

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM STUDY GUIDE

Master of Arts in Theology

I. SCHEDULE & LOCATION

- Saturday, October 28, 2017 (Buswell 112A) 8:45 am – 4:00 pm
- Saturday, March 24, 2018 (Buswell 112A) 8:45 am – 4:00 pm

II. OVERVIEW: ADMINISTRATION, SCOPE, AND PREPARATION

Administration ...

- Students have six hours to complete the exam.
- An unmarked, non-study Bible will be provided.
- No notes, books, or other study materials may be consulted during the writing of the exam or during breaks.
- No digital or printed copy of the exam or the answers may be retained, stored, or sent by the students.
- Grading will be pass/fail. Students who do not complete all four required essays will receive an automatic “fail” grade on the comprehensive exam.

Scope ...

- The exam includes a series of essay options that relate to core course content in the degree (biblical, historical, and systematic).
- *In the morning*, students will be required to write two essays in the non-emphasis areas of their degree (biblical, historical, or systematic).
- *In the afternoon*, students will be required to write two essays in the area of their emphasis (historical or systematic).
- *Biblical theology essay options* will focus on theological aspects of the following core courses: BITH 573, BITH 638, BITH 648 (see below, “III. Core Content”)
- *Historical theology essay options* will focus on theological aspects of the following core courses: BITH 577, BITH 653–656 (see below, “III. Core Content”)
- *Systematic theology essay options* will focus on theological aspects of the following core courses: BITH 565, BITH 573, BITH 674, BITH 675 (see below, “III. Core Content”)
- Essays should be clearly organized, written according to standard academic practices at Wheaton College, including the use of gender inclusive language when referring to men and women, and contain specific details/evidence.

Preparation ...

- The purpose of the exam is to evaluate each student’s comprehensive knowledge of the field of theology on a graduate level.
- As appropriate, students should be prepared to do the following:
 - think synthetically across the biblical, historical, and systematic theology disciplines
 - use technical theological terminology
 - relate theological concepts to the Bible
 - show awareness of diverse Christian theological traditions
 - locate movements in historical context
 - demonstrate firsthand knowledge of central theological works by key historical and contemporary (twentieth and twenty-first century) theologians

III. CORE CONTENT

- BITH 565—Christian Theology (4) (*degree prerequisite*)—Students should have a command of the major doctrinal divisions in Christian systematic theology
 - Biblical authority and inspiration
 - God/Trinitarian theology
 - Christology
 - Pneumatology
 - Creation
 - Human person
 - Salvation
 - Ecclesiology
 - Sacraments
 - Eschatology

- BITH 573—Scripture and Theology (4)
 - Theological use of Scripture
 - Doctrine of revelation
 - Sources of authority
 - Biblical inspiration
 - Models of biblical interpretation

- BITH 577—World Christianity (4)
 - Historical timeframe: nineteenth-century to current global Christianity
 - Contextual theologies (e.g. African theologies, Latin American Liberation theologies, Dalit theologies, and Asian theologies)
 - Key interpreters of global Christianity (e.g. Andrew Walls, Philip Jenkins, Brian Stanley, Lamin Sanneh)
 - Major figures (e.g. Mott, Ramabai, Tutu, Oduyoye, Romero, Pius XII, John XXIII, John Paul II)
 - Events & Movements (e.g. Edinburgh Missionary Conference, World War I, World War II, Vatican II, Global Pentecostalism)

- BITH 638—Old Testament Theology (4)—Students should have a command of the major divisions within the Old Testament, as well as a grasp of the unity of the whole canon.
 - Key contexts (e.g. literary, historical, cultural, and religious)
 - Key themes (e.g. God, creation, covenant, Israel)
 - Key connections with New Testament theology/literature

- BITH 648—New Testament Theology (4)—Students should have a command of the major divisions within the New Testament, as well as a grasp of the unity of the whole canon.
 - Key contexts (e.g. literary, historical, cultural, and religious)
 - Key themes (e.g. Christ, the kingdom of God, new life, new community)
 - Key connections with New Testament theology/literature

- BITH 653—Historical Theology: Patristic (2)
 - Historical timeframe: Apostolic Fathers through Council of Chalcedon (451)
 - Key theologians/leaders (e.g. Apostolic Fathers, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Constantine, Athanasius, Cappadocians, Cyril of Alexandria, Augustine)
 - Key events (e.g. Nicaea, Constantinople I, Ephesus, Chalcedon, the impact of the Constantinian shift)
 - Key doctrines/concepts (e.g. formation of the biblical canon, early Christian worship/practice, martyrdom, church and state, Christology, Trinitarian theology)

- BITH 654—Historical Theology: Medieval (2)
 - Historical timeframe: Council of Chalcedon through the eve of the Reformation
 - Key theologians (e.g. Augustine, Gregory the Great, Vincent of Lérins, Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, Maximus the Confessor, John of Damascus, Innocent III, Gregory Palamas, Anselm, Abelard, Peter Lombard, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, William of Ockham, Mystics, Biel, Hus, Wyclif)
 - Key events (e.g. Constantinople II, Constantinople III, Nicaea II, Great Schism, Avignon papacy, Western Schism)
 - Key doctrines/concepts (e.g. monasticism, papacy, Augustinian theological heritage, crusades, church and state, grace and merit, sacramental theology)

- BITH 655—Historical Theology: Reformation (2)
 - Historical timeframe: Reformation through the eighteenth century
 - Key theologians (e.g. Erasmus, Luther, Melancthon, Zwingli, Bullinger, Müntzer, Calvin, Bucer, Cranmer, Cajetan, Eck, Loyola, Spener)
 - Key events (e.g. German Peasants' Revolt, Council of Trent, Council of Regensburg, major confessions/gatherings/articles, Thirty Years' War)
 - Key doctrines, Concepts, and Movements (e.g. Major Reformation movements—Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, Anabaptist, British, free will, faith and works, forensic justification, paedobaptism, predestination, Arminianism)

- BITH 656—Historical Theology: Modern (2)
 - Historical timeframe: eighteenth through twenty-first centuries
 - Key theologians (e.g. Wesley, Edwards, Kant, Schleiermacher, Kierkegaard, Ritschl, Newman, Bushnell, Hodge/Princetonians, Barth, Bultmann, Bonhoeffer, Tillich, Rahner, Balthasar, Moltmann)
 - Key events (e.g. Great Awakening, Vatican Council I, Barmen Declaration, Vatican Council II)
 - Key doctrines/concepts (e.g. theodicy, Christological 'quests', Social Gospel, Catholic social teachings, evangelicalism, black theologies, feminist theologies, global theologies)

- BITH 674—Theology and the Liberal Arts (4)
 - Theological content: Be able to discuss the relationship between interdisciplinary content and Christian doctrine (using major fields of study discussed in class)
 - Key concepts (e.g. the origins and meaning of a liberal arts curriculum)

- BITH 675—Advanced Systematic Theology (4)
 - Be prepared to write advanced, graduate-level essays on topics in Christian systematic theology (students should refer to the topical list under "BITH 565")

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM READING LIST

Master of Arts in Theology

Students are advised to select from works such as the following while preparing for the exams, in addition to reviewing their core course notes. *This is not a list of required reading for the exam.* These books are listed either because they may have been assigned reading in some offerings of courses in the program or because they are helpful for understanding the material that may be tested on the exam. Students should also consult the major theological works of key figures in the history of Christian theology (primary sources from figures such as Augustine, Luther, Gutiérrez, etc.). The exam does *not* focus on the books themselves, however. Students are not expected to read all or even many of these books. In several cases, multiple books are listed that cover the same material, but with a variety of perspectives or details. Students should choose books (or portions of books) that review and supplement their course work, clarifying or expanding their understanding of doctrines or historical periods, according to their needs.

I. Historical Theology

A. Historical/Theological Surveys

Cross, F. L. and E. A. Livingstone, eds. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*. Third edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

González, Justo L. *A History of Christian Thought*, rev. ed. 3 vols. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1983.

Hastings, Adrian, ed. *A World History of Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.

McGrath, Alister E. *Historical Theology: An Introduction to the History of Christian Thought*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1998.

Olsen, Roger E. *The Story of Christian Theology: Twenty Centuries of Tradition & Reform*. Downers Grove, IVP, 1999.

B. Early Church

Burns, J. Patout, ed. *Theological Anthropology*. Sources of Early Christian Thought. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981.

Chadwick, Henry. *The Early Church*. Revised ed. London: Penguin, 1993.

Evans, G. R. *The First Christian Theologians: An Introduction to Theology in the Early Church*. Great Theologians. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004.

Frend, W. H. C. *The Early Church*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1982.

Hall, Stuart G. *Doctrine and Practice in the Early Church*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991.

Norris, Richard A. Jr., ed. *The Christological Controversy*. Sources of Early Christian Thought. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980.

Rusch, William G., ed. *The Trinitarian Controversy*. Sources of Early Christian Thought. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980.

C. Medieval Theology

Bell, David N. *Many Mansions: An Introduction to the Development and Diversity of Medieval Theology, West and East*. Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian, 1996.

Evans, G. R., ed. *The Medieval Theologians: An Introduction to Theology in the Medieval Period*. Great Theologians. Oxford: Blackwell, 2001.

Knowles, David. *The Evolution of Medieval Thought*. Second ed. London: Longman, 1988.

Meyendorff, John. *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes*. New York: Fordham University Press, 1979.

Ozment, Steven. *The Age of Reform 1250–1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980.

Southern, R. W. *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages*. London: Penguin, 1990.

D. Reformation Theology

Bagchi, David, and David C. Steinmetz, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Lindberg, Carter. *The European Reformations*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996.

Lindberg, Carter, ed. *The Reformation Theologians*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002.

Ozment, Steven. *The Age of Reform 1250–1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980.

E. Modern/Global/Contemporary Theology

Ahlstrom, Sydney E. *A Religious History of the American People*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972.

Braaten, Carl E., and Robert W. Jenson, eds. *A Map of Twentieth-Century Theology: Readings from Karl Barth to Radical Pluralism*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1995.

Cragg, Gerald. *The Church in the Age of Reason, 1648-1789*. London: Penguin, 1961.

Ford, David F., ed. *The Modern Theologians: An Introduction to Christian Theology in the Twentieth Century*. 3d ed. Oxford: Blackwell, 2005.

Holifield, E. Brooks. *Theology in America: Christian Thought from the Age of the Puritans to the Civil War*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.

Jenkins, Philip. *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Livingston, David, et al. *Modern Christian Thought*. 2 vols. Second ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1997, 2000.

Maddox, Randy L. *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1994.

Noll, Mark A. *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Schwarz, Hans. *Theology in a Global Context: The Last Two Hundred Years*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005.

II. Systematic Theology

Alexander, Donald, ed. *Christian Spirituality*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988.

Barbeau, Jeffrey W. and Beth Felker Jones, eds. *Spirit of God: Christian Renewal in the Community of Faith*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2015.

Boyd, Gregory A., and Paul R. Eddy. *Across the Spectrum: Understanding Issues in Evangelical Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002.

Clowney, Edmund P. *The Church*. Contours of Christian Theology. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1995.

Erickson, Millard. *Christian Theology*, 2d ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.

Gunton, Colin E. *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002

_____. *The One, the Three, and the Many: God, Creation, and the Culture of Modernity*. The 1992 Bampton Lectures. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

_____. *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*. Edinburgh Studies in Constructive Theology. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1998.

_____, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

_____, Stephen R. Holmes, and Murray A. Rae, eds. *The Practice of Theology: A Reader*. London: SCM, 2001.

Grenz, Stanley J. *The Millennial Maze: Sorting Out Evangelical Options*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992.

Hoekema, Anthony. *Created in God's Image*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1986.

Holcomb, Justin S., ed. *Christian Theologies of Scripture: A Comparative Introduction*. New York: New York University Press, 2006.

Husbands, Mark, and Daniel J. Treier, eds. *Justification: What's at Stake in the Current Debates*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004.

Jensen, Peter. *The Revelation of God*. Contours of Christian Theology. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002.

Lane, Anthony N. S. *Justification by Faith in Catholic-Protestant Dialogue: An Evangelical Assessment*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2002.

- Larsen, Timothy, and Daniel J. Treier. *The Cambridge Companion to Evangelical Theology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- McGrath, Alister E. *Christian Theology: An Introduction*. 3d ed. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 2001.
- _____, ed. *The Christian Theology Reader*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1995.
- McKim, Donald K. *Theological Turning Points: Major Issues in Christian Thought*. Atlanta: John Knox, 1988.
- Migliore, Daniel L. *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*. Second ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004.
- Olson, Roger E. *The Mosaic of Christian Belief*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002.
- _____, and Christopher A. Hall. *The Trinity*. Guides to Theology. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2003.
- Packer, J. I. *God Has Spoken*, 3d ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994.
- _____. *Knowing God*. 2d ed. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993.
- Pinnock, Clark H. *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1996
- Plantinga, Cornelius, Jr. *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995.
- Stott, John R. W. *The Cross of Christ*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1986.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM POLICY

Master of Arts in Theology

The comprehensive exam is offered by the BTS department twice during the academic year, in the fall and in the spring. Comps are not offered in the summer for August graduates of the Master of Arts programs, so students completing requirements and anticipating graduation in August should be prepared to take the comprehensive exam in March.

Students should not attempt to take the exam until they have had the opportunity to complete all the core course requirements (or during the final semester of the degree program). The exam must be passed within the 5-year deadline in order to earn the degree by traditional students and within the 7-year deadline for MPPM students.

If a semester or more has passed since the student's last enrollment in the Graduate School, the student should submit a Supplementary Application to the Graduate Admissions department in order to become eligible to register for BITH 692, *Comprehensive Exam*, in the semester of the student's choosing. The comprehensive exam fee is \$25.

Once a student has registered for BITH 692, s/he will be informed of study guides, exam dates and locations, special instructions, proctor agreements, and any additional information by the graduate BTS department office coordinator. It is the student's responsibility to verify that the graduate BTS department has all necessary contact information including an email address, to be used for communication purposes.

If the student decides to withdraw from the comprehensive exam that semester, s/he must drop it from his or her registration for that semester in the Registrar's Office no later than 2 weeks prior to the exam date. No refund is given after the second week of the semester.

Furthermore, it is the student's responsibility to communicate to the department no later than two weeks prior to the exam date that they have withdrawn from the comprehensive exam for that semester, or if they qualify for special accommodations due to *documented* special needs or learning disabilities. The documents for special needs must be on file in the Registrar's Office. Failure by the student to withdraw before the deadline of two weeks prior to the exam date results in the exam being recorded as an "F" for that attempt.

Students may attempt the comprehensive exam for their master's program only twice. A student failing his or her first attempt may retake the exam only at the announced time in the following semester. Failure to pass the comprehensive exam on the second attempt results in failure to have the master's degree conferred. Students who fail or withdraw from the comprehensive exam will be precluded from participating in commencement activities for that academic year.