

# **L A W & T H E O L O G Y**

**FALL 2017**

**JOHNNY REX BUCKLES**

**PROFESSOR OF LAW**

**CLASSROOM: 115 BLB**

**MONDAY, WEDNESDAY: 1:00-2:20 P.M.**

## **I. Purpose of Course.**

The goals of this course are (i) to introduce students to selected topics in the study of theology that conceptually parallel specific subjects in law and legal philosophy; (ii) to expand students' understanding of how theological thought can inform legal inquiry, and how legal thought can inform theological inquiry; and (iii) to increase students' awareness and enhance students' comprehension of the variety of historical and contemporary approaches to resolving problems that have arisen in theological and legal thought.

## **II. Required Materials.**

### **A. Textbook:**

Alister E. McGrath, CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY: AN INTRODUCTION (6th ed. 2017) (hereinafter "McGrath").

### **B. Supplemental Materials:**

A weekly packet of supplemental materials (generally designated by the number of the week of this seminar) should be available from the copy center. Each student is responsible for periodically obtaining packets in a timely manner as they are made available.

## **III. Topics to Be Discussed in this Course, Reading Assignments Corresponding thereto, and Dates thereof (Subject to Revision by the Professor).**

<b><u>DATE</u></b>	<b><u>TOPICS</u></b>	<b><u>READING ASSIGNMENT</u></b>
8/21	Prolegomena	McGrath at 83-103; Supplemental Materials for Week 1
8/23	Natural Law: Part I	Supplemental Materials for Week 1
8/28	Natural Law: Part II	Supplemental Materials for Week 2

8/30	Trinitarianism	McGrath at 299-326
9/6	Analogical Trinitarianism	Supplemental Materials for Week 3
9/11	Interpretation: Part I	Supplemental Materials for Week 4
9/13	Interpretation: Part II	Supplemental Materials for Week 4
9/18	Culpability: Part I	McGrath (TBA); Supplemental Materials for Week 5
9/20	Culpability: Part II	Supplemental Materials for Week 5
9/25	Causation: Part I	Supplemental Materials for Week 6
9/27	Causation: Part II	Supplemental Materials for Week 6; McGrath (TBA)
10/2	Justification, Excuse, and Pardon: Part 1	Supplemental Materials for Week 7
10/4	Justification, Excuse, and Pardon: Part 2	McGrath (TBA); Supplemental Materials for Week 7
10/9	Church and State: Part I	Supplemental Materials for Week 8
10/11	Church and State: Part II	Supplemental Materials for Week 8
10/16	Church and State: Part III	Supplemental Materials for Week 9
10/18	Church and State: Part IV	Supplemental Materials for Week 9
10/23	Theology and Public Policy: Part I	Supplemental Materials for Week 10

10/25	Theology and Public Policy: Part II	Supplemental Materials for Week 10
10/30	The Creator and the Created: Part I	McGrath (TBA); Supplemental Materials for Week 11
11/1	The Creator and the Created: Part II	Supplemental Materials for Week 11
11/6	The Creator and the Created: Part III	Supplemental Materials for Week 12
11/8	Human Life and Dignity: Part I	Supplemental Materials for Week 12
11/13	Human Life and Dignity: Part II	Supplemental Materials for Week 13
11/15	Marriage: Part I	Supplemental Materials for Week 13
11/20	Marriage: Part II	Supplemental Materials for Week 14
11/27	Conclusion	Supplemental Materials for Week 15
12/11	Exam	

#### **IV. Reading Assignments.**

Students must read the assigned portions of the required textbooks and supplemental materials in accordance with this syllabus (unless modified by the professor). Each reading assignment must be completed by the beginning of class on the date corresponding to the assignment in this syllabus. In addition to these required materials, students occasionally may receive photocopied materials to supplement material otherwise assigned. Students are responsible for reading such photocopied materials as assigned. Each student should read (*not skim*) the material intelligently, but at a brisk pace.

#### **V. Class Participation.**

Students must participate sufficiently in class (as determined by the professor) in order to pass this course. There are **two elements to class participation**. (1) Meaningful class discussion is required. (2) Each student must write four reflective journal entries addressing reading assignments

for the course. Each reflective journal entry must engage with precisely one day's (or one week's) reading assignment and demonstrate understanding of and reflection on the material discussed. **One journal entry must be submitted during each month of this course. Each journal entry must consist of at least 500 words.**

#### **VI. Evaluation.**

Assuming adequate class participation (see above), a student's grade will be based upon the student's performance on the final exam.

#### **VII. Office Hours.**

Unless otherwise announced, office hours will be Mondays and Wednesdays, 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. (Room 218 TUII), and other times by appointment. The professor will follow a literal "open door" policy when a student is in his office – no exceptions.

#### **VIII. Counseling and Psychological Services.**

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to the demands of a professional program, or feeling sad and hopeless. You can reach CAPS ([www.uh.edu/caps](http://www.uh.edu/caps)) by calling 713-743-5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or someone you know is in crisis. No appointment is necessary for the "Let's Talk" program, a drop-in consultation service at convenient locations and hours around campus. [http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets\\_talk.html](http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html)

#### **IX. Student Handbook and Compliance with Honor Code.**

Each student is responsible for complying with the requirements governing students in the University of Houston Law Center's student handbook. In addition to complying with the university attendance policy, each student is expected to attend all classes unless the student has very good cause for being absent on a particular day. Each student must record his or her class attendance and report to the professor concerning the same.