Course Syllabus

TRT2112

What Do We Really Believe?
Dogma, Heresy and Non-Dogmatics
in the Orthodox Tradition

Trinity College
Toronto School of Theology

Summer 2019

Instructor Information

Instructor:	Dr. Paul Ladouceur
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Office Hours:	By appointment

Course Identification

Course Number:	TRT2112
Course Name:	What Do We Really Believe? Dogma, Heresy and Non-Dogmatics in Orthodox Tradition
Course Location:	Larkin Building, Room 213 (subject to confirmation).
Class Times:	7:00-10:00 p.m.
Class Schedule:	Two classes a week, May-June 2019: May 7, 9, 13, 16, 21, 23, 27, 30; June 3, 6, 10, 13.
Prerequisites:	None.

Course Description

This course explores the faith or beliefs of the Orthodox Church in the light of both patristic and modern Orthodox theology. The Orthodox dogmatic tradition is an expression or manifestation of the living experience of the Church, reflected for example in the liturgy, icons and the lives and writings of the saints, and not only as propositions relating to God or as an integrated logical "system" of thought. Major theological questions will be considered in terms of beliefs essential to the faith ("dogmas"),

beliefs declared erroneous by Councils of the Church ("heresies"), and doctrines, teachings and private theological opinions ("theologoumena").

Grading for the course, both in-class and online sections, will be based on participation in the course, especially by means of introductions to course readings, a mid-term quiz, a book report and a final exam *or* written essay.

Expanded Course Description

The course will present and explore the principal dogmatic themes of Orthodoxy, beginning with key notions which served to mould the context in which Patristic theology developed: faith, revelation and philosophy; conceptual and experiential knowledge; kerygma and dogma; theology and mysticism; the sources of tradition; positive or cataphatic theology and negative or apophatic theology.

From these foundations, the course will focus on a selection of major specific themes of Orthodox theology: God as Unity and as Trinity; creation (cosmology); anthropology; the Incarnation (Christology); salvation (soteriology); the Holy Spirit (Pneumatology); eschatology.

These themes will be explored in large part through the contributions of modern Orthodox theologians, especially Sergius Bukgaov, Vladimir Lossky, Georges Florovsky, John Meyendorff, John Romanides, Dumitru Staniloae, Christos Yannaras and John Zizioulas.

Reference will be made throughout the presentation and discussion of these themes in patristic theology, especially in response to the challenges to the faith in the form of major heresies, particularly those relating to the Trinity, Christ and the Holy Spirit.

The relationship of major themes of the dogmatic tradition mentioned above to ecclesiology and to ascetic theology or spirituality will be mentioned, although these aspects of Orthodox theology are treated in detail in other courses.

Course Resources

Required Course Books

The following books should be acquired for this course:

Required Course Readings

Course Reader: *"Learn from Me, for I Am Gentle and Humble of Heart" (Mt 11:29): Modern Readings in Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*.

Dumitru Staniloae, *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology: The Experience of God.* Vol. 1: *Revelation and Knowledge of the Triune God* (Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2005). 310 p.

Recommended Books

Alfeyev, Hilarion, *The Mystery of Faith: An Introduction to the Teaching and Spirituality of the Orthodox Church* (London: Darton Longman & Todd, 2004). *Le Mystère de la foi* (Paris: Cerf, 2001). 270 p.

Bobrinskoy, Boris, *The Mystery of the Trinity: Trinitarian Experience and Vision in the Biblical and Patristic Tradition* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1999). 330 p. *Le Mystère de la Trinité, Cours de théologie orthodoxe*, Le Cerf, 1986. 331 p.

Cunningham, Mary B., and Elizabeth Theokritoff, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Orthodox Christian Theology*, Cambridge University Press, 2008. 348 p.

Vladimir Lossky, *Orthodox Theology: An Introduction* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1978). 137 p. *Théologie dogmatique*, Le Cerf, 2012. 208 p.

Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1997). 252 p. *Essai sur la Théologie mystique de l'Église d'Orient*, Le Cerf, 2006. 266 p.

Meyendorff, John, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes* (New York: Fordham UP, 1974). 243 p.
Initiation à la théologie Byzantine : L'histoire et la doctrine, Le Cerf, 1975 ; 2010. 322 p.

Pomazansky, Michael, *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology: A Concise Exposition* (1963) (Platina CA: St Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1984).413 p.
Online: http://www.holytrinitymission.org/books/english/dogmatics_pomazansky.htm.

Romanides, John S., *An Outline of Orthodox Patristic Dogmatics* (Orthodox Research Institute, 2004). 180 p.

Staniloae, Dumitru, *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology: The Experience of God.*
Vol. 1: *Revelation and Knowledge of the Triune God* (Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1994). 310 p.
Vol. 2: *The World, Creation and Deification* (Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2000). 225 p.
Vol. 3: *The Person of Jesus Christ as God and Savior* (Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2011). 182 p.
Vol. 4: *The Church: Communion in the Holy Spirit* (Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2012). 175 p.
Vol. 5: *The Sanctifying Mysteries* (Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2012). 232 p.
Vol. 6: *The Fulfillment of Creation* (Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2013). 242 p.

Ware, Kallistos, *The Orthodox Way* (Revised edition) (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995). 164 p.

Yannaras, Christos, *Elements of Faith: An Introduction to Orthodox Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991).
La foi vivante de l'Eglise: Introduction a la théologie orthodoxe, Le Cerf, 1989.

Zizioulas, John, *Lessons on Christian Dogmatics*.
Online: http://www.oodegr.com/english/dogmatiki1/perieh.htm#perieh.

Course Website(s)

This course uses the University of Toronto online learning facility called Quercus for its course website. To access Quercus, go to the UofT Quercus login page at https://q.utoronto.ca/ and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you will find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.

Information for students about using Quercus can be found at:
https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701.

Auditing students and regular students who have trouble accessing Quercus should ask Sydney Yeung at the Faculty of Divinity of Trinity College (divinity@trinity.utoronto.ca) for further assistance.

Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Basic Degree Level Outcomes

(A) IN RESPECT OF GENERAL ACADEMIC SKILLS

Students successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

- the ability to distinguish primary sources from secondary sources
- the ability to provide a plausible analysis of a primary source in theological studies according to its genre, purpose, assumptions or tendency, and intended audience
- the ability to give an accurate summary of the substance of a secondary source in theological studies, to give a plausible account of its place in the discussions or controversies of an academic or faith community, and to evaluate whether its approach to solving a problem is appropriate
- the ability to pose a clear substantial question for reflection or research
- the ability to gather information in theological studies
- the ability to write an academic essay with a clear thesis statement, an expository outline dependent on the thesis statement, a selection of primary evidence appropriate to the exposition, persuasive interpretations and arguments, and reference to alternative possible interpretations of the primary evidence
- the ability to apply learning from one or more areas outside theological studies
- an understanding of the limits to his or her own knowledge and ability, and an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits to knowledge and how these might influence analyses and interpretations
- qualities and skills necessary for ministry, further study, and community involvement
- the ability to exercise initiative, personal responsibility, and accountability in both personal and group contexts
- the ability to work effectively with others
- the ability to manage his or her own learning
- behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility

(B) IN RESPECT OF THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTENT OF ONE OR MORE THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINES

Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

- Describe and explain the principal beliefs or dogmas of the Orthodox tradition both using specialized theological language and formulations, and employing less technical language for a general public with little familiarity with theological language;
- Identify and discuss the principal theological challenges which the Orthodox Church has had to confront over the centuries;
- Distinguish in the Orthodox tradition beliefs essential to the faith ("dogmas"), beliefs declared erroneous by Councils of the Church ("heresies"), and doctrines, teachings and private theological opinions ("theologoumena");
- Critique new theological notions in relation to the Orthodox tradition;
- Describe and evaluate the contributions of important modern Orthodox theologians to the development of Orthodox systematic theology;
- Discuss and assess, following a critical reading and review, a major modern Orthodox work of systemic theology.

(C) IN RESPECT OF PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

- employ insights gleaned from the Orthodox dogmatic tradition in their own spiritual life and formation

(D) IN RESPECT OF MINISTERIAL AND PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

- articulate and apply the Orthodox approach to church teachings (dogma, doctrine and theological opinions) to their pastoral ministry or service within the church, and in public fora.

Evaluation

Requirements – Classroom and Online Sections

The final grade for the course will be based on the following:

Introductions to Selected Readings from the Course Reader	20%
Mid-course Quiz	15%
Critical Review of Dumitru Staniloae, *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology: The Experience of God* (Vol. 1: *Revelation and Knowledge of the Triune God*)	25%
Final exam *or* Research Essay	40%

All written assignments must be handed in no later than ***August 15, 2019***.

Grading System - Basic Degree Students

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale (see section 11.2 of the BD Handbook):

90-100 (A+)	Exceptional
85-89 (A)	Outstanding
80-84 (A-)	Excellent
77-79 (B+)	Very Good
73-76 (B)	Good
70-72 (B-)	Acceptable
0-69 (FZ)	Failure

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

Late work (BD). Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. [The instructor should stipulate the penalty for late work.] The absolute deadline for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner.

This penalty is not applied to students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness); students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a

recommendation on the matter to the instructor and request an SDF. The absolute deadline for obtaining an SDF for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of examination week, whichever is sooner.   An SDF must be requested from the registrar's office in the student's college of registration no later than the last day of exam week in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

Course grades*.* Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted to ACORN. Grades are not official until they are posted to ACORN. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy found at www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf, policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility*.* Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* (linked from http://www.tst.edu/content/handbooks) and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871. A student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges (http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm.

Other academic offences*.* TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of *Behaviour on Academic Matters* http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm).

Back-up copies*.* Please make back-up copies of written work before handing them in.

Obligation to check email*.* At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all credit students are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up a utoronto email address which is entered in the ROSI system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. *Students should check utoronto email regularly* for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or

Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder.

Email communication with the course instructor. The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students should be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses.

Course Schedule

Class 1 – Course overview, requirements, tools.
    Basic notions in systematic or dogmatic theology.
    Overview of modern Orthodox *Dogmatica* as a theological genre.

Class 2 – Tradition and the sources of tradition.

Class 3 – Positive/cataphatic theology and negative/apophatic theology.

Class 4 – God as Unity and as Trinity (Triadology).

Class 5 – The Holy Spirit (Pneumatology).

Class 6 – Creation (Cosmology).

Class 7 – Humanity (Anthropology).

Classes 8 & 9 – The Incarnation/Christ (Christology).

Class 10 – The Mother of God (Mariology).

Class 11 – Salvation (Soteriology).

Class 12 – The Last Things (Eschatology).

This syllabus is subject to change in accordance with the regulations in the TST *Basic Degree Handbook*.