2ST504, History of Philosophy and Christian Thought

Course Handbook

RTS/Orlando, Spring Term, 2013

Meetings

Thursdays, 2-5 PM.

Instructor

John M. Frame

My stated office hours this term are Thursdays, 8-11 AM, others by appointment. I’m in my office most mornings, and if my door is ajar I’ll be happy to see you. Feel free to write me at jframe@rts.edu. I will probably give a better answer to your question by email than in person, but I realize that sometimes face-to-face meetings are better.

Teaching Assistant

Robert Binion, binion.robert.e@gmail.com. Robert is also available to help you. He will be evaluating your written assignments and will be available to help you prepare for exams.

Objectives

1. To inform students about the main thinkers in the history of philosophy, Reformed theology, and liberal theology.
2. To show the interaction of philosophy and theology, especially the influence of philosophy on our theological formulations.
3. To illumine the spiritual warfare that takes place in the intellectual movements of human history.
4. To give students critical tools to evaluate, not only thinkers of past history, but future thinkers as well.

Assignments

1. Regular attendance, preparation of assigned material each day for discussion. This year I will be using my new book Philosophy: a
With each chapter, you should be prepared to define the Key Terms at
the end and answer the Study Questions.

2. One paper of roughly 3000 words, due Fri., May 17, at 11 AM. Put it in
the bin marked with our course name in the area near the Administrative
Assistants.

   a. Choose some thinker discussed in this course.
   b. Read some of the thinker’s own works, plus some secondary
      sources, both assigned and unassigned.
   c. Describe and explain briefly one of his distinctive theses (one for
      which he is known in distinction from other thinkers).
   d. Note one or more of his main arguments for that thesis.
   e. Evaluate those arguments.
   f. Compare his position with that of Reformed Christian Theism.

3. MAR. 31-APR. 5: Midterm Exam. The exam will cover assignments
through that of Mar. 13. The exam will be given in the library. You can go there to
take it any time between its opening Mon., Mar. 31 to its closing Sat., April 5.
You are responsible to know the library’s opening and closing hours.

4. Final Exam: covering the assignments from that of Mar. 20 to the end of
the course. It will be given during the official exam period, at a place to be
announced by the seminary.

N. B.: In your preparation for the exams, do not make use of any
exam used for this course in an earlier year. If you do, it will be considered
cheating, for which RTS applies draconian penalties.

Grading

Individual assignments 1-4 will be graded on a pass-fail basis. Your final
grade will be calculated as follows:

Passing work on all four assignments—A.
Passing work on three of four assignments—B.
Passing work on two of four assignments—C.
Passing work on one of four assignments—D.
Passing work on no assignment—F.

Required Texts
Papers by Frame and Edgar, including Frame’s book *Philosophy: a Christian Perspective*, can be found at [www.reformedperspectives.org](http://www.reformedperspectives.org). Click on “Hall of Frame,” then this course.


  **ISBN-13:** 978-0664252083.

Edgar, “No News is Good News”

Frame, “Certainty”

  --, “Christianity and Contemporary Epistemology”

  --, “God and Biblical Language”

  --, “Greeks Bearing Gifts”

  --, “Infinite Series”

  --, *Philosophy: a Christian Perspective*

  --, Lecture Outline

  --, “Ontological Argument”

  --, “Transcendental Arguments”

  --, “Van Til Reconsidered”

**Recommended, Supplementary Texts**

Andrew Hoffecker, ed., *Revolutions in Worldview* (Phillipsburg: P&R, 2007). An excellent survey of worldviews from the Greek philosophers to the present. My “Greeks Bearing Gifts” is included. Other contributors include present and former RTS professors and other well-known Reformed scholars like Vern Poythress, Peter Leithart, Carl Trueman, Richard Lints.

Donald Palmer, *Looking at Philosophy* (NY: McGraw Hill, 2010). I used this as a text for this course for several years.


Samuel Enoch Stumpf, *Socrates to Sartre and Beyond: A History of Philosophy* (NY: McGraw-Hill, 2003). Dr. MacKenzie used this book as his main text. Excellent, detailed account. I have thought that it is perhaps too technical for most seminarians, but I could be wrong.

**Course Schedule**
This schedule indicates the readings you should do to prepare for each class meeting. We shall not be specifically discussing the assignments in AS, but they should help you to understand some of the thinkers we will be studying. The midterm and final exam will cover both lectures and readings.

All dates are Thursdays.

**Feb. 6: Introduction**

Be able to define all key terms and answer all study questions.

**Feb. 13: Greek Philosophy**

PCP, Chapter 2.
Allen and Springsted (henceforth AS), 1-82.

**Feb. 20: Early Christian Thought, Through Augustine**

PCP, Chapter 3.

**Feb. 27: Medieval Philosophy**

PCP, Chapter 4
AS, 83-110
Frame, “Ontological Argument”
---“Infinite Series”

**Mar. 6: Early Modern Thought: Secular**

PCP, Chapter 5
AS, 111-171.
Frame, “Certainty.”

**Mar. 13: Early Modern Thought: Christian**

PCP, Chapter 6
Mar. 20: Early Liberal Theology; Kant and His Successors

PCP, Chapter 7
AS, 172-218, 228-247.

Mar. 27: Spring Break; No Class

MAR. 31-APR. 5: MIDTERM EXAM. The exam will cover assignments through that of Mar. 13 (above). (It will not include the assignment for Mar. 20.) It will be given in the library, and you can take it whenever the library is open, from Monday through Saturday of this week. You are responsible to determine when the library is open.

Apr. 3: Nineteenth Century Theology

PCP, Chapter 8
AS, 219-228.

Apr. 10: Phenomenology, Pragmatism, Existentialism

PCP, Chapter 9
AS, 248-262.

Apr. 17: Twentieth Century Theology, Part 1

PCP, Chapter 10

Apr. 24: Twentieth Century Theology, Part 2

PCP, Chapter 11
AS, 263-280

May 1: Language Analysis, Structuralism, Deconstruction
May 8: Recent Christian Thought

PCP, Chapter 13
AS, 281-303.
Frame, “God and Biblical Language.”
“Christianity and Contemporary Epistemology.”
“Transcendental Arguments”
“Van Til Reconsidered”

Bibliography

Histories of Philosophy (Western), Reference Works, and Primary Sources

Descartes, Rene, A Discourse on Method and Selected Writings (NY: Dutton, 1951).
Ewing, A. C., A Short Commentary on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1938, 1974).
Habermas, Jürgen, Knowledge and Human Interests (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972).
-- Selections (NY: Scribner’s, 1929).
-- From Shakespeare to Existentialism (Boston: Neacon Press, 1959).
5.95. 404. h. Anti-Christian.
-- Fear and Trembling; The Sickness Unto Death (Garden City: Doubleday, 1941, 1955).
Leibniz, G. W., Selections (NY: Scribner’s, 1951).


Pascal, Blaise, Pensees (NY: Dutton, 1956).


Spinoza, Selections (NY: Scribner's, 1930).


Thiselton, Anthony C., The Two Horizons (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980).


Oriental Philosophy


Recent Philosophy of Religion

Bullett, Gerald, Problems of Religion (London: William Heinemann, 1938) .50. 143. H.
Flew, Antony, and MacIntyre, Alasdair, New Essays in Philosophical Theology (London: SCM Press, 1955, 1958). 274. H. This volume was one of the earliest collections of essays representing the modern analytic approach to philosophy of religion.
Hamilton, Kenneth, Words and the Word (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971). 2.95. 119. P.
--. The Varieties of Belief (NY: Humanities Press, 1973). 189. H. Helm is one of the few Calvinists among contemporary analytic philosophers.
Lotze, Hermann, Outlines of the Philosophy of Religion (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1903). 162. H.
Pl, Warrant (3 vols.)
--., same, second ed., 161. →

History of Modern Theology, Critical Analyses

Ferm, Deane William, Contemporary American Theologies I:
  184. p.
Freeman, David H., Recent Studies in Philosophy and Theology
Fuller, Daniel P., Easter Faith and History (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965). 4.95. 279. h.
Geisler, Norman, and McKenzie, Ralph, Roman Catholics and Evangelicals
Grenz, Stanley, and Olson, Roger, Twentieth Century
  Theology (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1992.) 393. h. One of the more recent evangelical discussions. I’m much less impressed with it than most reviewers have been. Contrary to Grenz and Olson, The problems of twentieth-century theology are far greater than a mere imbalance between transcendence and immanence.
Gundry, Stanley N., and Johnson, Alan F., Tensions in
Hamilton, Kenneth, God is Dead (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966).
  1.25. 86. p.
  --, The System and the Gospel (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963). 2.45. 249. P. Hamilton is an evangelical, somewhat influenced by Kierkegaard. This is his critique of Tillich.
Hughes, Philip E., ed., Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology
  --, The Uses of Scripture in Recent Theology
Klooster, Fred, The Significance of Barth’s Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1961). 2.95. 98. H. Klooster taught at Calvin Seminary for many years. Quite orthodox, a nephew of Cornelius Van Til.
-- ed., Process Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987). 17.95. 387. h. These volumes are very useful. Evangelical critiques.
Niebuhr, Richard R., Resurrection and Historical Reason (NY: Scribner’s, 1957). 3.95. 184. H. Excellent critique of Barth and Bultmann, as far as it goes.
Polman, A. D. R., Barth (Phila.: P&R, 1960). 1.50. 68. P.

Major Works of Modern Theologians, Readings in Modern Theology

Baillie, John, The Idea of Revelation in Recent Thought (NY: Columbia UP, 1956). 151. p. Surveys views of Barth, Brunner, Tillich and others. He seems to agree with all of them!
Barth, Karl, Church Dogmatics (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, from 1936). Many volumes.
Recent thinker in the Dutch Reformed tradition.

179. p. Liberationism.

Buber, Martin, I and Thou (NY: Scribner’s, 1958). 1.25. 137. P.


A friend of Bultmann, rather to Bultmann’s left! He demythologizes God, too.


--., God as the Mystery of the World (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983). 414. h. Jungel is a contemporary German theologian, fairly reminiscent of Barth, but trying to move ahead.


--., The Necessity of Faith (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976). 2.95. 159. P.


Mollenkott, Virginia R., Sensuous Spirituality (NY: Crossroad, 1993). Mollenkott was known as an evangelical for many years. Now known as a lesbian apologist for feminist theology.


Neville, Robert C., Creativity and God (NY: Seabury, 1980). 12.95. 163. h.
--., God the Creator (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1968). 8.50. 320. h. Neville wants his fellow process thinkers to develop a more credible doctrine of creation. Highly complex and confusing.


Pinnock, Clark, ed., The Openness of God (Downers Grove: IVP, 1994).
Professing evangelical argues new “open theism,” a God who doesn’t know the future.
--, and Brow, Robert C., Unbounded Love (Downers Grove: IVP, 1994). A more systematic presentation of the above viewpoint.


Anglican bishop caused quite a furor with this book.


“Reformed Epistemology”

Anderson, James, “If Knowledge Then God: The Epistemological Theistic Arguments of Plantinga and Van Til,” forthcoming.

Clark, Kelly James, Return to Reason (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990). An apologetic based on Plantinga’s “Reformed Epistemology.”

--, articles in Steve Cowan, ed., Five Views of Apologetics (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000). Note the interchanges between Clark and Frame, and with the other authors.


Recent Epistemology of Religion


Clouser, Roy, Knowing with the Heart (Downers Grove: IVP, 1999).


  --, The Possibility of Religious Knowledge (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971).
Helm, Paul, Belief Policies (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994). Frame’s review is in your SD.
  --, God, Freedom, and Evil (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974). These titles were published before Plantinga developed his “Reformed epistemology,” but he considers them still valid as providing
supplementary argumentation for the rationality of Christian belief.
Smart, Ninian, : The Science of Religion & the Sociology of Knowledge
Stump, Eleonore, and Murray, Michael J., eds., Philosophy of Religion: The Big
Swinburne, Richard, Faith and Reason (Oxford: Clarendon Press,
Torrance, Thomas F., Theological Science (NY: Oxford University Press, 1969,
1978).
by Frame in WTJ. Wittgensteinian, more or less.
Yandell, Keith, The Epistemology of Religious Experience (Cambridge:

Postmodernism

Allen, Diogenes, Christian Belief in a Postmodern World
Altizer, Thomas, et al., Deconstruction and Theology (NY: Crossroad, 1982).
14.95. 178. H.
Anderson, Walter Truett, Reality Isn’t What It Used to Be (San Francisco: Harper,
1990).
Burnham, Frederic B., ed., Postmodern Theology: Christian Faith in a Pluralist
Cahoone, Lawrence, ed., From Modernism to Postmodernism: an Anthology
Derrida, Jacques, Writing and Difference (London and NY: Routledge and Kegan
Dockery, David S., ed., The Challenge of Postmodernism
by knowledgeable Van Tillian.
Grenz, Stanley J., A Primer on Postmodernism (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans,
1996). Probably the best general introduction to the subject, but I would be
more critical of the postmodern movement.
Gunton, Colin, The One, the Three, and the Many: God, Creation, and the
Culture of Modernity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
Lundin, Roger, The Culture of Interpretation (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993).
Lyotard, Jean-Francois, The Postmodern Condition (Minneapolis: Univ. of
-- --, The Postmodern Explained (Minneapolis and London: University of
McCallum, Dennis, ed., The Death of Truth (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1996).
Postmodernism.
Middleton, J. Richard, and Walsh, Brian J., Truth is Stranger than it Used to Be (Downers Grove: IVP, 1995). Christians who are more friendly than most toward some postmodern ideas.
Taylor, Mark, Deconstructing Theology (NY: Crossroad, 1982).
Tilley, John, Postmodern Theologies (NY: Orbis, 1994).

Course Objectives Related to MDiv Student Learning Outcomes
Course: 2ST504, History of Philosophy and Christian Thought
Professor: John M. Frame
Campus: Orlando, FL
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MDiv Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Discusses the forms of Christian and non-Christian thought through history, promoting understanding and articulation in all these ways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scripture</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Not a course in exegesis, but the intent is to present and defend a biblical worldview as it applies to historical and modern circumstances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reformed Theology</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Teaches a worldview that is distinctively Reformed, notes a number of significant Reformed thinkers. Doesn’t focus on Reformed standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sanctification</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>This is certainly one goal in the course. I am trying to show that the biblical worldview is best for the intellect, will, and passions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Desire for Worldview</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>The worldview presented in the course is comprehensive, pertaining to all of life, and therefore motivating our greatest passion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Winsomely Reformed</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Presents positively Christian thinkers of all traditions and tried to model a winsome approach to non-Christian thinkers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preach</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Not a preaching course. But I hope the course will help students to understand better the needs of the world today and will help them to think and speak more clearly about those needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Worship</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>The course ought to encourage concern for non-Christians, since it will present their epistemological situation as hopeless. I hope to present the material in a way that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shepherd</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church/World</td>
<td>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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