I. Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to understand and respond appropriately to the dominant perspectives, theologies, ideologies and cultural transformations that have contributed to the current religious landscape, with special focus on the implications for apologetics, ministry and outreach. Papers as well as the exam will reflect this aim of the course: familiarity with the modern and postmodern condition (culture, philosophy and theology) and a concern to relate Christian claims to our contemporary situation (apologetics).

II. Course Requirements:

A. Essay (50%). Limit 3,000 words (approximately 7-10 pages), due to the professor by XXX. Essays will be research-oriented, covering a specific topic addressed in readings and/or lectures. No book reports, please! Interact thoughtfully with relevant scriptural passages as well as with secondary material (i.e., creeds, confessions and significant theologians), including scholarly journals. Remember when using scripture that you are not in this paper simply using it for or against a particular view, but that you are engaging in exegesis to analyze the exegesis of others. Therefore, the goal is to interact and not simply to vindicate or attack. The following suggestions are only broad topics, not specific theses, so you’ll need to refine your paper’s focus. Important note:: Papers must be turned into the professor in hard-copy form. Electronic attachments will not be accepted.

   a. “Pure Religion and Ecclesiastical Faith”: The Status of Theological Claims in Kant and/or Derrida (surnames A-C);
   b. The One and the Many Debate: Absolutism and Relativism (D-F)
   c. The Global Soul: Sources of Postmodern Rootlessness (G-I)
   d. How Firm a Foundation? A Theological Analysis of Modern Foundationalism and Its Contemporary Rivals (J-L)
   e. The Hermeneutical Turn and Its Impact on Apologetics and Preaching (M-O)
   f. Eschatology and Modernity and/or Postmodernity (alternative)
   g. The “Emergent” Church Movement as a Model for Postmodern Ministry

(2) Final Exam (50%).

(3) Required readings. The exam will include an acknowledgment of the successful completion of the readings (worth 20% of exam grade).

III. Required Reading
IV. Course Outline
A. The View from 30,000 Feet (Day One)
B. Romanticism and Existentialism (Day Two)
C. Postmodernism as Critical Theory (Day Three)
D. Postmodernism as Cultural Practice (Day Four)
E. Pilgrim Postmodernism? (Day Five)