

Multnomah Biblical Seminary
Prof John Robertson
Patristic and Medieval Theology

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Historical development of the formulation of the major tenets of Christian theology with special attention to councils, disputes over orthodoxy and significant theologians from the close of the New Testament period to the beginning of the Reformation. 3 credit hours

TEXTS:

Required – John Behr, *The Formation of Christian Theology, vol. 1: The Way to Nicaea* [ISBN: 0-88141-224-4]

- John Behr, *The Formation of Christian Theology, vol. 2: The Nicene Faith, parts 1 & 2* [ISBN: 978-0-88141-266-6]

(N. B. – the second volume comes in two separate books, part 1 and part 2, so make sure you get both!)

Recommended –

Colin McEvedy, *The New Penguin Atlas of Medieval History*

Ronald L. Numbers, ed., *Galileo Goes to Jail and Other Myths about Science and Religion*

David C. Lindberg and Ronald L. Numbers, ed., *God and Nature: Historical Essays on the Encounter between Christianity and Science*

Edward Grant, *The Foundations of Modern Science in the Middle Ages: their Religious, Institutional, and Intellectual Contexts*

SEMINARY MISSION: The mission of this Seminary is to develop biblically and professionally competent servant leaders of Jesus Christ who will positively impact their church, their region and their world. This course will contribute most directly to a growth in doctrinal convictions through the awareness gained in the development of those doctrines within a context and the rejection of heterodox alternatives. Steps taken to develop these skills are identified in the particular objectives below. Secondary contributions will be made in: a) communications as students are coached in the skills of analysis, synthesis and judgment in presenting their new understandings in writings; and b) spiritual maturity as they are enabled to assess more wisely complex doctrinal issues.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:

1. To know key phases in the formulation of selected Christian doctrines from the first to fourteenth century. After this course, the student should be able to:
 - a. identify the key stages of that development
 - b. summarize the major issues and proponents in the various debates
 - c. state the essential components of the final Church positions

2. To understand the central thoughts of key individuals whose works helped lead to the development of these doctrines. After this course, the student should be able to:
 - a. write an interactive paper dealing with a key theological passage from a selected writer of the period
 - b. describe the doctrinal development of the period in two written examinations
3. To gain a well-developed awareness of the interaction of the historical theology of this period with natural philosophy and scientific inquiry of the day. By the end of this course the student will have shown that he/she is able to:
 - a. demonstrate an understanding of the nuanced nature of the relationship between faith and scientific enquiry during the patristic and medieval periods
 - b. show awareness of the ongoing importance of the dialogue between faith and science through an application of theological perspectives to a contemporary issue
4. To discover, and identify with, profoundly committed Christians from prior ages so that the student is inspired to greater faith and love.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. *Reading quizzes (7)* 40 pts each (280)
2. *Reading interactions (2)* 50 pts each (100)
3. *Christian perspectives paper* 100 pts
4. *Examinations (2)* 100 pts each (200)
5. *Forum/Class Participation* 320 pts

A Note About Forum Participation:

At a time that is convenient for you, go to the online forum for that week and ask a question, request clarification or make a comment related to the material covered that week in the lecture or in your reading. **This forum participation is required. You must make some substantive contribution to the forum discussion.** Simply posting something like “I have nothing to say, but I have to post something” will not suffice! (and yes, it has been done.) I also strongly recommend that you access the forum several times during the week. In this way, you may see responses to your comment or respond to the comments of others. Remember that this is a ‘public’ forum for the whole class to see. At all times keep your tone respectful. Each forum will be open from the end of one class until the beginning of the next one. Thus, you will have one week in which to participate in each forum.

GRADING: A numerical scale will be used to determine letter grades. Grades will be posted on the Multnomah Connect Online Learning site, as well as on Self Service. The scale: 95-100%=A, 90-94%=A-, 87-89%=B+, 83-86%=B, 80-

82%=B-, 77-79%=C+, 73-76%=C, 70-72%=C-, 67-69%=D+, 63-66%=D, 60-62%=D-, 59% or below is failing.

PROCEDURES/POLICIES: Much of the benefit in this course is gained through class discussions and since we will only be together 'physically' for two hours, regular attendance and participation is expected for a full grade. Assignments are to be typed and handed in at the beginning of class on the date due. Integrity guidelines (see the MBS *Handbook*) must be followed in full in order to pass the course.

2015 FALL SEMESTER SCHEDULE

<u>WEEK OF</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENT DUE</u>
8/31 -	Introduction to course OT/Jewish background	
9/7 -	NT background Apostolic Fathers – Ignatius of Antioch	(Behr, 11-70 – 60 pp.)
9/14 -	Justin Martyr Irenaeus/Gnostics Monarchianism/Tertullian Platonism	(Behr, 72-162 – 90 pp.)
9/21 - Myth #1)	Science and the Early Church	(Numbers, 8-18, +paper
9/28 -	Origen/Prelude to Nicaea	(Behr, 163-241 – 79 pp.)
10/5 -	Arian Controversy	(Behr II, 1-59, 123-161 – 99 pp.)
10/12 -	Athanasius	(Behr II, 163-259 – 97 pp.)
10/19 -	NO CLASS	
10/26 -	Basil the Great 108 pp.) Gregory of Nazianzus/Apollinarianism	(Behr II, 263-370 –
11/2 -	Gregory of Nyssa Nestorianism/Cyril of Alexandria	(Behr II, 370-481 – 112 pp.)
11/9 -	Monothelism/Maximus Iconoclasm	(Online Midterm due)

- 11/16 - **Retrieving Christian Perspectives on Science and the World**
- 11/23 - Augustine
Western Decline/Carolingians/Anselm
- 11/30 - Medieval Spirituality (Science paper due)
Scholasticism/Salvation
Aquinas
- 12/7 - **Science and Theology in the Middle Ages (Numbers, 19-34,
Myths 2 & 3)**
+ paper
- 12/14 - FINAL