

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary--Charlotte
CH650: The Protestant Reformation
Guided Study Syllabus

Dr. Garth M. Rosell, Instructor

Fall Semester 2009 (September 26, October 24 and November 21)

The class will meet formally from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

- I. Course Description:** This course is designed to explore the nature, development and influence of the Protestant Reformation of the Sixteenth Century through key leaders such as Martin Luther, John Calvin, Ulrich Zwingli, Menno Simons, John Knox and Thomas Cranmer. Special attention will be given to the four major branches of Protestantism as they emerged on the Continent and in England.
- II. Course Relationship to Curriculum:** CH650 is part of the Interpretation Phase (III) in the field of Christian Thought.
- III. Course Objectives:** The Protestant Reformation is designed to provide students with a knowledge of the major themes, issues and personalities of the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation and to help them use these materials in their practice of ministry.
- IV. Course Textbooks:**
- Timothy George, *Theology of the Reformers* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 1999) and Alister E. McGrath, *Reformation Thought: An Introduction* Third Edition (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2001) will be our primary texts. Both are available in paperback.
- Students might also want to consult the following issues of *Christian History and Biography* magazine (published by *Christianity Today*). Copies are also available in the Charlotte library. Martin Luther (Issues #s 34 and 39); John Calvin (Issue # 12); Ulrich Zwingli (Issue # 4); the Anabaptists (Vol. IV, No. 1); John Knox (Issue # 46); and Thomas Cranmer (Issue # 48).
- V. Course Requirement and Grading:** Students who are taking the course for credit will be asked to read the required textbooks, view the "Reformation Overview" video series produced by the Christian History Institute (copies available through the GCTS/Charlotte library), attend classes at the stated times and write six brief papers. There will be no examinations.

Research Papers: Each student will be asked to write six (seven page) papers for the course. These papers will focus on the life and work of the six primary reformers who have been selected for particular attention throughout the course: namely, Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Knox, Simons and Cranmer. Research should include the reading of at least one major biography of the person and at least one major piece of writing by that person. Papers on Luther and Zwingli will be due on October 24th; papers on Calvin and Knox will be due on November 21st; and papers on Simons and Cranmer will be due on December 21st.

The papers should consist of three parts: (i) A brief five page biographical sketch of the reformer you are studying; (ii) a one page annotated bibliography of the primary and secondary materials you have used; and (iii) a one page summary of specific ways (both positive and negative) in which that reformers life and work might be of help to you in your present and future ministry.

Required Reading: By no later than December 21st, each student will be asked to indicate what percentage of the required reading he/she has completed. 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 (no credit is given for skimming)

Personal Consultation: The instructor will be available prior to and following the class sessions in Charlotte and at other times by special appointment. He can also be reached by telephone at his Hamilton office (978-646-4139) or by email <grosell@gcts.edu>

Grading: Your final grade for the course will be computed on the following basis:

Research papers:	80%
Reading:	20%

Grading scale (point values for letter grades from GCTS Catalog):
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."

Late work will be penalized by a one-third grade reduction (for example, from A to A-) for each week or part of a week that the work is late. No work will be accepted (without an official extension by the Registrar in Charlotte) after December 21st., 2009.

VI. Course Outline:

First Meeting (September 26): Introduction to the Course

Second Meeting (October 24): Luther, Zwingli and Simons

Required reading: Alister E. McGrath, *Reformation Thought: An Introduction*, pp. ix-179; and Timothy George, *Theology of the Reformers*, pp. 13-162;

Required viewing: "Reformation Overview" video series by Christian History Institute (available in the GCTS/Charlotte library), half-hour videos on Wycliffe, Hus, Luther and Zwingli.

Required papers: Research papers on Luther and Zwingli are due by the time of the class meeting.

Third Meeting (November 21): Calvin, Knox and Cranmer

Required reading: George, *Theology of the Reformers*, pp. 163-323.

Required viewing: "Reformation Overview" video series by Christian History Institute, half-hour videos on Calvin, Anabaptists and Tyndale.

Required papers: Research papers on Calvin and Knox are due.

Submission of Final Work: Due December 21, 2009

Required papers: Research papers on Simons and Knox are due

Required report: Reading reports are due

VII: Bibliographical Resources:

Students will find excellent bibliographical resources in George, *Theology of the Reformers* and in McGrath, *Reformation Thought*.