THST 616

DOCTRINE OF GOD

Fall 2014

November 2-6, 2014

John C. Peckham, Ph.D.

InMinistry Center Intensive
MA in Pastoral Ministry
THST 616
DOCTRINE OF GOD
FALL 2014

GENERAL CLASS INFORMATION

Class location: Columbia Union Conference Office, Conference Room 1A
Class time/day: Sun, Nov 2: 5:00-8:00 pm
Mon, Nov 3-Wed, Nov 5: 8:00am-12:00pm; 1:30pm-4:30pm
Th, Nov 3: 8:00am-12:00pm; 2:00-4:00pm
Credits offered: 3

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT

Instructor: John Peckham, PhD
Telephone: 269-471-3954
Email: jpeckham@andrews.edu
Office Location: Seminary N309
Administrative Assistant: Eva Misho, esmisho@andrews.edu, 269-471-3197

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of the nature and attributes of God and His relation to the world. Consideration of divine foreknowledge, predestination, and providence; the Trinity; God as person.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required reading:


Selected readings accessed online.
Recommended reading:


**OUTCOMES**

Program Learning Outcomes (PO)

*MA in Pastoral Ministry (MAPMin) English & Spanish Program Outcomes*

1. Demonstrate proper biblical interpretation skills and application of biblical teachings.
2. Apply ethical principles in the context of the Seventh-day Adventist ministry.
3. Understand the historical-theological development of major SDA doctrines.
4. Prepare and deliver effective expository and prophetic sermons.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

Upon completion of this course students should be able to:

1. Think carefully about the nature, characteristics, and acts of God according to Scripture, especially as understood by Seventh-day Adventists.
2. Engage historical and contemporary theological issues while maintaining faithfulness to the canonical text.
3. Understand the current debate regarding the doctrine of God against the background of its historical and philosophical causes.
4. Analyze and evaluate various Christian perspectives on the doctrine of God.
5. Form a personal, biblical, and theologically sound approach to the doctrine of God, with recognition of the central role this doctrine holds for the whole of theology.
6. Discern the implications and repercussions of various traditional philosophical and theological presuppositions in relationship to the doctrine of God.

**PRE INTENSIVE CLASS ASSIGNMENTS**

1. **Reading Reports and Discussion Preparation**

You will complete the various assigned readings listed below and accessible online and turn in one reading report for each of the reading assignments. It is essential that you have completed these readings and reading reports before we begin meeting for class because essential in-class discussions will be based upon this pre-class preparation. All reading reports are due at the beginning of the first class on **November 2, 2014**. No reading reports will be accepted after the beginning of class on November 2.

The procedure and format for your reading report is as follows: list your name, the pages and time spent reading, three significant discussion questions based on the reading, and three points of
useful/interesting information. Finally, write one brief paragraph summarizing your critical evaluation of the reading (in approximately 100 words, see reading report rubric at the end of the syllabus). Your three questions should be of the type that evoke discussion and not merely yes/no or simple information questions. Make sure that you keep and bring to class a copy of your three discussion questions and points of useful/interesting information and have access to an electronic or hard copy of the readings during class. These will be used during dedicated times for discussion.

Please note that you should include only one reading report for each reading report assignment listed below even if that assignment includes more than one article to be read.

Reading Report Assignment # 1: Canale, “Doctrine of God” 1

Reading Report Assignment # 2: Peckham, “Theopathic or Anthropopathic?”

Reading Report Assignment # 3: Peckham, “Passible Potter”

Reading Report Assignment # 4: Canale, “Doctrine of God” 2; Peckham, “Bondage of the Will”

Reading Report Assignment # 5: Peckham, “Does God Always Get What He Wants?”


Reading Report Assignment # 7: Peckham, “Providence and God’s Unfulfilled Desires,” Canale, “Where is God?”

Reading Report Assignment # 8: Canale, “Doctrine of God 4” “Trinity in Scripture,” “Trinity Doctrine Among SDA”

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**DURING CLASS REQUIREMENTS**

1. **Class Attendance and Participation**

   Faithful attendance, preparation, and participation are essential to your success in this class and vital to the educational experience of your fellow students. You are expected to show evidence of your pre-class preparation by actively contributing in discussions. Be sure you attend class faithfully and plan to be active in participation.

2. **Final Exam**

   There will be one examination based on class lectures and discussions, which will consist of short answer and/or essay-type questions that expect the student to both reproduce specific information and show ability to appropriately evaluate and articulate that information within the broader context of the issues and biblical materials discussed.
It is suggested that each student spend 2-3 hours each evening reviewing the material presented in class and using the provided study guide to prepare for the final examination, which will be held on Thursday, November 6, 2-4 pm.

POST INTENSIVE ASSIGNMENTS

1. Critical Book Review

Read Norman Gulley’s *Systematic Theology: God as Trinity* in its entirety and write a critical book review. The final draft of the paper is due June 30 and must be 2000-2500 words in length (including footnotes and not including the title page), double spaced, in Times New Roman 12 point font, 1 inch margins, and in accordance with the Andrews University Standards for Written Work, which may be accessed at http://www.andrews.edu/grad/documents/standards-for-work.pdf. The criteria for assessing the critical book review is included in the rubric near the end of the syllabus. Specific instructions for preparing and writing the critical book review appear at the back of this document. **This paper is due on March 8, 2015.**

OUTLINE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Please note: This outline is subject to change based on the pace of the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Topic</th>
<th>Discussion of Reading Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov 2</td>
<td>Introduction/Divine Love is?</td>
<td>Discussion 1: Canale, “Doctrine of God I” (SLO 1-6)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion 1</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Discussion 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Discussion 3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nature and Attributes II: Is God Immutable, Timeless, Spaceless, and/or Transcendent?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 4 | Nature and Attributes III: Omnipotence and Determinism  
Discussion 4  
Nature and Attributes III: Omnipotence and Determinism  
Nature and Attributes IV: Omniscience and Providence,  
Foreknowledge and Predestination  
Discussion 5 | Discussion 4: Canale, “Doctrine of God 2”; Peckham, “Bondage of the Will” (SLO 1-6)  
Discussion 5: Peckham, “Does God Always Get What He Wants?” (SLO 1-6) |
|---|---|---|
| 5 | Nature and Attributes IV: Omniscience and Providence,  
Foreknowledge and Predestination  
Discussion 6  
Theodicy  
Discussion 7  
The Trinity | Discussion 6: Canale, “Doctrine of God 3”; Donkor, “Open Theism,”  
Donkor, “Predestination” (SLO 1-6)  
Discussion 7: Peckham, “Providence and God’s Unfulfilled Desires,”  
Canale, “Where is God?” (SLO 1-6) |
| 6 | The Trinity  
Discussion 8  
**Final Exam** (PO 1, 3; SLO 1-6) | Discussion 8: Canale, “Doctrine of God 4” “Trinity in Scripture,”  
“Trinity Doctrine Among SDA” (SLO 1-6) |

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**GRADING AND ASSESSMENT**

**Credit-Hour Definitions:** A professional 3-credit course taken at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary requires a total of 135 hours for course lectures, reading requirements and written assignments. For this course, the instructor estimates that the total hours for students registered for 3 credits will be distributed in the following activities:

- Class lectures: 30 hours
- Reading: 63 hours
- Reading Reports: 8 hours
- Preparation for Exam: 9 hours
- Critical Book Review: 25 hours

**Criteria for Grades:** In calculating grades I will look for evidence of mature, graduate level thinking as demonstrated in class participation and discussion and quality of written assignments. Written assignments will be graded relative to the degree to which the instructions listed in the description of each are followed and in accordance with the appropriate rubric. The final grade will take into account all of
the elements explained below and no other extra reading or work shall be given to improve one's final grade. However, the instructor reserves the right to make adjustments to the student's grade based on overall class performance and his perception of the student's involvement in the class.

**Passing Grades:** Students must faithfully attend and participate in class, complete required readings, and turn in all written assignments.

**Assignment Submission:** All assignments are to be submitted via Moodle (Learning Hub), unless otherwise noted in the assignment instructions below. Absent extenuating circumstances, which should be discussed with the professor, late assignments are not accepted.

**Assessment Breakdown**

1. Class Attendance and Participation 5%
2. Reading Journal and Discussion Prep 35%
3. Exams 40%
4. Critical Book Review 20%

The following scale will be used for determining the final grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>76-79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>69-63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>62-50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**CLASS POLICIES**

**Contact**
Do not hesitate to contact me for help or additional information. The best way is via email.

**Classroom Seating**
In order to facilitate learning everyone’s name please select a permanent seat until instructed otherwise.

**Disability Accommodations**
If you qualify for accommodation under the American Disabilities Act, please contact Student Success in Nethery Hall 100 (disabilities@andrews.edu or 269-471-6096) as soon as possible so that accommodations can be arranged.

**Late Assignment Submission**
The following penalties will be applied for late submission of assessment items:

Assessments received by due date: (possible A grade)
Delay up to 60 days: (no better than an A- grade)
Delay up to 90 days:  (no better than a B+ grade)
Delay up to 120 days:  (no better than a B grade)
Delay up to 150 days:  (no better than a C grade)

Computers and Cellphones
Computers are allowed in the class only for the purposes of note-taking or other activities related to the course lecture. Cell phone use is not permitted in class. Please silence and/or turn off any electronic devices that are not being used for the specific purposes of this course. Please do not leave the class room to take a phone call during class time.

Students found to be misusing their computers (gaming, emailing, surfing the internet) or cellphones (texting, gaming, emailing, surfing the internet) will be spoken with after class. Repeat offenders will receive a 5% final grade penalty.

Recording
Students are not permitted to record class lectures.

Examinations
“Credit is not granted in courses unless the required examinations are completed by the student. Students are expected to follow the published examination schedule. In cases where the schedule requires a student to complete four exams in one day, arrangements may be made with the dean to complete one of the examinations at another time.” AU Bulletin

If a student is not present at the scheduled examination time he/she will get 0 points for that evaluation. When a student is excused by the Associate Dean’s office from writing the examination at the appointed time, she/he will be given a different test from the rest of the class, usually an essay type examination consisting of only one question.

Language and Grammar
A student enrolled in a graduate program is expected to possess advanced written language skills, particularly in the language in which the degree is acquired. Thus, no special consideration will be given to English as a second language learners or native-English speakers who have yet to obtain mastery in written English. Such students are advised to seek the assistance of the campus writing lab or procure the services of an editor prior to the submission of their assignments. It might be helpful to read your assignments aloud and have someone else do so as well. All written work must conform to Andrews University Standards for Written Work: http://www.andrews.edu/grad/documents/standards-for-work.pdf.

Class Attendance
“Regular attendance at all classes, laboratories and other academic appointments is required for each student. Faculty members are expected to keep regular attendance records.” AU Bulletin

You are responsible for knowing the class preparation assignment for the following class period. If you miss class (excused or unexcused) it is your responsibility to find out what is expected in preparation for the next class period.

Teacher Tardiness
“Teachers have the responsibility of getting to class on time. If a teacher is detained and will be late, the teacher must send a message to the class with directions. If after 10 minutes no message has been
received, students may leave without penalty. If teacher tardiness persists, students have the right to notify the department chair, or if the teacher is the department chair, to notify the dean.” *AU Bulletin*

**Class Absences**

Attendance is an integral part of the learning experience in this course. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, 1% will be taken off the final grade for each absence. Students who are late within the first 10 minutes will lose 0.33%. Students arriving beyond the first 10 minutes will lose the entire 1%.

“Whenver the number of absences exceeds 20% (10% for graduate classes) of the total course appointments, the teacher may give a failing grade. Merely being absent from campus does not exempt the student from this policy. Absences recorded because of late registration, suspension, and early/late vacation leaves are not excused. The class work missed may be made up only if the teacher allows. Three tardies are equal to one absence.” *AU Bulletin*

**Excused Absences**

“Excuses for absences due to illness are granted by the teacher. Proof of illness is required. Residence hall students are required to see a nurse on the first day of any illness which interferes with class attendance. Non-residence hall students should show written verification of illness obtained from their own physician. Excuses for absences not due to illness are issued directly to the dean’s office. Excused absences do not remove the student’s responsibility to complete all requirements of a course. Class work is made up by permission of the teacher.” *AU Bulletin*

**Academic Integrity**

“In harmony with the mission statement (p.18), Andrews University expects that students will demonstrate the ability to think clearly for themselves and exhibit personal and moral integrity in every sphere of life. Thus, students are expected to display honesty in all academic matters.

Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) the following acts: falsifying official documents; plagiarizing, which includes copying others’ published work, and/or failing to give credit properly to other authors and creators; misusing copyrighted material and/or violating licensing agreements (actions that may result in legal action in addition to disciplinary action taken by the University); using media from any source or medium, including the Internet (e.g., print, visual images, music) with the intent to mislead, deceive or defraud; presenting another’s work as one’s own (e.g. placement exams, homework, assignments); using material during a quiz or examination other than those specifically allowed by the teacher or program; stealing, accepting, or studying from stolen quizzes or examination materials; copying from another student during a regular or take-home test or quiz; assisting another in acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., falsifying attendance records, providing unauthorized course materials).

Andrews University takes seriously all acts of academic dishonesty. Such acts as described above are subject to incremental discipline for multiple offenses and severe penalties for some offenses. These acts are tracked in the office of the Provost. Repeated and/or flagrant offenses will be referred to the Committee for Academic Integrity for recommendations on further penalties. Consequences may include denial of admission, revocation of admission, warning from a teacher with or without formal documentation, warning from a chair or academic dean with formal documentation, receipt of a reduced or failing grade with or without notation of the reason on the transcript, suspension or dismissal from the course, suspension or dismissal from the program, expulsion from the university, or degree cancellation. Disciplinary action may be retroactive if academic dishonesty becomes apparent after the student leaves the course, program or university.” *AU Bulletin*
Emergency Protocol
Andrews University takes the safety of its student seriously. Signs identifying emergency protocol are posted throughout buildings. Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting that specific location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during any evacuation or sheltering emergency.

Revision Statement
The instructor reserves the right to revise the syllabus for the benefit of the learning process with appropriate notification to the students.

INSTRUCTOR PROFILE

Dr. John C. Peckham, Associate Professor of Theology and Christian Philosophy at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, was born in New York and grew up in Massachusetts and Indiana. An ordained minister, John pastored in the Indiana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists before being called to teach in the Religion Department at Southwestern Adventist University, where he received the Educator of the Year Award in 2012. John graduated from Atlantic Union College (B.S. Accounting; B.S. Business Administration) and Andrews University (M.Div., Emphasis in Systematic Theology; Ph.D., Systematic Theology). His dissertation, “The Concept of Divine Love in the Context of the God-World Relationship” won the outstanding dissertation award and will soon be published by Peter Lang. Articles John has written have appeared in *Philosophia Christi, Trinity Journal, Themelios, the Mid-America Journal of Theology, Didaskalia, the Journal of the Adventist Theological Society, Perspective Digest,* and *Ministry Magazine.* Currently, John is working on two contracted books, one on divine love for IVP Academic and one on the Adventist Worldview for the NAD Education Department. John is married to an amazing woman, Brenda, who is a Registered Nurse and they have one son, Joel, their pride and joy. John’s passion is studying and proclaiming the beauty of the biblical worldview and the incomparable love of God that it manifests.

CLASS BIBLIOGRAPHY


**Reading Report Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria Category</th>
<th>Meets Standard (5)</th>
<th>Good (3)</th>
<th>Does Not Meet Standard (1)</th>
<th>Absent (0)</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>75% Content</strong></td>
<td>Some understanding of the material is exhibited in the summary. There are some questions and points of interesting information. Little evidence of thoughtful reading and reflection.</td>
<td>It appears that the material was not carefully read. Questions and points of insight are either missing or poorly done.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Out of 5</td>
<td>Out of 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>25% Presentation of the Assignment</strong></td>
<td>The journal is generally well done but includes some spelling and grammatical mistakes, only follows some of the instructions, and shows evidence of being completed in a rushed and halfhearted manner.</td>
<td>The journal looks messy; there are spelling mistakes and major departures from the instructions. It is evident that the student did not spend much time or effort preparing this assignment.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Out of 5</td>
<td>Out of 25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total (out of 100):**
CRITICAL BOOK REVIEW RUBRIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria Category</th>
<th>Exceeds Standard (5)</th>
<th>Good (3)</th>
<th>Does Not Meet Standard (1)</th>
<th>Absent (0)</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>20%</strong> Introduction</td>
<td>Book clearly introduced; a concise and succinct summary is presented, along with a well-crafted, thought-provoking thesis statement</td>
<td>Book clearly introduced; a two-sentence summary presented; leads into thesis statement</td>
<td>Book barely introduced; summary not included; no clear thesis sentence</td>
<td>Out of 5</td>
<td>Out of 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>30%</strong> Body</td>
<td>Thesis is well supported with three to five insightful points that not only support argument but also address personal philosophical perspective</td>
<td>Thesis is supported by three to five points; insightful and well-integrated argument</td>
<td>The thesis statement is not present or not clear; only one supporting argument is given; some points do not make much sense.</td>
<td>Out of 5</td>
<td>Out of 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>20%</strong> Organization-Structural Development of the Idea</td>
<td>The ideas are arranged logically to support the purpose, flowing smoothly from one to another and clearly linked to each other. The reader can follow the line of reasoning.</td>
<td>The ideas are arranged in a somewhat logical way, although occasionally they fail to make sense together. The reader is fairly clear about the writer’s intentions.</td>
<td>The writing is not logically organized. Ideas frequently fail to make sense. The reader cannot identify a line of reasoning and loses interest.</td>
<td>Out of 5</td>
<td>Out of 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>20%</strong> Conclusion</td>
<td>Main points summarized, thesis freshly restated, and significance of book/article noted</td>
<td>Main points summarized, thesis restated, and significance of book/article noted</td>
<td>No restatement of main points and thesis statement, or reference to significance of book/article</td>
<td>Out of 5</td>
<td>Out of 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10%</strong> Technical Aspects</td>
<td>Free of all technical errors</td>
<td>Two or three technical errors</td>
<td>Six or more technical errors</td>
<td>Out of 5</td>
<td>Out of 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total (out of 100):

CRITICAL BOOK REVIEW GUIDELINES

Each student will write a critique of the book and include his/her unique philosophical perspective. A critical book review requires reading, identifying your personal reaction, and cogently articulating support of your reaction.

Reading in order to Critique

1. Read the book, chapter by chapter—identify the author’s main points.

2. Summarize the book in your own words (one to two pages at the most).

3. Evaluate the credibility of the author and reliability of his sources—is the author credible? Are the sources authentic/accurate to your knowledge?
4. After you complete the first reading of the book, scan it and address areas such as bias (is the author fair?), opposing arguments presented, the ratio of facts to opinions. Are you convinced or unconvinced about the author’s main point? Why? Are there facts or opinions? Are opposing arguments addressed completely? Do you agree or disagree? Why? Why not? How does this fit/not fit with your philosophical perspective on theology? Will you incorporate the information you read into your life or do you reject it? Why? (You may agree with some points and disagree with others). And so on.

**Thesis Statement**

Now that you have thoroughly read and analyzed the work, you are ready to plan how you will WRITE about it. The key to identifying what you want to say about the book is an effective **thesis statement**. The thesis statement is the main idea of your critique and should be contained in one to three (maximum) concise sentences. This thesis statement defines your point of view about the ideas, theme(s), or meaning(s) of the arguments presented by the author of the book. Your thesis statement will not be the same as the original author’s thesis statement. For example, say that the original author’s thesis statement is “the moon is made of green cheese.” Your own thesis might be “the author’s assertion that the moon is made of green cheese is ill-founded and is not supported with adequate evidence.” Your succeeding paragraphs should all relate directly to this thesis statement and support your point of view by giving examples from the text.

**Writing the Critique**

Introduction: Introduce the book—state the author, title, and his reason for writing this book. Introduce the one-page summary created at the end of your reading, and, finally, lead into your thesis sentence(s) (one page).

Body: Three to five points should adequately support your thesis statement. These may include questions you asked yourself as you read and answers you arrive upon, the author’s credentials/credibility or lack thereof, the audience, bias, logic of argument, integration of ideas, and so on. You may cite directly, summarize, or paraphrase selected texts from the book to support your point/argument.

Conclusion: Summarize main points, restate the thesis statement in fresh words, and address the author’s success/failure at addressing the intended audience/reader. Note the significance of the work to the intended audience/reader. Keep the summary short and succinct, focusing on analysis of the book.