

**Course Syllabus**  
**TRH2452HF L0101 – Eastern Christian Thought,**  
**Doctrine and Theology from 15th to 21st c.**  
**(Modern Orthodox Theology)**  
**Trinity College**  
**Toronto School of Theology**

**September - December (Fall) 2019**  
(last offered Summer 2016)

***Instructor Information***

---

Instructor: Dr Paul Ladouceur  
Office Location: Larkin Building, Office 317  
Phone: 416-978-2170 (in-session only – leave no messages)  
E-mail: 123thabor@gmail.com  
Office Hours: By appointment

***Course Identification***

---

Course Number: TRH2452  
Course Name: TRH2452H Modern Orthodox Theology (15th to 21st c. )  
Course Location: Larkin Building, Room \_\_\_\_  
Class Times: Tuesdays and Fridays 19:00-22:00 (over two three-week sessions -  
dates available August 2019)  
Prerequisites: None

***Course Description***

---

This course studies Orthodox theology from the fall of Constantinople in 1453 to the present, with a focus on the period since the mid-nineteenth century. Course material includes lectures by the Instructor, a book for review, and extracts from books, and articles and essays. Evaluation of student learning for both in-class and online sections will be by two short papers on assigned primary readings (20%), a mid-term quiz (15%), a book review (25%), and a research essay (40%).

***Expanded Course Description***

---

After the great historic period of Orthodox theology in the 14th century, dominated by Saint Gregory Palamas, Orthodox thought and theology suffered long centuries of stagnation as a result of the Mongol occupation of Russia, Ottoman oppression in the Byzantine world, and Western influences on Orthodox theology and ecclesial life. In the 19th century Orthodox theology began to emerge from the “Western

Captivity”, initially in Russia, and the 20th century witnessed a flowering of Orthodox theology, such as was not seen for many centuries. Theologians in countries of Orthodox tradition and among Orthodox communities in the West revived neglected aspects of Orthodox theology and examined a very wide range of theological themes, frequently opening original perspectives on traditional questions or addressing new issues. Underlying modern Orthodox theology is the general question of the engagement of Orthodox theology with the problems raised in “modern” and “post-modern” societies by such forces as secularism, relativism, atheism, political ideologies, humanism, social pluralism, ethical problems, science, ecumenism, interfaith contacts and globalisation. The insight of modern Orthodox theology on such questions leads to an enriched understanding of the Faith in the contemporary world and provides the basis for a deepening of spiritual life.

This course will allow students to familiarize themselves with the principal theologians, themes and writings of modern Orthodox theology. The course will highlight the two main theological approaches of the 19th and 20th centuries, “religious philosophy” and “neo-patristic” theology, mindful of both personal and theological convergences and divergences among the leading figures. The course will cover Orthodox theology after the 14th century; Western influences in Orthodoxy; the Russian theological academies; Orthodox dialogues with Protestantism and with Anglicanism; the “Symbolic Books” of the 17th century; the origins of the Patristic revival in the 18th century; the Russian religious renaissance of the 19th and early 20th centuries; the origins and characteristics of the major modern theological approaches; leading Orthodox theologians.

The course will also focus on several selected major theological issues as case studies highlighting differences in approach, emphasis and doctrines among major modern Orthodox thinkers. The course will not cover specific theological themes that are taken up in more detail in other courses, such as ecclesiology, ecumenism and religious diversity (TRT2651), and the theology of the human person (TRP2172).

## **Course Resources**

---

### **Required Course Books**

The following books should be acquired for this course:

1. *“Behold I Make All Things New”*: Readings in Modern Orthodox Theology (“Course Reader”).
2. Paul Ladouceur, *Modern Orthodox Theology: “Behold, I Make All Things New”* (T&T Clark, 2019).
3. Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1997).

**Recommended Secondary Sources** (a more complete list will be provided to registered students):

4. Mary B. Cunningham and Elizabeth Theokritoff, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Orthodox Christian Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
5. Andrew Louth, *Modern Orthodox Thinkers. From the Philokalia to the Present* (London: SPCK, 2015; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015).
6. Timothy (Kallistos) Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (London: Penguin Books, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1993).

### **Course Website**

This course uses the University of Toronto online learning facility called Quercus for its course website. To access Quercus, go to the UofT Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your

UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you will find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.

Information for students about using Quercus can be found at:  
<https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701>.

Auditing students and regular students who have trouble accessing Quercus should ask Sydney Yeung at the Faculty of Divinity of Trinity College ([divinity@trinity.utoronto.ca](mailto:divinity@trinity.utoronto.ca)) for further assistance.

## ***Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes***

---

### **Basic Degree Level Outcomes**

#### **(A) IN RESPECT OF GENERAL ACADEMIC SKILLS**

Students successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

- the ability to distinguish primary sources from secondary sources
- the ability to provide a plausible analysis of a primary source in theological studies according to its genre, purpose, assumptions or tendency, and intended audience
- the ability to give an accurate summary of the substance of a secondary source in theological studies, to give a plausible account of its place in the discussions or controversies of an academic or faith community, and to evaluate whether its approach to solving a problem is appropriate
- the ability to pose a clear substantial question for reflection or research
- the ability to gather information in theological studies
- the ability to write an academic essay with a clear thesis statement, an expository outline dependent on the thesis statement, a selection of primary evidence appropriate to the exposition, persuasive interpretations and arguments, and reference to alternative possible interpretations of the primary evidence
- the ability to apply learning from one or more areas outside theological studies
- an understanding of the limits to his or her own knowledge and ability, and an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits to knowledge and how these might influence analyses and interpretations
- qualities and skills necessary for ministry, further study, and community involvement
- the ability to exercise initiative, personal responsibility, and accountability in both personal and group contexts
- the ability to work effectively with others
- the ability to manage his or her own learning
- behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility

## **(B) IN RESPECT OF THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTENT OF ONE OR MORE THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINES**

Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

- Understand and describe the main approaches to Orthodox theology since the fall of Constantinople in 1453.
- Be familiar with the principal Orthodox theologians and centers of Orthodox thought during the past six centuries, especially from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to the present.
- Describe and explain the main themes and issues of modern Orthodox theology, including the relationship with earlier Orthodox theology and differences of approach among Orthodox theologians and between Orthodox theology and other Christian theologies, both using specialized theological language and formulations, and employing less technical language for a general public with little familiarity with theological language;
- Distinguish and explain in modern Orthodox theology teachings reflecting essential dogmas and those reflecting personal teachings and theological opinions (“theologoumena”);
- Describe and evaluate the contributions of important modern Orthodox theologians to the development of modern Orthodox thought;
- Discuss and assess, following a critical reading and review, Vladimir Lossky’s *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*.

## **(C) IN RESPECT OF PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION**

Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

- employ insights gleaned from modern Orthodox theology in their own spiritual life and formation.

## **(D) IN RESPECT OF MINISTERIAL AND PUBLIC LEADERSHIP**

Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

- articulate and apply the wisdom of Orthodox theology to their pastoral ministry or service within the church, and in public fora.

## ***Evaluation***

---

### **Requirements – Classroom and Online Sections**

The final grade for the course will be based on the following:

|                                                                                             |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Introductions to Selected Readings<br>from the Course Reader                                | 20% |
| Mid-course Quiz                                                                             | 15% |
| Critical review of Vladimir Lossky,<br><i>The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church</i> ) | 25% |
| Research Essay                                                                              | 40% |

All written assignments must be handed in no later than **December 15, 2019**.

## Grading System - Basic Degree Students

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale (see section 11.2 of the BD Handbook):

|             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| 90-100 (A+) | Exceptional |
| 85-89 (A)   | Outstanding |
| 80-84 (A-)  | Excellent   |
| 77-79 (B+)  | Very Good   |
| 73-76 (B)   | Good        |
| 70-72 (B-)  | Acceptable  |
| 0-69 (FZ)   | Failure     |

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

**Late work (BD).** Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. [The instructor should stipulate the penalty for late work.] The absolute deadline for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner.

This penalty is not applied to students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness); students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor and request an SDF. The absolute deadline for obtaining an SDF for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of examination week, whichever is sooner. An SDF must be requested from the registrar's office in the student's college of registration no later than the last day of exam week in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

**Course grades.** Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted to ACORN. Grades are not official until they are posted to ACORN. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy found at [www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf), policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

### Policy on Late Assignments

Arrangements must be made in advance for work submitted after the deadline. If circumstances (such as medical or compassionate difficulties) require that work be turned in late, contact the instructor at the earliest possible juncture to agree on a new time-line and other details. The final deadline for the submission of written material will be announced at the beginning of the course. For Fall courses, this will normally be December 15.

Students who for exceptional reasons (for instance, a death in the family or a serious illness) are unable to complete work by this date may request an extension (SDF = 'standing deferred') beyond the term. An SDF must be requested from the registrar's office in the student's college of registration no later than the last day of classes in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed

upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

### **Course Grades**

Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/grading.htm>) or college grading policy.

### **General Policies**

---

**Accessibility.** Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

**Plagiarism.** Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/content/handbooks>) and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871>. A student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges ([http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library\\_Archives/Theological\\_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm](http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm)).

**Other academic offences.** TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of *Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

**Back-up copies.** Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in or sending by e-mail.

**Obligation to check e-mail.** At times, the course instructor may send out important course information by e-mail. To that end, students must provide the instructor with a current valid e-mail address and check this address regularly for communications concerning the course.

## ***Course Outline***

---

### PART I HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON MODERN ORTHODOX THEOLOGY

1. Orthodox Theology from the 14th to the 19th Centuries
2. Theology in Pre-Revolutionary Russia
3. The Russian Religious Renaissance
4. Neopatristic Theology
5. The New Theology in Greece
6. Theology in Romania
7. Contemporary Orthodox Theology

### PART II. THEMES AND CONFLICTS IN MODERN ORTHODOX THEOLOGY

*Case Studies will be selected for student oral presentations and a written essay from the topics listed below or others to be identified at the beginning of the course. A preliminary bibliography will be provided to registered students:*

1. Tradition, Dogma, Doctrine and Theologoumena in Orthodoxy
2. Divine Wisdom (Sophia – Sophiology)
3. Apophatic Theology (Apophatism)
4. The Divine Energies (Neo-Palamism)
5. The Name of God and the Onomatodoxy Controversy
6. Social Theology
7. Political Theology
8. Theology of the Environment

**Registered students will be provided a more detailed outline and course schedule at the beginning of the course.**

**This syllabus is subject to change in accordance with the regulations in the TST *Basic Degree Handbook*.**