

Faith and Reason in the Middle Ages

BLHS-105-01 Fall 2016

CRN: 23935

640 Mass. Ave., C214

Mondays, 6:30-10:05 pm

[HOWEVER: Our first class meets on WED., Aug. 31!!]

Provisional Syllabus*

Prof. Rebecca Linford

linfordr@georgetown.edu

beckyrlinford@yahoo.com

Office Hours: Mondays, 4:00-5:30 pm, SCS

*If you have emergencies or an urgent need to contact me, you may text me at: 443-465-9588. Please identify yourself by name & as a class member of Fall '16.

Purpose and Goals:

The purpose of the course is to understand and explore the relationship between faith and reason in the Middle Ages. From the time of the conversion of Constantine (and the institutionalization of the Catholic Church) and throughout the Middle Ages, theologians wrestled with the apparent contradictions between faith and reason. In this class we will examine a variety of experiences and texts relative to this issue. We will begin with the origins of the early medieval Church and how Church Fathers provided the framework (often incorporating some role for rationality) for the faith that would last through the centuries. We will also look at the Byzantine Church that evolved at the same time.

The class will then examine the period known as the twelfth century Renaissance, and the founding of universities throughout Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when the question of faith and reason was dramatically recast. The rediscovery of Aristotle—and so, the use of Aristotelian logic, grammar, physics, and metaphysics—led to the development of new methods of inquiry, categories of thought, and modes of expression. We will look at great thinkers like Anselm, Aquinas and Abelard as well as at the evolution of the scholastic movement. This period is crucial for its cross-fertilization among Muslim, Jewish, and Christian intellectuals, and we will therefore also study the works of scholars such as Ibn Sina and Maimonides. Finally the course examines the issue of authority and alternative approaches to faith and reason (e.g., mystical texts and vernacular theologies), the category of “heresy” and its ramifications (social, political, religious), and the rise of popular religious movements (Imitation of Christ; Cult of the Virgin Mary) and intellectual movements (humanism) that ultimately paved the way for the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the early modern era.

Requirements:

- A. Written Work (70%) There will be a total of **three papers** due in the course. These papers are designed to develop critical thinking and to develop analytical skills by focusing on issues discussed in class. These will be graded on Georgetown’s grading scale found below; only truly excellent work will receive the highest grades. I anticipate that there will be significant improvement in your writing from the beginning to the end of the class, so don’t be shocked if your first graded assignment seems low. You are not to use unattributed outside sources for these papers; doing so will be considered a violation of the University’s Honor Code and (if proven) will result in an F for the assignment. Moreover, papers should **respect the page limitation** spelled out in the guidelines, which will be placed in Resources and Assignments on Blackboard. Topics for **two brief papers** (1-2 pages in length, each worth 15%) will be based on selected primary and secondary texts. (For example, one might examine the relationship of an individual to the Church and/or to God.) ***One longer paper** (approximately 10 pages, worth 40%) will be due in the week following the last regular class session. (In other words, this is your **take-home final exam**.) The topic will be discussed later in the semester. Written work is due at the start of each class; you may submit your paper online before the start of class. Your absence will be recorded as such, but your paper will count as long as it arrives before the start time.
- B. Discussion Forum Posts, Class Group Work, and Participation (30%) Students will also be required to participate in and occasionally lead small group discussions during the class period. Discussions will focus on assigned reading selections of primary and secondary source documents that will be posted on Blackboard during the week preceding the class meeting. Students are expected to have read all selections even if they are not conducting the small group discussions. Of course, students are expected to attend every class. I recognize that emergencies may arise. Students must, however, be extremely cautious about missing class, since, through BALS policy, the second absence will result in failure of the course. The only exception to this rule is medical; for that, I will need documentation from a doctor, and I will consult with SCS administrators about what should be done. Your presence in the classroom, by itself, amounts to C work (75%, i.e., a “fair” performance). A higher grade is easily obtainable by contributing meaningfully to our discussions. This can mean asking questions as well as answering those posed by faculty and other students. The foundation of your class participation should be a careful, thoughtful reading of the texts. Much of this material will be unfamiliar, even challenging. Each class session is designed to help you understand the assignment and to think about it in new ways.
- C. Please note that it is **your responsibility to keep a copy of all graded work** (either a hard copy or on a flash drive) in case there is a discrepancy in grading.

Grading:

2 Short Papers	30%
Discussion Forum & Class Work	40%
Final Project	30%

Grading Scheme:

A	superior (94-100%)
A-	(91-93%)
B+	very good (88-90%)
B	good (84-87%)
B-	(81-83%)
C+	(78-80%)
C	adequate (74-77%)
C-	(71-73%)
D+	(68-70%)
D	poor , minimum passing (64-67%)
F	Failing (<64%)

Textbooks:

We will use **one main textbook** which gives a basic historical narrative of the Middle Ages and the issues pertinent to theologians and philosophers in Western Europe at that time. The textbook author runs a free website connected to the text which contains countless primary and secondary source materials which we will access. **The most important textbooks are highlighted.**

1. Judith M. Bennett. **Medieval Europe: A Short History 11th edition**. McGraw Hill; ISBN 978-0-07-338550-1
2. (Textbook Website: MedievalEuropeOnline <http://www.medievaleuropeonline.com>. This is a wonderful resource; take a few moments to get acquainted with the site by clicking on various tabs and wandering around.)
3. Confessions of St. Augustine, available online at <http://faculty.georgetown.edu/jod/augustine/conf.pdf>.
4. Richard E. Rubenstein. **Aristotle's Children: How Christians, Muslims, and Jews Rediscovered Ancient Wisdom and Illuminated the Middle Ages**. 2004. Harcourt, Inc. ISBN-13/EAN:9780156030090.
5. Edward Grant. **God and Reason in the Middle Ages**. 2001. Cambridge UP. ISBN: 9780521003377. *Also on pdf at: <http://catdir.loc.gov/catdir/samples/cam031/00065116.pdf>.
6. Kevin Madigan. **Medieval Christianity: A New History**. 2015. Yale UP. ISBN-10: 0300216777.
7. St. Thomas Aquinas. Summa Theologica, available online at: http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/1225-1274,_Thomas_Aquinas,_Summa_Theologiae_%5B1%5D,_EN.pdf
8. Peter Abelard. Sicet Non (Yes and No), available online at: http://www.historyguide.org/intellect/sic_et_non.html
9. William of Ockham. Summa Logicae, available online as a pdf at: <http://pvspade.com/Logic/docs/ockham.pdf>
10. Christine de Pizan. The Book of the City of Ladies, available online at <https://www.wdl.org/en/item/4391/>
11. *I will provide other documents online in Resources on Blackboard as they become necessary.

Accommodation (Students with Disabilities Policies):

If you are a student with a documented disability who requires accommodations or if you think you may have a disability and want to inquire about accommodations, please contact the Academic Resource Center at 202-687-8354 or arc@georgetown.edu.

Turnitin.com

Students acknowledge that by taking this course, all required papers can be submitted for a Textual Similarity Review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the terms of use agreement posted on the Turnitin.com site.

Extreme Weather, Emergencies, and Instructional Continuity

During inclement weather or other emergencies on a day when we are scheduled to meet, check the university's Web site or call 202-687-7669 for information on whether the university is open. If the university is open, this class will meet. If the university is closed, this class will meet through distance means such as online videoconferencing; check your e-mail for a message from me on how we will proceed in that situation. The university has the capability to send text messages and recorded messages about emergencies to cell phones and other mobile devices. Sign up on MyAccess.

Georgetown Honor System

All students are expected to follow Georgetown's honor code unconditionally. We assume you have read the honor code material located at <http://scs.georgetown.edu/academic-affairs/honor-code>, and in particular have read the following documents: Honor Council Pamphlet, What is Plagiarism, Sanctioning Guidelines, and Expedited Sanctioning Process. Papers in this course will all be submitted to turnitin.com for checking. Submitting material in fulfillment of the requirements of this course means that you have abided by the Georgetown honor pledge:

In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.

Plagiarism

In accord with university policy, all incident of suspected plagiarism or other Honor Code violations will be reported to the Honor Council without fail. If the Honor Council finds that a student has plagiarized or has

violated the Honor Code in any other way, the student will receive a grade of F for the course and/or be subject to expulsion from the university.

Policy Accommodating Students' Religious Observances

Georgetown University promotes respect for all religions. Any student who is unable to attend classes or to participate in any examination, presentation, or assignment on a given day because of the observance of a major religious holiday or related travel shall be excused and provided with the opportunity to make up, without unreasonable burden, any work that has been missed for this reason and shall not in any other way be penalized for the absence or rescheduled work. Students will remain responsible for all assigned work. Students should notify professors in writing at the beginning of the semester of religious observances that conflict with their classes.

Schedule of Classes (*Subject to change*) *I will be adding other readings on this schedule in the coming weeks. Currently the listed readings are only from Judith Bennett's textbook. There will be much more!

1	Aug.31 (Wed.)	Introduction: expectations; requirements; textbook & website; discussion groups; questions; etc.	
2	Sep. 12 (Mon.)	Textbook, Ch. 1: Romans, Christians, and Barbarians The Early Middle Ages; The Roman Peace & After; Christianity; Barbarians and the Western Empire; The Decline of the Western Empire; Conclusion	*1st Assignment Due *Last Day to Withdraww/full refund=9/13
3	Sep. 19	Ch. 2: Early Western Christendom, c. 500-700 Early Medieval Politics; The Early Medieval Church; Intellectual Life;	
4	Sep. 26	Ch. 3: Neighbors: Byzantium and Islam, c. 500-1000 From Eastern to Byzantine Empire; The Byzantine Centuries; The Ascent of Islam; The Islamic Empire; Islamic Culture	*Last Day to Withdraww/80% Refund=9/28
5	Oct. 3	Ch. 4: Carolingian Europe, c. 700-850 The Early Carolingians; Charlemagne; Intellectual Revival	*Last Day to Withdraww/70% Refund=10/11
*	Oct 10	*COLUMBUS DAY!!! NO CLASS MEETING!!	
6	Oct. 17	Ch. 5: Division, Invasion, and Reorganization, c. 800-1000 Division: The Later Carolingians; Invasion: Muslims, Magyars, and Vikings Reorganization: New Polities	1st Paper Due
7	Oct. 24	Ch. 6: Economic Takeoff & Social Change, c. 1000-1300 The Central Middle Ages; Agricultural Revolution & Rural Society The Commercial Revolution & Urban Society The Landholding Aristocracy & Feudal Society	*Last Day to Withdraww/50% Refund=10/25

8	Oct. 31 Halloween!	Ch. 7: <i>Popes & the Papacy, c. 1000-1300</i> Papacy, Clergy & Laity; The Reformed Papacy & Its Church; Innocent III & the Papacy Ascendant; The Papacy after 1250	*Last Day to Withdraw with 40% Refund=11/1
9	Nov. 7	Ch. 8: <i>New Paths to God, c. 1000-1300</i> Judaism; The Evolution of Christian Piety; Orthodoxy & Heresy; Changes in Monastic Life; The Mendicant Orders	*Pre-Registration for Spr 17 Begins 11/7 *Last day to Withdraw from Class
10	Nov. 14	Ch. 9: <i>Conquests, Crusades, and Persecutions, c. 1100-1300</i> Conquests & Territorial Expansion; Crusades; Persecutions	2nd Paper Due *PreRegistration Ends 11/19
11	Nov. 21	Ch. 10: <i>States Made and Unmade, c. 1000-1300</i> The Holy Roman Empire: Disintegration England: King & Parliament France: The Monarchy Triumphant Iberia: Some Consolidation The States of Northern & Eastern Europe	
*	Nov. 23-28	THANKSGIVING BREAK—Begins after last class on 11/23 Classes Resume 11/28	
12	Nov. 28	Ch. 11: <i>Literature, Art, and Thought, c. 1000-1300</i> Byzantine & Islamic Influences; Intellectual Trends; Literature; Architecture & Sculpture	
13	Dec. 5	Ch. 12: <i>Famine, Plague, and Recovery, c. 1300-1500</i> The Later Middle Ages; Economic Woes & Demographic Crisis (1300-1350) Adjustment & Recovery; Late Medieval Christianity	Last Class!!
	(Dec. 7)	CLASSES END! STUDY DAYS BEGIN!!!	
14	Dec. 12	FINAL EXAM !!!!!!! PLEASE TURN IN YOUR 10-Pg PAPER BY THE BEGINNING OF CLASS There will also be a supplemental activity that is part of the Final Exam	

Some Final Thoughts:

- A HUGE REMINDER THAT THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT THE DISCRETION OF THE PROFESSOR!!!
- Remember: **Before you leave to come to class, ALWAYS CHECK YOUR GEORGETOWN E-MAIL, Blackboard Announcements, & the University's Alert System** in case of university closings or important messages from your professor!
- *I AM SOOOO THRILLED TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH YOU THIS SEMESTER! I'm here to help you succeed, and I'll do all in my power to ensure you have a great experience at this wonderful institution.*