

RELG 3320
Fall 2013 Semester
MWF 10-10:50AM
131 Harrin Hall
Email: ClaytonC@uca.edu
University of Central Arkansas

Clayton Crockett
Office Hours: MWF
9-10AM , 12-1:30PM
Tu Th 10-10:45AM
Office: 128 Harrin Hall
Office Phone: 450-5506

MODERN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

Course Description

This course examines the development of theoretical understandings of religion from the European Enlightenment to the present. Mainly through readings of primary texts, we will examine ideas about faith, reason, ethics, language, self and God and how they relate to modern and contemporary thought and experience. Students will learn skills of conceptual analysis and interpretation in order to evaluate philosophical and religious texts and phenomena.

Course Objectives

Upper-Division UCA Core Course in Critical Inquiry

This course is a core course for the Religious Studies major and minor in the area of Religious Thought, or it provides elective credit towards the RS major or minor. In addition, with the revision of the UCA Core this course counts as an Upper-Division Core Course in the area of Critical Inquiry.

Goal: Demonstrate a knowledge base in theoretical religious studies that helps students ask more informed questions and learn more complex concepts about the significance of religion in the modern world.

As part of this Goal, the course will address the following three components:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of some of the basic concepts and principles in the field of Religious Studies.
2. Find and evaluate appropriate information based on knowledge about religion in the modern world and technologies of reading, writing and research, including internet research.
3. Apply theoretical modes of academic inquiry into and analysis of religious phenomena to develop and evaluate a position on significant questions about the status of religion in the modern and contemporary world.

Course Requirements

20% Participation. Students are required to attend class and participate in discussions. This is a seminar class, so discussion is integral to the course. 20% of the final grade will consist of a combination of attendance and participation in class. In addition, each student will make one presentation (about 10-15 minutes) to the class on the reading for that day. This presentation will be ungraded, but contribute to the overall participation grade.

60% Critical Essays. Students will write four 3-4 page essay papers, each due on the date assigned on the course syllabus. These papers will engage the reading material, and should combine descriptive analysis with critical evaluation. Try to avoid writing a summary book report on the one hand or a merely subjective opinion paper on the other. Papers should have a narrow focus; a thesis and theme which undergoes development, and include quotes from the text. Each essay is worth 15% of the final grade.

20% Seminar Paper. Each student will write and turn in a seminar paper (approx. 8-10 pages), due in instructor's mailbox (Philosophy and Religion Dept., 224 Harrin Hall) or office (128 Harrin) on or before the end of the day Thursday, December 12. Although this is not intended primarily as a research paper, it must include at least one outside source, and all sources must be cited. The seminar paper should deeply engage an issue or theme of the course and develop it in a coherent and thoughtful manner. The seminar paper may be developed out of one or more of the critical essays. Criteria for grading include clarity and depth of thought, consistency and style of writing and overall creativity. The seminar paper is worth 20% of the final grade.

Statement on Academic Integrity

The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

Statement on Americans with Disabilities Act

The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, contact the Office of Disability Support Services at 450-3135.

Emergency Procedures Summary (EPS)

An Emergency Procedures Summary (EPS) for the building in which this class is held will be discussed during the first week of this course. EPS documents for most buildings on campus are available at <http://uca.edu/mysafety/bep/>. Every student should be familiar with emergency procedures for any campus building in which he/she spends time for classes or other purposes.

Student Handbook Policies

Students are responsible to familiarize themselves with the policies listed in the Student Handbook. Special attention should be given to the Sexual Harassment and Academic Policies.

Required Texts (Available for purchase)

G.W. Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics and Other Writings*
Soren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*
Paul Tillich, *The Courage to Be*
Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*
James Cone, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*

COURSE SCHEDULE

F 8/23 Introduction to the course; Syllabus.

M 8/26 Religion in the Modern World.

W 8/28 Reformations and Wars of Religion.

F 8/30 Enlightenment: Descartes and Leibniz.
Read Leibniz, Introduction, pp. 9-51.

M 9/2 No Class: Labor Day.

W 9/4 – F 9/6: Leibniz.
Read *Discourse on Metaphysics*, pp.59-101.

M 9/9 – W 9/11 Theodicy.
Read Appendix D, pp. 155-196.

F 9/13 German Idealism and Religion: Kant.

*M 9/16 German Idealism and Religion: Hegel.
*3-4 page essay on Leibniz due 9/16.

W 9/18 Introduction to Kierkegaard.
Read *Fear and Trembling*, Preface and Attunement, pp.41-48.

F 9/20 Kierkegaard, cont.
Read *Fear and Trembling*, Speech in Praise of Abraham, Problemata, pp.49-82.

M 9/23 Kierkegaard, cont.
Read *Fear and Trembling*, Problema I, pp.83-95.

W 9/25 Kierkegaard, cont.
Read *Fear and Trembling*, Problema II, pp.96-108.

F 9/27 No Class: Instructor out of Town.

M 9/30 Kierkegaard, cont.
Read *Fear and Trembling*, Problema III, Epilogue, pp.109-147.

W 10/2 The Ruin of German Idealism: Nietzsche.

*F 10/4 Introduction to Twentieth Century Theology: Karl Barth and Paul Tillich.
*3-4 page essay on *Fear and Trembling* due 10/4.

M 10/7 Being and Courage.
Read Tillich, ch.1: pp. 1-31.

W 10/9 Nonbeing and Anxiety.
Read Tillich, ch.2, pp. 32-63.

F 10/11 Pathological Anxiety.
Read Tillich, ch.3, pp. 64-85.

M 10/14 Courage and Participation.
Read Tillich, ch.4, pp. 86-112.

W 10/16 Courage and Individualization.
Read Tillich, ch.5, pp. 113-154.

F 10/18 No Class: Fall Break.

M 10/21 Courage and Transcendence.
Read Tillich, ch.6, pp. 155-190.

W 10/23 Postmodern Theology After Tillich.

*F 10/25 Introduction to Psychoanalysis: Freud and Lacan.
*3-4 page essay on *The Courage to Be* due 10/25.

M 10/28 Approaching Abjection.
Read Kristeva, ch.1, pp.1-31.

W 10/30 Something to be Scared Of.
Read Kristeva, ch.2, pp.32-55.

F 11/1 Filth and Defilement.
Read Kristeva, ch.3, pp.56-89.

M 11/4 Biblical Abomination.
Read Kristeva, ch.4, pp.90-112.

W 11/6 Taking the Sins of the World.
Read Kristeva, ch.5, pp.113-132.

F 11/8 Introduction to Liberation Theology.

*M 11/11 Black Experience of the Tree and the Cross.
Read Cone, ch.1, pp. 1-29.
*3-4 page essay on *Powers of Horror* due 11/11.

W 11/13 Reinhold Niebuhr and the Cross.
Read Cone, ch.2, pp. 30-64.

F 11/15 MLK Bears the Cross.
Read Cone, ch.3, pp. 65-92.

M 11/18 Black Literary Imagination.
Read Cone, ch.4, pp. 93-119.

W 11/20 Women Weeping.
Read Cone, ch.5, pp. 120-151.

F 11/22 Legacies of the Cross and the Lynching Tree.
Read Cone, Conclusion, pp. 153-166.

M 11/25 – F 11/29 No Class: Thanksgiving Break.

M 12/2 –W 12/4 Course Conclusions.

*8-10 page Seminar Paper due in instructor's office or mailbox at end of the day on Thursday,
December 12.