

**History of Philosophy and Christian Thought: 6ST504**  
**Summer 2006, Reformed Theological Seminary, Washington DC**

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McLean Presbyterian Church  
July 17-21, 8:30 am – 5:00 pm

## **I. Course Description & Objective**

This course introduces the main schools and figures in the history of philosophy and Christian thought. As a survey, it begins with the Greco-Roman period and stretches to the contemporary scene. The course intends to enable the student to critically evaluate ideas of the past and present as they impact culture and the church.

## **II. Texts**

*Required Texts:*

Anselm, *Proslogion*. Available online.

Augustine, *Confessions*. There are various editions of this available. I will be using the one edited by R. S. Pine-Coffin in class.

G. R. Evans, *Philosophy and Theology in the Middle Ages* (London: Routledge, 1993).

Harro Hopfl, *Luther and Calvin on Secular Authority* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

Stephen J. Nichols, *An Absolute Sort of Certainty: The Holy Spirit and the Apologetics of Jonathan Edwards* (Phillipsburg: P&R, 2003).

Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Metaphysics & the Idea of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001).

## **III. Evaluation**

1. Examination: Essay Questions, 60%.

You will be given a set of essay questions in a take-home format that cover the reading and class discussions.

**Due: Monday, August 14**

2. Paper, 40%.

Write a ten page (or so) paper on a contemporary philosopher of your choice with my approval. On the last day of class we will sketch out some of the contemporary schools and their representatives. Your paper should include 1.) a brief biographical sketch; 2.) a discussion of the person's main idea(s) and contribution to contemporary thought—this could be a discussion of one of the person's books or essays; and 3.) a critical analysis from a Christian perspective.

**Due: Monday, August 28**

## IV. Course Schedule

### Day One, July 17: Greco-Roman Period

Lectures:

- Jerusalem & Athens: introduction to the course
- introduction to Ancient philosophy
- Augustine
- aesthetics and ethics

Reading:

- Augustine, *Confessions*, Books I - X

### Day Two, July 18: Middle Ages

Lectures:

- introduction to medieval philosophy and theology
- Anselm

Reading:

- Evans, *Philosophy and Theology in the Middle Ages*
- Anselm, *Proslogion*

### Day Three, July 19: Reformation

Lectures:

- introduction to the philosophical thought of the Reformation
- Luther and Calvin
- political philosophy

Reading:

- Hopfl, *Luther and Calvin on Secular Authority*

### Day Four, July 20: Modern Age, Part 1

Lectures:

- introduction to the philosophy of the modern era
- Locke, Hume, and Kant
- Jonathan Edwards
- epistemology

Reading:

- Nichols, *An Absolute Sort of Certainty*

### Day Five, July 21, Modern Age, Part 2

Lectures:

- the so-called “linguistic turn” and the end of metaphysics
- contemporary philosophical schools

Reading:

- Pannenberg, *Metaphysics & the Idea of God*