

**Christianity and the Modern Mind, 2CT619/01**  
**Reformed Theological Seminary**  
**Professor: Richard V. Horner**  
**June 9 - 13, 2008**

This class will offer a brief history of some of the ways in which modern thought has resisted and criticized a Christian understanding of human experience and also at the ways that several important Christian thinkers have responded to this critique and offered a Christian understanding of life as a compelling alternative to the modern mind.

**PLEASE NOTE!!**

**PART ONE OF THIS CLASS WILL TAKE PLACE BEFORE THE CLASS MEETS.**  
**ALL STUDENTS MUST READ THE FOLLOWING FIVE BOOKS**  
**PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS.**

**Readings required by the first day of class**

Prior to the first day of class students should have read the following and should also have a copy of each book to bring to class. Each of these books will be available through the RTS bookstore.

1. Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, translated by A. J. Krailsheimer (Penguin) ISBN 0140441719. (Read Part One, sections i-xv and Part Two, sections i-ii)
2. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, translated by R. J. Hollingdale (Penguin) ISBN 0140445145. (Do not read *The Anti-Christ*)
3. C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, ISBN 0060652926.
4. Any one of the anti-theism manifestos published in the past fifteen years or so. (Possible authors include, but are not limited to: Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, Daniel Dennett, Christopher Hitchens, David Mills, Bart Ehrman, *et al*)
5. Flannery O'Connor, *Spiritual Writings*, ISBN 1570754705.

**Readings required during the week of class**

Each evening during the week of class there will be a short reading assignment due the following day.

Monday evening: Ludwig Feuerbach, "Introduction" (Chapter One) from *The Essence of Christianity*

Tuesday evening: C. S. Lewis, "The Weight of Glory"

Wednesday evening: Jean Paul Sartre, "Existentialism and Humanism" and Richard Rorty, "Trotsky and the Wild Orchids"

Thursday evening: Flannery O'Connor, "The Enduring Chill," and Walker Percy, "A Space Odyssey" (II) from *Lost in the Cosmos*

Each of these shorter readings will be available on reserve in the RTS library. Each is also either available on line or will be made available in hard copy and distributed in class at a minimal cost.

cost.

## **Course Requirements**

1. Daily quizzes on required readings. (Monday through Friday) [5% each, total of 25%]
2. Attendance and participation. Please note that attendance is required at all sessions throughout the day and throughout the week. [10%]
3. In-class presentation of an anti-theist manifesto of your choice. (See required pre-class reading assignment above). [10%]
4. A 1500 word critical review of the anti-theist manifesto that you present in class. The paper must be double-spaced and include page numbers. It may not be any longer than 1500 words. The paper must either be delivered to Ceci Helm or be postmarked to the professor by Thursday, June 19. [15%]
5. Take-home final exam. After the conclusion of class on Friday, June 13, students will have two weeks to complete a take-home, open-book, essay exam on the readings assigned in class. The exam must be double-spaced and include page numbers. It may not exceed 3,000 words. The exam must either be delivered to Ceci Helm or be postmarked to the professor by Friday, June 27. [40%]

*Please note that electronic copies will not be accepted. Papers and exams must be submitted in hard copy, typed, double-spaced, and with pages numbered.*

If you send either the critical review or the exam directly to professor, please use the address provided below.

## **Daily Schedule, Monday through Friday**

8:00 - 11:45 - Class  
11:50 - 1:15 - Lunch  
1:15 - 5:00 - Class

Throughout each day we will take a ten-minute break approximately once an hour. A detailed schedule will be distributed on the first day of class.

## **A Word to the Wise!**

Think of this class as consisting of three parts.

Part one (May 1 - June 6) - Read required readings. Write a good draft of your critical review.

Part two (June 9 - 13) - Attend class during the day. In the evenings, review the main reading assignments that you completed before the first day of class, and read the additional short reading assignments.

Part three (June 16 - June 27) - Write the final draft of your critical review and complete the final exam.

## **Contact Information.**

[richardvhorner@aol.com](mailto:richardvhorner@aol.com)

352-331-4644 (Home-T/T and evenings before 11:00 p.m.)  
352-379-7375 (Office-MWF)

2137 SW 95<sup>th</sup> Terrace  
Gainesville, FL 32607

Please be in Touch. I give you this information hoping that you will use it now and in the future.

### **Office Hours**

I will hold office hours daily during the lunch break and immediately after class.