

STH TT 732 History of Christian Theology
Spring 2014

Syllabus

Instructor: R. Neville

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Office: STH 334

Office hours: Tuesdays, 8:30-9:30, Wednesdays, 2:30-3:30

Tuesdays: 9:30-12:20

STH 115

The purpose of this course is to survey some of the major theological positions in Western Christian history from the first through the twentieth centuries. A special emphasis is placed on the influence of philosophy on the formation of theological ideas; most of the great theologians were also known as philosophers. Thinkers from the ancient, medieval, Reformation, and modern periods will be studied, with emphasis on historical and social settings.

The course is taught in seminar format. All students are required to prepare the assigned readings and to be ready to discuss them. Each seminar session will begin with a presentation by a student. The presentations should be about 15 minutes long, briefly summarize the material read, and raise questions for discussion; the seminar presentations should be considered teaching exercises. Each student will be required to make at least one seminar presentation, depending on the enrollment in the course. Grading will be based on class participation, including seminar presentations, as well as a term paper.

The term paper, due at the last class, April 29, should be the development of the student's own theological position in relation to at least one of the historical figures read in class. Emphasis on theological change and discontinuity is appreciated as well as emphasis on continuity. The papers should be in proper academic format and be about 20 pages long with a proper bibliography.

Incompletes are not allowed except in cases of dire emergency, and permission must be obtained from the STH registrar.

Students with Disabilities—Any students in this course who have a disability that might prevent them from fully demonstrating their abilities should meet with the instructor as soon as possible to initiate disability verification and discuss accommodations that may be necessary to ensure your full participation in the successful completion of course requirements.

The STH Academic Code of Conduct may be found on the STH website at: www.bu.edu/sth/academic/academic-conduct. All students are required to familiarize themselves with this code, its definitions of misconduct, and its sanctions. Students should especially familiarize themselves with the section on plagiarism.

The course objectives are:

1. For students to acquire an historical framework for understanding Western Christian theology.

2. For students to learn many of the standard moves in theological disputation.
3. For students to develop their own theological positions with clarity in reference to historical antecedents.
4. For students to be able to articulate their theology in its historical contexts orally.

Please acquire the following books for this course, available at the University Bookstore, Barnes and Noble:

Barth, Karl, *Dogmatics in Outline*. Harper Torchbooks
 Behr, John, *Mystery of Christ: Life in Death*. St. Vladimir's Press
 Cahn, Steven M. *Classics of Western Philosophy*. 7th edition. Hackett
 Calvin, John, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Abridged edition by Hilary Osborn and Tony Lane. Baker Publishers
 Jenkins, Philip, *Jesus Wars*. Harper Collins
Martin Luther, edited by Timothy F. Lull. Second edition. Fortress
 Schleiermacher, F. *On Religion*. Cambridge
 Tillich, Paul. *The Essential Tillich*. Edited by F. Forrester Church. Chicago

Please prepare the material according to the following schedule:

- 1/21 Introduction
- 1/28 Cahn, chapter on Plato, Republic pp. 113-177
- 2/4 Cahn, chapter on Aristotle, pp. 228-236; chapter on Plotinus, entire
- 2/11 Jenkins, *Jesus Wars*, entire
- 2/18 Behr, *The Mystery of Christ*, entire
- 2/25 Cahn, chapter on Augustine
- 3/4 Cahn, chapter on Anselm, chapter on Aquinas
- 3/11 No class; Spring Break
- 3/18 *Martin Luther*, chapters 6, 22, 32, 4
- 3/25 Calvin, *Institutes*, Books I-II
- 4/1 Calvin, *Institutes*, Books III-IV
- 4/8 Cahn, chapter on Kant, pp. 903-927
- 4/15 Schleiermacher, through the fourth speech

4/22 Cahn, chapters on Hegel, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche

4/29 Barth, forewords and chapters 1-10; Tillich, Invocation, part 1, part 2, part 6.

Be sure to speak to one another outside of class about the readings and discussions.

Do not take incompletes except for dire emergency, which has to be certified by the registrar and academic dean in advance.