:15 AM with a gathering Zoom meeting, followed by pre-recorded lectures and then livestream discussions. Students may participate in virtual office hours on Thursdays between 11:10 AM and 12:30 PM. Please email Dr. Franklin to schedule an appointment during this time slot or at an alternate time.
Course Material	Access course material at classes.tyndale.ca or other services at Tyndale One . Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account only.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course guides and equips students to reflect critically and constructively on the practice of theology as an academic, pastoral, and missional discipline. Specifically, it explores and addresses the fundamental ideas, social/cultural influences, and personal commitments that necessarily motivate and shape theological reflection and communication. The overarching goal is to help students become more theologically formed and informed interpreters of Scripture, for the sake of the church and its mission in the world.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Recall key concepts, developments, and debates in the history of hermeneutics
2. Identify and articulate their own hermeneutical and theological presuppositions and commitments (and how these shape interpretive practices) and recognize those of others in their views, claims, arguments, and engagements with Scripture
3. List various theological sources, analyze their strengths and limitations, and assess how to rank and synthesize them in theological formulation
4. Embrace a responsibility for personal theological and ethical formation, appreciating the importance of such formation for good theological practice
5. Display a willingness to engage the views of others charitably (classmates, other theological voices from the past and present), while putting forth their own views humbly yet convincingly
6. Recognize the contextual nature of all theological approaches (and the missional significance of this) and evaluate prevalent models of engaging context theologically
7. Discuss how distinctly evangelical commitments shape theological method and practice

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING

Bevans, Stephen B. [*Models of Contextual Theology*](#). Maryknoll: Orbis, 2002. [140 pp.]

Note: Available for free as e-copy via Tyndale library (unlimited access).

Fowl, Stephen E. [*Theological Interpretation of Scripture*](#). Eugene: Cascade, 2009. [92 pp.]

Note: Available for free as e-copy via Tyndale library (unlimited access).

Olson, Roger E. *Against Liberal Theology: Putting the Brakes on Progressive Christianity*.

Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2022. [180 pp.]

Veeneman, Mary M. [*Introducing Theological Method: A Survey of Contemporary Theologians and Approaches*](#). Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017. [190 pp.] Note: Available for free as e-copy via Tyndale library (multiple copies).

Zimmerman, Jens. *Hermeneutics: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. [132 pp.]

Other required readings, in the form of articles and primary text excerpts, will be either linked (to a website address) or posted (in PDF format) on the course page on **Moodle**. See the table in **Section IV** below for a listing of these readings and their corresponding dates.

Additional Text for ThM Students:

Zimmerman, Jens. [*Recovering Theological Hermeneutics*](#). Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2012. [322 pp.] ISBN: 978-1610976442.

B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS

Tyndale recommends www.stepbible.org – a free and reputable online resource developed by Tyndale House (Cambridge, England) – for word searches of original-language texts, as well as for topical searches, interlinear texts, dictionaries, etc. Refer to the library for other [online resources for Biblical Studies](#).

C. INTERACTIVE LIVESTREAM AND/OR HYBRID COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Livestream attendance for the entire duration of the class at announced times
- Headphones (preferred), built-in microphone, and web-camera
- Well-lit and quiet room
- Stable high-speed internet connection, preferably using an Ethernet cable over Wi-Fi
- Full name displayed on Zoom and Microsoft Teams for attendance purposes*
- A commitment to having the camera on to foster community building*

*exceptions with permission from professor

D. GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTIONS

Tyndale University prides itself in being a trans-denominational community. We anticipate our students to have varied viewpoints which will enrich the discussions in our learning community. Therefore, we ask our students to be charitable and respectful in their interactions with each other, and to remain focused on the topic of discussion, out of respect to others who have committed to being a part of this learning community. Please refer to “Guidelines for Interactions” on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

E. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

- 1. Weekly Submission of Questions and/or Comments** (Due weekly; worth 3.5% each / 24.5% Total; ThM: 3%/21%). This assignment is related to Outcomes #1, #3, and #5.

Beginning with Week 2, students are required to submit in advance of class three (3) questions or comments related to the course readings for the week. Questions and comments should be clear, concise, and relevant to the topics addressed in the readings. Questions should provide enough background (or contextual) information to

be clear and should seek after deeper understanding of the issues (rather than just provoking discussion). Comments should engage one aspect of the readings critically or constructively; alternatively, comments might offer reflection on practical application.

Questions and comments should not be longer than 125 words. Comments should not be shorter than 75 words and questions should not be shorter than 40 words.

Submissions for this assignment are required for the following weeks: Weeks 2-6 and Weeks 8-10 but you can skip one week without penalty. **So, out of 8 opportunities, I will mark 7 of them** for a total of 24.5 (ThM: 21) marks (each submission is worth 3.5%/3%).

- 2. Response to Fowl** (Due Oct. 31 at the beginning of class; worth 5%; 4% for ThM students). This assignment is related to Outcomes #1, #2, and #4.

Write a 2-paged (ThM: 3 pp.) response (double spaced or 1.5 spacing) to Fowl's book, *Theological Interpretation of Scripture*. On the first page, describe the book's thesis and discuss two central concepts, themes, or arguments the book makes. On the second page, reflect on the significance of the book for your own approach to theological method and practice. NOTE: for your reflection, focus on one or (maybe) two themes.

Your written assignment is due at the beginning of class on Oct. 31. Come to class ready to discuss the book in depth and to share your own reflections on its significance.

ThM students: Your response should be 3 pages in length.

- 3. Theological Response Paper #1: On 'Liberal' Theology** (Due Friday Oct. 11; worth 20%; 15% for ThM students). This assignment is related to Outcomes #1, #2, #5 and #7.

Write a 5-paged (6 pp. for ThM) critical and constructive theological response paper to Roger Olson's book, *Against Liberalism*. In the first section (3 pages; ThM: 4 pp.), provide a *critical* response to the book. What is its key thesis? How does it define 'Liberalism'? Does the author succeed in making his case? Why or why not? In the second section (2 pp.), offer a constructive theological reflection about the nature and practice of theology in light of your reading of Olson. Having read the book, what commitments, practices, and goals do you want to emphasize in your own approach to theology? What dangers or pitfalls do you want to avoid, having gained perspective from Olson?

4. Theological Response Paper #2: Contextual Theology (Due Friday Nov. 29; worth 15%; 5% for ThM). This assignment is related to Outcomes #1, #2, and #6.

Write a paper in response to the following questions, in light of your reading of the Bevans' text *Models of Contextual Theology*. Which model of contextual theology resonates most with you and why? Which model resonates least with you and why? How might the main weaknesses or limitations of your own preferred approach be supplemented by the insights and strengths of one or more of the other approaches? The paper should be 3 pp. in length, double-spaced.

The work will display your recognition of the contextual nature of your own theology, including awareness of the strengths and limitations of your approach to integrating theology with context, relative to other approaches historically and presently. It will push you to be forthright about your presuppositions and commitments, and to articulate clearly how context is impacting your theology.

5. Analysis of Theological Method & Practice (Due Monday Dec. 9 for all except ThM students; worth 35.5%). This assignment is related to Outcomes #2, #3, #5, and #6.

Write a critical analysis (8-10 pp.) that describes and assesses the theological methodology and practice of a major work in theology. This task might be easier if you choose a systematic theology written by a major theologian. (For a work that is not a systematic theology, especially one lacking an explicit discussion of methodology, you might have to discern what methodological commitments and practices are at work implicitly in the book). For examples of appropriate theological works to consider, please consult the list provided in Moodle.

Begin by choosing a theological work. Read (a) the methodological section of the book (which might include the entire prolegomena section if it has one) as well as (b) its treatment of one theological topic (for example: the divine attributes; the Incarnation; the atonement; the Person and/or Work of the Holy Spirit; etc.). When reading the methodology section, make note of key assumptions, commitments, concepts, ideas, and arguments that you recognize from course lectures and readings (i.e., in the history of hermeneutics and developments in theology). Try to identify the style or school of doing theology that informs and guides the work, as well as the basic assumptions.

Next, analyze how the book's methodology (a) works out in practice in its treatment of a particular doctrine or theological topic (b). Following your analysis, offer a critical response that evaluates the book's treatment of the topic. Do you agree with the author's perspective? Why or why not? If you agree, do you agree with both the method and the outcome (or perhaps the outcome because of the method)? If you disagree, do you disagree with both the method and the outcome (or perhaps the outcome because

of the method)? How would you approach the topic differently, on the basis of your own methodological commitments and practices?

Make use of secondary literature (articles, [theological dictionaries](#), book reviews, etc.) to learn about the author's biography, context, methodology, and theological ideas. This will enable you to provide a brief introduction to the author and will likely inform your own reading of their work as you analyze their theological method and practice.

Conclude your paper with a brief reflection on the significance of your findings for your own understanding of and approach to theology.

Your paper should be 8-10 pages in length (excluding title page and bibliography), including 2 pages for the introduction (to the author) and conclusion. Thus, a basic outline is as follows: (1) Introduction to the author (1-2 pp.); (2) Analysis of theological method and practice in the chosen work (3-4 pp.); (3) Critical evaluation (2-3 pp.); (4) Conclusion (~1 page). Do not exceed 11 pages MAX (excluding title page and bibliography).

ADDITIONAL (and ALTERNATE) WORK FOR TH.M STUDENTS

6. Reflection on Zimmermann's *Recovering Theological Hermeneutics*

(Due on Friday Oct. 18; worth 15%)

This assignment is related to Outcomes #1, #4, and #6.

Engaging the text *RTH*, write a theological response to the question: Why is an Incarnational and Trinitarian approach to hermeneutics important? (Alternatively, you can write why such an approach is not important, i.e., express your disagreement with the author.) On the final page, reflect on how you have been personally encouraged, informed, challenged, or otherwise impacted by Zimmerman's discussion? The paper should be 5 pp. in length, double-spaced.

This work will display your grasp of, and ability to analyze and evaluate, key concepts, issues, developments, and disagreements in the history of theology and hermeneutics. It will also display your recognition of the impact of your own historical situatedness and theological formation on your own theological thinking, method, and practice.

7. Research Paper (Due Monday Dec. 9; worth 40%)

This assignment is related to Outcomes #1-6

In lieu of Assignment #5 above, write a research paper (~20 pages; 25 pp. MAX) on a topic of your choice (to be approved by the Professor) related to theological method and practice. Your research should include both primary and secondary research, drawing on historical/classical and contemporary sources. It is best to centre your research on one major theologian and their writing(s) and then use secondary sources to better understand that thinker as well as the chosen topic. In Chicago/Turabian style, the essay should be rigorously documented, with a minimum of 35 footnotes from 20 sources (10 books and 10 journal articles). It should not simply report or summarize, but demonstrate thorough reflection, analysis, and embody a conceptual argument in which various angles of the question are explored in fairness and at length. For more detail, please consult the supplementary *Grading Rubric* document (posted in Moodle).

F. EQUITY OF ACCESS

Students with permanent or temporary disabilities who need academic accommodations must [contact](#) the [Accessibility Services](#) at the [Centre for Academic Excellence](#) to [register](#) and discuss their specific needs. *New students* must self-identify and register with the Accessibility Office at the beginning of the semester or as early as possible to access appropriate services. *Current students* must renew their plans as early as possible to have active accommodations in place.

G. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

ASSIGNMENT	DUE	REGULAR	ThM
Weekly Questions and/or Comments	Weekly	24.5%	21%
Brief Response to Fowl	Oct. 31 (start of class)	5%	4%
Theological Response to Olson	Friday Oct. 11	20 %	15%
Theological Response to Contextual Theology	Friday Nov. 29	15 %	5%
Analysis of Theological Method & Practice	Monday Dec. 9	35.5 %	n/a
Extra Requirements for ThM Students			
Critical Reflection on <i>RTH</i>	Friday Oct. 18	n/a	15%
Research Paper	Monday Dec. 9	n/a	40%
Total Grade		100 %	100%

H. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Your work should demonstrate the following characteristics:

- With the exception of online forums, all written work should be double-spaced, written in 12-pt Times New Roman font, include a properly formatted title page, and use Turabian/Chicago formatting (not APA formatting) throughout.
- Research papers should include properly formatted footnotes (not endnotes) and a bibliography of all works cited (i.e., quoted or paraphrased), not all works consulted.
- Assignments that engage a single book (critical book reviews, theological engagements/reflections on a single book) do not require the use of footnotes. Please just refer to page numbers for citations in parentheses and provide a bibliography for your source.
- For proper citation style, consult the [tip sheet, “Documenting Chicago Style”](#) (Tyndale e-resource) or the full edition of the [Chicago Manual of Style Online](#), especially ch. 14. For citing scripture texts, refer to sections 10.44 to 10.48 and 14.238 to 14.241 from the *Chicago Manual of Style* or reference the [tip sheet, “How to Cite Sources in Theology”](#).

Due dates & times (and late penalties):

Assignments are to be uploaded to the assignment submission section of the course page in pdf or Microsoft Word format by 11:59 PM (Eastern Time) on the assigned due date. Papers submitted after 11:59 PM on the due date will receive a 1/3 grade deduction (i.e., B+ to B) per day (or part thereof) following the due date (to a maximum of 1.5 GP deduction per week). This late policy will apply to all assignments for which no extension has been granted. Extensions will be granted only for serious personal, family, or health situations.

Last Possible Date to Submit Assignments (no extensions possible beyond this date):

From the Registrar’s Office: Professors may NOT grant an extension to a student past the last day of exams (December 13, 2024). Requests for extensions past this date may be granted only by the Registrar. Students should submit an [Extension Request Form](#) to the Registrar’s Office latest by December 13, 2024.

Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity, and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism (including improper use of artificial intelligence programs). Tyndale University takes seriously its

responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty. Please refer to the [Academic Integrity website](#) for further details.

Students are encouraged to consult [Writing Services](#). Citation and other [tip sheets](#).

For tips on how to conduct proper research, how to do proper citations, and how to quote and paraphrase the work of others legitimately and effectively, please see the following videos provided by Tyndale's Centre for Academic Excellence:

- Video on proper [citations and referencing](#)
- Video on [use of proper quotations](#)
- Video on [effective paraphrasing](#)

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI): Academic dishonesty also includes submitting academic work which has been written rewritten, or substantially edited by an artificial intelligence program (see the [Academic Calendar](#), p. 167).

Students should also consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for academic polices on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System.

Research Ethics

All course-based assignments involving human participants requires ethical review and may require approval by the [Tyndale Research Ethics Board \(REB\)](#). Check with the Seminary Dean's Office (aau@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

I. COURSE EVALUATION

Tyndale Seminary values quality in the courses it offers its students. End-of-course evaluations provide valuable student feedback and are one of the ways that Tyndale Seminary works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student's learning experience. Student involvement in this process is critical to enhance the general quality of teaching and learning.

Before the end of the course, students will receive a MyTyndale email with a link to the online course evaluation. The link can also be found in the left column on the course page. The evaluation period is 2 weeks; after the evaluation period has ended, it cannot be reopened.

Course Evaluation results will not be disclosed to the instructor before final grades in the course have been submitted and processed. Student names will be kept confidential and the instructor will only see the aggregated results of the class.

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

DATE	TOPIC	REQUIRED READING	ADDITIONAL (ThM)
The Nature, Purpose, Need, and Contexts for Theology			
1. Sept. 12	Course Introduction Why Theology? Why Method? Guiding Goal of the course	Veeneman, Intro, ch. 1; Bevans, Intro, chs. 1-2;	All of ← plus Hauerwas
2. Sept. 19	Premodern Theologizing	Zimmermann, ch. 1; Bevans, ch. 3 <u>Choose 1</u> : Origen; Chrysostom; Augustine; Aquinas	All of ← plus *RTH (ch. 1-2)
3. Sept. 26	Reformation & Pietist Theologizing	Zimmermann, chs. 2-3; <u>Choose 1</u> : Luther; Calvin; Spener	All of ← plus RTH (chs. 3-4)
4. Oct. 3	Wesleyan Theological Method	Wesley (intro by Bratcher optional); Langford; Danker <i>et al.</i>	All of ← plus Wesley (“Scripture Way of Salvation”) RTH (chs. 5-6)
5. Oct. 10	Modernity and its Dualisms Due Friday: Response to Olson	Zimmermann, chs. 4-5 <u>Choose 1</u> : Kant or Schleiermacher	All of ← plus Dulles; RTH (chs. 7-8)
6. Oct. 17	Postmodernity: nihilism, critical realism, fiduciary reason & tradition Due Friday (ThM students only): Critical Review of Zimmermann’s <i>RTH</i>	Zimmermann, ch. 7 Jenson	All of ← plus RTH (chs. 9-10, appendix)
Oct. 24	NO CLASS: READING DAYS		
7. Oct. 31	Theological Interpretation Discussion of Fowl Book	Fowl (whole book);	All of ← plus RTH, chs. 8-9; Franklin (Watson & Fowl chapter)
A Survey of Theological Methods			
8. Nov. 7	1. Ressourcement & Neo-orthodox 2. Theologies of Correlation	Veeneman, chs. 2-3; <u>Choose 1</u> : Barth or Cone	All of ← plus Barth <i>and</i> Cone
9. Nov. 14	3. Postliberal theologies 4. Evangelical theologies	Veeneman, chs. 4-5; Chung	All of ← plus Lindbeck

10. Nov. 21	5. Political theologies 6. Feminist theologies 7. Inter-religious dialogue	Veeneman, chs. 6-8; Metz	All of ← plus Johnson
Doing Theology in Context			
11. Nov. 28	Models of CT (1) Due Friday: Theology & Context Paper	Bevans, chs. 4-6	All of ← plus Tillich
12. Dec. 5	Models of CT (2) Conclusion to course DUE Monday Dec. 9: Analysis of Theological Method & Practice DUE Monday Dec. 9 (ThM): Research Paper	Bevans, chs. 7-9	All of ← plus McFague

* *RTH* = Zimmermann's *Recovering Theological Hermeneutics* (additional text for ThM students). This table lays out a suggested guideline to keep your reading of *RTH* on track (you are free set your own pace).

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

([Tyndale Library](#) supports this course with [e-journals](#), [e-books](#), and the [mail delivery of books](#) and circulating materials. See the [Library FAQ page](#).)

Adam, A.K.M., Stephen E. Fowl, Kevin J. Vanhoozer, and Francis Watson. *Reading Scripture with the Church: Toward a Hermeneutic for Theological Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006.

Allert, Craig D. *A High View of Scripture? Biblical Authority and the Formation of the New Testament Canon*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.

Aquino, María Pilar, Daisy L. Machado, and Jeanette Rodríguez. *A Reader in Latina Feminist Theology: Religion and Justice*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002.

Bates, Matthew W. *The Birth of the Trinity: Jesus, God, and Spirit in New Testament and Early Christian Interpretations of the Old Testament*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

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- Levering, Matthew. *Participatory Biblical Exegesis: A Theology of Biblical Interpretation*. Notre Dame, Ind: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 2011.
- Lindbeck, George L. *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1984.
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_____. The Scripture Way of Salvation. Edited by Anne-Elizabeth Powell. Wesley Center Online: <http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-sermons-of-john-wesley-1872-edition/sermon-43-the-scripture-way-of-salvation/>

Westerholm, Stephen and Martin Westerholm. *Reading Sacred Scripture: Voices from the History of Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016.

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Bibliographies for specific theological doctrines (e.g., Trinity, Holy Spirit, etc.) will be posted in Moodle.