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Dallas Theological Seminary

ST620N History of Philosophy
3 credits
Fall 2019
Tuesdays, 6:45 – 9:30 pm

HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY SYLLABUS

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of the history of philosophy, with attention to the antecedents of modern philosophy and the relationship of philosophy to Christian doctrine. Designed as a broad overview for those who have not had a course in the history of philosophy. *Prerequisite:* ST101 Theological Method and Bibliology. *3 hours.*

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

A. Cognitive Objectives

1. Students will demonstrate fluency in important terms, concepts, problems and the contributions of significant individuals in philosophy and the history of philosophy.
2. Students will wrestle with the relationships between faith and reason and between philosophy and theology.
3. Students will evaluate and analyze the opinions of others regarding such issues as: the nature of truth and reality, certainty of knowledge, the existence of God, the relationship of faith and reason, the nature of the soul, the nature of beauty, and the challenge of determinism from a philosophical perspective.

B. Behavioral Objectives

1. Students will develop critical thinking skills and philosophical acumen by interacting with the great philosophers and defending positions on fundamental questions.
2. Students will appreciate and articulate the role of philosophy and philosophical reflection in developing an apologetic for Christianity.

C. Affective Objectives

Students will grow in godliness as a result of theologizing and philosophizing in community.

III. COURSE TEXTBOOKS

A. Required Texts

Cahn, Steven (editor). *Classics of Western Philosophy* (8th edition). Indianapolis: Hackett, 2012.

Ferry, Luc. *A Brief History of Thought: A Philosophical Guide to Living*. New York: HarperCollins, 2011.

Scruton, Roger. *The Face of God*. London: Continuum, 2012.

B. Recommended Texts

Yoder, Timothy. *A Logical First Step: A DIY Primer on Logical Reasoning*. Kindle, 2015

Other required readings will be made available electronically.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Reading Assignments

Students will be expected to have carefully and thoughtfully read the assigned readings for each class. It will be expected that the student will be prepared with questions and comments that arise from the readings.

B. Written Assignments

Philosophical Reflection Papers - specific instructions for these essays will be provided on Canvas

1. The Nature of the Soul – due by Thursday, September 26
2. The Nature of the Beautiful - due by Thursday, October 31
3. Certainty of Knowledge - due by Thursday, December 5

Book Review of Scruton book – due by Thursday, December 12 (4-6 pages)

There are two elements to a successful book review. First, one should *summarize one chapter* of the book (not the first or last chapter). What is the main thesis of the author in this chapter and what are his main contentions? How does it relate to the rest of the book? This part should be relatively neutral, in other words, you are describing the position and argument of the author without critiquing. This should be roughly one third of the entire review.

The last part of the review is to offer a *critique of the book as a whole*, in which you interact with 3 or 4 main points that the author made that you agree or disagree with. What are your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing? It is important that you display some interaction with the ideas of the whole book, and be clear what you agreed with and disagreed with and why. Be sure to provide some good reasons for the positions you take. The critique should comprise the rest of the review.

C. Quizzes and/or Exams

A Final Exam will be given, the dates and arrangements to be announced in class. The exam will be worth 15% of the final grade. Students graduating this semester will have the option of not taking the Final Exam if they have a grade of B+ or better, all other requirements considered. Graduating seniors must submit all papers by December 14.

V. COURSE POLICIES

A. Grading – The students’ grade will be based on the following percentages.

Book Review	15%
Philosophical Reflection Papers	
- 3 of them, 20% each	60%
Final Exam	15%
Participation	10%

B. Class Participation and Attendance

Attendance and active participation is expected at each class session. The attendance policies of the Student Handbook will be enforced. Students who miss more than two class sessions will lose points in their participation grade. To promote class participation and thoughtful engagement of the issues, students are not permitted to use electronic devices for activities that do not relate to the class. Students may use laptops for taking notes, or e-readers to access readings. Failure to adhere to this policy will have a detrimental impact on the student’s participation grade.

C. Late Assignments

Written assignments should be submitted on Canvas and adhere to standards set forth in the Student Handbook. All papers should be double-spaced, unless otherwise noted. Late papers are accepted, but a penalty of the loss of one letter (i.e. from an A to a B) will be assessed on a paper that is between 1 day and 1 week late, and 2 letter grades on a paper that is between 1 and 2 weeks late, and so on, up to a maximum of 50% of the total points for that assignment. Students whose work is very late are still encouraged to submit the assignment to gain some points.

D. Letter/Numerical Grade Scale

A+	99-100	B+	91-93	C+	83-85	D+	75-77	F	0-69
A	96-98	B	88-90	C	80-82	D	72-74		
A-	94-95	B-	86-87	C-	78-79	D-	70-71		

E. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standard of academic integrity and the Christian virtue of honesty. Submitting the work of another as your own is plagiarism. Whenever you use the work of other individual, you must give credit via proper citation. Failure to meet this standard is plagiarism. Any course work involving dishonest academic practices will be graded as a zero with no resubmission permitted. In each case, the Office of the Dean of Students will be notified.

VI. COURSE INFORMATION

A. Office Hours

If I am in my office, students are welcome to stop by with questions. I am also available by email for student interaction. If a student would like to set up an appointment, please email me at tyoder@dts.edu.

B. Disabilities

Dallas Theological Seminary works to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with psychological, medical, physical, and learning disabilities. A student desiring or needing accommodations on the basis of such disabilities or of medical incidents such as hospitalization or severe injury is to contact the Director of Services for Students with Disabilities (<https://students.dts.edu/studentlife/disability-services/>). If the student is aware of a condition that may impact his/her studies, the student should contact the Director of Services for Students with Disabilities prior to the beginning of the semester or at the onset of a crisis.

VII. COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment
1	8/27	Plato	Plato
2	9/3	Aristotle	Aristotle (On Interpretation, On the Soul, Metaphysics, Nicomachean Ethics)
3	9/10	Hellenistic Philosophy	Epicurus, Epictetus, Sextus Empiricus Ferry, chapters 1-2
4	9/17	Philosophizing about the Soul	
5	9/24	Plotinus	Plotinus Reflection #1 (the Soul), due 9/26
6	10/1	Augustine & Boethius	Augustine, Boethius
7	10/8	Anselm & Maimonides	Anselm, Maimonides Ferry, chapter 3
8	10/15	Aquinas	Aquinas
9	10/22	Philosophizing about Beauty	
10	10/29	Descartes	Descartes (Meditations) Ferry, chapter 4 Reflection #2 (Beauty), due 10/31
11	11/5	Hume	Hume (EHU and Treatise)
12	11/12	Kant	Kant (Prolegomena)
	11/19	No Class – Reading Week	
	11/26	No Class – Thanksgiving Break	
13	12/3	Nietzsche	Nietzsche Ferry, chapter 5-6 Reflection #3 (Knowledge) due 12/5
14	12/10	Husserl & Wittgenstein	Husserl, Wittgenstein Scruton Book Review due 12/12
	12/17	Final Exam	