

# History of Philosophy and Christian Thought (6ST504)

## Fall 2005

Reformed Theological Seminary  
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Class meets at *Wallace Presbyterian Church*, College Park (MD)  
September 23-24; October 14-15; October 28-29; November 18-19  
Friday, 7:30pm-10:00pm; Saturday, 8:30am-5:00pm

### I. Objective

The general objective of this course is to introduce students to the main schools and authors in the history of philosophy. Our survey will begin with Greek philosophy and culminate with contemporary trends.

The objective of the readings and assignments is not only to convey new information, but also enhance textual, writing, reasoning and analytic skills.

### II. Required Readings

Plato, *Euthyphro* and *Crito*.  
Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric*.  
Augustine, *Confessions*.  
Thomas Paine, *The Age of Reason*.  
Diogenes Allen, *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*. Atlanta: John Knox, 1985.

Additional short readings will be distributed in class

### III. Reference Books (recommended but not required)

Colin Brown, *Philosophy and the Christian Faith*. Downers Grove: Inter Varsity, 1968.

Forrest Baird & Walter Kaufmann (Eds.), *From Plato to Derrida* (Fourth Edition). New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2003.

### IV. Evaluation and Assignments

3 reading reports (20% each=60%)

*Reports are due on **October 14, October 28 and November 18.***

Final Exam (40%)

*The final Exam is due on **December 9.***

Reports will cover three of the required books (with the exception of Diogenes Allen) and should be 3-5 pages. Address the following points in your report:

- Summarize the text's main point(s) or thesis (theses).
- Explain why you think the author wrote this book.
- Writing style. Describe some of the devices the author uses in order to make his points (e.g., narrative, argument, dialogue). Give specific examples.
- Name one aspect of the author's thesis you *agree* with. **Argue your point.**
- Name one aspect you *disagree* with. **Argue your point.**
- As a Christian, how could this book help you? (assuming that it could indeed be of any help).

## V. Readings and Schedule

*September 23-24*

- Introduction: Athens and Jerusalem/Overview
- Early Greek Philosophy: Parmenides, Heraclitus, Democritus
- Greek Philosophy: Socrates, Plato, Aristotle
- Hellenistic Philosophy: Epicurus, Epictetus

*October 14-15*

Readings: Plato, *Euthyphro* and *Crito*; Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric*.

- Hellenistic and Medieval Philosophy: Sextus Empiricus, Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas
- Modern Philosophy: Descartes, Pascal, Spinoza, Leibniz

*October 28-29*

Readings: Augustine, *Confessions*; Thomas Paine, *The Age of Reason*.

- Modern Philosophy: Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, Schleiermacher
- Late Modern Philosophy: Kierkegaard, Marx
- Philosophy and Principles of Theological Interpretation

*November 18-19*

Readings: Diogenes Allen, *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*.

- Late Modern and Contemporary Philosophy: Mill, Nietzsche, James, Wittgenstein, Sartre
- Faith, Reason and Apologetics
- Athens and Jerusalem revisited

*Final Exam Distributed*