

Modern Christian Thought

Religion 317 (CRN 23117)

Spring 2013

TTh 3:30-4:45

Kinard 312

PROFESSOR INFORMATION

- Dr. William P. Kiblinger
- Office: Kinard 326
- Office Hours: M 12:30-2:30; W 12:30-2:30
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COURSE DESCRIPTION: The course is designed to expose students to the major currents in Christian thought from the Reformation to the present. By focusing on numerous leading theologians and religious thinkers, students will better understand how modern Christianity has been shaped by movements such as the Reformation, the Italian and Northern Renaissances, the Enlightenment, Romanticism, Idealism, Darwinism, Existentialism, Systematic Theology, Liberation Theology, Feminist Theology, and Postmodern Theology. The readings will focus on key concepts in order to see how they have evolved and met the various challenges of the time.

The course is worth three (3) credit hours. Any subsequent changes to this syllabus will be announced in class if minor, or else distributed in writing.

COURSE GOALS, METHODS, & ASSESSMENT MEASURES: This course has the following goals (i.e., desired student learning outcomes). Note that all of these goals relate closely to the goals of the General Education.

Goal 1: Engage in reasoned inquiry and self-reflection regarding the various values, beliefs, attitudes, and habits that define the nature and quality of life.

Method: Read material thoroughly and think critically in order to make connections between the material and your own understanding of the ultimates of life.

Assessment: Students will take periodic quizzes on the reading ensure comprehension of the basic ideas. More in-depth writing assignments will gauge their understanding of intertextual nature of the ideas in the course and their implications for lived value systems.

Goal 2: Model reflective participation in a learning community by learning to communicate with others effectively in speech and writing.

Method: Share your reactions and understanding of philosophical issues with your classmates and learn to understand other perspectives by listening carefully and communicating clearly in class discussion and written assignments.

Assessment: Students are expected to display their engagement with the ideas in the course on a daily basis in class and will be judged for the quality of their participation in class discussions. Furthermore, students will be asked on occasion to lead discussion and

to offer oral summaries of the daily reading. These assignments will be assessed as part of their grade in the course.

Goal 3: Recognize the constructed nature of knowledge, i.e., the way in which knowledge arises from a diversity of perspectives.

Method: Learn to identify multiple perspectives on life issues and then engage this diversity of perspectives by dialectically taking ownership of them as possible viewpoints within yourself.

Assessment: Through writing assignments as well as in presentations and on quizzes, students will chart the ongoing constructions of Christian thought as they evolved historically and met various challenges of their day. The level of their accomplishment in recognizing the constructed nature of knowledge will become self-conscious and manifest through these various assignments.

RELG 317 AND UNIVERSITY-LEVEL COMPETENCIES: RELG 317 helps students make progress toward the following University-Level Competencies.

Competency 1: Winthrop graduates think critically and solve problems.

Winthrop University graduates reason logically, evaluate and use evidence, and solve problems. They seek out and assess relevant information from multiple viewpoints to form well-reasoned conclusions. Winthrop graduates consider the full context and consequences of their decisions and continually reexamine their own critical thinking process, including the strengths and weaknesses of their arguments.

Method: In RELG 317, students are required to use the critical tools of historical and hermeneutical disciplines to analyze and interpret various positions in the history of Christian thought. The course requires discussion participation, writing assignments, and tests to assess students' progress in this ULC.

Competency 3: Winthrop graduates understand the interconnected nature of the world and the time in which they live.

Winthrop University graduates comprehend the historical, social, and global contexts of their disciplines and their lives. They also recognize how their chosen area of study is inextricably linked to other fields. Winthrop graduates collaborate with members of diverse academic, professional, and cultural communities as informed and engaged citizens.

Method: In RELG 317, students are introduced to a broad array of the religious conceptions from around the world, and they are required to reflect on their own assumptions in light of the different beliefs and practices they encounter.

Competency 4: Winthrop graduates communicate effectively.

Winthrop University graduates communicate in a manner appropriate to the subject, occasion, and audience. They create texts – including but not limited to written, oral, and visual presentations – that convey content effectively. Mindful of their voice and the impact of their communication, Winthrop graduates successfully express and exchange ideas.

Method: In RELG 317, students discuss ideas and also write test essays and numerous homework writing assignments. The instructor incorporates comments and suggestions not only on the content of each assignment but also the effectiveness of their communication.

TEXTS

In Bookstore:

1. Peter C. Hodgson & Robert H. King (editors), *Christian Theology: An Introduction to Its Traditions and Tasks* (abbreviated *CT*)
2. Rachel Muers & Mike Higton, *Modern Theology: A Critical Introduction* (abbreviated *MT*)

EXPECTATIONS OF THE STUDENT

1. **Class Attendance and Participation:** Because this class is largely based on discussion and much of the critical “action” occurs in the classroom, your attendance is imperative. Attendance will be taken and is a factor in your class participation grade (about which see below). Absence for a valid reason given in advance is excusable but inadvisable. More than two absences will lower your grade. Fewer than two absences will raise your grade. Your participation will be judged by your seriousness of attitude as well as prolificacy in speech, and it will be worth 100 points of your grade.
2. **Reading Quizzes:** There will be reading quizzes for many of the classes, using Blackboard. All together they will be worth 200 points.
3. **Exams:** There will be two exams during the semester, each worth 200 points.
4. **Final Exam:** There will a final exam, with a portion of it being an extended essay. It will be worth 200 points.

GRADING

Reading Quizzes:	300 points	<u>Grading scale:</u>			
Exam 1:	200 points	930-1000: A	900-929: A-		
Exam 2:	200 points	870-899: B+	830-869: B	800-829: B-	
Final Exam:	200 points	770-799: C+	730-769: C	700-729: C-	
<u>Class Participation:</u>	<u>100 points</u>	670-699: D+	630-669: D	600-629: D-	
TOTAL	1000 points		0-599: F		

STUDENT CONDUCT (INCLUDING PLAGIARISM): Students in this course should be aware of the strong sanctions against plagiarism (misrepresentation of another person’s work as one’s own) stated in the Student Conduct Code. If proven, a charge of plagiarism could result in an automatic "F" in the course and possible expulsion. If you have any questions or doubts about what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials and the works of others, be sure to consult the instructor. Proper citation procedures are provided in all standard writing manuals. As noted in the Student Conduct Code: “Responsibility for good conduct rests with students as adult individuals.” The policy on student academic misconduct is outlined in the “Student Conduct Code Academic Misconduct Policy.” For more information, see the Student Handbook at <http://www2.winthrop.edu/studentaffairs/handbook>.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Winthrop University is dedicated to providing access to education. If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact Gena Smith, Coordinator, Services for Students with Disabilities, at 323-3290, as soon as possible. Once you have your Professor Notification Form, please tell me so that I am aware of your accommodations well before the first {test/paper/assignment}.

SAFE ZONE: Regardless of sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, religion, age and ability, you will be treated and respected as a human being. Your continued presence in this course signals your commitment to act likewise.

ACADEMIC SUCCESS CENTER: Winthrop's Academic Success Center is a free resource for all undergraduate students seeking to perform their best academically. The ASC offers a variety of personalized and structured resources that help students achieve academic excellence, such as tutoring, academic skill development (test taking strategies, time management counseling, and study techniques), group and individual study spaces, and academic coaching. The ASC is located on the first floor of Dinkins, Suite 106. Contact the ASC at 803-323-3929 or success@winthrop.edu. For more information on ASC services, please visit www.winthrop.edu/success.

BLACKBOARD: Instructions for Logging into Blackboard

1. Go to <http://online.winthrop.edu>.
2. Click on the link for "New Blackboard."
3. **Please note: You will not use the WebCT "wu_" login for Blackboard.** Log into Blackboard with the same user name and password as you use to login to Winthrop email. **For example:**
 - a. **Username: whetstonek2**
 - b. **Password: Enter Your Winthrop Email Password**
4. After you log in, on the right side of the screen, in the My Courses module, click on the title for your course.
5. Once inside the course, use the menu on the left side of the screen to navigate through the course.
Note: If you do not see the menu on the left side of the screen, it may be hidden. Click on the arrow on the left side of the screen to reveal the menu.

Need Blackboard Help?

1. **Log in issues:** Please contact the help desk at 323-2400 or helpdesk@winthrop.edu.
2. **Tutorials:** You can find helpful tutorials for using Blackboard at the following web site: http://www2.winthrop.edu/webct/Blackboard_Training_Tutorials.html.
3. **Blackboard User's Guide:** You can find the Blackboard user's guide by logging into Blackboard, and at the very top of the screen, click on the Help link, and then click on User Guide. You can search for a specific topic that you need help with.
4. **For additional assistance:** Please contact Kimarie Whetstone, Online Learning Coordinator at 323-2551 or whetstonek@winthrop.edu.

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
WEEK 1	Historical Overview	
Tues., Jan. 8	Reformation History	Begin the film <i>Luther</i>
Thurs., Jan. 10	Luther's Theology	"Luther and the Storm of Faith" by Michael A. Gillespie
WEEK 2	Theological Method	
Tues., Jan. 15	The Task of Theology	Robert King (CT)
Thurs., Jan. 17	Introduction to Modern Theology	Muers & Higton, chapters 1 and 2
WEEK 3	Scripture and Tradition	
Tues., Jan. 22	Reading the Bible	Muers & Higton, ch. 10
Thurs., Jan. 24	The Uses of Scripture	Farley and Hodgson (CT)
WEEK 4	Key Thinkers	
Tues., Jan. 29	Immanuel Kant	Muers & Higton, ch. 3
Thurs., Jan. 31	Friedrich Schleiermacher	Muers & Higton, ch. 4
WEEK 5	Key Thinkers	
Tues., Feb. 5	G.W.F. Hegel	Muers & Higton, ch. 5
Thurs., Feb. 7	Søren Kierkegaard	Muers & Higton, ch. 6
WEEK 6	Key Thinkers	
Tues., Feb. 12	Nietzsche	Muers & Higton, ch. 7
Thurs., Feb. 14	Test 1	Test 1
WEEK 7	Creation, Providence, and Science	
Tues., Feb. 19	Religion and Science	Muers & Higton, ch. 11
Thurs., Feb. 21	Creation and Providence	Julian Hartt (CT)
WEEK 8	Human Being & Evil	
Tues., Feb. 26	Theological Anthropology	David Kelsey (CT)
Thurs., Feb. 28	Confronting Evil	Muers and Higton, ch. 13
WEEK 9	Sin and Salvation	
Tues., March 5	Sin and Evil	Robert Williams (CT)
Thurs., March 7	Christ and Salvation	Walter Lowe (CT)
Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break
Week 10	Church and Sacrament	
Tues., March 19	Ecclesiology	Hodgson and Williams (CT)
Thurs., March 21	The Sacraments	Stephen Sykes (CT)
WEEK 11	Everlasting Life	
Tues., March 26	Kingdom of God and Everlasting Life	Carl Braaten (CT)
Thurs., March 28	Test 2	Test 2
WEEK 12	Christianity and Social Justice	
Tues., April 2	Feminism, Gender, and Theology	Muers & Higton, ch. 14
Thurs., April 4	Liberating Theology	Muers & Higton, ch. 15
WEEK 13	Diversity of Religions	
Tues., April 9	The Religions	John Cobb (CT)
Thurs., April 11	Christianity Among the Religions	Muers & Higton, ch. 16
WEEK 14	Postmodern Christianity	
Tues., April 16	Becoming Postmodern	Muers & Higton, ch. 17
Thurs., April 18	Review Day	
Final Exam	Wed., April 24 11:30 AM	Final Exam