**ST 5400 – Christian Thought and Philosophy  
Reformed Theological Seminary  
Jackson  
Fall 2022**

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**Course Description:**

This course introduces the importance of philosophy for Christian theology, explores important historical primary texts and approaches on Christian philosophy and philosophical theology, while developing a Christian-theological approach to philosophy and its use.

**Course Readings:**

Diogenes Allen and Eric O. Springsted, *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*, 2nd edition (Westminster John Knox, 2007). Entirety.

William J. Van Asselt (ed.), *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism* (Reformation Heritage Books, 2011). Entirety.

Colin Brown, *Philosophy and the Christian Faith, An Introduction to the Main Thinkers and Schools of Thought from the Middle Ages to the Present Day* (Tyndale, 1969). Entirety.

**Suggested Reading**

David Knowles, *The Evolution of Medieval Thought*, 2nd edition (London: Longman, 1988). Entirety.

Diogenes Allen and Eric O. Springsted (eds.), *Primary Readings in Philosophy for Understanding Theology*, (Westminster John Knox, 1992).

See also bibliography, below.

**Course Structure:**

The Course will cover the following topics:

1. Introduction to Philosophy and Christian Thought
2. Plato and Aristotle
3. Early Christian Philosophical Thought
4. Medieval Philosophical Thought
5. Reformed Philosophical Thought
6. Post-Reformation Reformed Philosophical Thought
7. The Enlightenment (Nominalism, Humanism, Scientific Revolution)
8. Early Modern Thought (Rationalism and Empiricism)
9. Kant, Schleiermacher, Hegel
10. Neo-Calvinism
11. Contemporary Analytic Philosophy
12. Post-Modern Philosophy

**Course Requirements**

1. Final Exam (40%)
   1. Short essay and long essay format
2. Paper (40%)
   1. Student will write a 3500-4500 word paper on a philosophical-theological issue addressed in the class, the readings, or is specifically related to the class or readings.
   2. Paper must conform to the style and content guide provided below.
   3. Rough Draft is 5% of total grade; Final Draft is 15% of total grade
3. Reading (20%)
   1. Students will pledge to the percentage of reading they have accomplished.

**Schedule (with Reading Requirements):**

September 22-23

1. Introduction to Philosophy and Christian Thought
2. Plato and Aristotle
3. Early Christian Philosophical Thought
4. Medieval Philosophical Thought
5. Reading Requirements:
   1. Allen – Intro, Chapters 1-6
   2. Brown – pp. 7-36.

October 27-28

1. Reformation Philosophical Thought
2. Post-Reformation Reformed Philosophical Thought
3. The Enlightenment (Nominalism, Humanism, Scientific Revolution)
4. Early Modern Thought (Rationalism and Empiricism)
5. Reading Requirements:
   1. Allen – Chapters 7 & 8
   2. Brown – pp. 37-90.
   3. Van Asselt – entirety
6. Additional Requirements:
   1. Rough Draft of Paper Due

November 10-11

1. Kant, Schleiermacher, Hegel
2. Neo-Calvinism
3. Contemporary Analytic Philosophy
4. Post-Modern Philosophy
5. Reading Requirements:
   1. Allen – Chapters 9-13
   2. Brown – pp 90-289
6. Additional Requirements:
   1. Final Draft of Paper Due

**Paper Requirements**

1. Topics:
   1. The paper should take a philosophical idea introduced in the lectures or the readings and argue why it does or does not conform to a biblical worldview.
   2. Some examples include:
      1. Plato’s *ideas*
      2. Aristotle’s four-fold causality
      3. Thomas’s five ways
      4. Junius’ distinction between archetypal and ectypal theology
      5. Descartes rationalism
      6. Kant’s transcendentalism
2. Format:
   1. 8 ½ x 11 paper; one-inch margins
   2. 12-point, Times New Roman font, double-spaced
   3. 3,500 to 4,500 words (excluding footnotes, bibliography)
   4. Footnotes (at 10-point font)
   5. Bibliography (of works specifically cited)
   6. Paper shall conform to the guidelines from the current edition of *A Manuel for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, by Kate L. Turabian.
3. Structure:
   1. The paper must make an argument, not simply report on a person’s though (or what others think of that person’s thought).
   2. The paper should indicate its thesis early and clearly.
   3. The paper should be clearly organized in such a way that the thesis is demonstrated and defended.
   4. The paper should conclude by indicating what has been argued and how the thesis has been demonstrated.
4. Other Requirements:
   1. The paper must consult both primary and secondary sources.
   2. Translations are sufficient but be sure to consult the most up to date editions.
   3. The paper must include at least one primary source and at least eight secondary sources.
   4. These sources must be cited in the body of the paper, not just appear in the bibliography.
   5. At least one secondary sources must be a journal article.

**Course Bibliography**

Allen, Diogenes and Eric O. Springsted, editors. *Primary Readings in Philosophy for Understanding Theology*. Louisville KY: Westminster John Knox, 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_\_. *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*. Second edition. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2007.

Brown, Colin. *Christianity and Western Thought, A History of Philosophers, Ideas, and Movements*. Volume 1: *From the Ancient World to the Age of the Enlightenment*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1990.

\_\_\_\_\_\_. *Philosophy and the Christian Faith, An Introduction to the Main Thinkers and Schools of Thought from the Middle Ages to the Present Day*. London: Tyndale, 1969.

Copleston, Frederick C. *A History of Philosophy*. Volumes 1-11. London: Search Press, 1966 – ca. 1970.

Gaarder, Josten. *Sophie’s World, A Novel about the History of Philosophy*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2007.

Knowles, David. *The Evolution of Medieval Thought*. Second Edition. London: Longman Group, 1988.

Kristeller, Paul O.  *Renaissance Thought and Its Sources*.  New York: Columbia University Press, 1979.

Leinsle, Ulrich. *Introduction to Scholastic Theology*. Translated by Michael Miller. Washington: CUA Press, 2010.

Marenbon, John. *Medieval Philosophy: an historical and philosophical introduction*. New York: Routledge, 2007. McGrath, Alister E.  *The Intellectual Origins of the European Reformation.*  Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1987.

McGraw, Ryan M. *Reformed Scholasticism: Recovering the Tools of Reformed Theology*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 2019.

Muller, Richard A. *After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

\_\_\_\_\_\_. *Christ and the Decree: Christology and Predestination in Reformed Theology from Calvin to Perkins*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.

\_\_\_\_\_\_. *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms: Drawn Principally from Protestant Scholastic Theology*. Second Edition. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017.

\_\_\_\_\_\_. *Divine Will and Human Choice: Freedom, Contingency, and Necessity in Early Modern Reformed Thought*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017.

\_\_\_\_\_\_. “Not Scotist: Understandings of Being, Univocity, and Analogy in Early-Modern Reformed Thought.” *Reformation & Renaissance Review* 14:2 (2012): 127-50.

\_\_\_\_\_\_. *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725*.  2nd Revised Edition. 4 Volumes. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003.

\_\_\_\_\_\_. “Reformation, Orthodoxy, ‘Christian Aristotelianism,’ and the Eclecticism of Early Modern Philosophy.” *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis* 81, no. 3 (2001): 306-25.

\_\_\_\_\_\_. “Scholasticism, Reformation, Orthodoxy, and the Persistence of Christian Aristotelianism.” *Trinity Journal* 19.1 (Spring, 1999): 81-96.

\_\_\_\_\_\_. “*Vera Philosophia cum sacra Theologia nusquam pugnat*: Keckermann on Philosophy, Theology, and the Problem of Double Truth.” *Sixteenth Century Journal* 15.1 (1984): 341-65.

Oberman, Heiko A. *The Dawn of the Reformation: Essays in Late Medieval and Early Reformation Thought*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986.

\_\_\_\_\_\_. *The Harvest of Medieval Theology: Gabriel Biel and Late Medieval Nominalism*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963.

Platt, John. *Reformed Thought and Scholasticism: The Arguments for the Existence of God in Dutch Theology, 1575-1650*. Studies in the History of Christian Thought, Volume 29. Leiden: Brill, 1982.

Trueman, Carl R. *Histories and Fallacies: Problems Faced in the Writing of History*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010.

\_\_\_\_\_\_, and R. Scott Clark, eds.  *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment*. Studies in Christian History and Thought. Reprint. Milton Keyes: Paternoster, 2005.

Van Asselt, William J., editors. *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism*. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011.

Wilkens, Steve and Alan G. Padgett. *Christianity and Western Thought, A History of Philosophers, Ideas, and Movements*. Volume 2: Faith and Reason in the 19th Century. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2000.

Wilkens, Steve and Alan G. Padgett. *Christianity and Western Thought, A History of Philosophers, Ideas, and Movements*. Volume 2: Journey to Postmodernity in the 20th Century. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2009.

**Course Objectives Related to MDiv Student Learning Outcomes**

Course: ST5400 Christian Thought & Philosophy

Professor: Stephen B. Tipton

Campus: Jackson

Date: Fall 2022

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| **MDiv Student Learning Outcomes** | | **Rubric** | **Mini-Justification** |
| **Articulation**  **(oral & written)** | Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks. Also includes ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm. | Strong | Primary course objective is for students to become familiar with and gain discernment on the theologically relevant themes in the Hist. of Phil. For Christian Thought |
| **Scripture** | Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.) | Moderate | Various perspectives and proposals in the Hist. of Phil. will be critiqued in light of Scripture. Scripture is frequently brought into lectures and discussions and applied to topics at hand. See “Desire for Worldview” below. |
| **Reformed Theology** | Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards. | Strong | The class is taught from an explicitly Reformed orthodox perspective and devotes a unit to the philosophical background to Reformed Theology. |
| **Sanctification** | Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification. | Moderate | The course aims at increasing students’ awareness and discernment of formative ideas for Christian thought and life. |
| **Desire for Worldview** | Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God. Includes ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues. | Strong | This, as it applies to the life of the mind and history of ideas, would be the *raison d’être* of the course. |
| **Winsomely Reformed** | Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.) | Moderate | The professor strives to model and encourage this ethos in the course as we consider and critique various alternative ideas, values, etc. See also “Church/World” below. |
| **Pastoral Ministry** | Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.) | Minimal | Indirect relevance as we consider the way philosophical ideas have shaped our theology and our ministry contexts. |