
THEO5244 MODELS OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY
2025-2026 T1

3/9, 10/9, 17/9, 24/9, 8/10, 15/10, 22/10, 5/11, 12/11, 19/11, 26/11

Wed 7:00PM - 9:30PM
Chen Kou Bun Bldg 123

Course Outline
Website: Blackboard

Late Assignment Submission Policy
(online application required; handled by DSCCC panel; refer to Blackboard for details)

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Course Descriptions and Objectives

Richard R. Osmer, a leading scholar of the International Academy of Practical Theology and founding editor of the *International Journal of Practical Theology* (IJPT), says:

In recent decades the discipline of practical theology has seen a number of far-reaching innovations, including its scientific emancipation and the broadening of its scope.....The “new” practical theology no longer views itself as a discipline concerned merely with applications and techniques. It no longer understands itself to be a form of applied exegesis or applied dogmatics, charged with formulating principles that can guide ecclesial practice.....its scope is no longer that of pastoral theology.....The new focus of practical theology as an academic discipline is closely related to fundamental hermeneutical reflection on the practical character of theology as a whole. (Fr. Editorial of 1st volume of *IJPT*)

His statement stands for both the new form of Practical Theology and a largely suppressed theological tradition that holds that theology is fundamentally practical.

This course is designed to introduce students to both this recent trend and a theological tradition that emphasizes "theology is a practical science." Furthermore, it seeks to demonstrate to students how theological concepts they read about and learn in class can be integrated into their Christian ministries and religious lives.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Knowledge Aspect:

- Understand the concrete meanings of theology as a practical science.
- Grasp the methods and methodologies of practical theology.
- Develop digital literacy and ethical AI usage skills for theological inquiry and practice.

2. Attitude Aspect:

- Fully appreciate that theological study is practically-oriented.

3. Skill Aspect:

- Learn the “how” of theory-practice integration via theological reflection.
- Utilize AI-assisted inquiry methods to synthesize complex information and identify emerging trends in practical theology.

Holistically, students would begin to acquire the habits of a reflective practitioner/practical theologian in a technologically advancing world.

Policy on the Use of Artificial Intelligence

In this course, students are permitted and encouraged to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools as a sophisticated pedagogical aid for specific tasks, such as brainstorming, synthesizing research, and improving writing style and grammar. The judicious use of AI can enhance learning by allowing students to focus on higher-order theological tasks, critical analysis, and ethical reflection. However, academic integrity is paramount. Students are strictly prohibited from submitting unedited AI-generated text as their own original work. All work submitted must reflect the student's own critical engagement and intellectual contribution.

Citation and Acknowledgement:

In accordance with CUHK's Approach 3, which states, "Students are allowed to use AI tools in any learning activities and/or assessments as long as they explicitly cite or otherwise acknowledge the use of these tools," students are required to cite their use of AI. This includes:

- **Model Used:** Clearly state the name and version of the AI tool(s) used (e.g., ChatGPT 4.0, Google Gemini, Anthropic Claude).
- **Description of Prompts/Process:** Provide a brief description of how the AI tool was used, including the prompts or queries entered and the specific stage of the assignment where AI was employed (e.g., used for brainstorming essay topics, to summarize research articles, to refine sentence structure).
- **Ethical Considerations:** Students must adhere to ethical principles when using AI, including accountability for the content generated, transparency in its use, and ensuring data privacy and confidentiality when sharing information with AI tools. Avoid inputting sensitive or confidential information into public AI models.

Allowed AI Tools:

Students are encouraged to explore and utilize various reputable AI tools available. Examples include, but are not limited to, large language models like ChatGPT (OpenAI), Gemini (Google), Claude (Anthropic), and Perplexity AI. Students should exercise discretion and critical judgment when selecting and using AI tools, prioritizing those that offer transparency in their data handling and model training.

Course Assessment

- 1 **Critical** Book Review (around 3000 words) 60%
 - Critically discuss One Book marked with * in the **Reference List** of this Outline
 - Language: either in Chinese or English
 - Submission Deadline: 15 December 2025
 - Submission: submitted via Blackboard (Pls do NOT send in hardcopies) and to CUHK Veriguide
 - Style of Reference: *The Chicago Manual of Style* (17th edition)¹ OR APA (7th edition)² should be used as the style of reference

¹ Examples are available from the official website addressed <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html> (you need to connect to the CUHK VPN when you are not on the CUHK LAN).

² Examples are available from the official website addressed <http://www.apastyle.org/>

- **Assessment Rubrics:** Please make sure that it is NOT only a reading REPORT, but a critical dialogue between you and the author.

	Levels of Achievement				
Criteria	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Fail
Summary Weight 20.00%	Clearly presents author's thesis and describes his/ her strategies for supporting it. Clearly and succinctly describes organization and presentation of text.	Presents author's thesis and describes his/her strategies for supporting it. Describes organization and presentation of text.	Presents author's thesis, but may not provide sufficient description of strategies for supporting it. Describes organization and presentation of text, but may need more details	Insufficient explanation of author's thesis, and/or insufficient description of strategies for supporting thesis. Insufficient description of text's organization and presentation. Only give summary chapter by chapter.	No explanation of author's thesis, and/or no description of strategies for supporting thesis. Poor or no description of text's organization and presentation.
Organization & Presentation Weight 20.00%	Review is very well organized, containing an introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion. Paragraphs contain clear topic sentences, focus on a single issue, are coherent, and organized according to an obvious pattern of argument. Effective use of transitional expressions and other signposts that make the structure of the document clear. Student's tone and diction enhance the argument being made about the text under review.	Review is well organized, containing an introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion. All paragraphs contain topic sentences, focus on a single issue and are coherently structured. Some use of transitional expressions and other signposts that make the structure of the document clear. Student's tone and diction are appropriate for the argument being made about the text under review.	Review has separate introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion, but connections among these could be improved. Most paragraphs focus on a single topic and are coherently structured. Topic sentences signal structure of argument, but may require more focus. Transitions are present and help connect parts of argument. Student's tone and diction are occasionally inappropriate for the target	Distinction between introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion is unclear. Paragraph structure needs improvement (some may be incomplete, or focus on too many issues, or be incoherent). Topic sentences do not effectively signal structure of argument or lack focus / clarity. More transitions are needed to develop argument. Student's tone and diction are marginal. Paper is	General structure of review is difficult to follow, and/or student failed to follow the prescribed format. Paragraphs are unfocused, incoherent or require restructuring. Topic sentences are absent or unconnected to the paragraphs that follow. Transitions are absent or used incorrectly. Student's tone and diction are inappropriate. Paper is unreasonably too long or too short.

	Levels of Achievement				
Criteria	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Fail
			audience.	much longer or shorter than the assignment requirement.	
Clarity of Concepts Weight 20.00%	Accurate grasp and use of concepts.	Good grasp and use of concepts.	Average grasp and use of concepts.	Frequently exhibit wrong/superficial grasp and use of concepts.	Very poor grasp and use of concepts.
Criticality and Reflectiveness Weight 20.00%	Critically engage the thesis, ideas, assumptions behind the thesis and ideas, and the concepts advanced by the author. Meaningfully identify the contemporary and practical relevance of the work.	Critically engage the thesis, ideas, and the concepts advanced by the author. Identify the contemporary and practical relevance of the work.	Engage the thesis, ideas, and the concepts advanced by the author. Briefly touch upon the contemporary and practical relevance of the work.	Inadequately and superficially engage the thesis, ideas, and the concepts advanced by the author. Reflection includes mainly student's feelings toward the work and some learnings after reading the work.	Do not engage the thesis, ideas, and the concepts advanced by the author. Simply accept what the author says. Reflection include mainly student's feelings toward the work.
Argumentativeness Weight 20.00%	In arguing for or against the work, student remains outstandingly logical, mobilizes relevant evidence to support his/her arguments, connects individual arguments clearly and organically, arrives at conclusions that are logically derived from the arguments, commits no logical fallacies.	In arguing for or against the work, student remains logical, mobilizes evidence to support his/her arguments, tries to connect individual arguments, arrives at conclusions that are logically derived from the arguments, commits only a few logical fallacies.	In evaluating the work, student tries to be logical, to substantiate his/her judgments, arrives at conclusions that are not forcefully argued.	In evaluating the work, student remains assertive, showing only limited awareness of the need to argue for his/her opinions.	In evaluating the work, student remains very assertive without showing an attempt to argue for his/her opinions.

■ Academic Honesty:

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academic_honesty/.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign on the declaration.

For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via the plagiarism detection engine VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

2	Integrative Seminar	
2.1	Presentation ³	30%
2.2	Participation	10%

Contents

Theme	Topic	Suggested Reading
What is Practical Theology?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Nature of Theology—Theoretical or Practical or “theoretical vs. practical”? ◆ Duns Scotus and the debate over the nature of Theology in the Thirteenth/Fourteenth Century ◆ Practical Theology as a discipline—historical development ◆ Types/ Models/ Paradigms of Practical Theology ◆ On Practical Theology in Chinese Speaking Societies ◆ Methods and methodologies of Practical Theology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Empirical (qualitative inquiry) approach ◆ Hermeneutical Approach ◆ Practical Theology as Critical Social Theory 	<p><u>Basics</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cahalan, K. A., & Mikoski, G. S. (2014). Introduction. In K. A. Cahalan & G. S. Mikoski (Eds.), <i>Opening the field of practical theology: an introduction</i> (pp. 1-10). Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield. • Morris, W. (2013). <i>Salvation as Praxis a practical theology of salvation for a multi-faith world</i>. London: Bloomsbury. Ch1. • Farley, E. (1983). <u>Theology and Practice Outside the Clerical Paradigm</u>. In D. S. Browning (Ed.), <i>Practical theology: The Emerging Field in Theology, Church, and World</i> (1st ed.). San Francisco: Harper & Row. • Forrester, D. B. (2000). <i>Truthful action: explorations in practical theology</i>. Edinburgh: T & T Clark. Pp. 3-60. • Osmer, R. R. (2011). Practical theology: A current international perspective. <i>HTS Theological Studies</i>, 67(2), 1-7. <p><u>PT and Scotism</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vos, A., Veldhuis, H., Dekker, E., Bok, N.W. den, & Beck, A.J. (Eds.). (2003). <i>Duns Scotus on divine love: texts and commentary on goodness and freedom, God and humans</i>. Aldershot, Hants, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate. Ch. 1. <p><u>Methods</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cameron, H., Bhatti, D., Duce, C., Sweeney, J., & Watkins, C. (2010). <i>Talking about God in practice: theological action research and practical theology</i>. London: SCM. Pp. 1-60. • Miller-McLemore, B. J. (Ed.). (2012). <i>The Wiley-Blackwell companion to practical theology</i>. Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell. Pp. 89-265. • Kim, H. S. (2007). The hermeneutical-praxis paradigm and practical theology. <i>Religious education</i>, 102(4), 419-436. <p><u>Conceptualizing Practice</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dykstra, Craig. (1991). Reconceiving practice. In B. G. Wheeler & E. Farley (Eds.), <i>Shifting boundaries: contextual approaches to the structure of theological education</i> (pp. 35-66). Louisville, Ky: Westminster/ John Knox. • Smith, T. A. (2012). Theories of Practice. In B. J. Miller-McLemore (Ed.), <i>The Wiley-Blackwell companion to practical theology</i> (pp. 244-254). Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell. • Schatzki, T. R. (2001). Introduction: practice theory. In T. R. Schatzki,

³ Guideline and a sample for Presentation will be available later.

		<p>K. Knorr-Cetina & E. v. Savigny (Eds.), <i>The practice turn in contemporary theory</i> (pp. 10-23). New York: Routledge.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Asian PT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 關瑞文。亞洲實踐神學運動的展開與展望。《時代論壇》。 Kwan, S. M. (2020). Practical Theologies in Chinese Speaking Societies—A Cross-Cultural Consideration. <i>International Journal of Practical Theology</i>, 24(2), 303-326.
Some Domains (examples) of Practical Theology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Theological Education ◆ Theological Reflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Models of theological reflection ◆ Disjuncture and theological reflection ◆ Learning style and theological reflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reflection via integrative seminar 	<p><u>Theological Education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kwan, S. S.-M. (2010). Revisiting a hope for healing the theory-practice gap: Integrative seminar as a pedagogical tool. In L. K. Lo, N. Tan & Y. Zhang (Eds.), <i>Crossing textual boundaries: A festschrift in honor of professor Archie Chi Chung Lee for his sixtieth birthday</i> (pp. 42-63). Hong Kong: DSCCC, CUHK. Farley, E. (1983). <i>Theologia: the fragmentation and unity of theological education</i>. Philadelphia: Fortress. Chs. 2-5. <hr/> <p><u>Theological Reflection</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graham, E. L., Walton, H., & Ward, F. (2005). <i>Theological reflection: methods</i>. London: SCM. Pp. -17. Pattison, S., Thompson, J., & Green, J. (2003). Theological reflection for the real world: time to think again. <i>British Journal of Theological Education</i>, 13(2), 119-131. Macallan, B., & Hendriks, H. J. (2012). A post-foundational Practical Theology? The pastoral cycle and local theology. <i>Dutch Reformed Theological Journal= Nederduitse Gereformeerde Theologische Tydskrif</i>, 53(3 & 4), 194-205.
Integrative Seminar x 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students' presentation (no audit [except special students] is allowed) ● Students will be divided into reflection teams; ● 2 from each team will serve as theological-reflection-presenters (the format of presentation will be announced later) ● The non-presenters will serve as reflection-partners for the presenters of their team through pre-session reflection meetings. 	
Debriefing and Conclusion		

References (Selected)

Practical Theology—General, Trends, Reconceptualizations, Models

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Preaching

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