



Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit - 2020-2021

Contemporary Theology

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| Course Code | G_BATRSPC304 |
| Credits | 6 |
| Period | P5 |
| Course Level | 300 |
| Language Of Tuition | English |
| Faculty | Faculty of Religion and Theology |
| Course Coordinator | prof. dr. H. van den Belt |
| Examiner | prof. dr. H. van den Belt |
| Teaching Staff | prof. dr. G. van den Brink, prof. dr. H. van den Belt |
| Teaching method(s) | Seminar, Lecture |

Course Objective

Students will be able to

- Identify some important theologians and theological views in the modern context.
- Reproduce and distinguish the main characteristics of a diversity of theological positions, such as that of liberal theology, neocalvinism and dialectic theology.
- Understand and interpret theological texts from representatives of these theological positions.
- Apply the positions of these representatives to theological issues that are still relevant, such as the authority of Scripture, the role of natural theology and the implications of theological anthropology.
- Compare the different theological positions and explain how they relate to theological presuppositions.
- Reflect on the relevance of the theological positions for contemporary theological issues.
- Relate their own (theological) position to the discussed theological positions.

Course Content

The development of Christian theology in the modern context will be highlighted by discussing various theological positions, such as those of Friedrich Schleiermacher, the neocalvinists Abraham Kuyper and Herman Bavinck the dialectic theologians Karl Barth, Emil Brunner and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and other theologians from the twentieth century such as Rudolf Bultmann, Paul Tillich and Wolfhart Pannenberg and the Dutch theologians and Arnold van Ruler, Oepke Noordmans and Cornelis Berkouwer. The course will also highlight some developments in Roman catholic theology prior to and after the Second Vatican Council.

Teaching Methods

The student prepares the lectures by reading the specified literature. In the classes the content is critically assessed by means of a guided discussion. In one of the classes students will be asked to present a theological text of about 25 pages and explain how the text relates to the theological position of the specific theologian and the context. There are 6 ECTS for this course (= 168 sbu): 36 hours for classes, 20 hours for preparing the exam, and 12 hours for preparing the presentation. This leaves 100 hours for literature study (calculating with 6 pages per hour, 600 pages in the preparation for the classes).

Method of Assessment

Students are expected to attend all classes, only with a minimum of 80% attendance the final exam can be made. The exam will have the form of a written exam or - in case the course is offered completely online - of an exam at home that has to be finished within a fixed period. The exam will assess the student's ability to a) interpret and analyse theological texts correctly, b) compare different positions within Christian theology and to articulate their own position, and c) to explain the relevance of systematic theology for theology in general and for societal issues

The presentation will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

- analysis of the primary source (the theological text)
- structure and clarity of the argument (consistency of introduction, argument and conclusion)
- use of secondary literature
- presentation skills

The assessment of the presentation will include the student's ability to articulate her/his position, reflect on it and relate to the feedback of others

Presentation 30%, exam 70%