

Religious Studies 46: Thought of the Reformation(s)  
Spring, 2002  
Professor Paula Coeey (OM104), EXT: 6596

**Course Description:** What are the origin and nature of human freedom? If making morally wrong choices and committing immoral acts (what Christians call “sin”) are inevitable, can human beings truly be said to be free? If, however, Human beings are not free to make mistakes, can they be said to be responsible for their choices and actions? Is freedom an illusion, a given of human nature, or a gift? Who or what has the authority to absolve humans from their sinfulness; who or what holds the keys to salvation? Was the Protestant Reformation, during which these questions were hotly debated, part of an historical movement toward democracy? Or was it a politically conservative impulse that merely relocated religious and political power in the hands of a new elite group? This course will address these and related questions by exploring classical theological debates over sin, grace, and authority in their socio-historical context of struggle over ecclesial and political power. Students and I will read a lot, write a lot, debate a lot, and work on major projects. Topics for final projects include: pre-Reformation “heresies;” the Catholic Reformation; the English Reformation; the Protestant Reformation in France; the Jesuits; the beginning of the European witch trials; Martin Luther and the Jews; the impact of the Reformation on the status and power of women; the peasants’ war and Luther’s response; Muenster and the Millennium; Calvinism and the growth of capitalism; the impact of the Renaissance on various reform movements; pacifism and the left-wing sects; religious evangelism and colonial expansion; technological change and religious dissent; popular religion and material culture.

**Required Readings:**

AVAILABLE A RUMINATOR:

*The New Oxford Annotated Bible NRSV*

Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms*

Hillerbrand, *The Protestant Reformation*

Matheson, *The Imaginative World of the Reformation*

Placher, *A History of Christian Thought*

AVAILABLE THROUGH THE INTERNET (ALIBRIS.COM) & ON RESERVE:\*

Calvin and Sadoletto, *A Reformation Debate*

Erasmus and Luther, *Discourse on Free Will*

AVAILABLE ON ELECTRONIC RESERVE:.\*

Selections from the Book of Confessions, PCUSA

Sider, *Karlstadt’s Battle with Luther*

**\*Please bring copies of reserve readings (library and electronic) to class on the days assigned.**

**Requirements and Evaluation:**

1. Weekly critical analyses will be due on Tuesdays. You will need to make two copies, one for me and one to bring to class for your own use. **I will not accept late papers.** Because of the size of the class, I will grade roughly half of these papers randomly every week, and return them all at one time, once I have completed a full cycle. You may be called upon to present your critique orally as well (also graded). Your critiques should conclude with a thoughtful, clearly articulated discussion question that flows logically from the critical analysis itself. Failure to turn in a critique will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. The critiques will count 40% of your total grade.
2. This course requires a major project to be presented in both written and oral form. You will turn in two versions of our paper, to count 20% each, as well as make an oral presentation, worth 10% of your grade. The total project counts 50% of your grade.
3. Class participation counts 10% of you grade.

**Guidelines for Weekly Critical Analyses:**

Each student is required to keep and to turn in regularly a series of critical analyses of the reading assignments. At some point during the semester I will call on you to present your analysis to the class. I will grade randomly both the oral and the written critiques. Each analysis should consist of two to three printed pages that minimally includes the following information:

- (1) a thesis statement and argument that relates the readings to one another around the central issues that define them,
- (2) attention to how the texts fit into a wider discussion of the historical era,
- (3) your thoughtful assessment of both the strengths and limitations of the authors' positions, as well as your briefly suggested alternatives to perceived limitations;
- (4) a concluding question, which follows logically from your analysis, that forces you to raise issues you have not thought about before or need to think about in a new way.

**Attendance Policy:**

Because seminars depend heavily on thoughtful discussion and debate, attendance is required. More than one absence will result in a grade of failure for the course.

**Office Hours:**

Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 2:30-4:00 p.m. and by appointment.

**FORMAT FOR PROPOSAL, ORAL PRESENTATION, AND ESSAY:****A] Proposal (Required):**

State your topic in the form of a question and relate it briefly to the general issues addressed by the course. State briefly how you intend to approach your question. Include an annotated bibliography of at least seven sources not assigned in class, with a brief statement of how you expect these sources to help you for each entry. Your entire draft should not exceed two typewritten pages double-spaced.

**B] Oral (Suggested):**

Introduce yourself. State your question. Give a presentation in response with special attention to what most excited you about your topic and what bothered you most as you pursued your topic. Conclude by asking the class a new question this topic raised for you, and be prepared to lead brief discussion in response. Your presentation should last 10-15 minutes plus 10 minutes for discussion. Your presentation, including discussion, needs to last minimally 20 minutes and must not exceed 25 minutes.

**C] Essay (Required):**

Your essay should consist of a clearly stated and well argued thesis in response to your central question, between 10 and 12 typewritten pages (double-spaced) in length. In addition, you should include endnotes and a bibliography. You must draw on any relevant reading assignments from class, as well as your outside sources. As you work on your project, please draw upon the resources available through the reference librarians, the writing center, Strunk and White's *Elements of Style*, *Easy Writer*, and the MLA style sheet. Two copies are due for each version of your essay.

**Please note: There will be no extension of due dates. Written work is due at the beginning of class. Late work will incur a 1/3 letter grade deduction (a .3 point penalty on a 4.0 scale) for each day late.**

**A Note on Grading:**

I will use the following criteria to evaluate your papers and exams:

1. **Focus** on the question or issue: Does the essay address a stated question or issue? Is there a clearly stated, well argued thesis?
2. **Evidence**: Do the examples support the argument sufficiently?
3. **Organization**: Is the essay logically organized?
4. **Scope**: Does the essay deal with all the important aspects of the question or issue?
5. **Originality**: Are there new ideas or interesting interpretations of the evidence?
6. **Quality of research**: Does this essay reflect the best use of the resources available?
7. **Writing**: How well is the paper or exam written? Do mechanical errors (spelling and poor grammar) detract from the quality of the ideas expressed? If the exam is an in-class exam, I do not grade writing.

These are my standards for grades:

- A** an extremely well-written paper or exam which not only covers all the major points but does so in an original and insightful way
- B** a solid and well-written paper or exam which demonstrates a good understanding of the material
- C** a paper or exam with many strengths but which lacks sufficient depth or focus; a paper flawed by poor organization and mechanical errors; a paper which fails to integrate the evidence into a larger interpretation or which fails to provide sufficient evidence to support the argument
- D** a paper or exam with major problems; see me for details
- F** a paper or exam which never was

For your oral presentations, I will be grading you on the content of your reports (what you say, how important it is and how conceptually clear it is), as well as the following:

1. **Organization**--was your presentation clearly and logically organized?
2. **Clarity**--could we hear you and could we understand what you were trying to say?
3. **Eye Contact**--did you make eye contact with everyone in the seminar and not just with the professor?
4. **Enthusiasm**—did

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Schedule: Topic:</b>	<b>Next Assignment:</b>
January 29	Introductions	Brief, non-graded writing assignment
January 31	Basic concepts: Theological background	Placher (selections) <b>Reminder: Critiques due Tuesday</b>
February 5-7	Many Reformations Historical Background	Erasmus/ Luther with <i>Bible, Romans</i>
February 12-14	The Human Will: Free or In Bondage to Sin? <b>** Paper proposals due at beginning of class, 2/14**</b>	Calvin/ Sadoleto, the debate With <i>Bible, Jonah</i>
February 19-21	Human Salvation:	Zwingli, "Commentary" in Hillerbrand with <i>Bible, John 6</i>
February 26-28	Religious Authority: The Problem of Interpretation	Sider, Karlstadt/Luther with <i>Bible, Galatians</i>
March 5-7	Effecting Change: Liberal Meets Radical	Hillerbrand, "The Anabaptists (whole section) with <i>Bible, Acts</i>
March 12-14	Reforming the Reformers: The Radicals Separate	Luther, "On Governmental Authority," and Mornay, "A Defense Of Liberty Against Tyrants," in Hillerbrand
March 19-21	Religion and State: Whether and How to Challenge Political Authority	Calvin/Sadoleto, the sections on justification by Calvin and from the Council of Trent with selections from the book of Confessions and <i>Bible, James</i>
March 26-28	<b>*** SPRING BREAK ***</b>	
April 2-4	Redefining Christianity: A Schism That Endures	Ginzburg, <i>The Cheese &amp; the Worms</i>
April 9-11	Ordinary Heretics	
April 16 April 18-May 7 May 9	Pulling It All Together Class Presentations and Course Evaluation <b>** Papers due in my office by noon **</b>	