Reformation Texts

ELOQUENTIA PERFECTA 3: A BIOGRAPHICAL APPROACH

Summer 2016
THEO-3360-R21
Tuesdays through Thursdays, 6:00–9:00 PM
Duane Library 140

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Office Hours: Duane 154, by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

For the average European living in the year 1500, Roman Christianity, theoretically uniform in doctrine and practice, would have symbolized stability and authority. The church’s claims to mediate between God and humankind would have gone largely unchallenged. A century later, Europe’s house was divided, politically as well as theologically; dozens of distinctive evangelical or “Protestant” congregations now vied for the patronage of princes and parishioners, while the Roman Catholic Church had undergone substantial internal reform of its own.

In this course, we shall examine four major reformations of the sixteenth century: in Germany, the reform movement headed by Martin Luther; in Switzerland, that led by John Calvin; in England, that given direction by successive kings and queens; and in the Roman Catholic Church, that which emerged simultaneously with “Protestantism”. We shall do so by reading some of the key texts that these movements produced; the emphasis, therefore, will be less on Reformation history per se than on the expression of Reformation beliefs in a variety of literary genres. Our goal shall be to approach these texts with a critical eye, paying special attention to the ways in which Reformation writers constructed their arguments and were shaped by the tumultuous times in which they lived.

Some elements of this course reflect its designation as an Eloquentia Perfecta section. A series of writing assignments will aim to develop students’ skills in expository and persuasive writing, and the class as a whole will be guided by a focus on the biographies of key players in the various sixteenth-century reformations. Please see the Eloquentia Perfecta section of the syllabus (below) for further details about writing and speaking assignments. It should go without saying that regular attendance, daily preparation, and class participation are expected.

TEXTS

The two volumes listed below contain the majority of texts we shall be reading this summer and are identified on the syllabus by their titles; other texts will be sent by e-mail.

- Denis Janz, ed., A Reformation Reader, second edition (Fortress Press, 2008)
- Martin Luther, Three Treatises, second rev. edn. (Fortress Press, 1970)
REQUIREMENTS / EVALUATIONS

1. Careful reading of the assigned texts and active class participation (10% of final grade)
2. An oral presentation (15% of final grade)
3. Participation in one in-class debate (10% of the final grade)
4. Two essays, written in response to questions set by the instructor (15%, and 15% of the final grade respectively); in addition, participation in a peer review process for one of these essays will count for 5% of the final grade
5. An in-class final examination on Thursday, August 4 (35% of final grade)

SYLLABUS OF COURSE TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

PART I • THE MEDIEVAL BACKGROUND

Tuesday, July 5
- Introductory Discussion: Caricatures of Catholics and Protestants
- Lecture/Discussion: Medieval Spirituality

Thomas à Kempis, excerpt from The Imitation of Christ (Reformation Reader, pp. 4–13)

Wednesday, July 6
- Lecture/Discussion: Good Deeds and God: Pre-Reformation Perspectives on Salvation
- Lecture/Discussion: Indulgences, the Institutional Church, and Papal Power

Thomas Bradwardine, excerpt from The Cause of God against the Pelagians (Reformation Reader, pp. 43–50)
Gabriel Biel, The Circumcision of the Lord (Reformation Reader, pp. 51–56)
Boniface VIII, excerpt from Unam Sanctam (Reformation Reader, pp. 13–14)
Clement VI, excerpt from Unigenitus (Reformation Reader, pp. 56–57)
Sixtus IV, excerpt from Salvator Noster (Reformation Reader, p. 57)
Albrecht of Mainz, excerpt from Instructio Summaria (Reformation Reader, pp. 57–59)

Thursday, July 7
- Lecture/Discussion: Humanism—A Crack in the Armor?
- An Introduction to Luther

Desiderius Erasmus, excerpt from In Praise of Folly (Reformation Reader, pp. 63–74)
Lorenzo Valla, excerpt from The Forgery of the Alleged Donation of Constantine (e-res)
Martin Luther, “The Autobiographical Fragment” (Reformation Reader, pp. 78–83)
Luther, Ninety-five Theses; or Disputation on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences (Reformation Reader, pp. 88–93)
PART II • MARTIN LUTHER AND THE LUTHERAN REFORMATION

Tuesday, July 12
- Biographical Presentation: Johann von Staupitz
- Biographical Presentation: Andreas Karlstadt
- Lecture/Discussion: The Freedom of a Christian


Wednesday, July 13
- Biographical Presentation: Johann Eck
- Biographical Presentation: Thomas Müntzer
- Early Responses to Luther
- To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation

Thomas Cardinal Cajetan, On Faith and Works (Reformation Reader, pp. 387–400)
Luther, To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation (Three Treatises), pp. 7–26

Thursday, July 14
First essays due
- Biographical Presentation: Philip Melanchthon
- Biographical Presentation: Katharina Schutz Zell
- Debate: Cajetan and Luther
- Lecture: Signs and Symbols: Sacraments in Medieval and Reformation Christianity

Luther, excerpts from The Babylonian Captivity of the Church (Three Treatises), pp. 123–218, 257–60

PART III • THE SWISS REFORMATIONS

Tuesday, July 19
- Biographical Presentation: Michael Servetus
- Workshop: Historical and Theological Writing
- Lecture: Introduction to the Swiss Reformations: Ulrich Zwingli and John Calvin
- Lecture/Discussion: John Calvin and the Institutes of the Christian Religion (begin)

John Calvin, Geneva Ordinances (Reformation Reader, pp. 256–60)
Calvin, excerpts from Institutes of the Christian Religion (Reformation Reader), pp. 270–88
Wednesday, July 20
- Biographical Presentation: Marie Dentiere
- Biographical Presentation: Theodore Beza
- John Calvin and the Institutes of the Christian Religion (continue)

John Calvin, excerpts from Institutes of the Christian Religion (Reformation Reader), pp. 288–325

PART IV • THE ENGLISH REFORMATIONS

Thursday, July 21
Revised first essays due
- Biographical Presentation: William Tyndale
- Debate: Lutherans and Calvinists
- John Calvin and the Institutes of the Christian Religion (conclude)
- Workshop: The Process of Peer Review
- Lecture/Discussion: An Overview of the English Reformations

Gerald Bray, ed., Documents of the English Reformation (Minneapolis, 1994), pp. 78–87, 113–14, 162–75 (emailed)

Tuesday, July 26
- Biographical Presentation: King Henry VIII
- Lecture/Discussion: Reformation through the Law and the Liturgy

Bray, ed., Documents, pp. 175–83, 233–43 (emailed)
Selections from The Book of Common Prayer (1549 and 1552 editions) (emailed)

Wednesday, July 27
- Biographical Presentation: John Knox
- Lecture/Discussion: Reformation through the Spoken Word and the Liturgy

Thomas Cranmer, Certain Sermons or Homilies (London, 1562), sermons 1–4 (emailed)

PART V • EARLY MODERN CATHOLICISM

Thursday, July 28
Rough drafts of second essays due
- Biographical Presentation: Thomas More
- Lecture/Discussion: Counter-Reformation, Catholic Reformation, or Early Modern Catholicism?
- Lecture/Discussion: The Council of Trent

Council of Trent, various Decrees and Canons (Reformation Reader, pp. 405–25)
Tuesday, August 2

_Peer comments on second essays due_

- *Biographical Presentation: Robert Bellarmine*
- *Debate: The Council of Trent*
- Lecture/Discussion: Ignatius of Loyola and the Society of Jesus (*begin*)

  **Ignatius of Loyola: Reminiscences (Personal Writings, pp. 3–64); Letters 4, 14, 21 (Personal Writings, pp. 129–35, 164–7, 204–7) (e-res)**

Wednesday, August 3

- *Biographical Presentation: Francis Xavier*
- *Biographical Presentation: Teresa of Avila*
- Lecture/Discussion: Ignatius of Loyola and the Society of Jesus (*conclude*)
- Concluding Lecture/Discussion

  (No additional reading assignments for this day.)

Thursday, August 4

_Final Examination_

_Final drafts of second essays due_

**A NOTE ON ATTENDANCE**

Frequent absences harm a student’s ability to keep up with course material and detract from participation in discussions, both of which affect a student’s capacity to learn. Especially for an accelerated summer course, class attendance and punctuality are requirements. More than one unexcused absence will constitute grounds for lowering the final grade by up to half a letter grade for each unexcused absence beyond the second; more than two unexcused absences will constitute grounds for failing the course. Consistent tardiness will constitute grounds for lowering the final grade by up to a full letter grade. Absences may be excused for reasons specified in the policies of Fordham University (including illness, family emergency, or participation in university sanctioned activities), so long as the student notifies the instructor either in advance or as soon after the absence as is reasonably possible. Nevertheless, more than two absences of any kind will constitute grounds for failing the course.
As part of the *Eloquentia Perfecta* requirements of the Core Curriculum, elements of this course are designed to enhance students’ writing and speaking skills. In addition to the writing- and speaking-related topics listed on the syllabus above, please note the following specific assignments and policies:

- **Biographical Presentations (10% of final grade)**

  At the beginning of the summer, each student will be assigned a major figure (“character”) from the Reformation period. Starting with the fourth class meeting, as noted on the syllabus, most class days will begin with one or more 10-minute biographical presentation(s) on one or more of the students’ characters. When it is your day to present, strive to introduce the class to the personality, as well as to the basic biographical facts, of your character. Your task is to (1) offer a sketch of your character’s life; (2) provide a summary of your character’s most significant theological ideas; and (3) report on a short text written by your character that you have read. (The instructor is happy to provide assistance in choosing an appropriate text.) By 3 p.m. on the day of your presentation, please prepare and email to the instructor a one-page handout summarizing your presentation, so that it can be photocopied and distributed to all members of the class. A grading rubric will be distributed; grades will be based on the quality of the information provided (orally and in writing) as well as the presenter’s effectiveness in conveying that information.

  Once a student has delivered her/his presentation, it will be considered “fair game” for the instructor to ask that student to talk about what her/his character might think about any of the primary texts that we are reading together.

- **Debates (10% of final grade)**

  Three times during the semester, the class will re-enact significant debates from the Reformation period. Lists of participants, specific directions, and grading rubrics will be distributed for each debate.

  When it is a student’s turn to participate in a debate, she/he will submit during the following class meeting a 2-page paper summarizing the position she/he took during the debate and assessing the effectiveness of the debate. A student’s grade will be based on her/his participation in the debate, as well as on the quality of her/his response paper; a grading rubric will be distributed.

- **Essays**

  In addition to the debate response paper described above, two other writing assignments will be due during the summer. Grading rubrics for each of these essays will be distributed when they are assigned. The essays will be as follows:
1. Medieval Theology essay (due July 14; 15% of final grade). Students will be asked to write a 3-page paper in response to one of three questions set by the instructor. Strengths and weaknesses of these papers will be discussed in a writers’ workshop to be held during class on July 19. Students who wish to submit a revised version of this essay may do so by July 21. If a revision is submitted, the final grade for this essay will be the average of the original grade and the grade awarded to the revised paper.

2. Luther/Calvin essay (rough drafts due July 28; final drafts due August 4; 15% of final grade). Students will be asked to write a 6-page paper in response to one of two questions set by the instructor. On July 28, students will submit a rough draft of this paper; failure to do so on time will result in a reduction of one letter grade from the final paper. These rough drafts will be randomly shuffled and redistributed to the class by the instructor, so that each student will receive another student’s paper. By the next class meeting (August 2), each student will have prepared a one-paragraph critique of the paper s/he received, as well as made in-text suggestions for improving its argument, structure, grammar, and style. At that point, papers will be returned to their original authors, so that appropriate revisions can be made.

Please note that successful participation in the process of reviewing your peers’ essays will be worth 5% of your final grade.

EVALUATIONS

Final marks will be calculated using the following grading scale as a guide. I reserve the right to raise or lower numerical averages where circumstances dictate.

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<td>A-</td>
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Assignments must be submitted at or before the beginning of the class period for which they are due. Assignments may be submitted in hard copy or emailed (as Microsoft Word or PDF attachments); if they are emailed, the time-stamp on the instructor’s email system will govern whether an assignment was submitted on time. Late work may be penalized up to one letter grade per day late.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Students may use laptops and other electronic devices during class, to the extent that these enhance the learning process and do not disrupt others. For this reason, texting and mobile phone use are never permitted. The instructor reserves the right to prohibit the use of electronic devices for any reason and at any time.
A NOTE ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Proper scholarship entails the responsibility to give proper acknowledgment whenever one is indebted to another for either words or ideas. It is expected that students are familiar with the University’s standards of academic conduct. Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated and, if discovered, will be treated as a violation of the University Code of Conduct. Any student found to have engaged in any form of academic dishonesty will, at the very least, receive zero points for the piece of work concerned. That being said, the instructor is always happy to discuss any issues related to academic integrity.

ADA NOTICE

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, all students, with or without disabilities, are entitled to equal access to the programs and activities of Fordham University. If you believe that you have a disabling condition that may interfere with your ability to participate in activities, coursework, or assessment in this course, you may be entitled to accommodations. Please schedule an appointment with the Office of Disability Services, located on the lower level of O’Hare Hall; telephone extension 0655.