

## **Theology of Jonathan Edwards CHTH G110/TH 6ZG6**

**McMaster Divinity College  
Winter 2010  
Wed 10:30-12:20  
Course Link Password: Edwards**

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Hours: Mon 1:00-3:00; Wed 10:30-12:30 and by  
appointment**

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### **I. Description:**

This course provides an opportunity to explore the theology of Jonathan Edwards. To achieve that goal, course lectures and discussions cover significant topics in the field of Edwards studies and student paper presentations provide an opportunity to develop expertise in a specific area of Edwards thought.

### **II. Course Objectives:**

My goal for the course is that you will develop vocational competency as a scholarly researcher in historical theology (with a specific focus on Jonathan Edwards) that will serve you in fulfilling your calling as a theologian. With this in mind, the knowing, being, and doing learning objectives delineate specific objectives to facilitate the development of the vocational competency of the course.

#### **A. Knowing:**

1. Know key content in Edwards' thought
2. Know and be familiar with the contributions of key figures in Edwards scholarship
3. Begin to acquire specialist command of a specific area in Edwards thought

#### **B. Being:**

1. Become a critical and constructive theological leader
2. Appreciate the value of Edwards' theology for the church and your life
3. Be a respectable and significant theologian

#### **C. Doing:**

1. Develop the ability to present informative lectures and facilitate student discussion
2. Research and present original research on a substantial topic in Edwards studies
3. Hone critical reading skills in primary literature

4. Develop the ability to interact with secondary scholarship in light of primary texts
5. Gain practice in presenting academic papers
6. Gain practice in moderating academic presentations and discussions

### III. Required Text(s):

1. George M. Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).
2. Stephen J. Stein, *The Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Edwards* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

### IV. Course Performance Criteria:

| Assignment                                | Percent     | Due Date                              |
|---|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| A. Primary Text Analysis and Presentation | 10%         | Day of presentation                   |
| B. Lecture and Discussion                 | 30%         | Day of presentation                   |
| C. Response and Facilitation              | 10%         | Day of presentation                   |
| D. Thesis Paper and Presentation          | 50%         | Paper due one week after presentation |
| 1. Presentation (15%)                     |             |                                       |
| 2. Paper (35%)                            |             |                                       |
| E. Participation:                         | X           | Every class session                   |
|   | Total: 100% |                                       |

### V. Assignment Descriptions:

#### General Guidelines:

- Electronic copies in MS Word preferred; alternatively, **all** hard copies should be **stapled** and submitted with a **cover sheet**. If you are unable to be in class on the due date because of a foreknown absence; please submit an electronic copy on the due date or a hard copy before the due date.
- Papers and assignments may be submitted early for feedback from the professor and resubmitted on the due date for grading.
- All assignments marked according to the Grading Criteria Form attached to the syllabus
- All papers & assignments should conform to the MacDiv Style Guide

A. Primary Text Analysis and Presentation (due day of scheduled presentation):

1. Purpose:

- Sharpen your skills in the close reading and interpretation of primary texts.

2. Description:

- a. Select a significant primary text—e.g., sermon, treatise (several shorter selections are also acceptable such as Miscellany entries on a common topic).

- Unless impossible, please use *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957–) for primary text presentations.

- b. Present an analysis of and lead a discussion on the primary text(s).

The presentation identifies the thesis, logic, arguments, key Scriptures, philosophical assumptions, historical context, etc. and discusses significant secondary scholarship on the piece (if available).

Sample outline:

- 1). Theological and historical context of and influences on the writing
- 2). Thesis
- 3). Outline of the content
- 4). Critical analysis—does the content support the thesis, is the content consistent, advance a new perspective, etc.? Interaction with secondary interpretations and literature can occur here.
- 5). Statement of the texts contribution to its topic and your research

3. Mechanics:

- a. Class presentation and discussion: approximately twenty to thirty minutes.

- b. Handouts are usually helpful.

- c. Written submission: 2-3 page outline of the analysis that includes a bibliography with critical edition(s) and key secondary literature on the writing(s) and figure.

B. Lecture & Discussion: (due day of scheduled presentation):

1. Purpose:

- Provide students experience with developing and presenting lectures.

2. Description:

- Each student presents a lecture on one of the topics listed in the course outline (or an approved alternative topic).

- Provide a primary text selection for the class to read in preparation for the lecture

### 3. Lecture expectations:

#### a. Lecture content:

The lectures should present and discuss the following . . .

- Key primary texts on the topic
- The primary content points of the topic
- Significant secondary literature on the topic, paying particular care to introduce and interact with alternative interpretations of Edwards on the topic
- Lecture handouts/outlines are helpful, but not required
- Time: the lecture and discussion will take the first fifty minute period of the course followed by the scheduled primary text presentation

#### b. Lecture evaluation:

Grading of the lecture and discussion session will be based on the following . . .

- Please submit to the professor a copy (electronic or hard copy) of your lecture notes and bibliography used to develop the lecture.
- Does the lecture accurately discuss Edwards' central texts on the topic?
- Does the lecture accurately present the content of the topic on or related to Edwards?
- Does the lecture discuss the key secondary literature on the topic?
- Does the lecture engage in critical evaluation of the content and secondary scholarship?
- Does the lecture highlight the transcendent value of the material—e.g., does it have value for contemporary Christian thought, life, and ministry? Did Edwards' work in this area influence later figures? Does your research uncover something new and thus add a new insight to Edwards scholarship?
- Does the lecture facilitate student discussion?

C. Respond to Presentation and Facilitate Discussion (due day of presentation):

1. Purpose:

- Offer the student experience in responding to and moderating academic presentations and discussions, such as one might do at an academic society meeting.

2. Description:

- Each student *prepares a critique* and *facilitates a discussion* of a thesis paper presentation.

a. The critique:

1) Remember to be charitable; it is not only Christian, but since academia is a small guild, it is also self-preservation.

2) Critical (includes highlighting and discussing problems *and* strengths):

The critique should explore the following sorts of issues:

- Does the paper have a thesis?
- Does the content develop and support the thesis?
- Does it use appropriate sources?

b. The discussion:

You should keep the presentation to time limit and effectively manage student discussion (do not let one person dominate the interaction; move on to a new issue if discussion begins to go off on tangents and run down rabbit trails). Be sure to elicit comments from all people present. You might want to have some prepared questions and discussion prompts to facilitate the initial discussion.

3. Mechanics:

a. Student paper presentations will take approximately the first hour of class.

b. The presentation and discussion typically includes the following items:

1). Presenter presents the paper: approximately thirty minutes.

2). Response: approximately twenty minutes.

You can go through point by point as a monologue or start by raising and offering your thoughts on the paper's primary contributions and arguments and invite discussion based on your remarks and interaction with the paper and then so forth through the rest of the points you have identified.

c. A written submission/outline is not required, but is encouraged as it may be beneficial to other students in the course.

D. Thesis Paper and Presentation (final paper due one week after class presentation):

1. Purpose:

- Give students with experience in writing article length theological papers and to gain experience in presenting research in an oral form similar to that performed at academic conferences.

2. Description:

- Each student *writes* and *presents* a thesis paper on a topic related to the topic of the course. I encourage you to investigate the issue from the perspective of your discipline and area(s) of research interest.
- Students are encouraged to use the class as an opportunity to work on papers they can 1) present at academic societies and/or submit to journals for publication, 2) use in preparation for comprehensive exams, and 3) use for dissertation preparation.

3. Mechanics:

- Provide a copy of the paper (rough, but not incoherent draft) to students and professor *one week before presentation*
- Submit final copy of the paper *one week after class presentation*.
- Length: 18-22 pages (about 7,000-7,500 words; journal length).
- Style: conform to MacDiv Style Guide (please use footnotes and include a bibliography of sources cited in the paper).

4. Possible thesis paper topics and sources:

a. Systematic Theology Topics – Studies in Edwards’s theology

1) Theology Proper

- Sang Lee, *The Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards*
- Amy Pauw, *The Supreme Harmony of All*
- Robert Caldwell, *Communion in the Spirit*
- Steven Studebaker, *Jonathan Edwards’ Social Augustinian Trinitarianism*
- Stephen, Holmes, *God of Grace & God of Glory*
- Robert Jenson, *America’s Theologian*

2) Soteriology

- Conrad Cherry, *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards*
- Anri Morimoto, *Jonathan Edwards’s Catholic Vision of Salvation*
- Sang Lee, “Introduction” to Yale vol. 21
- Numerous articles – e.g., Schafer, McDermott, Westblade

### 3) Scripture

- Robert Brown, *Jonathan Edwards and the Bible*, Indiana, 2002
- Stephen J. Stein, “Introductions” to Yale vols. 5, 15, & 24
- Essays in Part 2 of *Jonathan Edwards at 300*.
- Numerous Articles

## b. Historical Theology Topics – Edwards’s theology in Historical Context

### 1) Edwards & the Enlightenment

- Michael McClymond,
- Gerald McDermott, *Jonathan Edwards Confronts the Gods*
- Leon Chai, *Jonathan Edwards and the Limits of Enlightenment Philosophy*
- Josh Moody, *Jonathan Edwards and the Enlightenment*

### 2) Jonathan Edwards & Ethics

- Norman Feiring, *Jonathan Edwards’s Moral Thought and Its British Context*
- William Danaher, *The Trinitarian Ethics of Jonathan Edwards*
- Paul Ramsey, “Introductions” to Yale vols. 1 & 8
- Other articles

### 3) Edwards’s Intellectual Context

- William S. Morris, *The Young Jonathan Edwards: A Reconstruction*
- Norman Feiring, *Jonathan Edwards’s Moral Thought and Its British Context*
- Peter Theusen, numerous articles, essays
- Emily Watts, dissertation “Edwards and the Cambridge Platonists”

## c. Historical Topics – Edwards in Historical Context

### 1) Biographies on Edwards

- Perry Miller, *Jonathan Edwards*
- Patricia Tracy, *Jonathan Edwards: Pastor*
- Iain Murray, *Jonathan Edwards: A New Biography*
- Samuel Hopkins’s Biography (18<sup>th</sup> Century)
- George Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*

### 2) Edwards’s Legacy

- Joseph Conforti, *Jonathan Edwards, Religious Tradition & American Culture*
- Doug Sweeney, *Nathaniel William Taylor, New Haven Theology, and the Legacy of Jonathan Edwards*
- David Kling, *A Field of Divine Wonders: The New Divinity and Village*

*Revivals in Northwestern Connecticut, 1792-1822*  
 Allen Guelzo, *Edwards on the Will*

3) Edwards and war (esp. his interpretation of the vagaries of the French-Indian war)

d. Ministry topics – Edwards and contemporary issues in Christian thought, life, and ministry

- 1) Edwards and revival
- 2) Edwards and women in ministry
- 3) Edwards and missions
- 4) Edwards and preaching

**VI. Course Outline (*tentative*):**

| Week | Date   | Topic  | Primary Text Presentations | Presenter |
|------|--------|--|----------------------------|-----------|
| 1    | 1/6    | Introduction to the Course   |                            | Stuebaker |
| 2    | 1/13   | <b>PART ONE: LECTURES &amp; DISCUSSIONS ON EDWARDS</b><br><br>Lecture & Discussion: Edwards and the Trinity<br><br>●Reading: <i>Discourse on the Trinity</i> (Yale 21) |                            | Stuebaker |
| 3    | 1/20   | Lecture & Discussion: Edwards and Christology<br><br>●Reading: TBA   |                            | Stuebaker |
| 4    | 1/27   | Lecture & Discussion: Edwards and Grace<br><br>●Reading: <i>Discourse on Grace</i> (Yale 21)   |                            | Stuebaker |
| 5    | 2/3    | Lecture & Discussion: Edwards and Justification<br><br>●Reading: TBD   | 1. _____                   | 1. _____  |
| 6    | 2/10   | Lecture & Discussion: Edwards and Revival/True Spirituality<br><br>●Reading: TBD   | 2. _____                   | 2. _____  |
| 7    | 2/1-19 | <b>Reading Week</b>  |                            |           |
| 8    | 2/27   | Lecture & Discussion: Edwards and Freedom of the Will<br><br>●Reading: TBD   | 3. _____                   | 3. _____  |

|    |         |  |          |          |
|----|---------|--|----------|----------|
| 9  | 3/3     | Lecture Discussion: TBD<br>SPS begins March 4 (Studebaker may be gone)   |          |          |
| 10 | 3/10    | Lecture & Discussion: Edwards and Preaching &/or Missions<br>●Reading: TBD                                     | 4. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 11 | 3/17    | Lecture & Discussion: Edwards and Evangelicalism<br>●Reading: TBD  | 5. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 12 | 3/24    | <b>PART TWO: STUDENT PRESENTATIONS</b><br>● Paper 1 _____ Respondent _____<br>● Paper 2 _____ Respondent _____ |          |          |
| 13 | 3/31    | ● Paper 3 _____ Respondent _____<br>● Paper 4 _____ Respondent _____   |          |          |
| 14 | 4/7     | ● Paper 5 _____ Respondent _____<br>● Course evaluations   |          |          |
| 15 | 4/12-16 | <b>Finals Week</b>   |          |          |

## VII. Policies:

### A. Textbook Purchase:

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 218, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstores, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1: phone 416-620-2934; fax 416-622-2308; e-mail [books@readon.ca](mailto:books@readon.ca). Other book services may also carry the texts.

### B. Academic Honesty:

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College.

Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ [www.madciv.ca/regs/honesty.php](http://www.madciv.ca/regs/honesty.php).

C. Gender Inclusive Language:

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

**VIII. Late-Assignment and Exam Policy:**

- A. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date specified in the syllabus.
- B. Students take exams on the date and at the time scheduled in the syllabus.
- C. Late assignments are reduced five percentage points for each day late (e.g., if the grade is 90 and it is one day late, the grade will be reduced to 85).
- D. Assignments and exams will be accepted without penalty after the specified date in the syllabus **only** in the case of an excused absence. If a student misses an exam or assignment submission due to a reason that he/she believes is excusable, then he/she must notify the instructor and schedule an exam date and/or late-assignment submission date within twenty-four hours of the beginning of the missed class session.
- E. Assignments and exams will not be accepted late on the basis of the student's involvement with school-approved activities. If you are not able to be in class for an exam or assignment submission, then you must pre-arrange with the instructor to take the exam and/or submit the assignment before the scheduled date in the syllabus.

**Please Note:** This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.