Title and Code of Course: **Dialogue Between Ancient Greek Philosophy and Christian Theology BSB9455**

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Credit Point Value: **6**	Number of Lessons per Week: **2**	Type of Course: **Seminar ☒** **Lecture ☐**	Method of Evaluation: **Oral Examination ☐** **In-Class Presentation ☐** **Other ☒**

Course Description:

The lengthy dialogue and polemics between the ancient Greek philosophy and the emerging Early Christian theology produced not only a lot of interesting arguments in the history of human thinking about existence, transcendence etc., but had also brought about new developments in various areas of social interaction, for example a new understanding of one's own identity, of 'religion' and 'religiousness' etc. Why would a Greek philosopher label his Christian contemporaries as 'simple-minded' and why would other pagan thinkers become Christians, some even asserting that Plato was in fact a Greek Moses? As we pursue the depth of these discussions, we shall find a lot of similarities between the two systems, moreover: the flux of ideas and solutions do not follow only one way. Christian theology is influenced by Greek philosophy and religious thinking and vice versa: starting as early as the first half of the first century. During these seminars we provide an introduction and analysis into some key texts from the earliest periods of this still ongoing and fascinating debate. The evaluation will be based on the student's home-written essay, which can be submitted until the last teaching day of the semester.

Bibliography:

Athenagoras, *A plea for the Christians* https://ccel.org/ccel/athenagoras/plea_for_christians/anf02.v.i.html
Epictetus, *Enchiridion* http://classics.mit.edu/Epictetus/epicench.html
Hurtado, Larry, *Destroyer of the gods: Early Christian distinctiveness in the Roman world* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016)
Hurtado, Larry, *Why on Earth did anyone become a Christian in the first three centuries?* (Milkwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2016)
Josephus Flavius' works: *Jewish War*; *Jewish History (Antiquities of the Jews)*; *Josephus' Autobiography*; *Against Apion* http://penelope.uchicago.edu/josephus/
Justin Martyr, *First Apology* http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08580c.htm http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0126.htm
Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* http://classics.mit.edu/Antoninus/meditations.html
Tatian, *Address to the Greeks* http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0202.htm
Athenagoras, *A plea for the Christians* http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0205.htm
Origen, *Against Celsus* (selections) http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/04161.htm
Paul the Apostle's speech in Athens: Acts 17:14–34
Pliny the Younger, *Correspondence with emperor Trajan* https://faculty.georgetown.edu/jod/texts/pliny.html
Theodoret of Cyrus, *A Cure for Greek Maladies I,* in: István Pásztori-Kupán, *Theodoret of Cyrus* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 85–108