To know God and to make Him known is a high and noble calling. This course will introduce the student to the study of systematic theology, its relationship to biblical theology, exegesis, historical theology and practical theology. Because it is a required initial class in all of Maranatha’s masters programs, this course will also introduce Seminary students to the research and writing expectations of Maranatha Baptist Seminary, to aid them in the writing and formatting of formal research papers, and to introduce them to basic research tools.

COURSE TEXTBOOKS:

**Required:**
Millard Erickson. *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013. This will be used in all of your Systematic Theology courses; it is expensive, but go ahead and buy a copy. You will use it in two more or four more classes, depending on your program.
Renald Showers. *There Really is a Difference*. Bellmawr, NJ: The Friends of Israel, 1990. You must read Showers, if you have never read his work. If you have read it previously, you are not required to read it for this class.
Nancy Jean Vyhmeister. *Quality Research Papers*, 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014. We will work through the first 13 chapters of this book. You need to purchase this small work. It will be invaluable for you during your Seminary career.

**Reference:**
Kate Turabian. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Seventh Edition: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. This is for reference only. Turabian is the gold standard for theological research papers. If you follow Vyhmeister and the Maranatha Guides, you will not need a personal copy of Turabian until you begin work on a doctoral degree. Your local library should have a copy for reference, if you need one.

**MBU Institutional Outcomes supported by this course:**
1. Critical Thinking: Students will apply a framework for logical decision-making in various contexts.
2. Biblical Knowledge: Students will acquire skills related to biblical study methods, interpretation, and doctrine.
3. Biblical World View: students will articulate a world view that will tie all fields of study to the Scriptures “to the praise of His glory.”
COURSE GOALS. By the end of this class:

1. You will have a better understanding of the concept of Systematic Theology.
2. You will develop a basic comprehension of the relationship of Systematic Theology to other biblical disciplines.
3. You will understand the questions raised concerning doing theology and to be able to formulate answers based on biblical truth.
4. You will have a basic understanding of the relationship historically between philosophy and theology.
5. You will learn how to do theological research, what tools are available and how they can be used.
6. You will learn the basics concerning how to research and write a good research paper.
7. You will learn how to use the Maranatha template for research papers.

ASSIGNMENTS

2. Weekly readings from Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology* and related course notes from the professor. This material will be assessed via the discussion forum.
3. Read the prolegomena from one of the books in the bibliography. Write a 5-page summary of the prolegomena, especially the approach given and the impact the writer’s prolegomena has on his theology. Check your choice of theologians with the instructor. You will present your summary to the rest of the class.
   a. All sources must be found in the notes and in the bibliography. Every idea not original with you should be noted, and the source should also be found in the bibliography. Every entry in the bibliography should also be found in the notes in the text.
   b. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is treating another’s language or thought as one’s own original work. Plagiarized papers will be required to be rewritten, but the late penalty will still be in effect.
   c. Do not hand in a paper from another course or one that has been revised from another course. Do not even attempt to hand in work done by another student.
4. Write a devotional on a topic of your choice, but a topic which is related to the class in some way. Specific information is given in the Devotional Template in the Research Module in your class information in myMaranatha.
5. The final exam will be taken at the completion of the course. It is open book and open notes; it is focused on the Prolegomena section of the course, not on the research and writing section.

GRADING

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<td>Devotional</td>
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TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

You will need access to a good internet connection, preferably high speed (cable or DSL). You’ll need to make sure that you have the free Adobe Flash player installed. Our learning management software works best with:

- Internet Explorer 9 or higher
- Firefox 8 or higher for Windows
- Firefox 13 or higher for Mac
- Safari 5 or higher for Mac
- Safari 5 or higher for Windows

Chrome for Mac or Windows is not recommended at this time as there are problems when doing discussion forums in it.

Opera for Mac or Windows is not recommended at this time as it has not been tested for compatibility.

You may use a PC (Windows XP) or Mac (10.3 or higher). (Basically, if your computer is less than three years old, you’ll probably be fine.) Webcams and webcam software are optional. You are encouraged to have the latest version of virus protection software installed (i.e. MacAfee Virus Protection, OneCare).

Office 2013 is recommended; you can buy a student version. If you are adventurous, you might try the free programs OpenOffice or LibreOffice. Be sure to save your documents as .doc, .docx, or .rtf files.
ADA STATEMENT

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, the law requires that all students with disabilities be given a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Learning Assistance Program Director, in the library in Room 216, (ph. 920/206-2340) or email learningassistance@mbu.edu.

CONTACTS

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IT SUPPORT
920-206-2322
There is a link on my.mbu.edu to email IT Support. Otherwise, email support@mbu.edu.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


The standard Reformed textbook for systematic theology by a former president of Calvin Seminary in Grand Rapids, Michigan. This book is a great treasure-house of information and analysis, and is probably the most useful one-volume systematic theology available from any theological perspective.


A work by a contemporary theologian who is broadly in the Reformed tradition.


A Reformed guide to systematic theology written by the theologian-pastor of Tenth Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia. This work is written in a popular, readable style, with helpful application of doctrines to life.


A Baptist systematic theology that is also Reformed in doctrinal orientation by a former president and professor of systematic theology in the Southern Baptist Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky.


A Reformed systematic theology by the former dean of the graduate faculty at Covenant College and Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri.


This is the best available English translation of Calvin’s systematic exposition of the Christian faith.


Chafer (1871-1952) was the first president of Dallas Theological Seminary. The seven-volume edition is the most extensive dispensational systematic theology ever written. The two volume edition is a condensation of the earlier work.

A Southern Presbyterian who represented a strongly Reformed position, Dabney (1820-98) was professor of theology at Union Seminary in Virginia. He was also chaplain and later chief of staff for General Stonewall Jackson during the American Civil War.

A thorough textbook in systematic theology from a Baptist perspective. Erickson was Academic Dean at Bethel Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minn, and on the faculty at Southwestern Baptist Seminary in Ft. Worth, Texas. He is currently Distinguished Professor of Theology at Western Seminary in Portland, Oregon. This book includes interaction with all the major trends in contemporary non-evangelical theology, as well as helpful material for personal application.

Gill (1697-1771) was a highly influential Baptist pastor, a prolific writer, and a respected theologian in 18th century England. He was also Reformed in his view of God’s sovereignty.

A major work containing detailed interaction with hundreds of other scholarly positions. Henry is a leading evangelical theologian with great strengths especially in the areas of apologetics and philosophical theology.

First published 1871-73.
A major Reformed systematic theology which is still widely used today. Hodge (1797-1878) was professor of systematic theology at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Lewis and Demarest are both professors of systematic theology at Denver Seminary in Colorado (a Conservative Baptist seminary). This is an excellent contemporary work that integrates historical, biblical, apologetic, and practical material with systematic theology.

A standard Anglican (or Episcopalian) systematic theology by an evangelical British theologian of the 19th century. Litton lived from 1813 to 1897.

This 3-volume systematic theology is a fundamental Baptist theology by a long-time professor at Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary.

This is probably the most scholarly and extensive Arminian systematic theology ever written. Miley was a professor at Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, New Jersey.

A condensation and translation of Francis Pieper’s *Christliche Dogmatik* (Christian
Dogmatics) by a professor of systematic theology at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, a Missouri Synod Lutheran seminary. An excellent statement of conservative Lutheran theology.

An evangelical systematic theology by a former president of the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. Mullins lived from 1860 to 1928.

Murray (1898-1975) was professor of systematic theology at Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia and one of the most articulate modern defenders of Reformed theology.

Olson, Arnold T. *This We Believe: The Background and Exposition of the Doctrinal Statement of The Evangelical Free Church of America.* Minneapolis, Minn.: Free Church Publications, 1961.
A guide to Christian doctrine based on the widely-used statement of faith of the Evangelical Free Church of America. Olson was the first president of the Evangelical Free Church.

This is standard systematic theology of conservative Lutheranism. Pieper (1852-1931) was a Missouri Synod theologian and professor and president of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis.

This work, first published in 1875-76, is one of the greatest systematic theologies written from a Wesleyan or Arminian perspective.

Reymond, Robert. *A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith.* Waco: Word, 1998. A lengthy, current Reformed theology structured on the Westminster Confession. He is strongly Calvinistic. He has been criticized for abandoning Nicene Trinitarianism for a “Reformed” view of the Trinity. His historical, biblical and systematic approach has been generally well received.

A very clearly written introduction to systematic theology from a dispensationalist perspective, by a former professor of systematic theology at Dallas Theological Seminary.

A useful Reformed systematic theology by a former professor at Union Theological Seminary in New York. Shedd lived from 1820 to 1894.

Strong (1836-1921) was president and professor of theology at Rochester Theological Seminary, and, from 1905 to 1910, was the first president of the Northern Baptist Convention. This text was widely used in Baptist circles for most of the twentieth century, until it was largely replaced by Millard Erickson’s *Christian Theology*. 

An evangelical systematic theology textbook by a former chairman of the faculty of the graduate school at Wheaton College. Thiessen is Baptist and Dispensational in theological perspective.

Thomas, W. H. Griffith. *The Principles of Theology: An Introduction to the Thirty-Nine Articles.* Fifth edition, revised. London: Church Book Room Press, 1956. (First published 1930.) Although this book is structured around the Anglican Thirty-Nine Articles, it functions well as a thoughtful introductory text in Christian doctrine even for those outside the Anglican tradition. It has been widely used in British evangelical circles for many years. Thomas (1861-1924) was principal of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, and then professor of Old Testament at Wycliffe College, Toronto. He also played a role in founding Dallas Seminary just before his death.


Turretin (1623-87) taught theology for over thirty years at the Academy in Geneva. His work, written in Latin, is said to be one of the fullest expressions of Calvinistic theology ever published. It was reprinted (in Latin) in 1847 and widely used as a theological textbook for American Presbyterians, most notably by Charles Hodge at Princeton.


Warfield (1851-1921) was a Reformed theologian who taught New Testament and then systematic theology at Princeton Theological Seminary from 1887-1921. In the estimate of many people, he was one of the greatest American theologians.


An Arminian systematic theology by a respected theologian in the Church of the Nazarene. Probably the best Arminian systematic theology published in the twentieth century, but it does not match Miley in scholarly depth.


Williams is a charismatic scholar who teaches at Regent University (formerly CBN University). This clearly written theology interacts extensively with the biblical text and with other literature. It is the first published from an explicitly charismatic perspective.
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<td>Respond to the Devotionals of Fellow Students</td>
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| Aug 21 | Module 8 Begins  
Submit Prolegomena  
Summary to Discussion Forum | Module 8 Reading Report  
Vyhmeister Chapters 21, 22  
(Chaps 10, 13 in 2nd edition) | Discussion Forum |
|--------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Aug 28 | Submit Final Prolegomena  
Summary for grading  
Submit Final Devotional for Grading | Submit Showers Reading Report | FINAL EXAM must be completed by 5:00 PM Friday.  
You have one hour to take this test. You may only open this test once. This is an open book and open notes test. |