TH 606 — MODERN THEOLOGY

“DONUTS TO DERRIDA”

COURSE SYLLABUS
FALL 2012

Instructor

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Office Hours: T, 2:00–5:00; and by appointment.

Time

The class will meet on Thursday evenings, 6:30–9:30. All students are required to attend each of the course lectures. Attendance is also recommended for optional post-lecture discussions on primary source readings, 9:40–10:30.

Description

From the end of the Reformation period, representative figures and movements are studied in order to better understand current orientations to theology and to the theological task. Focus is on modern European thought and culture as the context for the development of Protestant theology, including Protestant Orthodoxy, Deism, Protestant Liberalism, and Neo-Orthodoxy.

Objectives

• Reflect on what it means to think theologically within an evangelical and catholic Christian context.

• Develop a solid foundational knowledge of the general flow of ideas, and the key issues, movements, individuals and texts in modern Christian theological history.

• Hone our critical exegetical skills through close reading and discussion of seminal texts in modern Christian thought.

• Sharpen our perspective on the meaning, concerns, and significance of the modern period of Western intellectual and cultural history; and the place, shape, and challenges of evangelical theology as it developed through this time period, and as it seeks to define itself and its task in the current theological situation.

• Gain insight concerning the key orientations to theological method in Protestantism through an analysis of representative theologians and theological movements, focusing especially on the contrast between orthodox Protestantism and classic Protestant Liberalism; and reflecting on ways the lessons learned may be applied to our own critical evaluation of contemporary theologies and theological movements, and to our own faithful fulfillment of the contemporary evangelical theological task.

• Cultivate a deeper appreciation of our own theological heritage and place in the community of faith that transcends boundaries of time and location; and a clearer vision and intellectual context for a lifetime of theological study expressed in continuing personal growth, and well-informed ministry.
Texts


Choice of BOTH:


OR:


**Primary source readings posted on CAMS.** Students are also required to read at least 15 of the 25 readings listed below (although you are encouraged to make the most of your investment in the course by reading as many as possible – over 15 readings will receive extra credit). Hard to decide? Ten readings marked * are especially recommended. The readings are listed in order of their treatment in the course:


Karl Barth, The Epistle to the Romans (selection), in Karl Barth: Theologian of Freedom, ed. Clifford Green (Fortress Press, 1991).*


Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology (selections), in A Map of Twentieth-Century Theology: Readings from Karl Barth to Radical Pluralism, ed. Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson (Fortress, 1995).*
Requirements (Choose either OPTION #1 or OPTION #2)

OPTION #1: Final Exam

3,500-word (12 pages). You may use class notes and texts as you answer the questions, and you are encouraged to engage additional research and discussion. Simply number your answers to correspond to the terms/concepts on the exam.

Answers to the take-home exam will be evaluated on: 1) thoroughness, conciseness, and clarity of thought; 2) demonstrated significant understanding of the key terms, concepts, context, issues, texts, people, and movements addressed in this class; and 3) the quality of writing and presentation. Endnotes and bibliography are required only if sources are quoted directly (quotations should be used only where clearly meaningful to your answer, and only endnotes will be accepted as citation). Issues of scriptural interpretation should also be noted where appropriate.

PART 1 — Choose NINE terms/concepts from the list below. Define each of the terms/concepts you have chosen, and discuss their relevance in Modern Theology. Be sure to include in your answers, where appropriate, discussions/explications of: relevant historical context; key related issue or issues; related concepts; important representative theologians and/or philosophers; representative theologies and/or movements; key representative text or texts; interpretive scriptural issue or issues at stake; and clear examples that will further demonstrate their meaning and importance, and their relevance for the way you understand the evangelical theological task today. 10 points each.

1. Logocentrism
2. Formal principle of theology / Material principle of theology
3. Theology as science
4. The Counter-Renaissance
5. “broad, ugly ditch”
6. Jesus of history / Christ of faith
7. “turn to the subject”
8. evidentialism
9. religious a priori
10. “feeling of absolute dependence”
11. Christology “from above” / Christology “from below”
12. Vorstellung / Begriff
13. thesis, antithesis, synthesis
14. “kernel” vs. “husk”
15. Historie / Geschichte
16. Jesus vs. Socrates
17. The principle of subjectivity
18. Religion as alienation
19. “hermeneutics of suspicion”
20. “Death of God”
21. History of Religion School
22. “Theology of the Word”
23. “point of contact”
24. “demythologization”
25. Method of Correlation

PART 2 — Write a short response to the following (no more than 2 pages): Reflecting on what you have learned about Modern Theology from the reading, lectures, and discussions, briefly discuss a key issue, doctrine, or theological/philosophical position or development that has surprised you, puzzled you, irritated you, changed or confirmed your own thinking, or has found a meaningful application in your own Christian life and/or ministry. 10 points
OPTION #2: Research Paper

3,500-word (12 pages). Researching a sharply focused topic of interest to the student that is also clearly relevant to the subject of Modern Theology (see the instructor if you would like suggestions for possible topics).

The Research Paper must consist of 3,500 words, or 12 pages of text, plus endnotes and bibliography (only endnotes will be accepted). It should demonstrate thoughtful engagement with both primary and secondary sources that are clearly identified in the endnotes and bibliography. Required course reading may be used for the research paper as well. Research papers will be evaluated on: 1) a well-focused and relevant topic; 2) thoroughness, conciseness, and clarity of thought; 3) demonstrated significant and thoughtful engagement with the chosen topic, and with the primary and secondary sources; and 4) the quality of writing and presentation (be sure to closely follow the guidelines stated in the additional information concerning written assignments below).

NOTE: Clearly defined Research Paper topics and preliminary bibliography must be approved by the instructor no later than November 8.

The Final Exam OR Research Paper is due December 18 by 4:00pm.

OPTION #1 and OPTION #2 (Required of All Students):

Reaction Papers

Five short papers (500-word max each) reacting to the required course texts. Each paper must be a response to the reading, rather than merely a summary or explication. Students should seek to analyze each text as a whole, reflecting especially on key themes, arguments, issues, criticisms, or significant points that are of particular personal interest; and on how these relate to the key themes discussed in the course. The following examples of general critical questions may help guide your engagement with the text and the formulation of your response:

- What stood out to me? (Reflecting on interest)
- What surprised me? (Reflecting on distance)
- What puzzled me? (Reflecting on learning opportunities)
- What connections did I make? (Reflecting on integration)
- What implications are there? (Reflecting on application)

These papers may also be used as a prepared contribution to the optional discussion sessions that are devoted to those texts.

Reaction Papers are due:  
Week 3: Locke, The Reasonableness of Christianity  
Week 4: Kant, Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason  
Week 5: Schleiermacher, On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers  
Week 7: Harnack, What is Christianity?  
Week 9: Barth, Dogmatics in Outline

Participation/Reading

You are expected to be faithful to your calling as a student through preparation, attendance, and involvement in the course. Significant learning will take place in the context of the classroom community. Assigned reading outside of class is meant to supplement the lectures and discussions, and will provide a necessary aid for learning the material. You will have an opportunity to account for your attendance and completed required reading by filling out and submitting the Completed Reading Form available on CAMS. The Completed Reading Form is due December 18 by 4:00pm.
Additional Information Concerning Written Assignments

• Written assignments should be typed in 12 point, Times New Roman-type font, double spaced, 1 inch margins, and with a cover page that clearly states your campus mailbox number. Students should make consistent use of a style manual of their choice (though only endnotes will be accepted).

• The preferred means of submitting assignments is in hard copy at the beginning of class, in my campus mailbox (#223), or slipped under/deposited in the box in front of my office door (GL108). Please submit assignments as an email attachment only when absolutely necessary, and do not assume the instructor has received an emailed assignment until a verification is sent in response.

• Final written work submitted on December 18, should include a Final Exam OR Research Paper, and a Completed Reading Form. It is the GCTS Registrar’s policy that no written work may be accepted by the professor after 4:00 pm on December 18 without an extension granted by the Registrar’s office.

Grading

The relative weight of the course requirements will be distributed as follows:

• OPTION #1: Final Exam OR OPTION #2: Research Paper 50%
• Reaction Papers (Five) 25%
• Completed Reading Form 25%

Auditors

Auditors are welcome in the course. Attendance to all the lectures is especially encouraged, and auditors may also participate in the optional post-lecture discussions. Auditors should also read from the above list of texts as they are able.

Schedule

NOTE: Students should read Livingston, Modern Christian Thought, or Kapic/McCormack, Mapping Modern Theology along with the course schedule.

WEEK 1: Course Introduction; Introduction to the Study of Modern Theology

WEEK 2: Protestant Orthodoxy; The Counter-Renaissance

  Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics (selections) CAMS
  Warfield, “Christian Supernaturalism” CAMS

WEEK 3: Descartes to Deism

  Locke, The Reasonableness of Christianity
  Tindal, Christianity as Old as the Creation (selection) CAMS
  Lessing, “On the Proof of the Spirit and of Power” CAMS
  Rousseau, The Creed of a Priest of Savoy (Library Reserve)
  Reaction Paper #1 Due (Locke)

WEEK 4: The Enlightenment and Kant

  Kant, Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason
  Kant, Critique of Pure Reason (selections) CAMS
  Reaction Paper #2 Due (Kant)

READING WEEK
WEEK 5: Romanticism and Schleiermacher

Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*
Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, (selections) CAMS

**Reaction Paper #3 Due** (Schleiermacher)

WEEK 6: Idealism and Hegel

Hegel, “Without the World God Is Not God” CAMS
Hegel, “Lordship and Bondage (Master and Slave)” CAMS

WEEK 7: Moralism and Ritschl/Harnack

Harnack, *What is Christianity?*
Ritschl, *The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation* (selection) CAMS

**Reaction Paper #4 Due** (Harnack)

WEEK 8: Critiques: Search for the Historical Jesus; Feuerbach to Nietzsche; Historicism and Troeltsch; Kähler and Kierkegaard

Strauss, *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined* (selection) CAMS
Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (selection), CAMS
Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity* (selection) CAMS
Marx, “Thesis on Feuerbach” CAMS
Troeltsch, “Christianity and the History of Religion” CAMS
Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments* (selection) CAMS
Kierkegaard, “Objective and Subjective Christianity” CAMS

**READING WEEK**

WEEK 9: Neo-Orthodoxy: Development

Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline*
Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans* (selection) CAMS
Barth, “Evangelical Theology in the 19th Century” CAMS
Barth, “The Humanity of God” CAMS

**Reaction Paper #5 Due** (Barth)

WEEK 10: Neo-Orthodoxy: Division

Brunner, “Nature and Grace” (selection) CAMS
Barth, “No! Answer to Emil Brunner” (selection) CAMS
Bultmann, “New Testament and Mythology” CAMS

WEEK 11: Late 20th-Century Theology and the Passage to Post-Modernity

Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (selections) CAMS

**IMPORTANT DATES:**

10/11, 11/15 — Reading Weeks
11/22 — *Happy Thanksgiving!*
12/18 — Final Exam or Research Paper, and Completed Reading Form due by 4:00pm.

**NOTE:** The instructor reserves the right to revise the contents of this course syllabus as necessary.
Selected Bibliography


Chalamet, Christophe. *Dialectical Theologians: Wilhelm Herrmann, Karl Barth and Rudolf Bultmann*. Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 2005


Reardon, Bernard M. G. *Religious Thought in the Nineteenth Century: Illustrated from Writers of the Period*. Cambridge Univ. Press, 1966.


_____. *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture*. Crossway, 1976.


Biographical Notes


Barth, Karl (1886–1968). Swiss Reformed theologian widely regarded as the most important Protestant theologian of the twentieth century, and a key figure in the movement known as ‘neo-orthodoxy.’

Baur, Ferdinand Christian (1792–1860). German Protestant Liberal theologian, key figure in ‘the Historical Jesus Movement,’ and founder of the ‘Tübingen School.’

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich (1906–45). German theologian and pastor in the persecuted German Confessional Church, conspired against Hitler and executed by the Nazis in 1945.


Cone, James H. (1939– ). Liberation theologian and key figure in the development of the Black Liberation Theology movement in America.


Descartes, René (1596–1650). Founder of Continental rationalism and regarded as ‘the father of modern philosophy.’

Feuerbach, Ludwig (1804–72). German philosopher and critic of religion.

Foucault, Michel (1926–84). French social theorist, historian, and key figure in the development of postmodernism.


Galilei, Galileo (1564–1642). Mathematician, astronomer, and physicist who defended the theories of Copernicus and laid the foundation for the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century.

Gutiérrez, Gustavo (1928– ). Peruvian Roman Catholic priest considered to be ‘the father of liberation theology.’


Hegel, G. F. W. (1770–1831). German philosopher who sought to define and integrate the processes of nature and history, religion, politics and culture into a single vision of truth.

Henry, Carl F. H. (1913–2003). A representative theologian of the new-evangelicalism that sought to distinguish itself from fundamentalism as it rediscovered the vitality of evangelical theology.


Hume, David (1711–76). Scottish empiricist philosopher, skeptical critic of religion and rationalism.

Kähler, Martin (1835–1912). German theologian, author of a devastating critique of the ‘Historical Jesus Movement.’

Kant, Immanuel (1724–1804). Founder of the tradition of modern German philosophy, and credited with what has been referred to as a ‘Copernican revolution’ in epistemology.

Kierkegaard, Soren (1813–55). Danish philosopher, critic of Christendom, and founding figure of existentialism.

Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm (1646–1716). German philosopher and mathematician known especially for his ‘best of all possible worlds’ theodicy.

Lessing, Gotthold (1729–81). German Deist and literary critic who used the phrase ‘ugly, broad ditch’ in regard to the problem of historical revelation.


Luther, Martin (1483–1546). German monk, professor, and theologian commonly regarded as the leading figure of the Protestant Reformation.

Marx, Karl (1818–83). German political philosopher, economist, and critic of religion.

Moltmann, Jürgen (1926– ). German theologian who first became widely known for his ‘Theology of Hope.’


Nietzsche, Friedrich (1844–1900). German philosopher, critic of Christianity and morality, and the metaphysical tradition of philosophy stemming from Plato.

Pannenberg, Wolfhart (1928– ). German theologian who reasserted the importance of historicity in revelation of God.

Pascal, Blaise (1623–62). French mathematician and Jansenist theologian who criticized Jesuit theology from a viewpoint referred to as ‘fideism.’

Reimarus, Hermann (1694–1768). German Deist who was the first to assert a division between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith.


Ritschl, Albrecht (1822–89). German Liberal Protestant theologian who founded the influential ‘Ritschlian school’ that stressed the ethical character of Christianity.


Rousseau, Jean-Jacques (1712–78). Deist philosopher, author, and leading figure in the movement of ‘Romanticism.’

Schleiermacher, F. D. E. (1768–1834). German theologian and founding figure of Protestant Liberal theology who sought to base religion on intuition and feeling.

Schweitzer, Albert (1875–1965). German Protestant physician and theologian who challenged the presuppositions of the ‘Historical Jesus Movement.’

Spener, Philip Jakob (1635–1705). German Lutheran theologian and founder of German Pietism.

Spinoza, Benedict de (1632–77). Dutch philosopher (of Jewish background), devised a system of metaphysical pantheism that became highly influential in the period of German philosophy after Kant.

Strauss, David Friedrich (1808–1874). German theologian associated with the Tübingen School of historical criticism who was a pioneer in the historical ‘searches’ or investigations of Jesus.

Tillich, Paul (1886–1965). German Lutheran existentialist ‘neo-orthodox’ theologian, sought to bridge the gap between Christian faith and modern culture by employing the ‘method of correlation.’

Tindal, Matthew (1655–1733). Leading English Deist who sought to develop a rational and universal Natural Religion.

Troeltsch, Ernst (1865–1923). Theologian and sociologist involved in the founding of the ‘History of Religions School.’

Turrettini, François (1623–87). Regarded as one of the most important Protestant Scholastic theologians and influential in the development of American evangelical theology, most notably through old Princeton where he was read by leaders such as Charles Hodge and B. B. Warfield.


Wesley, John (1703–91). English theologian, evangelist, pastor, and founder of Methodism.
Timeline

1517 .................... Martin Luther posts his Ninety-five Theses.
1530 .................... The Augsburg Confession is presented.
1536 .................... John Calvin publishes the first (Latin) edition of his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.
1545–63 ................ The Council of Trent.
1577 .................... The Formula of Concord is published.
1611 .................... The King James Bible is completed.
1618 .................... The Thirty Years’ War begins.
1641 .................... René Descartes publishes his *Meditations on First Philosophy*.
1646 .................... The Westminster Confession is completed (it is approved by Parliament in June 1648).
1675 .................... Publication of Philip Jakob Spener’s *Pia Desideria*.
1677 .................... Baruch Spinoza’s *Ethics*, his most important work, is published posthumously.
1687 .................... Publication of Isaac Newton’s *Principia Mathematica*.
1689 .................... Publication of John Locke’s *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.
1695 .................... Locke publishes *The Reasonableness of Christianity as Delivered in the Scriptures*.
1714 .................... Gottfried Leibniz publishes *Monadology*, one of his best known works.
1730 .................... Matthew Tindal publishes *Christianity as old as the Creation, or the Gospel a Republication of the Religion of Nature*, which became known as the ‘Bible’ of Deism.
1748 .................... Publication of David Hume’s *Philosophical Essays Concerning Human Understanding*, which contained his famous ‘Essay upon Miracles.’
1759 .................... Voltaire publishes the first edition of *Candide*.
1774–8 ................ Hermann Reimarus’ Wolfenbüttel Fragments are published in seven parts by G. E. Lessing.
1762 .................... Jean-Jacques Rousseau publishes *The Social Contract* and *Emile*.
1779 .................... Posthumous publication of Hume’s *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*.
1781 .................... Immanuel Kant publishes the first of his three great philosophical works, *Critique of Pure Reason* (*Critique of Practical Reason* was published in 1788, *Critique of Judgment* in 1790).
1789 .................... French Revolution.
1793 .................... Kant publishes *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, his last major philosophical work.
1799 .................... Friedrich Schleiermacher publishes his *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*.
1807 .................... Publication of *Phenomenology of Mind*, G. F. W. Hegel’s first great philosophical work.
1835 .................... David Friedrich Strauss publishes *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined*.
1841 .................... Ludwig Feuerbach’s *The Essence of Christianity* is published.
1848 .................... Publication of Marx and Engels’ *Communist Manifesto*. 
1859 .................. Darwin’s *Origin of the Species* becomes the founding document of modern evolutionary biology.

1869–70 ............. The First Vatican Council.

1871–73 ............. Charles Hodge publishes his three volume *Systematic Theology*, representing the American Calvinism of Old School Presbyterianism at Princeton Theological Seminary.

1887 .................. *Genealogy of Morals* is one of the last published works of Friedrich Nietzsche.

1892 ................. Martin Kähler publishes *The So-Called Historical Jesus and the Historic, Biblical Christ*.

1899 .................. Sigmund Freud publishes *The Interpretation of Dreams*, his first major work on psychoanalysis and the theory of the unconscious.

1899–1900 ........... Adolf von Harnack delivers public lectures on “The Essence of Christianity” during the winter semester at the University of Berlin (published in English in 1901 as *What is Christianity?*)

1906 ................. *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* is published by Albert Schweitzer.

1914–18 .............. World War I

1919 .................. Publication of Karl Barth’s commentary, *The Epistle to the Romans*.

1923 .................. J. Gresham Machen publishes *Christianity and Liberalism* as a critique of theological modernism.

1932 .................. Publication of the first-part volume of Barth’s multi-volume systematic theology, *Church Dogmatics*, which he worked on until his death in 1968.

1934 .................. Barth publishes his pamphlet, *No! Answer to Emil Brunner* in response to Brunner’s *Nature and Grace* published the same year.

1939 .................. World War II begins.


1945 ................. The Nazis execute Dietrich Bonhoeffer.


1951 .................. Paul Tillich publishes the first of three volumes of his *Systematic Theology*.

1961 .................. Wolfhart Pannenberg and ‘the Pannenberg circle’ publish *Revelation as History*.


1964 .................. Jürgen Moltmann publishes his widely read *Theology of Hope*.

1966 .................. The lecture, “Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences,” is delivered by Jacques Derrida, marking the beginning of the era of poststructuralism or postmodernism in America.

1970 .................. James Cone publishes the seminal work, *A Black Theology of Liberation*.

1971 .................. *A Theology of Liberation* is published for the first time by Gustavo Gutiérrez in Lima, Peru.

1973 .................. The Center for Process Studies is founded by John Cobb and David Griffin at the School of Theology at Claremont.

1983 .................. *Sexism and God-Talk*, a pioneering work in American Christian feminist theology by Rosemary Radford Ruether is published.

1984 .................. George Lindbeck’s *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* is published.