ST504: History of Philosophy and Christian Thought. 3 hours

Meeting Time: Tuesdays 1:00 PM – 3:55 PM; Aug 22 – Dec 4

Fall, 2012

Contact Information
Prof.: Bruce Baugus Office Phone: 601-923-1696 (x696)
Office: DC Email: bbaugus@rts.edu

Catalog Course Description
[This Course is a] critical, historical survey of the development of the main schools of philosophy and the principal developments in Christian doctrine and thought. After a brief introduction to philosophical thinking, the course concentrates on philosophical movements from Heraclitus to contemporary existentialism. Each school of thought is evaluated from a distinctively Reformed perspective.

Explanation
Philosophy is inescapable and the relationship between philosophy and Christian thought, life, and ministry is varied and complex. The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with some of the most significant philosophical contributions, influences, and challenges to Christian thought. We will consider the relationship between philosophy and theology, and critique the various philosophical methods and proposals discussed in class beginning with pre-Socratic philosophy and running through contemporary postmodern thought. The primary objective of this course is to survey that body of philosophy students should know in order to (1) understand the development and present form of Christian thought and (2) be culturally literate in an increasingly Westernized world.

Textbooks & Readings

Textbooks (Required)
Colin Brown, Christianity & Western Thought, vol. 1 only (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1990)

Primary Readings (Required)
Augustine, On Christian Teaching (various publishers and online)
Immanuel Kant, Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone
David Hume, Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion
Homemade Reader (primary readings listed below posted on Self-Service and on reserve in Library)

Recommended
Willem J. Van Asselt, Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism (Reformation Heritage, 2011)

Assignments
Reading Reports: Each week students are expected to bring to class a summary of the major points or themes of the assigned primary readings for that day’s discussion (if any). Students may be asked to summarize their thoughts on a particular reading and may use their summaries to help them in class discussions. These summaries will be collected at the end of the class and graded.

In-class Exams: Two in-class exams will cover course content including assigned readings and class lectures and discussions. They will consist primarily of objective and short answer type questions.

Take-Home Exam: The take-home exam is comprehensive and consists of several analytic and synthetic essay questions on major themes in the course. There will be an element of choice built into the exam.

Course Grade
Reading Reports 20%
In class Exams 50% Midterm 25%; Final 25%
Take-home Exam 30%
Total 100%
Outline of Course Lecture Content

[Introduction to Course] ................................................................. Aug 28

**Introduction to Philosophy**
I. Definition and Divisions
II. Philosophy and Theology
III. Scripture and Philosophy

**Classical Philosophy**
I. Pre-Socratic Philosophy
   A. Central Problems: One and the Many (Unity and Diversity) & Change
   B. Major “Schools”
      1. Array of Theories: Ionians; Pythagoreans; Heraclitus; Eleatics (Parmenides and Zeno of Elea)
      2. Attempts at Synthesis: Empedocles and Anaxagoras
      3. Atomists
   C. Sophists ................................................................. Sept 4

II. Socrates ................................................................. Sept 11

IV. Aristotle ............................................................... Sept 18

V. Hellenistic Philosophy .......................................................... Sept 25
   A. Epicureanism
   B. Stoicism
   C. Pyrrhonism/Skepticism
   D. Neo-Platonism

**Medieval Christian Philosophy** .............................................. Oct 2*
I. Early Christian Thought
   A. Apologists
   B. Theological Debates: Incarnation and Trinity
   C. Christian Appropriation of Pagan Thought

II. Augustine ................................................................. Oct 9

[Fall Reading Week] ............................................................... Oct 16

[Midterm Exam] ................................................................. Oct 23

III. Medieval Christian Philosophy ............................................ Oct 23
   A. Boethius, Carolingian Renaissance, & Rise of Scholasticism
   B. Anselm of Canterbury
   C. Thomas Aquinas (Thomism)
   D. Duns Scotus (Scotism) .............................................. Oct 30
   E. William of Ockham (Nominalism)

IV. Philosophy & the Reformation
   A. Lutherans & Anabaptists
   B. Reformed Fathers

**Modernity** .......................................................................... Nov 6
I. Seventeenth Century Rationalism
   A. Descartes & Rise of Modern Rationalism
   B. Continental Rationalism: Spinoza, Leibniz, & Lessing
   C. British Rationalism: Rational Theology, Locke, Newton, and Deism
D. Dissent: Blaise Pascal & Jonathan Edwards

II. Eighteenth Century Enlightenment.................................Nov 13
   A. David Hume & Thomas Reid
   B. French Philosophes (Voltaire, Roussou, and Diderot) & the Encyclopédie
   C. Reason and Rebellion: American and French Revolutions

III. Nineteenth Century Philosophy: The Post–Christian Turn..............Nov 20
   A. Kant: Rational Moral Faith
   B. Schleiermacher & Romanticism
   C. Hegel: Absolute Idealism........................................Nov 27
   D. Rise of Modern Atheism: Feuerbach, Marx, Freud, Nietzsche
   E. American Scene
      1. Transcendentalism
      2. Pragmatism
   E. Dissent: Søren Kierkegaard & Old Princeton

Postmodernity........................................................................Dec 4
I. Analytic Philosophy & Positivism
II. Critique of Modernity: Wittgenstein & Ryle
III. Phenomenology & Existentialism
IV. Toward a Postmodern Philosophy
   1. Sources
   2. Lyotard, Derrida, Foucault, & Rorty
V. Christian Philosophy in America Today: Reformed Epistemology

Homemade Reader Content & Reading Schedule..................................Due Date
1. Plato’s Cave and Divided Line .....................................................Sept 11
2. Aristotle’s Categories....................................................................Sept 18
3. Plotinus’s The One, Descent of the Soul, and Dialectic...............Sept 25
   [Augustine’s On Christian Teaching] ........................................Oct 2
4. Anselm of Canterbury, Proslogion.............................................Oct 23
5. Thomas Aquinas, A Selection of Questions from ST and SCG
6. Descartes on Methodological Doubt.............................................Nov 6
7. Reimarus on Scripture and Lessing’s Ditch
   [Hume’s Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion].........................Nov 13
   [Kant’s Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone]....................Nov 20
8. Schleiermacher, Intro to CF
9. Stephen Crites on Hegel..............................................................Nov 27
10. Short passages from Feuerbach, Freud, Marx, and Nietzsche
11. Kierkegaard, Mirror of the Word
12. Menand on “the Metaphysical Club”
13. Selections from Wittgenstein and Rorty.................................Dec 4
   [Smith’s Who’s Afraid of Postmodernism]
14. Alvin Plantinga on Reformed Epistemology
### Course Objectives Related to MDiv Student Learning Outcomes

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<tr>
<th>MDiv Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</strong></td>
<td>Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<td><strong>Scripture</strong></td>
<td>Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td><strong>Reformed Theology</strong></td>
<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<td><strong>Sanctification</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td><strong>Desire for Worldview</strong></td>
<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<td><strong>Winsomely Reformed</strong></td>
<td>Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td><strong>Preach</strong></td>
<td>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<td><strong>Worship</strong></td>
<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td><strong>Shepherd</strong></td>
<td>Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<td><strong>Church/World</strong></td>
<td>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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