

Significant Voice in Christian Theology I
3 credits

Class Information		Instructor Information		First day of classes:	Wed., Sept 7, 2016
Days	Directed Study	Instructor:	Derek Geerlof	Last day to add/drop, or change to audit:	Sun, Sept. 18, 2016
Time:		Email:	DGeerlof@ambrose.edu	Last day to request revised exam:	Mon, Oct 24, 2016
Room:		Phone:	Please email as I am not always on campus to check for phone messages.	Last day to withdraw from course:	Mon, Nov 14, 2016
Lab/Tutorial:	N/A	Office:	L2113	Last day to apply for time extension for coursework:	Mon, Nov 21, 2016
N/A		Office Hrs:	I would be happy to meet with you. Please ask for an appointment by email.	Last day of classes:	Mon, Dec 12, 2016

Textbooks:

As per schedule below

Course Description:

Focusing on original source material (in English), this class serves as a broad introduction to some of the significant voices in Christian theology from the Patristic to the Medieval period, focusing on both eastern and western theologians. Primary attention will be given to exegetical methodology and each theologian's approach to Scripture.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. To read and synthesize original source material (in English) of the assigned theologians
2. To be able to identify and compare key exegetical practices and approaches to Scripture utilized by the assigned theologians.
3. To begin to understand the significance of each theologian for the development of theology in the church.

Course Schedule:

Reading/Assignment Schedule

Week of Sept 11 and Sept 18

Read:

- Robert Louis Wilken, "In Defense of Allegory" in *Modern Theology* 14:2 (1998): 197-212. Can get through ATLA.
- Behr, John, "Origen and Alexandria," Chapter 7: Origen and Alexandria in *The Way to Nicaea*, vol. 1 (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001): 163-203. You can get this from the library or I can get you a copy if needed. Note some differences between the Antiochian and Alexandrian schools.
- Frances Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Read the chapter on *allegoria* and *theoria*.
- Origen, *On First Principles*.
- Origen, "Homily 1," *Homilies on Joshua*
Online at:
https://books.google.ca/books?id=Yq6reMY6KMUC&pg=PA26&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=2#v=onepage&q&f=false
- Origen, "Book 19, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*
Online at:
https://books.google.ca/books?id=TuHTu3BJyywC&pg=PA166&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=2#v=onepage&q&f=false

(You can substitute the Gospel of John reading for one from his commentary on Luke).

Week of Sept 25 (Due Date: Saturday, Oct. 1 at 11:59 pm)

Short Writing Assignment #1: Origen, *On First Principles*.

Meet with Instructor during week of Sept. 25.

Week of October 2

Read:

- Gregory of Nyssa, *The Life of Moses* in the Classics of Western Spirituality (Paulist Press: 2002 edition). You can also get *The Life of Moses* in the Harper Collins Spiritual Classics. It is the same translation as the Paulist Press, but lacks the introduction, so I would get the Paulist Press edition, if possible.
- Gregory of Nyssa, *On Not Three Gods: Letter to Ablabius* in NPNF 5.331-336. You can get this online.

Week of October 9 (Due Date: Sat. Oct 15 at 11:59 pm)

Short Writing Assignment #2: Gregory of Nyssa, *The Life of Moses*.

Week of October 16 and October 23

Read:

- Augustine, *Teaching Christianity: De Doctrina Christiana*. Tr. Edmund Hill. Hyde Park: New City Press, 1996.

Note: Augustine in actuality goes well beyond the exegetical practices he describes in *De Doctrina Christiania*, so it is good to see some of his exegetical work in practice, hence below.

- “General Introduction” in *Expositions of the Psalms*. Vol. 1. Tr. Maria Boulding. Hyde Park: New City Press, 2000: 13-66. In library or I will supply you with a copy of this.
- Augustine, “Exposition of Psalm 142,” in *Expositions of the Psalms*. Vol. 6. Tr. Maria Boulding. Hyde Park: New City Press, 2004: 344-359. In library or I will supply you with a copy of this.
- Augustine, “Book 14,” in *The City of God: Books 11-22*, tr. William Babcock. Hyde Park: New City Press, 2013: 98-137 “Living According to the Flesh and Living According to the Spirit”. I will supply you with a copy of this.

Meet with Instructor During Week of October 23

Week of October 30: Due Date: Sat. Nov. 5 at 11:59 pm

Short Writing Assignment #3: Augustine, *Teaching Christianity* (deal with books 1-3, don’t worry about 4).

Week of November 6 and November 13

Read:

- Maximus the Confessor, *Selected Writings* in the Classics of Western Spirituality Series (Mahwah: Paulist Press: 2002). Pick two works of interest to you.
- Pseudo-Dionysius. *The Complete Works* in the Classics of Western Spirituality Series (Mahwah: Paulist Press: 2002). Read the introductions, “The Divine Names,” and the “Celestial Hierarchy.” These two works especially have a significant impact on high medieval writings in the west. You can also read “The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, but this is optional).

Week of November 23 Due Date: Sat. Nov. 29 at 11:59 pm

Short Writing Assignment #4: Maximus the Confessor (pick one work) OR Pseudo-Dionysius (either “Divine Names,” or “Celestial Hierarchy”). You could also choose to do a comparison paper between the two if you like, but this would mean you would have to ably synthesize both authors and interact with them.

Week of November 30 and December 4

Read:

- Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* in the Classics of Western Spirituality (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2002).

Meet with Instructor During the Week of December 4

Week of December 11: Due Date: Sat. Dec. 17 at 11:59 pm.

Short Writing Assignment #5: Gregory Palamas, *The Triads*.

Requirements:

The student will be required to write five (5) short writing assignments (1500-2000 words) on the books and according to the schedule noted in the Reading/Assignment Schedule below.

Each short written assignment must cohere to, and will be graded according to, the Instructions for Short Writing Assignments attached to this document as Appendix B.

The student will meet with the instructor a minimum of three times throughout the course (more if desired).

Other:

The Ambrose Learning Centre

Ambrose University and I want you to succeed in your educational goals. If you have a documented learning disability, or you think you may need and/or benefit some type of learning assistance, please, please, please either come speak to Ambrose Learning Services, or come talk to me and I will help connect you to Learning Services.

The Ambrose Writing Centre is also a resource that is able to help you become a better writer, whether you have difficulty writing academic papers or you are already a good writer who wants to become better. Please contact Ambrose Learning Services, or come talk to me and I will help connect you to Learning Services.

Grade Summary:

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Short Written Assignment #1	20%
Short Written Assignment #2	20%
Short Written Assignment #3	20%
Short Written Assignment #4	20%
Short Written Assignment #5	20%
Total	100%

The available letters for course grades are as follows:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>
A+	
A	Excellent
A-	
B+	
B	Good
B-	
C+	
C	Satisfactory
C-	
D+	
D	Minimal Pass
F	Failure

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
A+	97-100
A	93-96
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82

C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	60-69
D	50-59

Because of the nature of the Alpha 4.00 system, there can be no uniform College-wide conversion scale. The relationship between raw scores (e.g. percentages) and the resultant letter grade will depend on the nature of the course and the instructor's assessment of the level of each class, compared to similar classes taught previously.

Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system. Printed grade sheets are not mailed out.

Other

All papers are to be submitted electronically on Turnitin by the assigned date and time.

Any assignment not received by the date and time noted on the Reading/Assignment Schedule will receive an automatic 5% reduction in grade, and an additional 5% for each 24 hour period following (excluding Sunday's), to a maximum of 50% reduction. Any assignment received after the end of the last day of scheduled final exams (per the Ambrose Calendar) will not be graded. This means any assignment that is late but received before the last day of scheduled final exams is eligible to receive at least half-credit.

Instructions for Short Writing Assignments

1500-2000 words excluding footnotes

CH 645 - Significant Texts in Christian Theology

For these assignments, you do not need to do research outside of the readings listed in the syllabus. The primary purpose of this class is to be exposed to, carefully read, and be able to synthesize original sources. If a concept or argument is unclear to you, you may wish to do research beyond this reading but you only need to do it for clarification. You are welcome to do research beyond what is required, but that is up to you. It will not affect your grade if you do not do research beyond what is required.

I. The Writing Process

Step 1: Read through the work carefully and attempt to identify the major ideas and the way those ideas connect to one another in order to form a whole argument. While you are reading record your thoughts.

Step 2: From your notes compile a thesis statement. As you begin to write, it may be necessary to modify your thesis statement so that it confirms to what you have written. Do not feel overly constrained by the statement. It can be changed!

Step 3: Construct an outline that clearly sets forth the main points you want to make in support of your thesis statement.

Step 4: Write your rough draft and put the paper aside for a few days (if possible or at least an hour or two).

Step 5: Revise, edit, and proofread (do not rely on your word processor to catch all the mistakes because it won't!).

II. The Format of the Paper

This is a short assignment so you cannot afford to waste words. The following structure will help you maximize the allotted space.

A. Opening Paragraph(s) (This is what I will prove!)

The opening paragraph(s) should introduce the topic along with your thesis statement. It essentially tells the reader what you plan to do. Try to be as specific as possible. I should see three components in the introductory paragraph: (1) general statements about the significance of the writer and the treatise you're reading; (2) instructions to your reader as to how you plan to approach the topic (this could relate to the structure of your paper insofar as you are signaling to the reader the order or way in which your argument will unfold); (3) a clear, specific thesis as to what you think about the treatise and what you are going to argue in this paper. You should be able to summarize your entire paper in a single thesis sentence consisting of one or two sentences.

Note on the thesis: The thesis should give me your take on the treatise in question. That is, it will communicate in summary what you think the treatise is all about, it's primary purpose or intention and the main points supporting that purpose. The thesis is not a set of instructions, but a clear statement of what you intend to claim in the paper.

Example of a set of instructions [BAD]: The purpose of this paper is to explore the theology in Clement of Alexandria.

Example of a thesis [BETTER]: This paper will show that Clement of Alexandria viewed Christ primarily as a pedagogue in the life of the Christian.

B. Body of the Paper (Here is my proof!)

The body of the paper sets forth your argument(s) in support of your thesis statement. The argument(s) should demonstrate some interaction with the book you are reviewing either through quotations or references to a specific place in the text.

Quotations and references are crucial for your paper. The key lies in getting the right balance between your words and any

quotations or references you make. Too much quotation and your words get lost; too little and your words lack support. There is no set formula to indicate whether you have the correct amount of quotes and/or references. But you can begin to determine the proper balance by asking yourself if the reader would be convinced by what you have given.

This means that you must put your paper aside for at least two days and approach it fresh as if you were the reader. At minimum, you should have one citation and/or quotation per *major* idea.

C. Conclusion (This is what I've proved!)

The conclusion reworks the thesis in light of the body of evidence you've provided as well as drawing out some implications. Thus it is not simply copying and pasting the thesis into the final paragraph or so of the paper.

III. Important Points to Remember

A. Make sure grammar, spelling, etc., are all correct

Poor grammar, spelling, etc., get in the way of your argument by causing the reader to focus on the mechanics of the paper rather than the content. **Please use Turabian, 8th edition to format your paper. Here is why:**

1. When (not if) you cite your source, you will need to use a footnote, and Turabian, 8th edition should be consulted for proper format. You must cite the source!

2. When (not if) you compile your bibliography, you will need to follow Turabian, 8th edition on proper format. You will have a bibliography!

It does not matter that you may only use one source. Part of writing this paper is getting the formatting correct. Thus, you will need to place the one source in your bibliography. Please make sure it is in the proper format because I will take off points if it is not.

B. Make sure the structure and argument is clear

Ask yourself the following questions: 1) Is my paper arranged effectively?; 2) Does anything I've written stray too far from the primary subject?; 3) Is there a clear relationship between the ideas I have presented? The content of the paper must be specific. Try to avoid general statements.

There are two basic types of critical analysis

- It is an examination of the vocabulary and inner logic of a work as an attempt to understand the author's argument or point of view

This is the first step in critical analysis that most students pass over. They fail to take the time and effort to understand the key terms an author employs, what the author means by those terms, and how those terms connect to the larger argument. Many students skip right over this to critique. If a student attempts to critique without offering a sufficient account of the arguments in a text, it will result in a loss of points on the final grade.

**This is not a mere summary of an argument(s). A summary only restates the argument in a shortened version. Summarizing a text is intended for an audience that knows nothing about the author or the work. This is not the case here.

- It is an attempt to critique the argument of the author either by showing its inconsistency within the work or by showing that the author does not take everything into consideration

Only after articulating the perspective of the text are you then in a position to offer some sort of critique. A cautionary note here is to remember that it is unfair to critique an author based on something from another period of time that the author could not know. For example, do not criticize early texts in light of formulations of the Trinity that happen after Nicaea in 325. Those are later theological developments.

C. The grade for your paper will be based on the following criteria

1. Proper formatting, grammar, etc.
2. Structure of the argument
3. Content of the argument

D. How I evaluate content

- I look for your capacity to explain an author's (or text's) position in your own words by using examples or other vocabulary.
- I look to see how well you understand the author's own vocabulary and how this vocabulary illustrates his/her views as a whole
- I look to see if you are reading the author anachronistically by assuming that what's/he means by term is the same as what you mean by it. Try your hardest not to do this.
- I look to see how specific you are about the topic. Stay clear of vague sentences that do not convey any direct information about the topic. For example, "The Didache talks about the Eucharist." This is true, but vague. You need to explain how Didache understands the Eucharist, etc.

Remember that the paper should be between 1500 and 2000 words in length, excluding footnotes and bibliography.

The paper will be written in Times New Roman 12 font, double-spaced and with one-inch margins around.

You do not need a title page. The top of the first page should be written as follows:

Last Name, First Name
Name of Course
Date Paper Submitted (not date paper is due)
Name of Instructor:

Title of Paper

Policies:

Communication

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class

sessions. If students do not wish to use their Ambrose accounts, they will need to forward all messages from the Ambrose account to another personal account.

Registration

During the **Registration Revision Period** students may enter a course without permission, change the designation of any class from credit to audit and /or voluntary withdraw from a course without financial or academic penalty or record. Courses should be added or

dropped on the student portal by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees.

Students intending to withdraw from a course after the Registration Revision Period must apply to the Office of the Registrar by submitting a "Request to Withdraw from a Course" form or by sending an email to the Registrar's Office by the **Withdrawal Deadline**; please consult the List of Important Dates on the my.ambrose.edu website. Students will not receive a tuition refund for courses from which they withdraw after the Registration Revision period. A grade of "W" will appear on their transcript.

Exam Scheduling

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

Students, who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a Revised Examination Request form to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; 2) the student has three final exams within three consecutive exam time blocks; 3) the scheduled final exam slot conflicts with an exam at another institution; 4) extenuating circumstances. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Electronic Etiquette

Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to use electronics for purposes unrelated to the course during a class session. Turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops should be used for class-related purposes only. Do not use iPods, MP3 players, or headphones. Do not text, read, or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. Some professors will not allow the use of any electronic devices in class. The professor has the

right to disallow the student to use a laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a course Extension from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."

Appeal of Grade

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Registrar's Office in writing and providing the basis for appeal within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism

involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Note: Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.