

**PASCAL, APOLOGIST TO SKEPTICS IN THE 21<sup>st</sup> Century**----- Spring 2008  
Professor C.S. MacKenzie, ThD/PhD/L.H.D. Teaching Assistant- Jeff Crowe

This course will meet Mondays (1-3pm) to study the life and thought of Blaise Pascal. We shall seek to understand why so many skeptics and doubters have been led to Christ through his teachings. We shall examine the style and relevance of his apologetic for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Attendance at all class sessions is expected but if one must miss a class, it is his/her responsibility to secure the data from another student. For those taking the course for two credits grades will be assigned on the basis of a mid-term exam (40%), a final exam (50%) and class participation (10%). If a student wishes to take course for three credits, in addition to the above requirements, a ten page research paper on how and why Pascal's Christian apologetic appeals to so many secular postmodernists..

Required reading for all students: Krailsheimer's "**Blaise Pascal:Pensées**" (BPP); MacKenzie's "**Pascal, Apologist for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**" (PAC); and MacKenzie's "**Pascal's Anguish and Joy**" (PAJ) . Each of the books will be on the Library's reserve shelf. When reading BPP, keep a written record of what Pascal said about *epistemology* (how we know what we know), *ontology* (what links all things together), *anthropology* (what is the nature of human beings), and *soteriology* ( how are humans saved). Be prepared to report your findings in class.

**SCHEDULE:**

February 4: Apologetic Methods; skepticism in Pascal's day and ours. Read PAC-Intro., Ch.1; PAJ Ch.1-10.

**PASCAL'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE THREE ORDERS**

- “ 11: Pascal and the Material Order. Read PAC Ch.2; BPP Ch.I-III
- “ 18: Pascal and the Mental Order. Read PAC, Ch.3; BPP Ch. IV-VIII
- “ 25 Pascal and the Order of Charity. Read PAC, Ch 4; BPP-fragment 308

March 03: Pascal's New Life. Read BPP, Ch 5,8; BPP fragment 919

**PASCAL'S APOLOGETIC (THE PENSÉES)**

10: Prologomena to the Pensées, Read PAC Ch. 6; BPP Ch IX-XI  
17:

Spring Break ---March 24-28: Mid term exams due 3/21

31: Message of the Pensées. Read PAC Ch. 7; BPP Ch XII-XV

- April 07: “ “ “ “ “Read PAC Ch. 8; BPP Ch XVI-XXI
- “ 14: “ “ “ “ Read PAC Ch. 9; BPP Ch XXII-XXVII
- “ 21: The Three Orders; Read PAC Ch.10; BPP fragment 913
- “ 28: Pascal's Legacy- Read PAC Ch.11
- May 05: Pascal's Legacy- Read PAC Ch.12
- “ 12: Pascal's Apologetic Method for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century