

Reformation Christianity (RS 120), Fall 2001

MWF 12:45-1:50 p.m., Clark A

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Course Syllabus

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course examines the Protestant Reformers (e.g., Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Anabaptists, Anglicans) with emphasis on their reaction to scholasticism, Roman Catholicism, and the trends they set for theology, along with the Catholic response that centered in the Council of Trent.

The sixteenth century is a dizzying era. At that time, “to reform the church meant changing the world” (Robert E. Van Voorst). The world changed in a different way in every part of sixteenth century Europe. A few “giants” dominate the theological and cultural landscape (Martin Luther, John Calvin), each of which has produced such a capacious body of literary works that we cannot hope to master even one of them. Furthermore, around these giants, major characters crowd every stage, as in an overpopulated Shakespeare play: Andreas von Karlstadt, Ulrich Zwingli, Balthasar Hubmeier, Thomas Cajetan, Menno Simons, Philip Melancthon, Thomas Cranmer, Martin Bucer... Good heavens! How can we possibly track the interactions of all these people against all of their different, rapidly changing contexts?

Furthermore, we cannot simply read these people and pretend we have studied “the Reformation.” Nor can we pretend that these revolutions can be reduced to a set of “ideas.” (Besides, justification by grace through faith is not an “idea,” it is a *conviction*, one that hit the continent with the force of a hurricane.) They are also political, social, economic, personal – and always theological. As a result, the sixteenth century has been so well trodden by historians that we are drowning in secondary literature, all contending for different perspectives and new conclusions. The past fifty years have been enormously productive for sixteenth century historiography. As responsible “theological historians,” we must enter into conversations and weigh into disputes that have not been solved, and show no sign of being soluble.

What happened in sixteenth century Europe changed the world forever, and made us who we are. As in all history courses, we will see how (1) our pasts form us, and (2) we form our pasts. "History" is not a self-contained, stable deposit of information that passively awaits our investigation. Rather, what we retrieve is shaped by what we expect, and what we retrieve changes how we live and think (and what we expect to retrieve in the future). History is a living project that *involves* us, that appropriates us as we try to appropriate it. As we revive the past, the past will revive us. Thanks for joining me in the revival.

COURSE FORMAT:

Sleepy students, beware: This is a seminar, not a lecture course. Class time will concentrate on student presentations and discussions. I will offer occasional lectures. And of course I will mount my soapbox regularly. Nevertheless, we will typically be hearing from (and interrupting) students. You are responsible for the content of your own presentations, *and* for your colleagues'. This is the standard format for doctoral seminars. It is sometimes boring, sometimes frustrating, sometimes exhilarating – and in the end, a deeply effective teaching format. I cannot explain why I learned so much in seminars. But I did, and you will too (if you make an effort).

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformations*, Blackwell, 1996.

In a summary that is readable without being shallow, Carter Lindberg leads us through the contested territory that doctrinal theology, biography, history-of-ideas, and social history all claim for the Reformation era. This text will be our main guide throughout the course, richly supplemented by primary sources and other commentators.

Denis Janz, ed., *A Reformation Reader: Primary Texts with Introductions*, Fortress, 1999.

Secondary sources are important tools for increasing our clarity on the “reformations”; but primary sources are indispensable. Denis Janz has spent a lifetime of teaching the Reformation in refining this collection of primary texts. They center in theology (helping to compensate for Lindberg’s greater attention elsewhere), but involve social history, politics, culture, and other aspects of life that we have come to find indispensable to the task of knowing another era.

Timothy George, *Theology of the Reformers*, Broadman, 1988.

George’s overview of the theologies of the Reformation era’s various theological streams is clear and accessible, and refreshing in paying attention to the Mennonite tradition, part of a long neglected family of “radical” Reformation traditions. If Lindberg is leaving you hungry for someone who will come and rescue you from historical contingency, George is someone you can both use and trust. (But don’t be fooled – nothing can rescue you from historical contingency!)

Heiko A. Oberman, *Martin Luther: Man Between God and the Devil*, Image, 1992.

One of the senior historians of Martin Luther is Heiko Oberman. This work is the definitive revisionist biography of Luther. We tend to locate Luther in our own times, as an American-style modern individualist. Oberman sets him firmly in the late Middle Ages; and this very different place and time reveal a very different life than the one we expect to find. In 1933, Karl Barth told an audience of Germans that Luther “is harder to understand and nowhere near as accessible as he is currently thought to be.” In this book, you will see why.

John C. Olin, ed., *John Calvin and Jacopo Sadoleto: A Reformation Debate*, Baker, 1976.

This exchange, between a Catholic bishop and John Calvin, portrays two parties in the Reformation in polemical, but constructive, debate. Calvin’s reply helped restore his status in Geneva, so this is not only an enlightening glimpse at the Reformation-in-the-making, but an important part of it. Calvin got the last word in the exchange, but by including material from the Council of Trent, our edition shows responsibly that the Catholic Church was not persuaded.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

Many primary sources can be found on-line at <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook02.html>, <http://www.ccel.org>, <http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/wittenberg-home.html> (for Lutheranism), <http://history.hanover.edu/early/calvin.html> (for Calvin), and <http://www.oremus.org> (for Anglicanism).

David Steinmetz, *Reformers in the Wings: from Geiler von Kaysersberg to Theodore Beza*, 2d ed., Oxford, 2001.
The prominence and convenience of the "Great Man" theory of history has often obscured the sheer width of the Reformation era. The Reformation is much more than two (Luther, Calvin), or three (Zwingli), or five figures. The Lutheran tradition alone draws from much more than just Luther, and the Reformed from much more than just Zwingli or Calvin. Steinmetz's book is a series of twenty treatments of "minor" reformers, who quietly left very important legacies alongside and in the shadow of the giants.

Roger E. Olson, *The Story of Christian Theology: Twenty Centuries of Tradition & Reform*, IVP, 1999.
Some of you may want a more accessible secondary source, or even just another source with another perspective. Olson's book is a readable guide to the history of Christian theology. (Some of you have already taken historical survey courses on the Christian faith, and you are already familiar with whatever survey text you used in that class. If so, your text in that class is probably a worthy substitute for this one.)

Heiko A. Oberman, *The Reformation: Roots and Ramifications*, Eerdmans, 1994.
These essays reveal some of the ways Reformation scholarship is on the move today – in the thick of transformations and culture wars in historiography, ecumenical dialogue, and ongoing controversies over "the Reformation." The only settled history is dead history. This volume will give you a glimpse into the vitality of historical tradition.

David Steinmetz, *Luther in Context*, Baker, 1995.
This collection "sets Luther in his cultural and theological world" in a wonderfully compact yet profound way. Topics like "Luther and Augustine on Romans 9" and "Abraham and the Reformation" reveal Steinmetz's respect for the prominence of Scripture (not just "ideas") in the life and thought of the Reformation and its key figures.

Francois Wendel, *Calvin: The Origins and Development of His Religious Thought*, Baker, 1997.
Calvin's thought, not his life, is what he would have us study about him. So Wendel's masterful project comes in two parts. The first is a shorter biography of Calvin. The second is a longer topical analysis of Calvin's doctrine, organized roughly according to the Institutes.

Richard A. Muller, *The Unaccommodated Calvin*, Oxford, 2000.
Muller is an unrepentant, unreconstructed, unpostmodern historian, and also an unrepentant, unreconstructed, unpostmodern Calvinist. The rigor and insight of his analysis almost makes me miss modernity. (Almost.) He is one of the finest commentators on Calvin and Calvinism, and this is an exceptional collection of essays.

Felipe Fernandez-Armesto and Derek Wilson, *Reformations: A Radical Interpretation of Christianity and the World, 1500-2000*, Scribner, 1996.
Mischievous, revisionist pop history from a Catholic and a Protestant. This project is a useful reminder that Reformation history is always constructed (and reconstructed) history.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **Attendance** at class sessions and participation in discussions is required.
2. Each of you will give a 20 minute in-class **presentation** on a day's readings. There are several formats for these presentations (see below). Your presentation will count as 25% of your final grade. As you write, please refer to my [suggestions for writing papers](#) for helpful suggestions, cautions about Internet "research", ultimata regarding late papers and plagiarism, and so on.

Presentation formats include:

- A. *Leading a seminar presentation.* This will offer helpful context for other students, make observations, and raise questions for us to discuss. This amounts to about two *tightly written*, single-spaced pages. Please distribute copies to your classmates on the day of your presentation.
- B. *Holding a disputation.* Instead of a seminar presentation, a student may choose to present that subject's case for the Gospel against current (Catholic and/or magisterial) practice. The class would then represent a restless but somewhat skeptical "public" (of ecclesiastical, political, etc. authorities). Unless we use a historical disputation (e.g., part of the Heidelberg Disputation), the student's own disputation questions will be due at the class period prior to the discussion, with (one single-spaced page) written and/or oral arguments to be evaluated in the course of the discussion.
- C. *Moderating a debate.* Here the class will meet and take sides on historical disputes (e.g., over justification). The student will submit debate questions (cleared by me) one week before the debate, and submit a report evaluating the arguments after the debate. The student's grade for that session, if co-moderated by the student, would be for the quality of the questions submitted and the (one single-spaced page) evaluation.
- D. *Something else.* Have an alternative? I'm open to suggestions.

3. Each of you will take part in one **debate** between parties in a historical theological conflict. You and one or two teammates will defend God, Gospel, and True Church against an opposing team and enemy of the Truth (who believes it is doing the same). You will receive debate questions from the moderator one week before the debate. After the debate you will submit your preparatory brief (four double-spaced pages or so) to the court (*i.e.*, to the moderator and me) for evaluation. Your grade will not so much be based on whether you "win" the debate, as how well you advance and defend your position in writing and debate. It will be 25% of your final grade.

4. Everyone who is not presenting will bring a one-page typewritten **brief** that (1) summarizes the reading, and (2) asks at least one question for discussion. These should be in prose-outline form ([see my rationale and an example](#)), well written. They will raise the quality of discussion markedly! (*On debate days, instead of bringing a brief, the "audience" will render a verdict and offer reasons for that verdict.*) I will collect these after class, and grade them as follows: "+", "-", or "0" (for absences). These will comprise 30% of your final grade. **No briefs written after the fact will be accepted**, though I will accept briefs *ahead of time* for excused absences.

5. There will be a final exam on presentations and readings that covers the entire course. The exam is meant to develop and test your ability to recall and especially to *use* the course material. Your final exam will count as 20% of your final grade.

6. To stimulate discussion, this class will have its own **e-mail** discussion group you will use to take class discussions into and out of class sessions. This is a place for you to post questions and thoughtful answers to the questions of others. I will lurk, responding and posing questions only when I consider it necessary. Send e-mail to rs120@westmont.edu.

COURSE OUTLINE AND READING SCHEDULE:

Date	Subject	Reading (required/ recommended)	Led By
Mon. 8/27	Introduction	Syllabus	Telford Work
Wed. 8/29	Assignments	Lindberg preface, ch 1; George ch 1; Janz (pp) 1-2, 3-4, 69-70, 151, 203-204, 283-284, 325-326; Steinmetz intro	Telford Work
Streams Into the Reformation			
Fri. 8/31	Life in the Late Middle Ages	Lindberg 24-35; George 22-30; Janz #1, #12	Telford Work
Mon. 9/3	The Medieval Church and Papacy	Lindberg 42-55; George 30-40; Janz #2, #6	Ben Holstein
Wed. 9/5	Indulgences in the Context of Eschatology	Lindberg 73-76; Oberman ch 2; Janz #9-#11	Curtis Bronzan
Fri. 9/7	Stirrings of Reform	George 46-49; Janz #13; Oberman 124-150; Lindberg 335-341; Janz #77, #79; <i>Dogma</i> (?)	Jennie Schneider
Luther and the German Reformation			
Mon. 9/10	The Scholastic Legacy	George 40-46; Oberman 113-124; Steinmetz ch 1	Brittany Johnson
	Influences on Luther	Lindberg 56-70; Oberman ch 3; Janz #15-16; Steinmetz ch 2 (review)	
Wed. 9/12	The Shadow of Augustine	Janz #7, #8; Oberman 158-161; Steinmetz ch 2	Carol Laing
	Luther's Conversion	Lindberg 71-73; George pp 51-62; Oberman ch 5; Janz #14, #20	
Fri. 9/14	The Luther Controversy	Lindberg 73-76 (review), 76-79; Oberman ch 6, 298-304; Janz #19, #75-76	Jake Reid
	More Than Two Kingdoms: Politics in the Reformation	Lindberg 79-90; Lindberg ch 9; Oberman ch 1; Janz #21	

Mon. 9/17	From Luther to Lutheranism: Justification and Freedom	George 62-73; Janz #22, #27-29 (note dates); George 73-79; Steinmetz chs 6, 8, 9	Justin Egerer
Wed. 9/19	Luther on Scripture, Tradition, Authority	Janz #5; George 79-86; Oberman ch 7, 304-309; Janz #23-24; Luther, <i>On Translating</i> ; Steinmetz ch 4	Tim Seidel
Fri. 9/21	Debate (Luther v. Eck), 1522: "God Demands That We Teach ..."	Selections from Luther, <i>Ninety-Five Theses</i> or <i>Heidelberg Theses</i>	Telford Work
Mon. 9/24	Luther and Karlstadt Implement Reforms	Lindberg chs 4-5; Oberman ch 10, 309-313; Janz #3-4, #18, #25; Lindberg 363-371; Steinmetz ch 10	Kristen Ridgway
Wed. 9/26	Lutheran Gospel, Evangelical Church, and State	George 86-102; Oberman prologue, ch 9; Janz #26; Steinmetz ch 7; <i>Babylonian Captivity</i> (skim)	Bryce Hales
Fri. 9/28	Luther on the Place of Experience in Doctrine	Oberman 313-324, Epilogue; George 102-106; Janz #17, #14 (review)	Abby Diepenbrock
Mon. 10/1	Debate (Luther v. Cajetan), 1533: "In what sense(s) are believers justified by faith?"	Janz #77-78 (and review relevant Lutheran readings)	Telford Work
Rebels, Believers' Baptists, and Spiritualists			
Wed. 10/3	Müntzer, Apocalypticism, and the Peasants' War	Lindberg ch 6; Janz #38-39; Oberman 64-67 (review)	Alex Branderhorst
Fri. 10/5	The Zwinglian Scripture Principle	Lindberg 169-181; George 108-119, 126-129, 158-161; Janz #30, #37, #33	Holly Adams
Mon. 10/8	<i>(Fall Break)</i>		
Wed. 10/10	Zwingli on Purity in Worship and Life	Lindberg 102-110 (review), George 119-122, 130-144; Janz #31-32, #34	Brandi Chase
Fri. 10/12	Believers' Baptists and the Exclusivity of the Church	Lindberg 199-220; Janz #40-41, #44; George 252-265, 297-302; Steinmetz ch 18	Jim Eddy
Mon. 10/15	Baptists on Personal Discipleship	George 265-280, 280-285; Janz #45-46; Oberman 226-232; Steinmetz ch 19	Iris Ichishita

Wed. 10/17	Baptists on Communal Discipleship	George 285-297, 303-306; Janz #42-43, Lindberg 220-225; Janz #47; Steinmetz ch 20	Gregg Schroeder
Fri. 10/19	Debate (an “Ana”-baptist v. Luther v. Zwingli), 1537: Should Christians’ children be baptized?	Steinmetz ch 12	Telford Work
Mon. 10/22	Divine Transcendence in the Lord’s Supper	Lindberg 181-198; George 144-158; Janz #35; Oberman 232-245; Janz #36; Steinmetz ch 14	Scott Duncan
Wed. 10/24	Inner Light: From Karlstadt to Spiritualism	Lindberg 93-96 (review), 102-110 (review); Steinmetz ch 16; Lindberg 225-228; George 277 (bottom)-280 (review); Steinmetz ch 17	Kirsten Hoelt
Fri. 10/26	Lecture: The Centrality of Reformation Christology		Telford Work
Mon. 10/29	Debate (Zwingli v. Luther), 1529: “What happens at the Lord’s Supper?”		Telford Work
Calvin and the Reformed Tradition			
Wed. 10/31	Calvin: Influences and Career	Lindberg ch 10; George 163-185, 246-249; Janz #48-55	Josh Colp
Fri. 11/2	Calvin on Our Theological Vision	George 185-199, 213-216; Janz 226, #56-58	Cameron Baker
Mon. 11/5	Calvin on God: Creator, Provider, Savior	George 199-213, 216-219; Lindberg ch 11	Matt Spahn
Wed. 11/7	Calvin on Atonement and Appropriation	George 219-231; Janz #59-61	Anne Chauvin
Fri. 11/9	Calvin on Predestination	George 231-234; Janz #62; Steinmetz ch 15	Emily Sanford
Mon. 11/12	Calvin on the Church	George 235-244; Janz #63-64	Ryan King

Wed. 11/14	Debate (Sadoletto v. Calvin), 1539: “What Is the Unity of the True Church?”	Olin 6-94	Telford Work
Fri. 11/16	Calvin on Christian Society	George 244-246; Janz #65; Lindberg ch 12	Michael Wright
Mon. 11/19	Debate (Calvin v. Simons), 1559: “What is the proper relationship between the Christian community and the civil community?”	Steinmetz ch 11	(no TW)
11/21- 11/23	<i>(Thanksgiving)</i>		
The English Synthesis			
Mon. 11/26	English Reformation: History	Lindberg ch 13; Janz 283-284, #66-67, #70-72, #97	Jennifer Mora
Wed. 11/28	English Reformation: Theology	Janz #68-69, #74; Steinmetz ch 13	Jason Finch
The Catholic (Counter?) Reformation			
Fri. 11/30	Asserting Roman Authority: The Index and Inquisition	Lindberg 341-345; Janz #80, #87	Telford Work
Mon. 12/3	Catholic Renewal: Jesuits and Missionaries	Lindberg 345-350; Janz #88-96	Chris Atkinson
Wed. 12/5	The Council of Trent: Confessional Catholicism	Lindberg 350-356, 357-359; Janz 348-349, #82-#86; Steinmetz ch 5	Telford Work
Fri. 12/7	Debate (a Catholic, a Lutheran, and a Calvinist), 2001: “Are the sixteenth-century Catholic and Protestant visions of justification reconcilable?”	Olin app I; Olin app II or Janz #81; Joint Decree on the Doctrine of Justification ; David Yeago, “The Catholic Luther” ; Steinmetz ch 3	Telford Work