The syllabus is established by the Systematic and Philosophical Theology Area. The weekly meetings will be taught by members of the Area.

Course Description:

This is a required course for doctoral students in the area of Systematic and Philosophical Theology, as well as for students who opt to choose this Area as their allied field. Other advanced students are also allowed to take the course with the permission of the instructor. The course will give students a thorough grounding in theological methodology and hermeneutics, by way of a close reading of texts from a variety of historical and cultural contexts. Students will gain an understanding of the way in which doctrinal loci are imagined, encoded, and deployed across time and place, exploring some of the theological foci, strategies, and methods that have served as hinges for doctrinal development. By the end of the semester, students should have an understanding of the manner whereby, in the course of the history of Christian theology, some theological concepts have been sidelined, challenged, and reconceived, while others, once contested, have been retrieved and re-conceptualized.

Goals and Learning Outcomes/Objectives

I. Students will gain a broad theological and cultural understanding of the main themes of contemporary theology, and demonstrate:

- knowledge of some of the chief figures in the history of Christian theology;
- a broad understanding of the chief methodological and hermeneutic concerns of different periods of Christian theology.

II. Students will develop a basic understanding of the role of culture in shaping the direction of theological inquiry as well as an appreciation for the impact of different philosophical trends on the development of theological thought, and they will demonstrate:

- facility with the fundamental principles and concerns of cultural analysis and their impact on the development of theology
- familiarity with some of the chief themes in the conversation between theology and philosophical reflection at different times in the history of Western thought

III. Students will appreciate the increasing importance of contextual theology, as well as the gradual emergence of local (African, Asian, Latin American) theologies, and demonstrate:

- an understanding of the principles that shape contextual/post-colonial approaches to theology;
- an understanding of the chief concerns of some non-Euro-American theologies.

Course Requirements and Assignments

A successful completion of this course requires: careful, weekly preparation for in-class discussion of the assigned texts and topics; weekly “reflection papers” and one longer (25-page) or two shorter (12-page) research papers.
Preparation for and Participation in Class Discussions (15% of the final grade)

A doctoral seminar ought to occupy roughly one third of a student’s time over the semester. Careful reading of the assigned texts and preparation to discuss them critically are expected, and each student should be prepared with at least one critical/constructive question to contribute to the discussion. More than two absences will make a significant impact on the final grade; contact the instructors before any planned absences.

Weekly Reflection Papers/Presentations (25% of the final grade)

Each student will submit a brief reflection paper (2-3 pages/700-1000 words) every week. Students may choose to summarize the major arguments and themes of the assigned readings for that day, or choose a particular issue in the readings and attempt to develop it constructively. Reflections will be graded by the professor who is responsible for that particular class. One student will begin each class session with a brief presentation (10-15 minutes) of the main themes covered by the readings and based on the reflection paper.

Paper(s) (60% of the final grade)

There are two options. In each option, students will preferably work on authors who have been discussed during the semester. Each paper will be graded by the professor who taught the session when the authors were discussed. Students are expected to focus on questions of methodology and on how methodology shapes and affects the articulation of theological insights.

Option 1: Students in the PhD program in Systematic and Philosophical Theology or PhD students from other areas taking this course will submit a 25-page research paper due on December 16.

Option 2: Other students, including STL or STD students, have the option of writing two shorter papers (12 pages). These papers should demonstrate the student’s careful reading and analysis of the assigned texts and a critical engagement with the themes and topics. Each paper should involve a different historical period or compare figures from different historical periods in their specific contexts. The first paper is due on the Nov. 4, and the second paper is due on December 16.

Required Text


Other texts will be available on Moodle. The password is “Aquinas”. In addition to Moodle, Aquinas readings are also available at http://dhspriory.org/thomas/

Materials on moodle are reproduced and electronically distributed pursuant to the “Fair Use” (sec. 107) and the “Technology, Education, and Copyright Harmonization Act of 2002” (sec. 110) exemptions of the Copyright Law (U.S. Code, title 17). They are therefore available only for a limited time, to accommodate the students’ preparation and intellectual assimilation of the material.
Sep. 9  Introduction to the course (M. Dodds)
Yarchin, William, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, pp. 3-60
Origen, *De Principiis*, Book 4, Ch. 2-4
Cattoi, Thomas, *What does Chalcedon have to do with Lhasa? (Buddhist Christian Studies*, October 2008)
MacCullough, Diarmaid, *Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years*, Ch. 4, 6 and 7

Sep. 16  Logos and Mythos/ Apophasis and Kataphasis/ Univocity and Analogy
Pseudo-Dionysios, *The Mystical Theology*
Gregory of Nyssa, Excerpts from *The Life of Moses*
Aquinas, *Summa Theologia*, Part I, Question 1; Question 13, article 5

Sep. 23  Signs and Revelation: Augustine and Christian Doctrine
Augustine, *On Christian Teaching*
MacCullough, D. *Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years*, Ch. 9

Sep. 30  Worlds, Bodies, Loves: Incarnation
Plato, excerpt from *Timaeus*,
Athanasius, excerpt from *De Incarnatione*
Brown, Peter. Chapter on Augustine from *Body and Society*
Augustine, *The City of God*, Book I, chapters 1-12, 29-35; Book V, chapters 10-20; Book XI, chapters 1-7; Book XV, chapters 1-9.
Bynum, Carolyn Walker. *The Resurrection of the Body*, Ch. 2
Schultz, Jennifer, "Doctors, Philosophers, and Christians Fathers on Menstrual Blood," in De Troyer et al. (eds.), *Wholly Women, Holy Blood*
Petroff, "*New Styles of Feminine Spirituality - The Beguine Movement*": Marie d'Oignies and Christina Mirabilis, pp. 171-189

Oct. 7  Different approaches to spirituality (Thomas Cattoi)
Gregory Palamas, *Triads*
Augustine, *Confessions*, Books 9-11, (pp. 133-207)

Oct. 14  Medieval Methodologies
Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles* I, 1-8; *Summa Theologica* I, 32, 1, ad 2.

Julian of Norwich, *The Showings* (excerpts)


Colish, Marcia, *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition*, Selections, Chapter 21 and 22

MacCullough, D., *Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years*, Ch. 12, 16.

**Oct. 21**  
**Colonialism, Mission and Culture**

Las Casas, Bartolome de. *The Devastation of the Indies: A Brief Account*

Pagden, Anthony, *The Fall of Natural Man*, Chapter 4

Koschorke, K. et al., selections from *A History of Christianity in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, 1450-1990*


MacCullough, D. *Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years*, Ch. 10, 19, 23

**Oct 28**  
**READING WEEK (no class)**

**Nov. 4**  
**Situating the Reformation I**

(First paper due, for students following the two-paper option.)

Luther, M. *On the Freedom of A Christian* (*Concerning Christian Liberty*)

Luther, M. *On Temporal Authority*

Melanchthon, Philip. *Loci Communes Theologici*, 3-152

Stjerna, Kirsti. Selections from *Women and the Reformation*.

Ocker, Christopher. From *Biblical Poetry*, Chapter 5

MacCullough, D. *Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years*, Ch. 17

**Nov. 11**  
**Situating the Reformation II: Calvin**

John Calvin *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book One, “The Knowledge of God the Creator,”

MacCullough, D., *Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years*, Ch. 18

**Nov. 18**  
**Situating the Reformation III: Pietists, Hooker, Wesley**

John Wesley (selections)


Richard Hooker, Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie, Book 3, pp. 198-209.

Pietists (selections)

MacCullough, D., *Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years*, Ch. 20
Nov. 25  **Hermeneutics, Interpretation**
Schleiermacher, F.D.E., excerpt from *Hermeneutics and Criticism*, 3-59
Dilthey, Wilhelm, excerpts from *The Hermeneutic Tradition: From Ast to Ricoeur*
Humboldt, Wilhelm von, excerpt from *The Hermeneutics Reader*
Clarke, J.J., excerpts from *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter between Asian and Western Thought*, 3-34; 54-70.
Cady Stanton, E., selections from *The Woman’s Bible.*
MacCullough, D. *Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years*, Ch. 21

Dec. 2  **Defining Religion, Engaging Histories**
von Drey, Johann Sebastian, *Revision des gegenwärtigen Zustandes der Theologie.*
von Drey, Johann Sebastian, *Brief Introduction to the Study of Theology*, 1-49,
MacCullough, D, *Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years*, Ch. 22

Dec. 9  **Hegel**
(Readings to be determined)

Dec. 16  **Kierkegaard and Nietzsche**
(Readings to be determined)
Final paper due (or second paper for students following the two-paper option.)