



Renison University College
Affiliated with the University of Waterloo
240 Westmount Road N, Waterloo, ON
Canada N2L 3G4

Phone: 519-884-4400 | Fax: 519-884-5135 | uwaterloo.ca/Renison

Fall 2016

Course Code: RS 250

Course Title: History of Christian Thought

Class Times/Location: Wednesdays, 2:30-5:30 pm

Instructor: Dr. Wendy Fletcher

Office: RUC

Office Phone: ext. 28636

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:15-2:15 or by appointment

Email: wendy.fletcher@uwaterloo.ca

Course Description

RS 250 is a survey course which introduces the learner to the key developments in Christian theology from the biblical era to the present day. Key themes, questions, thinkers, and theological methods will be considered in relation to the contexts in which they emerged.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- A. Demonstrate a general knowledge of key developments in Christian theology across its historical span.
 - Mid-term Exam
 - Final Exam

- B. Demonstrate the ability to identify and reflect critically on key theological issues, methods, and intellectual turning points in the Christian theological tradition.
 - Class and discussion board participation.
 - Written assignments

C. Demonstrate the ability to research and argue a thesis statement with reference to some aspect of Christian thought touched on in the course.

*Term paper

Required Text

- Students are advised to purchase either:
 - *Christian Thought: a Historical Introduction* by Chad Meister and JB Stump. Routledge, 2010*
 - OR
 - *Christian Theology: an Introduction* 5th edition by Alsitair McGrath. Wiley Blackwell, 2011*

**Available through library course reserves*

Course Requirements and Assessment

Assessment	Date of Evaluation (if known)	Weighting
In class mid-term	October 26	15%
Final Exam	Exam Period	20%
Weekly Reflections on Primary Texts	Weekly-posted in LEARN 12 hours before class start	35%
Term Paper	December 07	25%
Discussion Leadership	One week of class as designated	5%
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Total		100%

Assessment 1

In-class midterm; this term identification and short answer exam will test student knowledge of material covered up to the preceding week of class.

Assessment 2

Final Exam: the final exam will have both short answer and essay questions which cover material from the whole term.

Assessment 3

Weekly Reflections on Primary Texts: each week every student should post a reflection (maximum 300 words) on ONE of the primary readings assigned for the week. It should identify the key argument the theologian is making in the text and reflect on it critically in light of the broader tradition of Christian thought. It is expected that class participants will read all comment threads posted prior to class for that week before coming to class.

Assessment 4

Term Paper: Students should identify a key issue in Christian thought covered in the course for which they then conduct primary and secondary course research (consulting a minimum of 10 sources) and write a paper which argues a thesis statement. All standard scholarly bibliographic and citation expectations apply. The paper should be between 2,500 and 3,000 words, double spaced and presented in standard academic form.

Assessment 5

Discussion Leadership: Students will be asked to facilitate class discussion on assigned primary readings. At least one student will be assigned for each week. Students offering leadership that day should come prepared with questions based on their reading of the text and the written reflection they have submitted through LEARN prior to class.

Course Outline

Week	Date	Topic	Readings Due
1	Sept 14	Charting the Theological Map; Introduction to Biblical Theology	No assigned Reading
2	Sept 21	Patristic Thought-Pre-Nicene: Iraeneus; Justin Martyr; Clement of Alexandria	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clement of Alexandria: Hymn and Miscellanies (Ch. 1-6)• Iraenaeus: Against the Heresies Book 5 (Ch. 1-22)
3	Sept 28	Patristic Thought-Post-Nicene: Augustine; John Chrysostom; Ambrose; John of Damascus	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Augustine of Hippo: On Christian Doctrine (Book 1: Ch. 1-40)• John Chrysostom: Homilies "First Epistles to the Corinthians"

Week	Date	Topic	Readings Due
4	Oct 5	Thought in the Medieval Context: the Reason/Revelation Debates Scholasticism—Anselm; Abelard; Duns Scotus; Bonaventure; Thomas Aquinas (Dominicans);	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomas Aquinas: <i>Summa Theologica</i>, (First Part of the Second Part Questions 1-5) • Anselm: <i>Prosologium</i> (Ch. 1-26)
5	Oct 14 (Friday)	Theology and Religious Practice: Francis (Franciscans); Love Mysticism; Hildegard; Teresa of Avila	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teresa of Avila: <i>The Way of Perfection</i> (Ch. 7;8;10) • Francis of Assisi: <i>Canticle of the Sun</i> • Mechtild of Magdeburg: <i>Selected Poems</i>
6	Oct 19	Epistemological Earthquake! Reformation Thinkers: Luther and Calvin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin Luther: <i>Treatise on Good Works I</i> • Jean Calvin: <i>Institutes of the Christian Religion</i> (Ch 4 "The Operation of God in the Hearts of Men"; Ch. 5 "A Refutation of the Objections Commonly Urged in Support of Free Will")
7	Oct 26	Anabaptists; Quakers; Anglicans (Mid Term Test)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • George Fox: <i>Epistles</i> (p.2, p.10-30) *Prepare for Mid-term
8	Nov 2	Enlightenment Thought and the Birth of Liberal Theology; Freidrich Scheliermacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F. Schleiermacher: <i>On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers</i> (Speech 1, p. 1-26 and Speech 2-p.27-65) • Adlof Von Harnack: <i>What is Christianity?</i> (p. 1-30)

Week	Date	Topic	Readings Due
9	Nov 9	Forms of Liberal Theology; Dialectical Theology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • *Karl Barth: <i>Church Dogmatics, Doctrine of the Reconciliation IV. I. (Ch. XIV. 1 "The Way of the Son of God into the Far Country")</i> • *Gustav Guttierrez: <i>A Theology of Liberation</i> (Ch. 1-2) • *John Cobb: <i>Process Theology: An Introductory Exposition</i> (Ch. 1, "Basic Concepts", Ch. 2 "God as Creative-Responsive Love") <p>*Check LEARN for course reserves</p>
10	Nov 16	Evangelicalism, Fundamentalism, Pentecostalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Wesley's Sermons: Christian Perfection (Phil 3:12); Free Grace (Romans 8:32); Sermon on the Mount 1 (Matt 5:1-4) • Aimee Semple MacPherson Sermon: The Power of Faith (on YouTube for listening)
11	Nov 23	Post-colonial Theory and Deconstruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • *Gianni Vattimo, John Caputo and Jeffrey Robbins: <i>After the Death of God</i> (Ch 1, "Toward a Non-Religious Christianity and Ch 2, "Spectral Hermeneutics") <p>*Check LEARN for course reserves</p>
12	Nov 30	Where to from here in Christian Thought- new directions/old directions? Exam preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No assigned reading; prepare questions for exam preparation

**The first week of classes begins on a Thursday and includes only Thursday and Friday September 8-9. Regular Thursday and Friday schedules are followed on both these days.*

***The loss of a Tuesday class on October 11 (study day) is made up by following a Tuesday schedule on October 13.*

****The loss of a Wednesday class on October 12 (study day) is made up by following a Wednesday schedule on October 14.*

Late Work

Work submitted after the deadline will be accepted with an applied deduction of 5% per day.

Electronic Device Policy

Students may use electronic devices for note taking. Full attention is expected in class and as such it is assumed that electronic devices present in class are for note taking only, not web surfing or electronic communications.

Attendance Policy

Students who must miss a class for reasons of illness or other emergencies are asked to notify the instructor in writing ahead of the class.

Final Examination Policy

For **Fall 2016**, the established examination period is **Dec. 8-22, 2016**. The schedule will be available in late October. Students should be aware that student travel plans are not acceptable grounds for granting an alternative final examination time (See: <https://uwaterloo.ca/registrar/final-examinations>).

Accommodation for Illness or Unforeseen Circumstances:

The instructor follows the practices of the University of Waterloo in accommodating students who have documented reasons for missing quizzes or exams (see: http://www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/students/accom_illness.html).

Academic Integrity:

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage \(https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/\)](https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/) and the [Arts Academic Integrity webpage \(https://uwaterloo.ca/arts/current-undergraduates/student-support/ethical-behaviour\)](https://uwaterloo.ca/arts/current-undergraduates/student-support/ethical-behaviour) for more information.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their own actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration, should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or Administrative Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties are imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties \(https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/guidelines/guidelines-assessment-penalties\)](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/guidelines/guidelines-assessment-penalties).

Students should also be aware that copyright laws in Canada prohibit reproducing more than 10% of any work without permission from its author, publisher, or other copyright holder. Waterloo’s policy on Fair Dealing is available here: <https://uwaterloo.ca/copyright-guidelines/fair-dealing-advisory> Violation of Canada’s Copyright Act is a punishable academic offence under Policy 71 – Student Discipline.

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](#), Section 4 (<https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70>). When in doubt please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant, who will provide further assistance.

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71, Student Discipline may be appealed if there are grounds. Students who believe

they have grounds for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72, Student Appeals \(https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72\)](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72).

Academic Integrity website (Arts):

http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

Academic Integrity Office (uWaterloo):

<http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/>

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

Note for Students with Disabilities: The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (NH 1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities, without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AAS office at the beginning of each academic term.

Intellectual Property. Students should be aware that this course contains the intellectual property of the instructor, which can include:

- lecture handouts and presentations (e.g., PowerPoint slides)
- lecture content, both spoken and written (and any audio or video recording thereof)
- questions from various types of assessments (e.g., assignments, quizzes, tests, final exams)
- work protected by copyright (i.e., any work authored by the instructor)

Making available the intellectual property of instructors without their express written consent (e.g., uploading lecture notes or assignments to an online repository) is considered theft of intellectual property and subject to disciplinary sanctions as described in Policy 71 – Student Discipline. Students who become aware of the availability of what may be their instructor’s intellectual property in online repositories are encouraged to alert the instructor.

A respectful living and learning environment for all

1. It is expected that everyone living, learning or working on the premises of Renison University College will contribute to an environment of tolerance and respect by treating others with sensitivity and civility.

2. Harassment is unwanted attention in the form of jokes, insults, gestures, gossip, or other behaviours that are meant to intimidate. Some instances of harassment are against the law in addition to Renison University College policy.
3. Discrimination is treating people differently because of their race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, colour, age, creed, marital status, or other personal characteristics. The Ontario Human Rights Code considers actions and behaviours rather than intentions.
4. If you experience or witness either harassment or discrimination, you may contact the Renison University College Interim Harassment and Discrimination Officer at megan.collings-moore@uwaterloo.ca (519-884-4404, ext. 28604).