




Advancing God's Kingdom by Preparing Competent Christian Leaders for
Spirit-Empowered Life and Ministry

T410 CB/DE Doctrine of God

3 credits. Prerequisites: Theology I

Course delivery option:  Directed Study

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Course Goals

Course Description

Reflection upon the doctrine of the divine attributes as understood in Christian history and especially contemporary theology. Consideration is also given to the implications our understanding of God has for our understanding of godliness and for Christian ministry and Christian living in general.

Relationship to Horizon's Mission

As part of Horizon's mission to prepare competent Christian leaders, this course provides students with historical knowledge and research skills that will help them grow in the following [core competency](#):

- **Biblical and Theological Literacy:** demonstrate biblical and theological literacy by interpreting God's Word carefully in order to articulate the Christian faith and discern unorthodox teachings.

Core Competencies and Learning Outcomes



To demonstrate competency in *Biblical and Theological Literacy* students will:

1. Explain the different approaches theologians take when constructing their doctrines of God.
 - Assessment: Approaches Paper.
2. Explain areas of consensus and key areas of debate regarding the attributes of God by comparing and contrasting the views of theologians on the doctrine of God.
 - Assessment: Attributes Reports.
3. Explain numerous practical implications of the doctrine of God, including how the doctrine of God motivates your love for, worship of, and faith in God.
 - Assessment: Attributes Reports.

4. Articulate and defend your own understanding of the divine attributes.
 - Assessment: Attributes Reports.
5. Construct a sustained and in-depth theological argument regarding one of the divine attributes.
 - Assessment: Research Paper.

Course Work

Required Readings

Gabriel, Andrew K. (=AG1) *The Lord is the Spirit: The Holy Spirit and the Divine Attributes*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011. (ISBN: 978-1-60899-889-0)

Gabriel, Andrew K. (=AG2) “Pneumatological Insights for the Attributes of the Divine Loving.” In *Third Article Theology: A Pneumatological Dogmatics*, edited by Myk Habets, 39-53. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2016. *Available [online here](#) and on Populi, under the course Syllabus tab.

Highfield, Ron. (=RH) *Great is the Lord: Theology for the Praise of God*. Grand Rapids. MI: Eerdmans, 2008. (ISBN 978-0-8028-3300-6)

Pinnock, Clark H. (=CP) *Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God’s Openness*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2019 [originally published by Baker Academic in 2001]. (ISBN 9781532688614)

**While students have the benefit of accessing their textbooks online through the [Digital Theological Library](#), they will not have access to the Digital Theological Library upon graduation. Therefore, we encourage students to purchase select textbooks to build their personal library. For your convenience, Horizon has partnered with Kennedy’s Parable to provide textbooks.

Course Assignments and Activities

Portfolio Components. Attributes Report. One of these assignments must be edited and submitted to the Biblical and Theological Literacy e-Project *e-Project* in your Portfolio on *Portfolium*. See the [Portfolio Guide](#): “What Goes in My Portfolio” for further information.

*** Assignment Completion Notes ***

-You should be thinking about assignment 1 at the same time as assignment 2, while the content is still fresh in your mind.

1. Approaches Paper

You will begin preparing for this assignment at the beginning of this course, although you won’t write the paper until later. Hence, you should take good notes from your reading. In addition to preparing you for this assignment, the reading for this assignment will serve as a general orientation to the doctrine of God and to the various approaches that theologians take to this doctrine. This background information will prepare you for reading each theologian’s discussion of the attributes of God and for the attributes reports assignments. For this approaches paper assignment you will read:

- *AGI*, 1-12, 15-28, 37-44, 51-57, 65-74, 81-96, 100-112, 121-122 (76)
- *RH*, xvi-xviii, 153-163, 416-421 (18)
- *CP*, 1-18 (18)

After you complete the reading, you will **submit a statement** of reading completion. You should also write the first page of this paper. Later in the course, when it comes time to complete the paper, plan a time to **discuss with the other students** in the course (via skype, phone, in person, IM [instant messenger], or some other manner) the *overall approaches to the doctrine of God* that each of the authors take. Then write a 4 page paper (max 5 pages) and compare and contrast the *overall approaches to the doctrine of God* that each of the authors take. This paper has *four parts*.

- 1) Note who you discussed with (one sentence)
 - 2) Begin your paper by summarizing the heart of Gabriel's argument (about 1 page).
 - 3) Compare and contrast the overall approaches that the three books take in developing their doctrines of God (about 2 pages). As a part of this, you should note any tendencies you see in each of the authors (that is, is there anything that seems to be a recurring theme in how each author argues in favor of their conclusions?).
 - 4) Evaluate to what extent Highfield and Pinnock are examples of the concerns that Gabriel raises in his book (about 1 page). Your paper should give specific examples to supports your general observations.
- Related learning outcome: 1.
 - **Assignment Length:** 1400 words.
 - **Due dates:** Reading due Sept 24, Paper due Nov 19.

2. Attributes Reports

You will submit three reports. This assignment will give you the opportunity to demonstrate your ability to assess the textbooks, to articulate your own understanding of the divine attributes, and to reflect on the practical significance of the doctrine. For this assignment, citations may be in brackets (e.g., RH 106). Please do not include an introduction or conclusion for these assignments. Each report will be a total of 4-4.5 pages and should include the following parts.

- a) 2-2.5 pages each report= Compare and contrast *the specific conclusions that each author makes regarding each of the attributes of God* (you may also wish to reference additional authors discussed in class). Note areas where the theologians agreed (consensus) and areas of disagreement (diversity) and *why* they disagree. You will focus on Highfields's and Pinnock's books, although you should also take into account Gabriel's book when you are discussing attributes covered in Gabriel's chapters 5-7. For those attributes that only Highfield discusses, you can simply give a brief description of the attribute.
- b) Up to 1 page each report= An *explanation and defense of your own position* regarding each of the attributes covered in the report.
- c) Up to 1 page each report= Reflect on the *practical implications* of the attributes covered in the report. Reflections might include points regarding how you live (and your understanding of godliness), minister, how you relate to God, etc. You should take into account many insights that the textbooks make, but you should also **discuss this with other people in your circle of relationships** to get additional ideas (at your church, on Facebook, family). Ask yourself, (for example) what difference does/should it make in my life that I believe that God is omniscient (depending on

how one defines that)? What practical applications would a person make if they were preaching a sermon on that attribute of God?

Here is the list of readings for each report:

1) Attributes Report 1 (125 pages of reading)

- Freedom and Love, *RH* 164-176, 222-236; *CP* 81-83; *AG2* 45 (30)
- Omnipotence, *RH* 332-357; *AG1* 183-195, 203-204; *CP* 92-96, 126-131, 163-167 (51)
- Immutability, *RH* 358-375; *AG1* 152-162, 166-171, 174-182; *CP* 85-88, 138-140 (45)

2) Attributes Report 2 (101 pages of reading)

- Impassibility, *RH* 375-389; *AG1* 123-133, 146-151; *CP* 55-64, 88-92 (42)
- Eternity, *RH* 292-311; *CP* 96-99 (22)
- Omniscience, *RH* 312-332; *CP* 47-53, 99-102, 104-111, 137-138 (37)

3) Attributes Report 3 (73 pages of reading)

- Omnipresence, *RH* 275-292 (17)
- Holiness and Righteousness, *RH* 177-191; *AG2* 47, 49-50 (16)
- Grace and Mercy, *RH* 192-206; *AG2* 45-46, 48-49 (16)
- Patience and Wisdom, *RH* 206-221; *CP* 102-104; *AG2* 50-52 (19)
- Glory, *RH* 389-398, *AG1* 205-207 (11)

- Related learning outcomes: 2, 3, 4.
- **Assignment Length:** 1300 words each.
- **Due dates:** Oct 13, 29; Nov 12.

3. Research Paper

You may write a paper on any topic regarding the doctrine of God as long as it is related to the content covered in this class. This assignment should be characterized by critical theological reflection and not just a matter of reporting what others have said. Hence, in your thesis statement you must take a position regarding the topic that you are researching. As you write your paper:

- Aim for **2500 words** (a minimum of 2250 words and no more than 2750 words = approx. 8 pages), **not including** your **footnotes and bibliography** (include both of these with your paper). Please record the **word count** for your papers after your conclusions.
- Use a **minimum of 8 scholarly¹ sources**, including at least two **journal articles²** (dictionary definitions do not count as sources). If you are uncertain of how to access journal articles, watch this [video](#).
- Record the **word count** for your papers after your conclusions.

Failure to follow these simple guidelines warrants a grade reduction.

- Related learning outcome: 5.
- **Assignment Length:** 2500 words.
- **Due date:** Dec 8.

¹ “Scholarly” sources generally include articles published in academic journals and academic books (a book is often not ‘academic’ if it does not have footnotes or endnotes). You are welcome to use magazine articles and [web pages](#), but these will often not count as scholarly sources.

² There are a number of excellent databases available for searching the contents of many journals at one time. If you request a password from the [Horizon librarian](#), you can access many journals online through the electronic search databases once you login to the [STU Library page](#). An internet search can help you as well (although this would not be as helpful).

Estimate of Time Investment (individual time investments may vary)

Approaches Paper	18 hours	Sept 24, Nov 19
Attributes Reports (3)	51 hours	Oct 13, 29; Nov 12
Research Paper	24 hours	Dec 8
TOTAL	93 hours	

Assessment Rubrics

For this course, please find assessment rubrics on the Populi course page, in the lesson called “Doctrine of God Assessment Rubrics.”

Course Outline / Class Schedule

Any required revisions will take place throughout the course since there is generally no “revision week” for DE courses.

Week 1-2 Reading for the approaches paper. Write the first page of the approaches paper.

- *AG1*, 1-12, 15-28, 37-44, 51-57, 65-74, 81-96, 100-112, 121-122 (76)
- *RH*, xvi-xviii, 153-163, 416-421 (18)
- *CP*, 1-18 (18)

Due Sept 24 Statement of reading completion for the Approaches Paper

Week 3-5 Working on Attributes Report 1

- Freedom and Love, *RH* 164-176, 222-236; *CP* 81-83; *AG2* 45 (30)
- Omnipotence, *RH* 332-357; *AG1* 183-195, 203-204; *CP* 92-96, 126-131, 163-167 (51)
- Immutability, *RH* 358-375; *AG1* 152-162, 166-171, 174-182; *CP* 85-88, 138-140 (45)

Due Oct 13 Attributes Report 1

Week 5-7 Working on Attributes Report 2

- Impassibility, *RH* 375-389; *AG1* 123-133, 146-151; *CP* 55-64, 88-92 (42)
- Eternity, *RH* 292-311; *CP* 96-99 (22)
- Omniscience, *RH* 312-332; *CP* 47-53, 99-102, 104-111, 137-138 (37)

Due Oct 29 Attributes Report 2

Week 8-9 Working on Attributes Report 3

- Omnipresence, *RH* 275-292 (17)
- Holiness and Righteousness, *RH* 177-191; *AG2* 47, 49-50 (16)
- Grace and Mercy, *RH* 192-206; *AG2* 45-46, 48-49 (16)
- Patience and Wisdom, *RH* 206-221; *CP* 102-104; *AG2* 50-52 (19)
- Glory, *RH* 389-398, *AG1* 205-207 (11)

Due Nov 12 Attributes Report 3

Week 10 Finish Approaches Paper

Due Nov 19 Approaches Paper

Weeks 11-13 Research Paper

Due Dec 8 Research Paper

→End Submit any remaining revisions as necessary

- Since this is a DE course, revisions will be requested throughout the semester. Watch your rubrics for due dates for revisions.
- No assignments or revisions will be accepted after December 17, 2021.

Academic Policies

General Assignment Guidelines

Please see the Horizon [Format Guide](#) for assignment submission, grammar, and formatting guidelines.

Late Assignments and Extensions

Students are expected to submit work by the assigned due dates, as part of their development of the Leadership and Administration competency. To submit extension requests, students must submit the [Assignment Extension Request Form online](#) and *before the due date*. Professors may grant extensions in the case of extenuating circumstances, such as significant illness or a family emergency. Furthermore, no extensions will be granted beyond the final day of a term or semester.

A late assignment will not be assessed until the student first meets with the professor or the Adjunct Faculty Advisor to discuss whether the student's reasons for the late submission are acceptable. Unexcused late submissions will be tracked across each student's program. If one assignment is submitted more than five days late or if a student incurs multiple instances of unexcused late submissions, it will result in academic discipline, such as required tutoring, academic probation, failure of the course, or failure to qualify for graduation. Similar to standard human resource employment practices, students will receive warnings and conditions with increasing severity of academic discipline.

Resubmission of Assignments

Students have until the last day of revision week to submit revisions. Students can generally submit up to two revisions for each assignment, although a professor may accept more revisions if the professor determines the student is addressing all of the professor's instructions and making significant progress toward achieving competency.

Horizon College Assessment of Student Work

The goal of courses is to help students develop the stated competencies, not earn letter grades. Assignments are the means by which instructors evaluate development of those competencies. Consequently, students do not earn overall "grades" on individual assignments. Instead, assessment focuses on measuring students' competency as outlined in the syllabus and assignment rubric. For purposes of transferability to other institutions, the final competency designations will be translated to a comparable letter grade on a traditional transcript. The tables below explain Horizon's approach:

Horizon CBE Scale		Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point	U of S Equivalency
E	Exceeding	Student exceeded competency requirements for more than 40% of the learning outcomes and met requirements for all remaining learning outcomes.	A+	4.0	90-100
			A	4.0	85-89
			A-	3.7	80-84
M	Meeting	Student met competency requirements for all learning outcomes and may have exceeded in 40% or less.	B+	3.3	77-79
			B	3.0	73-76
			B-	2.7	70-72

Students pass a course only after they have demonstrated that they have *met or exceeded all* competency requirements for a course. If the student chooses not to meet all course competency requirements, the course will not be sufficient to fulfill their program requirements at Horizon. Nevertheless, for transferability purposes, the student will receive a letter grade of C+ or below on a traditional transcript.

BTM	Beginning to meet	Student was beginning to meet competency requirements for any one or more learning outcomes, and met or exceeded competency requirements for all other outcomes.	C+	2.3	67-69
			C	2.0	63-66
			C-	1.7	60-62
NYM	Not yet meeting	Student was not yet meeting competency requirements for one or more learning outcomes.	D+	1.3	57-59
			D	1.0	53-56
			D-	0.7	50-52
			F	0.0	0-49

Academic Honesty

Horizon uses the University of Saskatchewan definition of plagiarism described as “the presentation of the work or idea of another in such a way as to give others the impression that it is the work or idea of the presenter. Adequate attribution is required. What is essential is that another person have no doubt which words or research results are the student’s and which are drawn from other sources” (Office of the University Secretary, 2012). Students are expected to give due recognition to sources from which all substantial phrases, sentences or even ideas are drawn. Note also that you may not submit work done in one course to satisfy the requirements of another course (unless both instructors agree beforehand to accept such work). See [here](#) for examples of plagiarism and further guidelines in the College [Student Handbook](#).

Disability Services Information

If you would benefit from learning accommodations due to pre-existing physical or mental health conditions or learning disabilities, contact the Academic or Student Life departments at the beginning of the course. Horizon will work to meet your learning and/or physical needs where possible. If any conditions arise during the course that you wish to disclose, please contact us as soon as possible. In all cases you will need to provide current [documentation](#) of the disability or condition you wish to disclose. Horizon takes appropriate care to ensure confidentiality about any such disclosures. For more information, contact Bob Williamson, Dean of Students, at

bwilliamson@horizon.edu; or Heather Wood, Associate Dean of Students, at hwood@horizon.edu; Leanne Bellamy, Academic Coach, at lbellamy@horizon.edu.

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