CH/TH 614: Theology of Jonathan Edwards

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

Course Instructor
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Course Lecturer
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Course Description
Considered by many to be America's most brilliant theologian, Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) was also a philosopher, a college president, a pastor, a revival preacher, a missionary to the Native Americans, a noted author (whose writings are known and read around the globe), the husband of a remarkable woman and the father of eleven children. Drawing primarily upon Edwards' own writings, this course will seek to explore the fascinating life and ministry of one of America's most influential figures. Each session will focus on at least one major aspect of Edwards' life and work and each session will examine at least one of Edwards' writings.

Gordon-Conwell Mission
This course satisfies the following institutional learning objectives

- To maintain academic excellence in the highest tradition of Christian scholarship in the teaching of the biblical, historical and theological disciplines. (Article 2)
- To provide leadership and educational resources for shaping an effective evangelical presence in Church and society. (Article 5)
- To develop in students a vision for God's redemptive work throughout the world and to formulate the strategies that will lead to effective missions, evangelism and discipleship. (Article 6)

Course Learning Objectives
Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Have a working knowledge of the life and ministry of Jonathan Edwards
- Be familiar with the corpus of Edwards' writings
- Have read one biography about Jonathan Edwards
- Have read a number of Edwards sermons
- Have a working knowledge of several key studies about Edwards ministry and theology
- Have been introduced to Edwards work as a revivalist, a scientist, a philosopher and a missionary

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Gordon-Conwell offers technical support during regular business hours. If you have a technical issue, please email helpdesk@gordonconwell.edu. All requests related to the course should be sent to the professor, and/or the Semlink program staff.
The Lectures for this course have been built using the lectures from the Semlink Classic course. Please refer to this document found in Resources to help you map the Semlink Classic lectures to this course. The following is a listing of the modules topics in this course:

1. Edwards Historical & Cultural Context
   - Key Question: What Major Influences Shaped Jonathan Edwards Life and Thought?
     - Week 1 - Introduction to Edwards Life & Literature
       - Lecture 1 - Introduction
     - Week 2 - Major Influences
       - Lecture 2 - Puritanism
       - Lecture 3 - Pietism
     - Week 3 - Early Years and Conversion
       - Lecture 4 - Conversion
       - Lecture 5 - God's Two Books: Creation and Scripture
   - Week 1 - Introduction to Edwards Life & Literature
     - Lecture 1 - Introduction

2. Edwards as Pastor and Preacher
   - Key Question: How did Edwards Understand his Role as Pastor and Preacher?
     - Week 4 - Edwards as Pastor and Preacher
       - Lecture 6 - Edwards as Preacher
       - Lecture 7 - Edwards as Pastor

3. Edwards and the Great Awakening
   - Key Question: What Role did Edwards Play in the Great Awakening?
     - Week 5 - The Great Awakening I
       - Lecture 8 - The Great Awakening
       - Lecture 9 - Edwards and Whitefield
     - Week 6 - The Great Awakening II
       - Lecture 10 - Principles of Spiritual Renewal
       - Lecture 11 - The Rise of Modern Evangelicalism
     - Week 7 - Work, Vocation, and the Call of God
       - Lecture 12 - Vocation
       - Lecture 13 - Practice of Piety

4. Edwards Understanding of Ecclesiology, Historiography and Missions
   - Key Question: What was Edwards Understanding of Church, History, and Missions?
     - Week 8 - Ecclesiology
       - Lecture 14 - The Church
       - Lecture 15 - History
     - Week 9 - Edwards as a Missionary
       - Lecture 16 - Missions

5. Edwards as a Theologian
   - Key Question: How can we Characterize Edwards Theology?
     - Week 10 - Edwards as a Theologian I
       - Lecture 17 - Edwards Theology
     - Week 11 - Putting together the Works of Jonathan Edwards
       - Lecture 18 by John Edwards (direct descendant of Jonathan Edwards)
       - Lecture 19 by Louis Mitchell - Edwards Understanding of Beauty, Truth, and Excellence

6. Edwards Enduring Legacy
   - Key Question: What can the Contemporary Church Learn from Edwards?
     - Week 13 - Edwards Enduring Legacy
       - Lecture 20 - Edwards Enduring Legacy

Required Materials


Course Requirements - Learning Activities

Achievement of the course objectives will be measured through a variety of activities as described below.

Examination

Final Examination: An essay exam covering the readings and class lectures. The completed exam is due 11:55PM ET on the Friday of week 14.

The Final Exam in this course must be proctored. Your proctor must be someone who works for a church or volunteers for a church in an officially recognized capacity (pastor, elder, ministry leader, office administrator, etc.), a library or a school. Your proctor cannot be a member of your family or a current Gordon-Conwell student. Your proctor should be present throughout the exam.

https://sakai.gcts.edu/portal/tool/6c32ab88-210d-4f29-a489-314597ede144/printFriendly
time you are taking the exam.

At this time, you may not use the Goddard Library, Hamilton Campus, as a proctor.

The student will need to identify a suitable proctor and submit his/her name and email address to the Semlink office via the proctor registration form before each exam. The Semlink office will then email your proctor login information for your exam so he/she can help you login at the time when you take the exam. Please submit your proctor information to the Semlink office at least 2 business days before you plan to take the exam.

Preparation for the examination:
Since the final exam will combine the student's historical and theological knowledge of Jonathan Edwards with their actual practice of ministry, many have found that the most effective way of preparing for this somewhat unusual examination is to focus on the major themes, issues and personalities raised by the instructor in the lectures. While students are encouraged to draw upon the required and recommended readings, the final exam will invite each student to identify three major insights from their study of Edwards and to apply those insights to their own lives and ministries.

Note on the Exams:
While the student is encouraged to reflect on the exam questions during the two weeks prior to their writing of the actual exam — making use, if they wish, of whatever notes and/or books they might wish to consult — no books (other than an unmarked Bible and/or dictionary) may be used during the actual writing of the exams. Students may take up to three hours to write the exam.

Grading of the exams:
Your examination will be evaluated on the basis of three primary criteria: (1) the depth and accuracy of your historical knowledge; (2) the quality, clarity and organization of the analysis/argument you present; and (3) the level of professional skill, creativity and pastoral sensitivity reflected in the way you apply your historical insights to the practice of ministry.

Reading
You are required to read a total of 2500 pages for the course, including a careful reading of the required textbooks. The remaining pages of reading (to make up the full 2500 pages required for the course) can include the materials that are used for the research paper and/or additional reading from the "Recommended Reading" sections of the course syllabus or more general reading in related areas of the student's choosing. No credit is given for skimming.

Grading of the reading will be as follows:
100%=A; 95-99%=A-; 90-94%=B+; 85-89%=B; 80-84%=B-; 75-79%=C+; 70-74%=C; 65-69%=C-; 60-64%=D+; 55-59%=D; 50-54%=D-=; Below 50%=F

In order to complete 2,500 pages of reading (or equivalency), it is necessary to read an average of 179 pages per week. Your reading will not be tracked week to week. You will be asked to submit one report of your reading by 11:55PM ET on the Monday following week 14.

Research Paper
You are required to write one 15-20 page research paper on one major aspect of Edwards' life and work. Completed papers should be typed and in correct form (for example, double-spaced, using twelve-point font, footnoted where appropriate, with a bibliography of all sources used for the study, etc.). Those who have not had much experience in writing research papers may want to consult a reliable style manual like Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 6th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). Any recognized style is acceptable to the instructor so long as it is used consistently throughout the paper.

Research paper is due 11:55PM ET on the Monday following week 14.

Grading the paper:
Your research paper will be evaluated on the basis of three primary criteria:
1. The depth of the research in both primary and secondary materials
2. The quality of the analysis/argument you present
3. The clarity, accuracy and beauty of the writing.

Attention to these matters will not only help you on this paper assignment but it will also aid you in developing the kinds of skills you will be using in those various ministries to which God has called each one of you.

Cheating and plagiarism: Please exercise special care in the use of sources. Institutional guidelines can be found in your Student Handbook under "Violations of Academic Integrity." As followers of Christ, we need to maintain the very highest standards of professional conduct.

Analysis Paper
You are required to write a 5-7 page analysis of one of the following writings by Edwards: (a) Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God; (b) A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God; (c) Religious Affections; (d) Freedom of the Will; or (e) The Excellency of Christ.

Analysis Paper is due 11:55 PM ET on the Saturday of week 10.

The paper should describe the writing's major arguments, point out its major strengths and weaknesses and indicate the key lessons it might have for contemporary readers.

Twenty-Five Resolutions
A listing of "resolutions" (similar to those that Edwards used to guide his life).
Twenty-Five Resolution List is due 11:55 PM ET on the Saturday of week 10.

Your list is to be modeled after the 70 resolutions that Edwards created and used to guide his own life. This assignment is required and worth 5% of your final grade. While this assignment will not be given a grade, you will receive full credit or no credit for your submission of 25 resolutions.

**Discussion/Interaction**

There are 6 discussion forums centered around the Key Questions that are posed for the major modules of this course. These discussions are an important part of the course. They provide an opportunity for us to engage in thoughtful discussion on various topics related to the history and theology of Jonathan Edwards, and for us to get to know each other a bit better.

For the six discussion forums, you will be required to post an initial response to the key question and respond to a fellow student's post. **This means you are required a minimum of two posts per discussion forum.** It is recommended to continue responding and interacting with your fellow students beyond the required posts to further enhance your learning and experience. Your initial post is expected to be about 450 words for each Forum topic and a response/reply of 200 words. (Additional comments and responses can be any length.) A Grading Rubric can be found in Resources.

The six key questions correspond to the major module topics. They are:

- **Module 1:**
  1. What Major Influences Shaped Jonathan Edwards Life and Thought?
     - Initial post due by 11:55PM ET on the Friday of week 2.
     - Response post due by 11:55PM ET on the Wednesday of week 3.

- **Module 2:**
  2. How did Edwards Understand his Role as Pastor and Preacher?
     - Initial post due by 11:55PM ET on the Friday of week 4.
     - Response post due by 11:55PM ET on the Wednesday of week 5.

- **Module 3:**
  3. What Role did Edwards Play in the Great Awakening?
     - Initial post due by 11:55PM ET on the Friday of week 6.
     - Response post due by 11:55PM ET on the Wednesday of week 7.

- **Module 4:**
  4. What was Edwards Understanding of Church, History, and Missions?
     - Initial post due by 11:55PM ET on the Friday of week 8.
     - Response post due by 11:55PM ET on the Wednesday of week 9.

- **Module 5:**
  5. How Can we Characterize Edwards Theology?
     - Initial post due by 11:55PM ET on the Friday of week 11.
     - Response post due by 11:55PM ET on the Wednesday of week 12.

- **Module 6:**
  6. What can the Contemporary Church Learn from Edwards?
     - Initial post due by 11:55PM ET on the Friday of week 13.
     - Response post due by 11:55PM ET on the Wednesday of week 14.

**Grading Policy**

Your final grade for the course will be computed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis Paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;25 Resolutions&quot; List</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forum Discussion/Interaction</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Report</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grading Scale**

Grading Scale (point values and definitions of letter grades can be found in the "Grading Scale" section of the Gordon-Conwell Student Handbook):

A=4.0; A-=3.7; B+=3.3; B=3.0; B-=2.7; C+=2.3; C=2.0; C-=1.7; D+=1.3; D=1.0; D-=0.7; F=0.0

"A" means "conspicuous excellence;" "B" means "exceeding the minimum;" "C" means "satisfactory" work; "D" means "passing" but "unsatisfactory;" and "F" means "course has been failed."

**Other Course Policies**

**Proctored Exams**

The exam in this course must be proctored. Your proctor must be someone who works for a church or volunteers for a church in an officially recognized capacity (pastor, elder, ministry leader, office administrator, etc.), a library or a school. Your proctor cannot be a member of your
family or a current Gordon-Conwell student. Your proctor should be present throughout the time you are taking the exam.

*At this time, you may not use the Goddard Library, Hamilton Campus, as a proctor.*

The student will need to identify a suitable proctor and submit his/her name and email address to the Semlink office via the proctor registration form before each exam. The Semlink office will then email your proctor login information for your exam so he/she can help you login at the time when you take the exam. Please submit your proctor information to the Semlink office at least 2 business days before you plan to take the exam.

**Instructor Feedback**

The instructor will attempt to respond to questions or messages within a few days. The instructor will provide feedback on assignments within one week of submission. The instructor will post grades in the gradebook within two weeks of submission.

**Document Formatting and Submission**

Papers should be submitted as attached files in PDF format. Assignments should be double spaced with 1” margins on all sides of each page, and should be printed in Times New Roman 12 point type or another font of similar size and appearance. Those who have not had much experience in writing research papers may want to consult a reliable style manual like Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). Any recognized style is acceptable to the instructor so long as it is used consistently throughout the paper. Assignments must be submitted electronically by posting to the Sakai site. Hard-copies will not be accepted.

**VeriCite**

A tool called VeriCite has been added to Sakai to check for plagiarism. If you find that a part of your assignment has scored highly in VeriCite's review (these sections will be highlighted in red), that means your content is very similar to content in another source and is probably a quote or paraphrase that should be cited. Please use this as a tool to make sure you have cited everything you need in your assignment. Not everything this service highlights will be a violation, so use your best judgment.

**Late Work**

All work must be posted or uploaded to Sakai by 11:55PM ET of the day it is due. For each day an assignment is late, the following deductions will be made: Forum posts will lose 1 point (of 3 possible) per day late; Comments on forum posts will lose 1 point (of 2 possible) per day late; Reflection papers and the "Oral History" interview will lose 1 point (of 5 possible ) per day late; Research paper and examinations will receive a deduction of ½ grade level per day (i.e. A to A-, A- to B+, etc.)

**Netiquette**

Gordon-Conwell does not tolerate disruptive or disrespectful behavior in the online communications in any course. Students should review the netiquette policy in the Student Handbook and this website: [http://www.albion.com/netiquette](http://www.albion.com/netiquette).

**Additional Seminary Policies**

**Academic Standards**

Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of personal and academic integrity. Cheating involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination or the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors. Plagiarism involves the use of another person’s distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one’s own instead of giving proper credit to the source. Plagiarism can also involve over dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one’s writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures. For more information, please consult the Student Handbook.

**ADA Policy**

The seminary complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student with a qualifying and authenticated disability who is in need of accommodations, should petition the seminary in accordance with the stated guidelines in the Student Handbook.

**Extension Policy**

Arrangements for submission of late work at a date on or before the “last day to submit written work”, as noted on the seminary’s Academic Calendar, are made between the student and professor. Formal petition to the Registration Office is not required at this time. This includes arrangements for the rescheduling of final exams.

However, course work (reading and written) to be submitted after the publicized calendar due date, must be approved by the Registration Office. An extension form, available online, must be submitted to the Registration Office prior to the “last day to submit written work.” Requests received after this date will either be denied or incur additional penalty. For a full discussion of this policy, please consult the Student Handbook.

**Grades**

Grades are posted on line within twenty-four hours of receipt from the professor. Students are expected to check their CAMS student portal in order to access posted grades. Those individuals who need an official grade report issued to a third party, should put their request in writing to the Registration Office. Faculty have six weeks from the course work due date to submit a final grade. Note that the final grade posted in Sakai is not official; the official final grade will be posted in the CAMS student portal.

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**Contacting the Educational Support Services Office**

email: semlink@gordonconwell.edu

https://sakai.gcts.edu/portal/tool/6c32ab88-210d-4f29-a489-314597ede144/printFriendly
phone: 978-646-4144 (office hours only)
Office hours: 9:00 am - 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday