

CH 745 A
ERSKINE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
The Scottish Reformation
Augusta

Dale Walden Johnson, Ph. D.
Fall, 2008

Class Meets: 9:00-5:00; Saturday, 9/6; 10/14; 11/1; 11/22

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Office Hours: My office hours will be posted on my door. Because this class meets off campus, it is best to contact me personally, by phone or by e-mail.

Course Description:

Students examine such key individuals as John Knox, Queen Mary, Andrew Melville, James VI, Alexander Henderson, and Samuel Rutherford in order to assess the Reformation era in Scotland. The tory and documents of the development of Scottish Presbyterianism, from the Scots Confession up to the Standards of the Westminster Assembly in England, provide students with resources for leadership in the Church today.

In this Saturday class we will study the people, documents, ideas and movements that characterize the Reformation in Scotland from the 15th-17th centuries. Attention is given to the cultural and religious background that contributed to reform, the role of England and France, Lutheranism, the martyrs, and the role of John Knox in the Scottish Reformation. An attempt is made to focus on both the narrative and historiographical issues.

Course Purpose:

The purpose of this class is to build on the knowledge and skills introduced in the required introductory courses in Church History. The seminar format involves lectures delivered by the professor, but perhaps more importantly, will focus on student research guided by the professor. The course is not limited to, but is of particular importance to students in the Presbyterian and Reformed tradition. The capstone of the course is a summative paper that addresses an important interpretive issue in the Scottish Reformation, or Scottish Church History.

Course Objectives:

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to educate persons for service in the Christian Church. We thus encourage students to value the theological and historical resources of the Church including creeds, and theological treatises of Church leaders. It is the instructor's goal that by the end of the course each student will be able to demonstrate the following skills:

1. Identification of the causes of the Scottish Reformation
2. Ability to explain the relationships between the Renaissance and Reformation

3. State leadership principles as demonstrated in the life of John Knox
4. Identify and explain the distinctive content of the Scots Confession of Faith
5. Synthetic skills of research in a summative research paper
6. Ability to list both the successes and failures of the Scottish Reformation
7. Identification of historiographical issues in the discipline

Course Methods:

The purpose and objectives of this class are achieved through lectures and class discussion, assessed through weekly quizzes, a summative paper and student presentation(s). There are 5 grades in the class of unequal weight:

3 quizzes (at beginning of class)

1 oral presentation based on a journal article

1 research paper (10-12 pages of text, including footnotes and full bibliography)

The quizzes and oral presentation are worth 50% of your final grade. The research paper is also worth 50% of your final grade. On the first day of class the instructor will give details and requirements of the information stated above. Progress on the research paper is “required” each week of class. Please read the due dates below as they relate to the research paper.

Required Texts: (Note that the required texts may be ordered from the Erskine Theological Seminary Virtual Bookstore at <http://www.ecampus.com/erskine>.

Mitchell, Alexander F., *The Scottish Reformation: Its Epochs, Episodes, Leaders and Distinctive Characteristics*, Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1899; Reprinted by Kessinger Publishing Company, 2007.

Douglas Wilson, *From Kirk and Covenant: The Stalwart Courage of John Knox*.
Cumberland House Publishers, 2000.

Note: The professor will distribute numerous handouts throughout the course. The student may also expect occasional reading assignments on reserve in the library.

Course Requirements:

Attendance at each class is vital to the success of each student. This is particularly true in a Saturday class that meets once a month. It is **not** possible to miss more than one class and still pass the class. One absence is allowed if it is of an extraordinary nature. Each student is expected to complete the reading assignments and be prepared to offer informed comments in any class discussion. Students should focus their efforts on producing a high caliber research paper. It is worth one half of the course grade.

Criteria for Grading Research Papers:

Adherence to instructions

Clear thesis statement/historiographical/interpretive issue

Strong defense of the thesis

Convincing solution or resolution of the issues

Depth, analysis, and use of sources

Proper use of English language

Grading Scale:

See page 35 of the current seminary catalog

Notice Regarding Drop/Add:

Each student must note the following information. Class registration is a BINDING CONTRACT. Should you decide to drop this class, you must complete the DROP/ADD form with the appropriate signatures and submit it to the registrars office. Failure to properly withdraw from the class will result in a grade of “F” for the course and full tuition charges will apply. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE TO THIS POLICY.

Language about God and Humanity:

Although God transcends the distinction between male and female, the Bible and the Church’s historic creeds and confessions use masculine language in reference to God. Thus, the Seminary encourages all students to retain this masculine language when speaking and writing about God. Furthermore, the Seminary recognizes that all human beings, male and female, are created equally in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27), and believers of both sexes are fellow heirs of the grace of life (Pet. 3:7). Accordingly, whenever students are speaking and writing about males and females, they should use language that clearly includes both men and women (for example by saying/writing “humanity” rather than “man” or “people” rather than “men.”

Thus, the seminary encourages all students to make use of language, in reference to human beings, that is inclusive rather than needlessly exclusive. It is the mark of a good communicator to build bridges rather than barriers; therefore, such language should be used in all written work and oral presentations. The seminary catalog stands as an example of recommended language.

Conduct in Theological Discussions

Erskine Seminary is committed to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, and it expects its students to show respect for all who identify with that one Church. In all written work, oral presentations, and discussions both inside and outside the classroom, the Seminary expects students to conduct discussions of controversial issues in a context of respect for those with whom one disagrees. Please see the Community Life Statement in the *Catalog* for more information.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the use in writing of wording or ideas produced by others without crediting the author and/or source from which the material was taken. Plagiarism is a serious offense that undermines both the witness and integrity of the Christian community. See p. 37 of the current catalog for a fuller treatment of this issue including the specific consequences for violation and the grievance procedures.

ANY STUDENT GUILTY OF PLAGIARISM OR CHEATING IS IN VIOLATION OF SEMINARY POLICY AND IS LIABLE FOR DISMISSAL.

All written work must conform to the Turabian Manual of Style.

A grade of incomplete is rare and must conform to policy statements in the catalog. A student does not have the option of simply “taking” and incomplete when they fail to complete the requirements of the class. It is granted to a student who has completed most

of the work and because of illness or some other extenuating circumstances is providentially hindered from completing the course on time.

Course Outline: Lecture and Reading Schedule

WEEK #1

September 6 Distribution of the syllabus, introductions, explanations, etc.

Lecture- “The English Reformation and its Relationship to Scotland”

Lecture- “An Overview of the Scottish Reformation”

Part One: Historiography of the Reformation

Lecture- Part Two: Contributing Factors to the Scottish Reform.
(Factors 1-3)

Reading Assignment for October 4:

Mitchell, pp. 1-98

Select/Read article for oral presentation

Writing Assignment; come to class with:

- A. Preliminary research topic
- B. Preliminary thesis statement
- C. Preliminary research design
- D. (Very) preliminary bibliography

WEEK #2

October 4

QUIZ

Lecture- (continued) “Contributing Factors to the Scot. Reform.”

Slide show of Scotland: St. Andrews, Edinburgh and Stirling

Break for Lunch

Lecture- “The Life and Work of John Knox”

Lecture- “The Prophetic Self-Image of John Knox”

Handout: “Will the Real John Knox Please Stand Up?”

Oral Presentations of Signif. Articles concerning the Scot. Ref.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Reading Assignment for November 1:

Mitchell, pp. 100-184

Selected Writings of Knox, TBA

Writing Assignment:

- A. Submit revised research topic
- B. Revised thesis statement
- C. Revised research design
- D. Revised bibliography

Prepare for 10-15 minute oral presentation

WEEK #3

November 1

QUIZ

Lecture- "Significant Writings of John Knox"

Handout: -Chronology of Writings

-Bibliography, Primary Sources

-Chronological Development of Knox's Writings on
Predestination

Oral presentations of Signif. Articles concerning the Scot. Reform.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Reading Assignment for November 22

Mitchell, pp. 185-284

Knox's writings or Documents: TBA

WEEK #4

November 22

QUIZ

Lecture- "Examination of Reformation Documents"

-Scots Confession

-First Book of Discipline

-Second Book of Discipline

Break for Lunch

Lecture- "Success and Failure of the Scottish Reformation"

OR

"The Leader of Scot. Presbyterianism: Andrew Melville"

Oral Presentations: (as needed)

1.

2.

3.

4.

Student "report" on thesis and conclusions of research paper.

NOTE! NOTE! NOTE!

Submit Research Papers!!

Course evaluation completed by students

IMPORTANT DATES/EVENTS FOR FALL SEMESTER

Fall Missions Conference

Sept. 16-18

Christianity and Public Morality

Sept. 24 (Wed)

The Bible and Archaeology

Oct. 16 (Thurs)

Christianity and Public Service

Nov. 12 (Wed)