

Raymond C. Aldred  
Vancouver School of Theology  
My office is on the ground floor of VST building  
Email: [raldred@vst.edu](mailto:raldred@vst.edu); Mobile: 403-771-1187



THX550: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Theology: Modern, Postmodern, and Indigenous

Dates/Time: July 8-12 Lectures 9 am – 11:45 am + Tutorial 2 pm – 4:45 pm

Students will be introduced to the major theologians and theological movements of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. We will trace the philosophical development of Modernity to Post-modernity. The late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century gave rise to a growing diversity of theologies. My hope is that as we examine a variety of ways of doing we will grow in our ability to do theology.

### **Competencies**

1. Identify and briefly describe the major factors which influenced the theological thinking of the twenty and twenty-first centuries and form the background to it.
2. Identify and briefly describe the ideas of the major currents in the theology of the twenty and twenty-first centuries.
3. Compare and contrast the leading ideas of the major currents with the ideas and values of the student's Indigenous community.
4. Identify ways in which 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries theological ideas influence popular culture and media, and thus affect our communities and evaluate the healthy and unhealthy aspects of these impacts.
5. Reflect on ways in which the student's understanding of the Christian Gospel speaks to these issues and consider whether our understanding of the Gospel needs to be adjusted or clarified to meet the challenges posed by these recent trends.
6. Summarize the views of a significant theologian in 20<sup>th</sup>-century Christian theology and locate that theologian's work in its cultural and historical context.
7. Analyze that theologian's work from an Indigenous perspective or discuss a model for how to integrate that theologian's work with the theological traditions of the student's own community.

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### Course Requirements

Requirements	MDiv (ISP) 3 credits	MA or MDiv 1.5 Credit	Certificate	Audit
Attend Daily Morning Lectures	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Attend 3-hour afternoon Tutorial	Yes	No	No	No
Reading	Yes	Yes	Optional	Optional
10 Page final paper	Yes	No	No	No
Daily Journal	No	Yes	Yes	No

### Description of Course Requirements

*Attendance:* The learner must attend all the lectures, and all the tutorials, if required. I will not be recording the lectures, so if you miss some of the content, you will need to get notes from one of your classmates. This course is not offered asynchronously.

*Reading:* Required reading of articles and chapters from textbooks will be distributed in class.

*Required Text:* Bevans, Stephen B. *Models of Contextual Theology*, Third Edition. Orbis Books, 2002 ISBN: 978-1570754388

#### Journal Articles

Cone, J. H. (1986). "Black theology in American religion." *Theology Today* **43**(1): 6-21.

Deloria, V. (1977). "Native American perspective on liberation." *Occasional Bulletin of Missionary Research* **1**(3): 15-17.

Ellul, J. (1977). "Technology and the gospel." *International Review of Mission* **66**(262): 109-117.

Metzger, P. L. (2007). "Christ, culture, and the Sermon on the Mount community." *Ex auditu* **23**: 22-46.

Ruether, R. R. (1986). "Re-contextualizing theology." *Theology Today* **43**(1): 22-27.

Smith, A. (2006). "Dismantling the master's tools with the master's house: native feminist liberation theologies." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* **22**(2): 85-97.

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*Reading Schedule*

Date	Topic	Reading for morning	Reading for tutorial
July 8	Introduction	Bevans Part 1	<i>Christ and Culture and the Sermon on the Mount</i> <i>Community</i>
July 9	Identity	<i>Re-Contextualizing Theology</i> by Rosemary Radford Ruether	<i>Black Theology in American Religion</i> by James Cone
July 10	Christianity	<i>Technology and Gospel</i> by Jacques Ellul	
July 11	Indigenous Culture	<i>Dismantling...</i> by Andrea Smith	"A Native American Perspective on Liberation" by Vine Deloria
July 12	Praxis		

**Daily Journals are due at the beginning of class for the previous day's material. (4 Journals for the course)**

*Adapted from Randy Woodley, Asbury Theological Seminary*

## 4-MAT Reflections

A 4-MAT reflection, named for Bernice McCarthy's 4-MAT system (McCarthy 1987), consists of two single-spaced typed 8 1/2 x 11 pages. You will use 12 point font and the margins will be 1 inch all around. You can print the pages front and back if you wish. The first page must contain one heading, while the second page contains three. When laid out next to each other they will look something like this:



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“Concrete” section should not exceed half a page.

If you can connect what you are reading and hearing with what you have previously lived or observed, you will be profoundly changed by the class. If you cannot connect the semester with past and present personal realities, you will never be able to teach or use what you are learning with any conviction and effectiveness.

(c) **REFLECTION EXPRESSED IN QUESTIONS: What questions popped up** as you think about this class and topics? Keep a rough note sheet at hand as you read so you can write them down. Then simply list three or four of them. Your questions may be critical or grounded in spontaneous curiosity or naive yearning for solutions. Make sure, however, they relate directly to the MATERIAL CONTENT of the class NOT to the experience(s) you have just described in b. This section should take up about one fourth to a third of a page.

(d) **ACTION: WHAT I MUST DO WITH WHAT I LEARNED. So What Are You Going to Do about it?** All ministry related learning MUST lead to acts of ministry—whether through transformation of your inner person or your acquiring of useful knowledge or skills. Here describe what you simply must DO if you keep faith with what you have now discovered as a result of experiencing this class. Ideally, your actions will comply with the acronym **MAST**. They will be **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **S**pecific and **a**chievable within a given **T**ime frame. For example, “For the next month during my quiet time, I will meditate on a symbol called forth by my Bible reading.” Do not report reflective responses like “I need to learn or read more about Christian symbols.” This section should comprise one fourth to one third of a page.

### **Final Paper**

A ten-page paper is due on October 1, 2022 sent to instructor’s email as a Word document attachment. A bibliography is required with citations from at least ten different sources, of which no more than two are websites, excluding Wikipedia. *An equivalent requirement in the oral tradition can be negotiated with the instructor. Please inform the instructor if you would like to pursue this alternative.*

Summarize the views of a significant theologian from 20th century Christian theology and locate that theologian’s work in its cultural and historical context.

Analyze that theologian’s work from a First Nations perspective or discuss a model for how to integrate that theologian’s work with theological traditions of student’s own community.

### **COURSE POLICIES**

1. **Attendance** Learners are required to attend all the class sessions.

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**2. Reading and assignments** Students are expected to read all required assignments before class and to complete all assignments as outlined in the syllabus within the specified dates of the course and term.

**3. Submission of assignments**

Written assignments should follow the format set out by the *Society of Biblical Literature*. (A concise form of key examples may be found, free of charge, at <https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/pubs/SBLHSupp2015-02.pdf>)

Please note the following additional criteria.

- All assignments must be submitted as a word document and emailed to the instructor.
- All assignments should have a title page containing all the pertinent information.
- All assignments will be double-spaced in 12-point New Times Roman.
- All assignments must be submitted as Microsoft Word documents.
- The file name submitted ***must*** begin with the student's surname and designate the assignment. (e. g. Smith Theology Paper 1.doc)
- The professor will return all submissions via email.

**4. Academic honesty** Students are expected to adhere to VST's requirements for academic honesty as published in the Student Handbook.

**5. Inclusive language** in speaking and writing, inclusive language is expected when making reference to humans and a variety of metaphors are anticipated when referring to God.

**6. Assignment and Course Evaluation**

- Course evaluations at VST combine a letter grade system (A+ to B-; course failure is "Not Approved") including narrative comments based on the competencies of the course. No number of grades or weights of assignments are calculated, nor are final grades given numerical equivalents.
- Individual assignments within a course are given narrative evaluations, that is, APP (Approved) or INC (Incomplete) with narrative comments, based on the competencies and expectations set for that assignment. One re-write is allowed on any assignment that is INC. The re-written assignment is due two weeks after the work is returned. The final evaluation for an assignment can be APP or NAPP after a re-write.

**7. Late assignments**

Submission of assignments on time is a part of academic, professional and pastoral competence and a part of every course at VST. All assignments in courses are due on the dates specified in the syllabus. Failure to submit an assignment on time will be noted in the narrative evaluation of an assignment. Repeated failure to submit assignments on time may affect the final grade for the course. All assignments must be completed in a manner that meets the expectations of the professor in order to receive a passing grade for the course.

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**8. Limitation on use of social media**

Ordinarily, the use of electronic devices in the contexts of classrooms or meetings will be to support the learning, formation, or agenda at hand.

9. VST is committed to creating a safe space and an inclusive learning environment. If you have a diagnosed or suspected learning disability, chronic condition, mental health concern, or physical requirement which you anticipate may impact your participation in this class, you are encouraged to discuss your needs with the instructor and the Dean within the first week of classes.