

To An Unknown God:
A Journal of Christian Thought at UC Berkeley
Fall 2017 DeCal

Fall 2017

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Meetings	Tuesdays 6–8 PM, 251 Dwinelle
Website	unknowngodjournal.wordpress.com
English 198	2 units

Course Description

At the end of each semester, *To an Unknown God*, a journal of Christian thought at UC Berkeley, publishes writing and artwork produced by Cal students and alumni in order to exhibit the Christian intellectual tradition in an increasing secular cultural context, with the purpose of fostering dialog between students of all faiths and philosophies. Students will criticize a broad catalog of Christian thinking from patristic sources to 21st-century developments and reflect on their interaction with selected topics, both classical (e.g. suffering and free) and contemporary (e.g. race). Students will engage these issues in writing, discourse, and discussion. Furthermore, students will learn the fundamentals of the publishing process, viz. writing, editing, and design in a journal setting.

Student Learning Objectives

Upon the successful completion of this course, students will have experience in the following areas:

- Writing thoughtful articles
- Editing others' written work
- Designing journals
- Discussing contemporary topics critically and creatively in relation to Christian thought

Assignments

Every week we will be providing a question or prompt relevant to the reading due the following week, and students will be expected to submit an approximately page-length response.

Each student will be expected to work on a longer piece throughout the semester that can be considered for the TAUG journal.

Grading

Your P/ NP grade for this class will be determined on a 100 point scale:

10 short writing projects	50
1 long writing project	15
Discussion participation	25
Café Night attendance	10

Expectations for Attendance

TAUG meets once a week for two hours. Only two unexcused absences will be accepted; any more will result in a failing grade. Tardies (15 minutes late or more) count as one-third of an unexcused absence.

Assigned Reading

All materials are in a course reader for this class.

Course Overview

We will consider two metaclasses of literature: works will be organized in the first part of the class by *topic*, and in the second class by *form*.

1. Syllabus and logistics
2. TAUG writing
 - a) "Manna of Human Rights" (Aurora Ling)
 - b) "A Few Thoughts on the Future" (Viktor Plenyy)
 - c) "Scientia Potentia Est" (Lauren Hall)
 - d) "Disordered" (Amanda Gee)
3. Suffering
 - a) *The Grand Inquisitor* (Fyodor Dostoevsky)
 - b) *Confessions* (St. Augustine)
 - c) *A Grief Observed* (C. S. Lewis)
 - d) *Fear and Trembling* (Søren Kierkegaard)

- e) *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* (John Calvin)
- 4. Free will
 - a) *The Freedom of the Will* (Desiderius Erasmus)
 - b) *The Bondage of the Will* (Martin Luther)
- 5. Politics
 - a) *The City of God* (St. Augustine)
 - b) *The Federalist* (Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, James Madison)
 - c) *Political Writings* (St. Thomas Aquinas)
 - d) *First Treatise on Government* (John Locke)
- 6. Fiction
 - a) "Leaf by Niggle" (J. R. R. Tolkien)
 - b) *The Death of Ivan Ilych* (Leo Tolstoy)
 - c) *Wise Blood* (Flannery O'Connor)
- 7. Poetry
 - a) "Death be not Proud" (John Donne)
 - b) "The Flea" (John Donne)
 - c) "Dark Night of the Soul" (St. John of the Cross)
- 8. (Auto)biography
 - a) *Confessions* (St. Augustine)
 - b) *A Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (Frederick Douglass)
- 9. Wrapup
 - a) "The Weight of Glory" (C. S. Lewis)