

“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.”

Semester, Year	FALL, 2025
Course Title	THEOLOGY OF THE HUMAN PERSON
Course Code	THEO 0646 1A
Date	From September 8, 2025 to December 5, 2025
Delivery Format	ASYNCHRONOUS ONLINE
Class information	<p>The course is web-based asynchronous with no fixed class time.</p> <p>WEEKLY COFFEE HOUR (Online): Tuesdays from 3:00 to 4:00 PM (EST) on the dates indicated on the course page in Moodle, along with the meeting link. Alternative arrangements to meet with the instructor can be made for those who are unable to join during these times.</p>
Instructor	ALEX TREW, PhD Email: atrew@tyndale.ca
Office Hours	By appointment only.
Course Materials	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 endeavours to acquaint students with the theology of the human person. It focuses on biblical and doctrinal issues that bear on such questions as “What does it mean to be a human being?”, “What is meant by the ‘image of God’?”, and “How is the Person of God related to the personhood of human beings?”

Prerequisite: THEO 0531 Systematic Theology

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1. Recognize the wonder, dignity, and mystery of every human person (Psalm 8)
2. Explain the relationship between Christology and Trinity to anthropology

3. Analyze presuppositions about human personhood in various theologies, philosophies, ideologies, and approaches to community/sociality
4. Identify and discuss contemporary issues in understanding the human person in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences and assess them theologically
5. Articulate the implications of one's view of personhood for theology, spirituality, ethics, and ministry
6. Apply insights gained from the course to understand and frame their own lives, their own journey of being and becoming human, theologically
7. Apply implications of theological anthropology to one's discipline of study and vocation

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING

Hinsdale, Mary Ann and Stephen Okey, eds. [*T&T Clark Handbook of Theological Anthropology*](#). London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2023. [*This book is available as an e-book for free via Tyndale library; the subscription is unlimited.*]

Kärkkäinen, Veli-Matti. [*Creation and Humanity. Volume 3 of Constructive Christian Theology for the Pluralistic World*](#). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015. [*This book is available as an e-book for free via Tyndale library; the subscription is unlimited.*]

Perry, Louise. *The Case against the Sexual Revolution*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2022.

Smith, James K. A. [*On the Road with Saint Augustine: A Real-World Spirituality for Restless Hearts*](#). Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2019. [*The library has a single-copy subscription to this book, so likely you will want to purchase it.*]

B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS

Tyndale recommends [STEPBible](#) – 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. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Forum Discussions (30%; 5 X 5% for individual posts + 5% for group conclusion)

This assignment is related to Outcomes #1 and #5.

Educational research reveals that maximum benefits in online instructional formats result when students take personal responsibilities to complete readings, engage actively (e.g. forums), and consciously contribute to a virtual learning community through a spirit of collaboration, openness and encouragement.

Individual Posts & Responses (5% each forum; 5 forums in total, 25% of course grade):

There will be 5 forums in total (on weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, 10; see the course schedule in Section IV), each answering a question (or set of questions) posted by the Professor. Students will post their responses to the question(s) by 11:59 PM on Thursdays, and comment on the posts of 2 other students in their group by 11:59 PM of the next day (Fridays). Each initial post is worth 3% and each of the two response comments is worth 1%.

Your initial (Thursday) post should be about 25-35 lines (250-350 words; can exceed by 10%, but marks deducted thereafter). Each post should be concise, addressing the issues in the question with reference to course readings and lectures, and demonstrate critical thinking (e.g., addressing key concepts, arguments, and ideas, identifying further questions or issues raised, or application to your context). Your comments to fellow students should be briefer (approx. 100-150 words), with both an affirmation or connection point and perhaps one thoughtful question for further reflection. (The question is not always necessary; it is one option for engaging. If you do pose a question, it is helpful to provide your own provisional answer to it, then ask, e.g., “What do you think?” or “What else comes to mind for you?”)

You are not required to respond to a “late post” of any member.

Group Conclusion (5% of course grade; Due by 11:59 on Saturdays)

After the individual posts and responses, one member of the group will write a group conclusion. What key issues were discussed? Where do you identify consensus and disagreement? How should the conversation move forward toward resolution of issues, deeper understanding, or practical applications? The conclusion should not merely repeat what contributors to the conversation said earlier; it should draw out implications and reflect on their significance. This conclusion is due by 11:59 PM on Saturday evening of the week in question. The conclusion should be about 30-35 lines (300-350 words; marks deducted if you exceed limit). Your group is responsible for establishing a schedule for conclusion writers. Each student will only write one conclusion during the course. You do not need to include late posts of any member.

If you prefer, you may post a video response (rather than a written response) for your conclusion. To do this, upload your video to You Tube (or another accessible platform) and provide a link in the discussion in Moodle in place of your written conclusion. The video should be no longer than 5 minutes in length (3-5 minutes is sufficient).

Penalty for late work:

“Late posts” will be noted by the instructor, and the penalty is a reduction of 1/3 of a grade per every 3 hours late (e.g., from A to A minus or B to B minus).

If there is “no post” after 11:59 pm on Fridays, the student will receive a “zero” for that forum. If there are specific reasons for late posts (as stated in “Late Papers and Extension Policy,” Seminary Academic Calendar), the student is to email the instructor directly.

2. Personal Reflection Paper (10%; Due Oct. 10 by 11:59 p.m.)

This assignment is related to Outcomes #5 and #6.

Write a personal reflection paper (4-5 pp.) interacting with James K. A. Smith’s book *On the Road with St. Augustine*. Share 2-3 insights emerging from your reading of Smith about your own journey of *being* and *becoming* human. It is best to reflect on your journey in light of key ideas, concepts, and reflections discussed by Smith. You may also draw on ideas and insights gained from class materials - lectures and readings - that are relevant and applicable to the 2-3 themes/insights you discuss.

3. Theological Reflection Paper (20%; Due March 21 by 11:59 p.m.)

Write a theological reflection paper (6-8 pp.) on Louise Perry’s book, *The Case Against the Sexual Revolution*. In two to three (2-3) pages, describe the book’s central argument (thesis) and explicate two themes that you found particularly striking and important. You do not have much space, so be concise and explain key concepts and ideas precisely (this is not a book review). In the remaining pages of your paper write a theological reflection on one or two of these themes as they relate to (a) your own theology of being human (your theological anthropology) and (b) your vocation or calling (e.g., as a pastor, counsellor, parent, friend, youth worker, business owner or worker, etc.).

Drawing on course content (lectures, readings) as you engage the book will enrich your discussion.

4. Short Research Paper (40%; Due April 11 by 11:59 p.m.)

This assignment is related to Outcomes #2, #3, and #4.

Write a concise (12 pp.) research paper on one of the themes treated by theological anthropology. Discuss your conclusions on the topic based on your engagement with the subject matter and in dialogue with a theologian who has written a book on that topic.

- a) Select one topic that addresses a specific question that you want to sort out in your own theology of being human. Also, select one theologian who writes about this issue to be your primary dialogue partner for the paper. Engage one major work by this theologian deeply to guide your own critical and constructive reflection on the topic. Other primary

and secondary sources will help inform you more broadly about the topic as it is discussed in the discipline and beyond (e.g., classical questions, the key contemporary questions and debates, alternate approaches to the topic, etc.).

There are many issues relevant to theological anthropology. The purpose of this paper is not to resolve fully or address comprehensively the issue in which you are interested. Rather, the purpose of the paper is to identify a specific theological-anthropology issue that needs to be resolved—one that grounds, informs, guides, frames, and/or critically evaluates or regulates one's approach to the issue in an important way.

Please choose one of the following topics (or, if you wish, you may propose an alternate topic to the professor):

- Human origins (argue for a perspective, e.g., YEC; ID; evolutionary creation, etc.)
- The nature and effects of human sin
- Theological anthropology in relation to race (or racism)
- Theological anthropology in relation to human sexuality and/or gender
- Theological anthropology and the ethics of ending life (e.g., abortion, MAID, war)
- Theological anthropology and technology
- The constitution of the human being (trichotomy, dualism, monism, nonreductive physicalism, emergent dualism, etc.)
- The relationship between theological anthropology (TA) and another area of Christian doctrine (e.g., TA and eschatology; TA and soteriology; TA and Christology; TA and ecclesiology; TA and missiology; etc.)

- b) Narrow your focus to identify a key theological issue that needs to be resolved. This will probably be something that occurs at the basic theological convictions / worldview level, with ripple effects on one's overall theology, including implications for belief, teaching, and practice.

Be sure that the focal issue of the paper is theological in nature.

- c) Articulate for yourself an initial hypothesis about the topic. When you first begin the research for your paper, your hypothesis will be tentative and preliminary, to be tested by your ongoing research. When you write up the final draft of your paper, you should be able to articulate a clear thesis statement on the first page (at the end of your introduction). **A thesis statement is a concise description (1-2 sentences) of a position you are taking, an argument in summary form which you will go on to demonstrate in the body of your paper.**
- d) Research the topic in depth – **at least** 10 sources, including at least one theological monograph (a book on your topic written by a recognized theologian), and at least 5 peer

reviewed journal articles (the ATLA database accessed via our library is the best source for full text, peer reviewed theological journal articles).

The remaining sources might include other books and articles on the topic, theological reference works (e.g., theological dictionaries, works of systematic theology, 'multiple views' books, biblical commentaries and dictionaries, etc.).

Blog posts, web sites, student papers, and online videos are not appropriate academic sources unless they have official academic or professional credentials (e.g., an online peer-reviewed journal, official government sources, reputable scientific sources such as Science, AAAS, the ASA (American Scientific Affiliation), CSCA (Canadian Scientific and Christian Affiliation), NASA, and so forth). You can use popular sources too, for illustrative or interest purposes, but they do not count as academic sources.

NOTE: Keep in mind that you don't need to read every chapter of every book, or every paragraph of every article; but you do want to read thoroughly the sections that are most relevant and be sure to understand their logic and argument. You should also grasp the book's / article's overall thesis and how it contributes to the theological discussion of the topic at hand). Sprinkling a paper with references from sources is not enough to demonstrate a thorough understanding and synthesis of those sources.

- e) Write up a concise paper (12 pages, excluding title page and bibliography) in support of your thesis, demonstrating how your research informed your (provisional) answer to the question you posed. **Your answer to your question (concerning the theological issue to be resolved) is your thesis.** You should state your thesis succinctly and clearly in your paper's introduction.

Begin with one introductory paragraph, alerting the reader to the importance of your topic (why it matters) and identifying the specific question the paper seeks to answer. Briefly state your provisional answer to that question (**your thesis**) in 1-2 sentences.

Use the body of your paper to make your case theologically. Mention and address briefly 1-3 other serious options (other, alternative answers to the question) that you discovered while doing research. State briefly why you are convinced of the answer you give in your paper, rather than these alternatives.

- f) Conclude the paper with a paragraph restating your own tentative thesis on the topic. In a nutshell, where do you currently stand on the question you researched and why? Your conclusion is not meant to state your final view on the matter, but your provisional view which you have come to at least tentatively given your study and reflection at this point in

time. So, it might be appropriate to briefly state what further questions remain for you (if any?) that need to be addressed in future research.

D. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Assignment	Due	Weight
1. Online Forum contributions	See Section IV	30 %
2. Personal Reflection Paper (Smith)	Friday Oct. 10	10 %
3. Theological Reflection Paper (Perry)	Friday Nov. 14	20 %
4. Short Research Paper	Friday Dec. 5	40 %
Total Grade		100 %

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

Please complete all readings in preparation for the lectures. NOTE: All readings not found in Kärkkäinen or in the *T&T Clark Handbook (TTCH)* are posted in Moodle (classes.tyndale.ca).

Week 1 Introduction to the Course

(Sept. 8) Sources & Methods for Theological Anthropology, Part I

Read:

Kärkkäinen, chapter 9

TTCH, chapter 1

Week 2 Sources and Methods for Theological Anthropology, Part II

(Sept 15)

Read:

TTCH, chapters 2-3

Franklin, "The Human Person in Contemporary Science and Theology"

Reimer, "Why Aren't Canadians Listening to Christian Leaders?"

DUE: Online Forum Discussion #1 (in Moodle)

Week 3 Image of God, Part I

(Sept. 22)

Read:

Kärkkäinen, chapter 11

TTCH, chapter 5, chapter 27 (just pp. 338-40)

Franklin handout, 'Image' Passages in the Bible

(Optional: TTCH, chapters 6 and 27)

Week 4 Image of God, Part II

(Sept. 29)

Read:

Grenz, "The Social God and the Relational Self"

Resch, "Christ and Contemplation"

DUE: Online Forum Discussion #2 (in Moodle)

Week 5 Human Dignity and the Sacredness of Human Life

(Oct. 6)

Read:

UN Declaration on Human Rights (preamble) Moltmann on Human Dignity
Gushee, "The Sacredness of Life"

(Oct. 10)

DUE: Personal Reflection Paper on Smith

Week 6 SIN & the Tragic, Part I

(Oct. 13)

Read:

Kärkkäinen, chapter 15
TTCH, chapter 8 (pp. 99-105a)
St. Augustine, Confessions (excerpt)

DUE: Online Forum Discussion #3 (in Moodle)

Seminary Reading Days Oct. 20-24 (No Class)

Week 7 SIN & the Tragic, Part II

(Oct. 27)

Read:

Kärkkäinen, chapter 16
TTCH, chapter 8 (pp. 105b-110)
Gutiérrez on liberation theology (excerpt)
(Optional: TTCH, chapter 28)

Week 8 Human Ontology

(Nov. 3)

Read:

Kärkkäinen, chapter 12 (optional: chapter 14)
Croasmun, "Emergence"
Farris, "What am I" (chapter excerpt)
DUE: Online Forum Discussion #4 (in Moodle)

Week 9 Human Origins, Part I: Beyond 'Creation' versus 'Evolution'

(Nov. 10)

View before class lecture: Lamoureux lecture (link provided in Moodle)

Read:

Kärkkäinen, chapter 10
Brooks, "What is a human?" (humans as evolved yet unique)
Lamoureux, The Bible and Ancient Science (excerpts)
(Optional: Kärkkäinen, chapter 6)

(Nov. 14) **DUE:** Theological Reflection on Perry

Week 10 Human Origins, Part II: Reflecting Theologically on Evolution

(Nov. 17) **Read:**
Smith, “What Stands on the Fall? A Philosophical Explanation”
Franklin, “Understanding the Beginning in Light of the End”
DUE: Online Forum Discussion #5 (in Moodle)

Week 11 Gender and Sexuality #1

(Nov. 24) **Read:**
Review: Grenz from week 4 (“Social God, Relational Self, pp. 50-57 only)
Pierce, “Biblical Equality and Same-Sex Marriage”
Smith on ‘cultural liturgies’

Week 12 Gender and Sexuality #2

(Dec. 1) **Read:**
Jelsma, “An Attempt to Understand the Biology of Gender and Gender Dysphoria: A Christian Approach”
Eddy and Rhodes, “Understanding Transgender Experiences & Identities”
Sprinkle on sensitivity re. trans and emerging gender identities
Sax on intersex conditions and whether sex is a binary or a spectrum
(Optional: Stock, “A Brief History of Gender Identity”)
(Optional: Cheng, “Contributions from Queer Theory”)
(Dec. 5) **DUE:** Research Paper

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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VI. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL COURSES

A. 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.

B. REQUIREMENTS FOR LIVESTREAM INTERACTION (SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE COURSE ONLY)

- 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*

C. 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.

D. GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Grading Rubric

Please consult the rubric provided for each assignment on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

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.

For proper citation style, consult [Citation Guides](#) for different styles. Students are encouraged to consult [Writing Services](#).

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

Turnitin Text-Matching Software

Tyndale has a subscription to Turnitin, a text-matching software that ensures the originality of academic writing and verifies the proper citation of all sources. The instructor for this course will use Turnitin for assignments submitted through your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca. Upon submission, you will receive a summary that includes your submitted files along with a similarity report generated by Turnitin. Please be aware that Turnitin can also detect AI-generated content from tools like Grammarly, so students should be mindful of when

using such software. It's advisable to confirm with your instructor before using any AI tools into your assignments. Below are some useful resources:

- [Student](#) Guides for Turnitin via classes.tyndale.ca course resource page
- Interpreting Similarity ([Guide](#), [Video](#), [Spectrum](#))

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 (seminaryoffice@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

Late Papers and Extensions Policy

All papers and course assignments must be submitted by the due dates indicated in the course syllabus. Unless the instructor already has a policy on grading late papers in the course syllabus, grades for papers submitted late without an approved extension will be lowered at the rate of two-thirds of a grade per week or part thereof (e.g., from "A+" to "A-," from "B" to "C+"). Please note that some programs, such as cohort-based or intensive courses, may follow a different policy due to the nature of the program.

Faculty may not grant an extension beyond the last day of exams for the semester. Requests for extensions beyond this date must be addressed in writing to the Registrar by filling out the [Extension Request Form](#). The application will be considered only in cases such as a death in the family, medical emergency, hospitalization of oneself or immediate family member or prolonged illness requiring treatment by a physician. Factors such as assignments for other courses, holidays, and technology-related difficulties are insufficient grounds for requesting an extension.

A temporary grade of incomplete ("I") may be granted by the Registrar. Once an extension is granted, it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor and make satisfactory arrangements to complete the outstanding work. A grade of "F" will be recorded for students who do not complete the outstanding work by the deadline.

E. 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.

F. LIBRARY RESOURCES

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

G. GRADING SYSTEM & SCALE

For each course's grading rubric, please refer to your course syllabus or classes.tyndale.ca. For general grading guidelines, refer to Seminary [Grading System & Scale](#).