

CHRISTIAN FOUNDATIONS
RELI 300-C
FALL 2009
Hoover 103
TR 2:45-4pm

DR. COREY BEALS
Office: HOOVER 233
Office Hrs: M, 1:30-3:30
or by appt. (call x2650 to make appt.)
Phone: x2661

Course Description:

Everyone has a *foundational faith* in something or someone. For example, it might be faith in success, pleasure or in self. Each person's foundational faith affects her worldview—it affects how she interprets everything that she encounters. We will be looking at *faith in Christ* in particular and three key influences on Christian faith.

A person's *thinking* affects his faith. The *larger story* that each person is a part of affects his faith. A person's own *experiences* and testimonies of other's experiences also affect his faith. And faith affects the way one views the world. Therefore, we will be examining Christian faith by looking at it through 1) theological, 2) historical and 3) experiential lenses, observing the way it affects our own philosophies of life.

Course Goals:

A primary goal of this course is to deepen and broaden your understanding of Christian faith by:

- 1) broadening your understanding of the story of Christianity that is larger than any one person or one particular congregation;
- 2) acquainting you with the controversies that have taken place in Christian thought and understanding how these have helped clarify theological reflection about Christian faith;
- 3) observing the religious experience of Christians who have gone before us and reflecting on how those experiences relate to your own religious experiences.

Another goal of this course is to help clarify and sharpen your worldview by making real connections between Christian history, theology, experience and your own foundational faith.

Required Texts:

Story Of Christian Theology, Roger Olson
The Orthodox Church, Timothy Ware
Spiritual Classics, ed. Richard Foster

Course Requirements:

1. Being Present (10%)

Being *present* (in every way), on time and *engaged* in our discussion is crucial to success and participating in class will also be considered. I grant everyone 3 absences and do not put myself in the position of judging whether an absence is excused or not (so no need to notify me about absences unless it is a situation where you're in the hospital or some-such). Participation is not only speaking, but involves listening well to others.

2. Quizzes (10%)

You will take an on-line quiz before every class. You will have until 6am on the day of class to complete the quiz. The quiz will be over the reading assigned for that day, and your answers will influence what is covered in the lecture and they will often be used to guide discussion as well. The quiz may include multiple choice, true/false, short answer and/or long answer.

3. Exams (30%)

You will take three exams covering material from the reading and from lectures. The exams will focus on the historical and theological portions of the course. The first exam covers from 30 AD to 1054. The second exam covers from 1054 to 1517. The third exam covers from 1517 to the present. The dates for the exam are on the calendar and each exam is worth 10% of your overall grade. The exams may include multiple choice, true/false, short answer and/or long answer.

4. Journal/Spiritual Disciplines Explorations (20%)

You will keep a journal that includes reflection on your reading from the *Spiritual Classics* text, although it may also include reflections that arise from other class readings/lectures/discussions. The goal is to engage what we're reading/discussing and explore the ways that they interweave with your own spiritual journey. You will be asked to complete one spiritual discipline exploration per week, and this can be drawn from the 'Suggested Exercises' that are included in each section of the book. This is primarily graded on a complete/incomplete basis, with the one graded criteria being length of 'sustained attention' to the exercise. You will be asked to journal at least briefly on each exercise, and on each Thursday, you will enter short selections from your journal on FoxTALE (not for the class to read unless you share it with them.)

5. Story of your Faith Paper (30%)

This paper is your opportunity to tell the story of your faith, including your faith genealogy (including the story of faith that preceded your birth). You will also get to include your how your theology affects your faith and how your life experiences have shaped your faith. This paper will be 6-8 pages in length.

Evaluation

0-59=F, 60-69=D, 70-76=C, 77-79=C+, 80-82=B-, 83-86=B, 87-89=B+, 90-92=A-, 93-100=A

FoxTALE

This course will be using FoxTALE for on-line quizzes, reading log responses, on-line reading, grades other resources.

Plagiarism

Please avoid plagiarism. Plagiarism includes the obvious cases of using another person's writing without citing them, but it also includes using someone's ideas without citing them. The consequences for plagiarism could include failing the course or even expulsion from the university, as specified in the student handbook. I look forward to reading your honest grappling with the ideas and issues raised in the course.

The Academic Resource Center (ARC)

on the Newberg campus provides all students with free writing consultation, academic coaching, and learning strategies (e.g., techniques to improve reading, note-taking, study, time management). The ARC, housed on the second floor of the Murdock Learning Resources Center (library), is open from 1:00-10:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 12:00-4:00 p.m. on Friday. Call 503-554-2327 or email the_arc@georgefox.edu to schedule an appointment. Visit arc.georgefox.edu for information about ARC Consultants' areas of study, instructions for scheduling an appointment, and helpful learning tools.

Disability Services

If you have specific physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please contact the Disability Services Office as early as possible so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide current documentation of your disability to the Disability Services Office. For more information, go to ds.georgefox.edu or contact Rick Muthiah, Dean of the Center for Teaching and Learning (503-554-2314 or rmuthiah@georgefox.edu).