

CHRI 2373 Christian Theology & Traditions Executive Summary

This course is an introduction to Christian theology. This course covers the way in which Christians move from Scripture to doctrine and includes discussion of the historical developments of doctrine and movements of the church, important theologians, essential Christian doctrines, varieties of Christian belief, and the marks that distinguish Christianity from other religions. This is a required course in the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Explain the process of theological reasoning from Scripture as the supreme norm of Christian theology;
2. Articulate basic Christian doctrine;
3. Assess key theological figures;
4. Discuss the major historical movements which shaped the practice of Christianity;
5. Apply Christian theology to present-day issues.

MISSIONAL ALIGNMENT

University Mission: The mission of Houston Christian University is to provide a learning experience that instills in students a passion for academic, spiritual, and professional excellence as a result of our central confession, “Jesus Christ is Lord.”

University Mission Integration: Upholding our central confession requires us fully to understand what it means for Christ to be Lord.

College Mission: We in the School of Christian Thought believe that theological formation is holistic. Preparation for ministry and a life of discipleship involves the head, heart, and hands. We are a community with a shared mission: to ground students in biblical truth, to form them to have a beautiful faith, and to prepare them for a flourishing ministry. We shape and train students to minister to a world in need through biblical and theological study, apologetics, spiritual formation, discipleship, and scholarship.

College Mission Integration: The exploration of the church’s historic teaching is the foundational element in the practices mentioned above; the course engages Christian tradition and texts that serve as the environment for further study.

Department of Theology Mission: The mission of the Department of Theology is to provide students with a foundation in the classical theological disciplines, facilitate intellectual and spiritual growth, and equip individuals in skills essential for Christian ministry.

Departmental Mission Integration: This exploration of the Christian theological tradition will be foundational to a student’s progress in the study of theology and in a related major or minor.

HOW DOES THIS COURSE EMBODY THE MISSION OF THE CORE CURRICULUM?

- Know and Make Known God (Biblical Literacy, Christian Wisdom, Theological Proficiency)
- Know and Make Known Humans as God’s image-bearers (Human dignity, Interdependence, Flourishing)

SIGNATURE ASSIGNMENT

Students will visit a church service in a worship tradition other than their own and write a 250 word theological reflection paper about their experience. The paper will answer the following questions

1. What tradition/style does this worship service represent?
2. What doctrines were reflected in the service and how do these relate to the topics we have covered in class through Engaging Theology?
3. What doctrines was/were reflected in the songs?
4. What doctrines emerged in the sermon/homily?
5. How were these doctrines explained and applied?
6. How is the four sources of theology play a role in the service: scripture, tradition, reason, and experience?

TEXTBOOKS

Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*

Ben Blackwell & Randy Hatchett, *Engaging Theology: A Biblical, Historical, and Practical Introduction*

Irenaeus, *On the Apostolic Preaching*

Ben Myers, *The Apostles' Creed: A Guide to the Ancient Catechism*