

RS 255: "Protestant Faith & Practice"
MW 3:00 – 4:15, Buttrick 213
Laura S. Sugg

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Office hours: I am very often in my office. It might be helpful to call first and set an appointment, but always feel free to drop by and see if I am in and available to talk.

Purpose of the course.

This course is one of a number of introductory religious studies courses investigating the religious practices and beliefs of major faith traditions. It is designed to introduce students to the origins, development and diverse forms of Christian Protestantism. It reviews the historical, cultural and theological issues of the Protestant Reformation, and examines the various families of faith which emerged after and/or from that event: Lutheran, Presbyterian, Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, and Pentecostal. We will concentrate some of our reading on confessions or articles of faith from these traditions. Leading thinkers considered will include Luther, Calvin, and Wesley. There will be opportunity for experiential learning by way of visits to congregations' worship services. While we will attempt cover a breadth of material in class, I hope that your papers will be a particular opportunity for you go deeper into in a particular area within this very diverse subject.

The purpose of this course is not to persuade you to accept any particular religious perspective or tradition. Rather, it is to equip you with the tools for your own scholarly reflection—to understand the important elements of the discipline of religious studies. At the end of this course you should have a good understanding of the content of each of the writings we read, and be able to comment critically on them both in writing and in discussion. Critical thinking involves questioning and struggling with a text. It can result in both agreement and disagreement with aspects of a writer's perspective. Each student will bring her own perspective and experiences. A lively academic community like this class is characterized by respect between people with differing points of view, thoughtful reflection to back up opinions expressed, and commitment to be prepared for class.

Requirements:

Attendance and Participation

All students should attend class having read and reflected on the text. You are always responsible for what is covered in the readings and the class discussion (whether or not you are present). Since one of the goals of the course is to equip you to articulate your perspective coherently both in writing and in discussion, it is vital that each student participate in class conversations. Each student will assess her own contribution to the class by completing a self-evaluation form at the time of the midterm, and again at the final exam. Class participation will count as 20% of the final grade. If you are absent from class more than two times, it will negatively impact your participation grade. If you miss more than five times, you will most likely fail the course. First year students and students on probation with two or more unexcused absences will be reported to the office of academic advising, as instructed in the Faculty Handbook, III.4.

Midterm and Final Exams

There will be comprehensive midterm and final exams which will be both objective (multiple choice, True/False) and essay. You will be given a study guide one week before these tests are administered. The midterm will count 10% and the final 20% of your final grade.

Papers

You will receive specific directions for the two papers required this term at least two weeks before they are due. The first paper will count 15% and the second will count 20% of your final grade.

Visits to churches and /or interview

Over the course of the semester, you will be expected to write three 2-page reports (following a set of guidelines) reflecting on visits to worships services in congregations from three different Protestant traditions. These guidelines will be distributed by the end of Week 2. One of these visits may take the form of an interview with a clergy person rather than a report on a liturgical experience. It is expected that at least two of these churches will be from the six denominations we will examine in this course. My hope is that these experiences will fire a deeper interest in your research topic for the second paper. The due dates will be Week 6, Week 11, and at the end of the semester. These reports will count 5% each.

Evaluation/Grading

You will be evaluated on the basis of the content of the course and your progress in developing communication and learning skills. The final grade is an attempt to provide “quantifiable measure” of the work you have done for this class. It is certainly not an evaluation of you as a person or as a “soul”!

The grading scale will be a 10-point one: 80-89=B, 90-100=A, etc.

“A” means “outstanding.” The work exhibits great insight or creativity. Thoughts are clearly articulated, and analysis and ideas are original.

“B” means “good, above average.” The work shows special achievement beyond the ordinary.

“C” means “average.” The work is ordinary, exhibiting little clear articulation, or insightful ideas.

“D” means “below average, or barely passable.” The work is seriously deficient and may require remedial work with me or with College support systems.

“F” means failure.

A general guideline for how the different elements of the course are weighed is as follows:

Visit reports/interview 15%	Participation 20%
Midterm exam 10%	First paper 15%
Final test 20%	Second paper 20%

If a student fails to complete any of the elements (does not turn in a paper, excessive absences, etc.), she will fail the course.

Required Texts (to read, not necessarily to buy):

1. Roberta Bondi, *Memories of God*
2. (Ch. 2 & 3) Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*

3. (selected sections) Dillenberger and Welch, *Protestant Christianity*
4. Shirley Guthrie, *Always Being Reformed*
5. Numerous web-based texts, and several overview pamphlets (provided)

Helpful Texts

1. Keller and Ruether, ed., *In Our Own Voices*
2. Donald McKim, ed., *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*
3. James F. White, *The Sacraments in Protestant Practice and Faith*

Readings and Class Topics

(Because this is the first time I am teaching this course, this timeline is subject to change.)

<u>Week 1</u>	<u>Introduction: Setting the Stage for the Reformation</u>	
M 1/22	Class Introduction, syllabus, assignments, etc.	no reading
W 1/24	Medieval Situation	Dillenberger and Welch (DW) 1-22
<u>Week 2</u>	<u>The Reformation</u>	
M 1/29	Luther and Calvin	DW, 23-27; 36-52
W 1/31	Luther	Scriptographic <i>About Martin Luther</i> , Handout: <i>Preface to the Complete Edition of Luther's Latin Writings</i> (1545); <i>95 Theses</i> :
<u>Week 3</u>	<u>The Reformation, continued</u>	
M 2/5	Luther	Handout: selections from <i>The Smalcald Articles</i> (1537) and <i>The Augsburg Confession</i> (1530)
W 2/7	Calvin	Web texts: <i>Preface to Commentary on the Psalms</i> ; Selections from <i>Institutes of the Christian Religion</i> (1559) Read the chapter headings for all four books of the Institutes (I, II, III, and IV.) Begin with http://www.reformed.org/books/institutes/indxbk1.html and move forward to the next book chapter index.
<u>Week 4</u>		
M 2/12	Laura away for conference – go to the Writing Center about your paper?	
W 2/14	Laura away for conference, no class, work on paper and readings.	
<u>Week 5</u>		
M 2/19	Calvinism/Presbyterianism	Photocopies of introduction to the Westminster Standards. <i>The Westminster Confession of Faith</i> and the <i>Shorter Catechism</i> http://horeb.pcusa.org/search/BookOfConfessions.pdf
W 2/21	Anglican	DW, 66-71; Handouts: Scriptographic on Episcopal Church Act of Supremacy and Act of Unity

Friday 2/23 Paper 1 due

Week 6 The Reformation in England

M 2/26 Anglican Handout: 39 Articles, Catechism
W 2/28 Wesley/UM DW, 114-125; Handout: Articles of Faith

Friday 3/2 Visit Report 1 Due (you may turn it in long before this date ☺)

Week 7

M 3/5 Wesley/UM Handout: "Sermon on the Catholic Spirit"; selected hymn lyrics

W 3/7 Midterm Exam

Week 8 March 10-17, **SPRING BREAK!**

Week 9 Free Churches

M 3/19 Southern Baptist Handout: Baptist history; Baptist Faith and Message

W 3/21 Go over midterm exam and church visit papers in class No reading

Week 10 One man's perspective

M 3/26 Pentecostal Cox, Ch.'s 2 & 3 (45-78); Handout: Assemblies of God

W 3/28 Guthrie Guthrie, Preface, Intro, Ch.'s 1 & 2 (ix-30)

Week 11

M 4/2 Guthrie Guthrie, Ch.'s 3 & 4 (31-60)

W 4/4 Guthrie Guthrie, Ch.'s 5 & 6 (61-93)

Friday 4/6 Deadline for getting your topic for Paper 2 approved

Friday 4/6 Visit Report 2 due

Week 12

M 4/9 Shirley Guthrie visits review his book before class

W 4/11 Father, Reason Bondi, Intro., Ch.'s 1 & 2 (7-78)

Week 13 One woman's story

M 4/16 Mother, Crucifixion Bondi, Ch.'s 3 & 4 (79-144)

W 4/18 Walter Brueggemann will visit. Handout: His article on Biblical authority

Friday 4/20 Paper 2 due

Week 14

M 4/23 Resurrection, Communion of the Saints Bondi, Ch.'s 5 & 6 (145-205)

W 4/25 Panel of clergy from different denominations No new reading

Friday 4/27 Visit Report 3 due

Week 15

M 4/30

Review for final exam

RS255: Protestant Faith and Practice

Self-evaluation of class participation

Your name _____

MIDTERM EVALUATION

The purpose of this form is to record your impressions of the quality of your participation in the session discussions during this half of the semester. It is hoped that this exercise not only will give the instructor important help in determining your class participation grade but also will help you monitor your progress in developing effective skills for interactive learning. Please answer these questions as truthfully as possible.

On the lines, place a "Y" for Yes, an "N" for No, "S" for Somewhat, and/or and "NA" for Not Applicable.

Responsible preparation	W1	W2	W3	W5	W6	W7
1. Read assigned material	___	___	___	___	___	___
2. Reviewed reading material before session	___	___	___	___	___	___
3. Used additional resources to do research on topics related to this class	___	___	___	___	___	___

Responsible participation	W1	W2	W3	W5	W6	W7
4. Gave feedback to instructor on index card	___	___	___	___	___	___
5. Answered questions when called on in class	___	___	___	___	___	___
6. <u>Volunteered</u> comments and <u>raised</u> relevant <u>issues</u> for discussion	___	___	___	___	___	___
7. Listened well and learned something new from my classmates	___	___	___	___	___	___
8. Consulted with the instructor outside class	___	___	___	___	___	___
9. Completed assignments on time	___	___	___	___	___	___

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THE **GRADE** I DESERVE FOR CLASS PARTICIPATION IS: **A** **B** **C** **D**

Additional comments:

RS255: Protestant Faith and Practice

Self-evaluation of class participation

Your name _____

FINAL EVALUATION

The purpose of this form is to record your impressions of the quality of your participation in the session discussions during this half of the semester. It is hoped that this exercise not only will give the instructor important help in determining your class participation grade but also will help you monitor your progress in developing effective skills for interactive learning. Please answer these questions as truthfully as possible.

On the lines, place a "Y" for Yes, an "N" for No, "S" for Somewhat, and/or and "NA" for Not Applicable.

Responsible preparation W9 W10 W11 W12 W13 W14

1. Read assigned material _____

2. Reviewed reading material before session _____

3. Used additional resources to do research on topics related to this class _____

Responsible participation W9 W10 W11 W12 W13 W14

4. Gave feedback to instructor on index card _____

5. Answered questions when called on in class _____

6. Volunteered comments and raised relevant issues for discussion _____

7. Listened well and learned something new from my classmates _____

8. Consulted with the instructor outside class _____

9. Completed assignments on time _____

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THE **GRADE** I DESERVE FOR CLASS PARTICIPATION IS: **A** **B** **C** **D**

Additional comments: