2ST504, History of Philosophy and Christian Thought

Course Handbook

RTS/Orlando, Spring Term, 2015

Meetings

Tuesdays, 9-12 AM.

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

Chad Gilbert, chadillac85@gmail.com 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 15, at 11 AM. Send it electronically to Chad’s email address.
   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. Apr. 6-11: Midterm Exam. The exam will cover assignments through that of Mar. 31. The exam will be given in the library. You can go there to take it any time between its opening Mon., Apr. 6 to its closing Sat., April 11. You are responsible to know the library’s opening and closing hours.

4. Final Exam: covering the assignments from that of Apr. 7 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**


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 Tuesdays.

**Feb. 10: Introduction**

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

**Feb. 17: Greek Philosophy**

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

**Feb. 24: Early Christian Thought, Through Augustine**

PCP, Chapter 3.

**Mar. 3: Medieval Philosophy**

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

**Mar. 10: Early Modern Thought: Secular**

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

**Mar. 17: Early Modern Thought: Christian**

PCP, Chapter 6
Mar. 24: Spring Break: No Class

Mar. 31: Early Liberal Theology; Kant and His Successors
PCP, Chapter 7
AS, 172-218, 228-247.

Apr. 6-11: MIDTERM EXAM. The exam will cover assignments through that of Mar. 31 (above). 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. 7: Nineteenth Century Theology
PCP, Chapter 8
AS, 219-228.

Apr. 14: Phenomenology, Pragmatism, Existentialism
PCP, Chapter 9
AS, 248-262.

Apr. 21: Twentieth Century Theology, Part 1
PCP, Chapter 10

Apr. 28: Twentieth Century Theology, Part 2
PCP, Chapter 11
AS, 263-280

May 5: Language Analysis, Structuralism, Deconstruction
PCP, Chapter 12
Edgar, "No News is Good News"
May 12: Recent Christian Thought

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

May 15: Papers Due, 11 AM

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).


Palmer, Donald, Looking at Philosophy (NY: McGraw Hill,
A simple, but very competent exposition.

Pascal, Blaise, Pensees (NY: Dutton, 1956).
Singer was a historian of Reformed convictions.
Spinoza, Selections (NY: Scribner's, 1930).
Thiselton, Anthony C., The Two Horizons (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980).
Interacts especially with Heidegger, Bultmann, Gadamer, and Wittgenstein.
**Oriental Philosophy**


**Recent Philosophy of Religion**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dewey, John</td>
<td>A Common Faith</td>
<td>New Haven: Yale Univ. Press</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diamond, Malcolm</td>
<td>The Logic of God</td>
<td>Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill</td>
<td>552 h.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donnelly, John</td>
<td>Logical Analysis and Contemporary Theism</td>
<td>NY: Fordham Univ. Press</td>
<td>12.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donovan, Peter</td>
<td>Religious Language</td>
<td>NY: Hawthorn</td>
<td>114 P.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ebeling, Gerhard</td>
<td>Introduction to a Theological Theory of Language</td>
<td>Phila.: Fortress, 1971</td>
<td>6.50 221 h.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evans, C. Stephen</td>
<td>Philosophy of Religion</td>
<td>Downers Grove: IVP</td>
<td>6.95 191 P.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gill, Jerry H.</td>
<td>On Knowing God</td>
<td>Phila.: Westminster Press</td>
<td>173 P.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hamilton, Kenneth</td>
<td>Words and the Word</td>
<td>Grand Rapids: Eerdmans</td>
<td>2.95 119 P.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hartvelt, G. B.</td>
<td>Contextualizing the Gospel</td>
<td>RES Theological Forum XV:4</td>
<td>22 P.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helm, Paul</td>
<td>Belief Policies</td>
<td>Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994</td>
<td>226 h.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helm, Paul</td>
<td>The Varieties of Belief</td>
<td>NY: Humanities Press</td>
<td>189 H.</td>
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<td>Hepburn, Ronald W.</td>
<td>Christianity and Paradox</td>
<td>NY: Pegasus</td>
<td>211 P.</td>
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<tr>
<td>High, Dallas M.</td>
<td>New Essays on Religious Language</td>
<td>NY: Oxford Univ. Press</td>
<td>5.00 240 H.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holmer, Paul</td>
<td>The Grammar of Faith</td>
<td>San Francisco: Harper</td>
<td>10.00 212 h.</td>
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414. P.
-- *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion* (NY: St. Martin’s Press, 1982). 218. H.
-- *Warrant* (3 vols.)
321. h.
1.45. 221. p.
Wolfe, David, *Epistemology: The Justification of Belief*


**History of Modern Theology, Critical Analyses**


Fuller, Daniel P., Easter Faith and History (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965). 4.95. 279. h.


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.


Hamilton, Kenneth, God is Dead (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966).

--. 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.


--. The Uses of Scripture in Recent Theology (Phila.: Fortress, 1975). 11.95. 227. h.

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.


Bonino, Jose Miguez, Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation (Phil.: Fortress, 1975). 3.95. 179. P. Liberationism.


-- 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.


“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.


**Postmodernism**

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.
Lundin, Roger, The Culture of Interpretation (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993).
Lyotard, Jean-Francois, The Postmodern Condition (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1984).
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).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MDiv Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation</strong> (oral &amp; written)</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></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shepherd</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</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 will model Christian maturity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Church/World</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>The course focuses on a worldview held essentially in common by all Christians, and it seeks to show how differences of worldview affect all discussions of public issues.</td>
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