A. **Rationale for the Course.**
Understood as the study of the Bible subject by subject, *theology* is in a real sense the goal and culmination of Biblical studies, and has always been part of the very core of seminary curricula. This particular course is designed as an introduction to theological studies. As such it discusses the nature, the sources, the method, and especially the norm and basis of theology, i.e., the Bible. By focusing on the nature of the Bible as revealed, inspired, and inerrant, this course is intended to instill confidence in Christian workers in their ability to communicate truth about God and his world to others.

B. **Objectives of the Course.** After taking this course, the student should --
1. Know what theology is.
2. Understand how one should go about "doing" theology.
3. Understand what the Bible teaches about its own nature.
4. Understand and be able to refute the major attacks on Biblical authority.
5. Have a firm commitment to the reality of truth and sound doctrine.

C. **Class Sessions.** This course meets on Tuesdays, 12:30 – 3:10 p.m., from August 25 through December 15, 2015. The student should bring to class a Bible (NASB or ESV preferred but not essential) and the course outline (available online through the CANVAS system). Do not eat meals during class sessions.

D. **Absence Policy.** The student is expected to attend each class session. If an absence is necessary, the student should arrange for a fellow student to record that session and should listen to the recording. Three absences may require extra work; four absences may result in dismissal from the course.

E. **Grade Determination.** The following values will be given to specific assignments: reading statements, 15% (total); book reviews 30% (total); exam, 25%; final paper, 30%.

F. **Explanation of Assignments.**
1. **Reading statements.** On the due dates: submit a 3x5 card, or similar paper, or an e-mail, including your name, date, name(s) of assignment(s), and a simple statement declaring THAT the reading has been completed. If the whole assignment has not been completed, state how much was completed. A one-week grace period will be allowed in reference to the due dates.
2. **Book Reviews.** A book review should be about 2,000 to 2,500 words long, and should contain the following three sections.
   a. **DESCRIPTION.** First, what is the writer's overall purpose? What does he hope to accomplish with the book? What main point is he trying to make? Summarize in a general way the content and progress of his thought.
   b. **EVALUATION.** Second, how well does the writer accomplish his purpose? Does he cover the subject adequately? Does he leave any loose ends, any questions unanswered? Does he treat all viewpoints fairly and take account of all the options? Are there logical or theological weaknesses or errors in the author's presentation? Are his conclusions really supported by the evidence presented? Are his presuppositions legitimate? Is his thinking biblical? Such questions as these must be answered only in terms of the author's intended purpose. (To answer such questions, you must read the book critically.)
   c. **APPLICATION.** Third, what is the value or usefulness of the book? Who would profit most from reading it? How can you use the author’s ideas in your own ministry?
G. Schedule of Assignments. (Aug. 25 -- First day of class.)


Sept. 29 -- Submit Book Review on Norman Geisler, ed., Inerrancy (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980), chapters 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, plus the Appendix.


Oct. 20 -- Return the completed exam at the beginning of the class session. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Nov. 10 -- Submit Book Review on your choice of ONE of the following books:

Nov. 24 -- Thanksgiving recess: no class.

Dec. 8 -- Submit a FINAL ESSAY (about 2,000 words—put word count on title page) explaining the following: “Truth, Life, and Ministry: What I Learned in This Course, and How I Plan to Apply It.”

Dec. 15 -- Final day of class. Graded essays will be returned.

H. Communication with Instructor: (1) Mailing address: 2700 Glenway Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45204. (2) E-mail: jack.cottrell@ecuniversity.edu (3) Phone: 513-244-8166 (school); 812-637-9628 (home).
I. The professor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus if deemed necessary.