

Independent Study on Augustine

Prof. Jeremy Reid

Course and Contact Information

Meeting times: In person, time TBD

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Office: Humanities Building 360

Office hours: M 1–3pm (in person), W 1–3pm (Zoom), or by appointment

Course description

The purpose of this study is to do a close reading of Augustine's *Confessions* and to understand its place in Augustine's life and intellectual context. In particular, we will assess Augustine's access to ancient philosophical texts and the extent to which it is fair to see influence from Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, and the Neoplatonists. The end of the course will focus especially on Augustine's readings of Genesis, and fill out the account of creation from the *Confessions* with Augustine's more expansive and detailed commentaries.

Assessment

50% weekly writing assignments

50% final paper (5000–8000 words)

Texts

We will be using the new 2018 translation of the *Confessions* by Sarah Ruden, in consultation with the three-volume commentary and Latin text of James O'Donnell. We will also be reading O'Donnell's biography of Augustine's life in its entirety, though students should be aware of Peter Brown's seminal biography of Augustine (1968, republished 2013) and consult it as appropriate.

Schedule of Readings

Week 1

O'Donnell, *Augustine: A New Biography*, prologue and chapters 1–5 (pp. 1–146)

Week 2

O'Donnell, *Augustine: A New Biography*, chapters 6–epilogue (pp. 147–332)

Week 3

Augustine, *Confessions*, Book 1

Week 4

Augustine, *Confessions*, Books 2–3

Byers, “Augustine’s Debt to Stoicism in the *Confessions*”

Week 5

Augustine, *Confessions*, Books 4–6

Week 6

Augustine, *Confessions*, Book 7

Week 7

Augustine, *Confessions*, Books 8–9

Week 8

Augustine, *Confessions*, Book 10

Week 9

Augustine, *Confessions*, Book 11

Week 10

Augustine, *Confessions*, Books 12–13

Week 11

Augustine, *City of God*, Books 8–9

Week 12

Augustine, *City of God*, Books 10 & 19

Week 13

Augustine, *Unfinished Literal Commentary on Genesis*

THANKSGIVING BREAK (NO MEETING)

Week 14

Augustine, *Literal Meaning of Genesis*, Books 1, 4, & 8

Week 15

Augustine, *Genesis Against the Manicheans*, Book 2

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of cheating or fraud; it occurs when a student misrepresents the work of another as his or her own. Plagiarism may consist of using the ideas, sentences, paragraphs, or the whole text of another without appropriate acknowledgment, but it also includes employing or allowing another person to write or substantially alter work that a student then submits as his or her own. Any assignment found to be plagiarized will be given an "F" grade. All instances of plagiarism in the College of Liberal & Creative Arts will be reported to the Dean of the College, and may be reported to the University Judicial Affairs Officer for further action.

Disability Access

Students with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor. The Disability Programs and Resource Center (DPRC) is available to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process. The DPRC is located in the Student Service Building and can be reached by telephone (voice/415-338-2472, video phone/415-335-7210) or by email (dprc@sfsu.edu).

Student Disclosures of Sexual Violence

SF State fosters a campus free of sexual violence including sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and/or any form of sex or gender discrimination. If you disclose a personal experience as an SF State student, the course instructor is required to notify the Title IX Coordinator by completing the report form available at <http://titleix.sfsu.edu>, emailing vpsaem@sfsu.edu or calling 338-2032.

To disclose any such violence confidentially, contact:

- The SAFE Place - (415) 338-2208; http://www.sfsu.edu/~safe_plc/
- Counseling and Psychological Services Center - (415) 338-2208;

<http://psyservs.sfsu.edu/>

- For more information on your rights and available resources: <http://titleix.sfsu.edu>