

While every effort has been made to be accurate as of 4 January 2020, syllabi produced before the beginning of class are subject to change.

# INDS/THEO 517: THEOLOGY AND SCIENCE IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

CONFLICTED, COMPLEMENTARY OR COINHERENT?

Ross Hastings and David Robinson

Winter 2021

Wednesdays, 2:30-5:30 pm

2 or 3 graduate credit hours

TA: Jacob Raju

## Special Notes

Students are required to complete an anonymous online survey at the start and at the end of the course to ascertain their attitudes toward science and theology.

**Live Online and Recorded:** This course is being offered online with live class sessions in Winter 2021. Recordings of each class will be made available on the course Moodle site for 48 hours after the class. If you are not able to attend the live sessions due to living in a distant time zone, you may appeal to the Senior Academic Administrator for permission to take the course by using the recordings.

**On Campus:** A limited number of seats are available for on-campus participation in this course. If you wish to attend class on campus, you must register by November 29 and indicate your preference for on-campus instruction.

## Course Description

Since the advent of modernity it has become increasingly common for people to view science and religion as being in conflict with one another. According to scientism and the new atheists, this is because the former relies on rationality and evidence, whilst the latter is the result of faith and superstition. In this course, we will offer a robust theological response to such polarization, developing in its place a complementary—even coinherent—position that shows how each of these great traditions of thought have “deep mutual relations” (T.F. Torrance) and are the richer for the reality of the other. By considering commonalities of epistemology, ontology, aesthetics, as well as in-depth looks at particular sciences, we will demonstrate that there is much more overlap between theology and science than is commonly thought. Ultimately, we show that there is no contradiction between Scripture as properly interpreted and science as properly observed, and that science is not something that should be feared by

Christians. Rather, science can become an expression of our curiosity and wonder and a means for deepening our worship. We will also encourage those in scientific vocations to re-discover their work as a participation in God's work in the world.

### **Learning Objectives**

1. Create awareness of the history of science within and as enabled by the Christian tradition.
2. Develop an understanding of the distinctness yet mutuality of Christian theology and science, with respect to epistemology and ontology.
3. Impart an introductory knowledge of various aspects of particular sciences which illustrate connections with theological realities.
4. Encourage the development of encyclopedic theologians who, in contrast to viewing science as something that should be feared, respond to all reality in forming their theology.
5. Evoke a sense of curiosity and wonder about God's creation that leads to a doxological posture in all of life.
6. Validate and enrich the vocation of scientists in light of their image-bearing and priestly calling.

### **Academic Requirements and Time Investment**

	<u>2 cr hr</u>	<u>3 cr hr</u>
Lectures	36 hrs	36 hrs
Reading	32 hrs	48 hrs
Book Report	---	8 hrs
Book Responses	8 hrs	8 hrs
Term Paper	<u>14 hrs</u>	<u>35 hrs</u>
TOTAL	90 hrs	135 hrs

Please note: The amount of time taken by students will vary. This information is intended to be used as an approximation for planning purposes.

### **Assignments**

#### **1. Reading**

2 credit hour students are required to read 460 pages and 3 credit hour students are required to read 700 pages from the books in the required list.

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- 460 pages will come from the readings assigned for each day in class. Students must have read the pages assigned for the day before coming to class, have written a one page summary of their responses to the readings (see assignment #3 below), and be prepared to interact on their content. This will be the totality of reading for 2 credit hour students in the required list.
- Readings that are not taken from the required reading list will be made available as photocopies or on Moodle.
- The rest of the readings for 3 credit students must include some pages from each of the books in this required list. If students have read one of these books before they may substitute that book with another from the recommended list, with approval from the professor.

## **2. Book Report (3 credit hour students only)**

Students are required to write one book report on one of the books from the required reading section.

The book report will identify the book's main approach to science and religion. Write a review of the book in which you (i) clearly and succinctly describe its approach towards science and religion, (ii) identify what you consider to be the main strengths and/or weaknesses of its approach (use textual evidence; avoid ungrounded personal opinions), and (iii) briefly outline any ways in which you think it might need to be supplemented by any of the other approaches that were discussed in the class. Length: 1,000 words.

**Due submitted to Moodle by 4:30 pm, February 26**

## **3. Reading Responses (all students)**

Students are required to write a one page response to the assigned readings in preparation for each day in class. These responses will contain a summary of what they have learned, and a brief account of their own critical engagement with the material.

**Due submitted to Moodle before each class**

## **4. Term Paper (all students)**

Students are to write an academic paper on one of the following topics:

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- a. The Basis for Knowledge in Science and in Christian Theology
- b. The Origin of Humanity, describing the pros and cons of any two viewpoints that are biblically and scientifically credible. [Preferably pick the two viewpoints you agree and disagree with most strongly, referring to any wider reading you have done on the topic (including the book reviews). Give an evaluation of what you consider their strengths and weaknesses to be, being careful to offer arguments to support your praise or criticism (use textual evidence; avoid ungrounded personal opinions). In your concluding remarks comment on what ramifications your chosen viewpoint has for understanding the relationship between science and Christianity.]
- c. How I would teach/preach a series of sermons or adult/youth Christian Education classes on the relationship between science and theology, thereby evoking the curiosity and wonder and worship of Christian disciples. This essay will reflect a thorough knowledge of the subject material and include outlines of each sermon/talk given and a full manuscript of one of the sermons/talks.
- d. A topic approved by the professor.

Length: 1,200 words for 2 credit hour students; 3,000 words for 3 credit hour students

**Due submitted to Moodle by 4:30 pm, April 16**

**Format for Book Report and Paper:** Double-spaced; one-inch margins on all sides; Times New Roman 12pt font. The title page should contain the following information: (1) title; (2) your name; (3) name of the instructor; (4) course number and title; (5) semester and year; (6) word count. The format must be standardized according to Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013). Papers that are between one and two days late (counting inclusively) shall be penalized one grade point (e.g., a B+ will become a B); papers between three and four days late shall be penalized two grade points (e.g., a B+ will become a B-); and papers between five and seven days late shall be penalized an entire letter grade (e.g. a B+ will become a C+). We will not accept for grading any paper that without my permission is submitted more than seven days late.

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## Evaluation

	2 cr hrs	3 cr hrs
Book Report	--	20%
Book Responses	40%	20%
Term Paper	60%	60%

## Important Policies

**Note** that while every effort is made to ensure that assignments do not go missing, students are strongly advised to keep a copy of all course work in the event that resubmission is required.

**Course Evaluations** are an essential way for the College to measure and improve the effectiveness of its courses. Submitting a course evaluation is considered a requirement of this course. Near the last class session you will receive an e-mail notice with a link to an online course evaluation. Once you have submitted your evaluation you may then view your course grade online.

**Extensions** for course work are granted only in cases of a demonstrated unforeseeable and unavoidable emergency. See the Extension Policy for details (<http://www.regent-college.edu/current-students/academic-catalogue/course-policies>). The deadline for applying for an extension is the due date of the assignment(s). For Fall and Winter end-of-term assignments, you must first ask your instructor for an extension before applying through the Student Services Office.

**Attendance** is expected at all classes. If you must miss a class, for whatever reason, you are encouraged to contact your instructor prior to the class. Instructors are at liberty to assign grade penalties for unexcused absences.

**Academic Honour** is upheld by Regent College, as the highest standards of academic responsibility are part of our commitment to Christ in all of life. Students are required to familiarize themselves especially with the discussion of “Academic Integrity” in the College Catalogue.

## **Course Outline**

### **PART ONE: INTRODUCTIONS**

#### **Week 1 – January 13**

##### **Introduction; History of Science and Religion: Challenging the conflict thesis**

Readings: (80pp, 4 hours)

- Peter Harrison, “‘Science’ and ‘Religion’: Constructing the Boundaries,” *The Journal of Religion*, Vol. 86, No. 1 (January 2006): 81-106.
- Peter Harrison, “Science and Secularization,” *Intellectual History Review*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (January 2017): 47-70.
- Ross Hastings, “The Coinherent History of Ideas,” in *Echoes of Coinherence* (Eugene: Cascade, 2017), 60-94.
- Alan Padgett, “Science and Religion in Western History: Models and Relationships”, in *Science and Religion in Dialogue*, edited by Melville Y. Stewart (Malden: Blackwell, 2010), 849-861.

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#### **Week 2 – January 20**

##### **Considering a Theology of the Sciences: Towards Trinitarian Theology and Science Together**

Readings: (60pp, 3 hour)

- Ross Hastings, “Coinherence in the Theology/Science Tradition,” in *Echoes of Coinherence* (Eugene: Cascade, 2017), 1-59.

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### **PART TWO: UNDERSTANDING SCIENCE**

#### **Week 3 – January 27**

##### **Knowledge, Method(s), and Laws**

Readings: (45pp, 2 hours)

- Ross Hastings, “Coinherent *Epistemologies* in the Theology/Science Tradition,” in *Echoes of Coinherence* (Eugene: Cascade, 2017), 95-121.
- Lydia Jaeger, “Facts and Theories in Science and Theology: Implications for the Knowledge of Human Origins,” *Themelios* 41.3 (2016): 427–46.

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### **Week 4 – February 3**

#### **From Aristotle to Newton: The Rise of Modern Science**

Readings: (50pp, 3 hours)

- Michael B. Foster, “The Christian Doctrine of Creation and the Rise of Modern Natural Science,” *Mind*, Vol. 43, No. 172 (October 1934): 446-468.
- Michael B. Foster, “Christian Theology and Modern Science of Nature (Part I),” *Mind*, Vol. 44, No. 176 (October 1935): 439-466.

w. Guest Yonghua Ge

David Robinson

### **Week 5 – February 10**

#### **Natural Processes and Divine Providence**

Readings: (70pp, 3 hours)

- David Fergusson, “Providence in Nature,” in *The Providence of God: A Polyphonic Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 167-240.

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### **{Reading Week – February 17}**

### **Week 6 – Feb. 24**

#### **Contemporary Science(s) and Worldviews**

Readings: (70pp, 3 hours)

- Peter Harrison, “Religion, the Royal Society, and the Rise of Science,” *Theology and Science* 6, no. 3 (2008): 255–71.
- John Polkinghorne, “The Scientific View of the World,” “The Personal View of the World,” and “The Religious View of the World,” in *The Way the World Is* (Louisville and London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007 [1983]), 7-16, 17-26, 27-32.
- Iain Provan, *The Reformation and the Right Reading of Scripture* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2017), 347-382.

w. Guest Iain Provan

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### **PART THREE: EXPLORING COINHERENCE**

#### **Week 7 – March 3**

#### **Science and the Church; Vocation of the Scientist (Guest Scientist w. Interview/Response)**

Readings: (40pp, 2 hours)

- Karl Barth, “The Vocation of Man,” in *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004) IV.3, 520-555.
- Jennifer Wiseman, “How You Can Help Young Christians in Science,” *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 51, no.1 (1999), 1–5

w. Guest Deb Haarsma

David Robinson

#### **Week 8 – March 10**

#### **Resonances Between Theology and Science: Knowing, Being, Making**

Readings: (60pp, 3 hours)

- Ross Hastings, “The Coinherent *Ontologies* of Theology and Science [Part One and Part Two],” in *Echoes of Coinherence* (Eugene: Cascade, 2017), 122-168
- Tom McCleish, “A Theology of Science?” in *Faith and Wisdom in Science* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 166-212.
- Bronislaw Szerszinski, “Modernity, Nature and the Sacred,” in *Nature, Technology, and the Sacred* (Malden and Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 1-27.

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#### **Week 9 – March 17**

#### **Biology and Evolution (Guest Scientist w. Interview/Response)**

Readings: (40pp, 2 hours)

- Nancey Murphy, “Is Altruism Good? Evolution, Ethics, and the Hunger for Theology,” *Zygon*, Vol. 41, No. 4 (December 2006): 985-994.
- Dennis Venema, *Genomes as Ancient Texts* at BioLogos (<https://biologos.org/blogs/dennis-venema-letters-to-the-duchess/series/evolution-basics>)

w. Guest Dennis Venema

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**{Reading Week – March 24}**

**Week 10 – March 31**

**Physics (Guest Scientist w. Interview/Response)**

Readings: (80pp, 4 hours)

- Polkinghorne, *Science and the Trinity*, 88-117; *Quantum Physics & Theology*, 1-47

w. Guest Arnold Sikkema

Ross Hastings

**Week 11 – April 7**

**Biotechnology / Genetics (Guest Scientist w. Interview/Response)**

Readings: (40pp, 2 hours)

- Gerald McKenny, “Evolution, Biotechnology, and the Normative Significance of Created Order,” *Toronto Journal of Theology*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (2015): 15-26.
- Robert Song, “Genetic Manipulation and the Body of Christ,” *Studies in Christian Ethics*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (2007): 399-420.

w. Guest Rob Allore

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**Week 12 – April 14**

**Mediating and Practicing Coinherence; Important Practitioners in Theology and Science**

Readings: (90pp, 2 hours)

- Ross Hastings, “The Coinherent *Ontologies* of Theology and Science,” and “Trinitarian Theology as the ‘Theory of Everything’ and its Practice,” in *Echoes of Coinherence* (Eugene: Cascade, 2017), 169-223.
- Alister McGrath, *Science and Religion: A New Introduction*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 193-234.

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## **Bibliography**

### **Required Reading**

**(\*\* indicates the reading is not on Moodle and should be purchased)**

Karl Barth, “The Vocation of Man,” in *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004) IV.3, 520-555.

David Fergusson, “Providence in Nature,” in *The Providence of God: A Polyphonic Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 167-240.

Peter Harrison, “‘Science’ and ‘Religion’: Constructing the Boundaries,” *The Journal of Religion*, Vol. 86, No. 1 (January 2006): 81-106.

———, “Science and Secularization,” *Intellectual History Review*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (January 2017): 47-70.

———, “Religion, the Royal Society, and the Rise of Science,” *Theology and Science* 6, no. 3 (2008): 255–71.

\*\*Ross Hastings, *Echoes of Coinherence* (Eugene: Cascade, 2017). \$45.00

Lydia Jaeger, “Facts and Theories in Science and Theology: Implications for the Knowledge of Human Origins,” *Themelios* 41.3 (2016): 427–46.

Tom McCleish, “A Theology of Science?” in *Faith and Wisdom in Science* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 166-212.

Alister McGrath, *Science and Religion: A New Introduction*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 193-234.

Alan Padgett, “Science and Religion in Western History: Models and Relationships”, in *Science and Religion in Dialogue*, edited by Melville Y. Stewart (Malden: Blackwell, 2010), 849-861.

\*\*John Polkinghorne, *The Way the World Is* (Louisville and London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007 [1983]). \$23.99.

———, *Science and the Trinity*. Yale University Press, 2006. 88-117.

———*Quantum Physics & Theology*. Yale University Press, 2008. 1-47.

Iain Provan, *The Reformation and the Right Reading of Scripture* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2017), 347-382.

Bronislaw Szerszynski, “Modernity, Nature and the Sacred,” in *Nature, Technology, and the Sacred* (Malden and Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 1-27.

Jennifer Wiseman, “How You Can Help Young Christians in Science,” *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 51, no.1 (1999), 1–5

### **Recommended Reading**

- Alexander, Denis. *Rebuilding the Matrix: Science and Faith in the 21st Century*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2003.
- Alexander, Denis. *Can We Be Sure about Anything? Science, Faith and Postmodernism*. Leicester: Apollos, 2005.
- Barbour, Ian G. *Religion in an Age of Science*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990.
- Barbour, Ian G., and Ian G. Barbour. *Religion and Science: Historical and Contemporary Issues*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997.
- Bowler, Peter J. *Monkey Trials and Gorilla Sermons: Evolution and Christianity from Darwin to Intelligent Design*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007.
- Brooke, John Hedley. *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Brooke, John Hedley, and G. N. Cantor. *Reconstructing Nature: The Engagement of Science and Religion*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Brooke, John Hedley. *Heterodoxy in Early Modern Science and Religion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Carlson, Richard F. *Science & Christianity: Four Views*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2000.
- Chepkwony, Adam K. Arap. *Dialogue in Religion and Science: An African Perspective*. Eldoret, Kenya: Moi University Press, 2009.
- Collins, Francis S. *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief*. New York: Free Press, 2006.
- Connor, Daniel, and Francis Oakley. *Creation: The Impact of an Idea*. New York: Scribner, 1969.
- Danielson, Dennis Richard. *The Book of the Cosmos: Imagining the Universe from Heraclitus to Hawking*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing, 2000.
- Desmond, Adrian J., and James R. Moore. *Darwin*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton &, 1994.
- Edwards, Denis. *Breath of Life: A Theology of the Creator Spirit*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2004.
- Eiseley, Loren C. *The Firmament of Time*. New York: Atheneum, 1960.
- Fergusson, David A.S. *The Cosmos and the Creator: An Introduction to the Theology of Creation*. London: SPCK, 1998.
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- Giberson, Karl, and Francis S. Collins. *The Language of Science and Faith: Straight Answers to Genuine Questions*. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Books, 2011.
- Gunton, Colin E. *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans, 1998.
- Gunton, Colin E. *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: Essays Towards a Fully Trinitarian Theology*. London and New York: T. and T. Clark, 2003. Esp. Ch. 7
- Gunton, Colin E. *Christ and Creation: The Didsbury Lectures*, 1990. Eugene, OR.: Wipf & Stock, Reprint edition, June 9, 2005.
- Gunton, Colin E. *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Greene, John C. *Science, Ideology, and World View: Essays in the History of Evolutionary Ideas*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981.
- Haarsma, Deborah B., and Scott Hoezee. *Delight in Creation: Scientists Share Their Work with the Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Center for Excellence in Preaching, 2012.
- Harrison, Peter. *The Territories of Science and Religion*. Chicago, IL : University of Chicago Press, 2015.
- Harrison, Peter. *The Bible, Protestantism, and the Rise of Natural Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Henry, Carl F. H. *Horizons of Science: Christian Scholars Speak out*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978.
- Hodge, Charles, and Mark A. Noll. *What Is Darwinism? And Other Writings on Science and Religion*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1994.
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- Howell, Kenneth J. *God's Two Books: Copernican Cosmology and Biblical Interpretation in Early Modern Science*. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002.
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- Knight, Christopher C. *The God of Nature: Incarnation and Contemporary Science*. Minneapolis, Fortress, 2007.
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## **Journals**

*European Journal of Science and Theology*

*Journal of Creation Theology and Science*

*Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith*

While every effort has been made to be accurate as of 4 January 2020,  
syllabi produced before the beginning of class are subject to change.

*Philosophy, Theology and the Sciences*

*Reviews in Religion and Theology*

*Reviews in Science and Religion*

*Science and Christian Belief*

*Theology and Science*

*Zygon*

**Periodicals**

*Scientific American*

*New Scientist*