

Course ID:	Course Title:	Winter 2023
FMC 410-1	Introduction to Theology: Confessions and Creeds	Prerequisite: N/A
		Credits: 1

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates	
Delivery:	Online	Instructor:	Rev. Arthur Wong (Ph.D. Cand.)	First Day of Class:	May 12, 2023
Days:	2	Email:	arthur.rosanne.wong@gmail.com	Last Day to Add/Drop:	End of class on May 12
Time:	9-4pm (MST)	Phone:	416.949.9664	Last Day to Withdraw:	End of class on May 13
Room:	N/A	Office:	N/A	Last Day to Apply for Coursework Extension:	August 25, 2023
Lab/Tutorial:	N/A	Office Hours:	Contact to book appointment	Last Day of Class:	May 13, 2023

Important Dates and Information

Class (Online, Zoom)

Friday May 12, 9am-3pm (MST)

Saturday, May 13, 9am-3pm (MST)

Assignments due date: August 31, 2023

Course Description

This course provides an overview of the developments and the importance of creeds and confessions in the history of the church.

Expected Learning Outcomes

At the successful completion of this course, students should:

- have an understanding of the role of creeds and confessions in the life of the church
- have an understanding of theological terms developed during the Reformation such as *status confessionis*, *adiaphora* matters, etc.
- have an understanding of the “christocentric” nature of creeds and confessions and its relevance to the church today

Textbooks (Pick the ones necessary the your assignments you choose, see below)

1. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Christ the Center* (San Francisco, CA: HarperOne, 2009)
2. Alister McGrath, *Heresy: A History of Defending the Truth* (San Francisco, CA: HarperOne, 2009)
3. Beth F. Jones, *Practicing Christian Doctrine: An Introduction to Thinking and Living Theologically* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014)

Recommended Resources

- Alister McGrath, *"I Believe": Exploring the Apostle's Creed* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1997)
- Justo González, *The Apostles' Creed for Today* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2007)
- Ben Myers, *The Apostles' Creed* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2018)
- Robert Sproul, *What We Believe* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2015)
- Michael Bird, *What Christians ought to Believe* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016)
- Bernie van de Walle, *The Heart of the Gospel* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2009)
- Franklin Pyles and Lee Beach, *The Whole Gospel for the Whole World* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2016)

Requirements:

1. Class Participation (10 hours)

You are expected to be "present" during the Zoom meetings by having the video turned on (audio is optional) except for valid reasons (e.g. washroom or lunch breaks). You will also be expected to participate in group discussions during breakout sessions.

2. A Joint Project (10 hours, 2 pages)

Read the "Church in a Diverse World: Ecclesiology" chapter in *Practicing Christian Doctrine* (p.193-216) and the "Ecumenical Guidelines" in the Alliance Canada 2023 Manual (p.130-133). You have been tasked by the Board of Elders to recommend two organizations to partner with your church. One is to be a non-Christian organization and the other a Christian organization that is not directly under the Alliance Canada. Using the "Attentive Discernment" principle outlined in the manual, you are to present your findings by answering these three questions (one paragraph each):

- What do these organizations believe (e.g. mission, vision, core values)?
- How are these organizations similar or differ from the Alliance Canada and your church?
- Why do you think these two organizations are good ministry partners?

You will share your findings with your designated group at an agreed time after the the online classes are completed. Group members are expected to give constructive feedbacks. You will then edit your paper (if necessary) and submit to the instructor.

3. Choose one of the following assignments (20 hours, 2000 words, ~8 pages)

a. Pick a Heresy

Pick one of the heresies described in "The Classic Heresies of Christianity" in *Heresy: A History of Defending the Truth*. Provide a background and exposition of the beliefs (note: consult other resources to provide a more thorough research). How does this heresy manifest itself in today's church? Why is this heresy detrimental to the life of the individual Christian as well as the church? Defend against this heresy using scripture, creeds and confessions that are available to you.

b. Christ the Center

What are Bonhoeffer's critiques with regards to the typical approach to the Christological question? What does he propose instead? Provide a brief summary of Bonhoeffer's thoughts in "The Present Christ – The Pro Me" and "The Historical Christ." How can Bonhoeffer's approach to Christology enrich (or not!) the life of the individual Christian as well as the church?

c. The Person and the Work of Jesus Christ

Read "The Personal Jesus Christ: Christology" and "The Work of Jesus Christ: Soteriology" in *Practicing Christian Doctrine*. What is the relationship between the person of Christ and the work of Christ? Why is the doctrine of Jesus Christ (i.e. Christology) critical to the doctrine of salvation (i.e. soteriology)? How does various heresies distort / undermine this relationship (pick two)? How do these heresies manifest themselves in today's ecclesial context? How do these two doctrines, foundation upon creeds and confessions, stand against these heretical beliefs and shape the life of the Christian and the church?

Attendance:

Attendance for online class and group meeting (after class) are mandatory.

Grade Summary:

FMC courses are marked as either a pass or a fail, but for purposes of learning, the assignments will be given a letter grade to indicate the quality of their content and communication. Letter grades indicate the following:

A – Excellent

B – Good

C – Satisfactory

D – Minimal Pass

F – Inadequate

Further Instructions:

- **Format:** Written work should be double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman, with reasonable margins. No title page is required. Place title and name on the header.
- **Citations:** Concepts and quotes taken from others must be referenced properly using the [Chicago / Turabian \(CMS\) citation format](#).
- **Inclusive Language.** Pronouns such as "we" or "them" and nouns such as "humanity" and "people" should be used when appropriate.

Ambrose University Important Information:

Communication

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions.

Exam Scheduling

Students who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a *Revised Final Exam Time Application* to the Office of the Registrar by the deadline noted in the Academic Calendar. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; or 2) the scheduled final examination slot results in three consecutive examination periods. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Standards of Behaviour in the Classroom Setting

Learning is an active and interactive process, a joint venture between student and instructor and between student and student. Some topics covered within a class may lead to strong reactions and opinions. It is important that Students understand that they are entitled to hold contradictory beliefs and that they should be encouraged to engage with these topics in a critical manner. Committing to this type of "active learning" significantly increases the learning experience for both teacher and student, and reflects the Christian imperative to pursue truth, which lies at the heart of the Ambrose educational experience. However, active discussion of controversial topics will be undertaken with respect and empathy, which are the foundations of civil discourse in the Classroom Setting. Primary responsibility for managing the classroom rests with the instructor. The instructor may direct a student to leave the class if the student engages in any behaviour that disrupts the classroom setting. If necessary, Ambrose security will be contacted to escort the student from class. Please refer to your professor regarding their electronic etiquette expectations.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. The academic calendar can be found at <https://ambrose.edu/academics/academic-calendar>

Privacy

Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Coursework Extensions

Should a request for a time extension on coursework exceed the end of the term, a *Coursework Extension Application* must be completed and submitted to the Office of the Registrar. The extension (if granted) will be recorded on the student record. Extensions are granted at the discretion of the instructor and registrar. Normally, Course Extension Applications will be considered only when all of the following conditions are met:

- the quality of prior course work has been satisfactory;
- circumstances beyond your control, such as an extended illness or death of a family member, make it impossible for you to complete the course work on time; and
- you submit *Coursework Extension Application* to the Office of the Registrar on or before the deadline specified in the Academic Schedule.

If granted, time extensions do not excuse you from a final examination where one has been scheduled for the course. A temporary grade of TX will be assigned until a final grade is submitted in accordance with the new deadline. A final grade of F will apply to:

- all course work submitted after the end of the semester unless a coursework extension has been granted; and all course work submitted after the revised due date provided by an approved extension to coursework.

Academic Success and Supports

Accessibility Services

Academic accommodation is provided to Ambrose students with disabilities in accordance with the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Provision of academic accommodation does not lower the academic standards of the university nor remove the need for evaluation and the need to meet essential learning outcomes. Reasonable accommodations are tailored to the individual student, are flexible, and are determined by considering the barriers within the unique environment of a postsecondary institution. It can take time to organize academic accommodations and funding for disability-related services. Students with a disability who wish to have an academic accommodation are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services as early as possible to ensure appropriate planning for any needs that

Note: Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.

may include accommodations. Staff can then meet with students to determine areas to facilitate success, and if accommodations are required, ensure those accommodations are put in place by working with faculty.

Ambrose Writing Services

Ambrose Writing services provides academic support in the four foundational literacy skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It also assists students with critical thinking and the research process. Throughout the academic year, students can meet with a writing tutor for personalized support, or they can attend a variety of workshops offered by Academic Success. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. Academic Success serves all students in all disciplines and at all levels, from history to biology and from theatre to theology. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/sas/writing-services>

Ambrose Tutoring Services

Ambrose Tutoring Services provides support in specific disciplinary knowledge, especially in high-demand areas such as chemistry, philosophy, math and statistics, and religious studies. These tutors also coach students in general study skills, including listening and note-taking. During the academic year, Ambrose Tutoring Services offers drop-in tutoring for courses with high demand; for other courses, students can book a one-to-one appointment with a tutor in their discipline. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/tutoring>.

Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. We encourage students to build mental health supports and to reach out when help is needed.

On Campus:

- Counselling Services: ambrose.edu/counselling
- Peer Supportive Listening: One-to-one support in Student Life office. Hours posted at ambrose.edu/wellness.
- For immediate crisis support, there are staff on campus who are trained in Suicide Intervention and Mental Health First Aid. See <https://ambrose.edu/student-life/crisissupport> for a list of staff members.

Off Campus:

- Distress Centre - 403-266-4357
- Sheldon Chumir Health Care Centre - 403-955-6200
- Emergency - 911

Sexual Violence Support

All staff, faculty, and Residence student leaders have received *Sexual Violence Response to Disclosure* training. We will support you and help you find the resources you need. There is a website with on and off campus supports – ambrose.edu/sexual-violence-response-and-awareness.

Off Campus:

- Clinic: Sheldon Chumir Health Centre - 403-955-6200
- Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse - 403-237-5888