

THM SEMINAR ON RADICAL ORTHODOXY AND THE REFORMED TRADITION

2HT837
January 2009

PROFESSOR: Dr. James K.A. Smith

DATES: 5-9 January 2009

PLACE: RTS Seminar Room

TEXTBOOKS: Required

Students will be required to read the following books BEFORE the seminar:

James K.A. Smith, *Introducing Radical Orthodoxy: Mapping a Post-Secular Theology* (Baker Academic, 2004).

James K.A. Smith and James H. Olthuis, eds., *Radical Orthodoxy and the Reformed Tradition: Creation, Covenant, and Participation* (Baker Academic, 2005).

Recommended Reading:

John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory*, 2nd ed. (Blackwell, 2005).

John Milbank, Catherine Pickstock, and Graham Ward, eds., *Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology* (Routledge, 1999).

Students might also consult the comprehensive bibliography available at <http://www.calvin.edu/~jks4/ro/robib.pdf>.

OBJECTIVES:

This graduate seminar will introduce students to “Radical Orthodoxy,” a recent movement or “sensibility” in postmodern theology. However, we will explore aspects of this movement explicitly through points of interest and intersection in the Reformed tradition (particularly its Dutch configurations). The goal of the course is to provide a rigorous introduction to the core themes of Radical Orthodoxy, spurring constructive theological work in the Reformed tradition.

Students will be encouraged to develop a summary understanding of Radical Orthodoxy as a whole, but then to delve further by focusing on a particular theological loci or question. Afternoon tutorials will provide one-on-one opportunities to explore more specific and focuses lines of research.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

There will be **1 major research paper (20+ pages)** on a topic approved by professor. The complete first draft is due **13 March**. The final draft of research paper is due **17 April**.

There are also **two Response Papers (7-10 pages)** on the reading assignments, which are to be completed BEFORE the January session. Each paper is to be a formal, well-written, footnoted, balanced, summary, analysis and critical response to any two chapters from the assigned reading.

These response papers will be presented informally in the morning sessions and will provide the basis for seminar discussions. These should be a (30 min) presentation of the fruits of his/her response paper. Students may email their response paper to Dr. James's assistant for photocopying and distribution. [jhagey@rts.edu]

In afternoon tutorials, Professor will work with student to help (i) to assess and develop scholarly skills and (ii) to begin work on research paper for the seminar.

The major research paper is 80% of the final grade. Each response paper will be 10% of the final grade.

SEMINAR

SCHEDULE: 9 am- Noon

5 January ----- Introduction: The Reformed Tradition *as* a Radical Orthodoxy

6 January ----- Epistemology: Secularity and the Presuppositions of Modernity

7 January ----- Ontology: Participation and Sacramentality

8 January ----- Ecclesiology: A Catholic *Polis*

9 January ----- Politics: Whose Kingdom? Which Culture?

TUTORIALS: 1 PM – 3 PM in Professor's office

INTERNET SCHEDULE FOR January Session

Week of 12 January	Travel Week
Week of 19 January	3-5 page draft to Professor
Week of 26 January	Professor responds to Student Papers
Week of 2 February	5-7 pages to Professor
Week of 9 February	Professor responds to Student Papers
Week of 16 February	10-13 pages to Professor
<p><i>Nota Bene:</i> Each student should also send a copy of this draft to all seminar participants for feedback</p>	
Week of 23 February	All Seminar participants provide feedback for Student Paper.
Week of 2 March	First Draft to Professor
<p><i>Nota Bene:</i> Each student should also send a copy of this draft to all seminar participants for feedback</p>	
Week of 9 March	All Seminar participants provide feedback for Student Paper.
Week of 16 March	Final Draft due to Professor
FINAL DRAFT DUE 20 MARCH 2009	

Nota Bene: All preliminary drafts will be via email. The final draft should be a hard copy of the paper and should be mailed to RTS by the due date. Address is: Dr. Frank A. James, Reformed Theological Seminary, 1231 Reformation Drive, Oviedo, FL. 32765.

Criteria for Evaluation of THM Papers

I. Grammar and Style (25%)

- * Is the text clean of spelling mistakes?
- * Is the text punctuated correctly?
- * Does the sentence structure consistently adhere to basic rules of good grammar?
- * Does the footnote/bibliographic apparatus follow Turabian consistently? (Turabian, A Manual for Writers).
- * Is the paper written in clear, straight-forward style of academic prose (e.g., the guidelines in Strunk and White, The Elements of Style)?

II. Organization (25%)

- * Is the subject of the paper clearly delimited? Is it significant, but still manageable?
- * Does the subject correspond to what was assigned in the syllabus?
- * Does the paper have a well-designed thesis statement and outline?
- * Does the running text of the paper adhere to the outline, and are the larger divisions of the paper clearly signposted?
- * Are the sentences and paragraphs of the text linked together clearly and in such a way that the thought of the student builds throughout the paper with continuity and coherence?

III. Clarity and Force of Argument (25%)

- * Is a convincing case made to support the thesis statement?
- * Is the evidence marshalled to support the argument used judiciously?
- * Where the student provides exposition or summary, does she/he do so succinctly and objectively?
- * Are opposing viewpoints treated fairly?
- * Is there evidence of mature Christian reflection on the subject matter?

IV. Research (25%)

- * Does the paper draw on primary sources for its main evidence?
- * Are the secondary sources selected and used judiciously?
- * Does the paper demonstrate sufficient depth and breadth of research, given the nature and level of the assignment?

Recommended Resources

Jacques Barzun and Henry F. Graff, The Modern Researcher (New York: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich, latest edition).

Mary-Claire van Leunen, A Handbook for Scholars (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979).

William Zinsser, On Writing Well (New York: Harper and Row, latest edition).