Three questions from the reading are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the material for that day. Each day will be set aside to deal with one or more of these questions, and we will discuss them extensively, except as a way to prompt discussion. Readings for each day will either be available as .pdf files on Blackboard or will be from books that you have to buy. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the material for that day. Please come to class prepared with at least three questions from the reading. As the course proceeds, I may find it helpful to post additional readings on
Blackboard. These readings may be recommended or required. It is important that you make use of the materials posted on Blackboard. There will be a break during class each day.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**
1) A number of our readings are available on Blackboard.

Please note: the books by Derrida and Žižek can be purchased online, through Amazon.com or another seller.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**
In addition to participation in classroom discussion, students must write two short papers, 1-2 pages long. The topics will be assigned. There will also be a take-home mid-term exam and a final exam. See the schedule below for dates.

**BREAK DOWN OF GRADE:**
- Participation: 30%
- Papers: 30%
- Exams: 40%

**BIBLIOGRAPHY (And suggestions for further reading):**


**COURSE SCHEDULE:**
On each day we have an assigned reading. This will be the text for discussion and is the required reading. Please come to class prepared to discuss this material. You should write up 3 questions from your reading each day and be prepared to hand in these written questions. On each day I have also listed readings that I am recommending for your continued exploration of the topic. I will post these readings on Blackboard in Course Documents section in the folder “Further Reading.”

*Please note: the schedule of reading is subject to revision. I may decide that we need more time to work through the material or I may want us to consider a new reading based upon our discussion in class. I will announce in class and on Blackboard if there are changes to the reading schedule.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WEEK ONE</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>M 6.22</td>
<td><strong>Introductions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Syllabus</strong></td>
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</table>
| T 6.23 | H. G. Gadamer | "Kant and the Question of God"  
from *Hermeneutics, Religion and Ethics*, 9-17  
FURTHER READING:  
(1) Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, 485-570 (B595-B732)  
(2) Kant, *Religion within the Bounds of Mere Reason*, 65-73  
(3) Wood, "Rational Theology" in *The Cambridge Companion to Kant* |
| W 6.24 | H. G. Gadamer | "Kant and the Question of God" (continued) |
| TH 6.25 | H. G. Gadamer | "Reflections on the Relation of Religion and Science"  
in *Hermeneutics, Religion and Ethics*, 119-127  
FURTHER READING:  
(1) Gadamer, "Myth in the Age of Science"  
in *Hermeneutics, Religion and Ethics*, 91-102 |
| F 6.26 | **Paper #1 assigned**  
W. James | "The Religion of Healthy-Mindedness"  
in *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 78-126  
FURTHER READING:  
(1) W. James, "The Will to Believe" in *The Will To Believe*, 1-31 |

| **WEEK TWO** | | |
| M 6.29 | **Paper #1 due**  
W. James | "Mysticism" in *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 379-421  
FURTHER READING:  
(1) W. James, Conclusions and Postscript to *Varieties of Religious Experience* |
| T 6.30 | D. T. Suzuki  
Keiji Nishitani | "The Buddhist Conception of Reality"  
"Science and Zen" (both essays are in *The Buddha Eye*) |
W  7.1  S. Kierkegaard  *The Sickness Unto Death, 5-42*  
FURTHER READING:  
(1) A. J. Grunthaler, "Kierkegaard's Concept of Despair"  
(2) C. Bellinger, "Summary of Kierkegaard's *Sickness Unto Death*"

**TH 7.2**  Take-home exam assigned  
S. Kierkegaard  *The Sickness Unto Death, 42-74*  
FURTHER READING:  
(1) S. Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*  
(2) K. Jaspers, "The Unconditional Imperative"

**F  7.3**  No Class ~ Holiday

**WEEK THREE**

**M  7.6**  Take-home exam due  
M. Heidegger  "The Onto-theo-logical Constitution of Metaphysics"  
in *Identity and Difference, 42-74*  
FURTHER READING:  
(1) Vedder, "Ontotheology and the question of god(s)"  
in *Martin Heidegger: Key Concepts*

**T  7.7**  M. Heidegger  "The Onto-theo-logical Constitution of Metaphysics"  
(continued)  
FURTHER READING:  
(1) Davis, "Heidegger on Christianity and divinity: a chronological compendium" in *Martin Heidegger: Key Concepts*  
(2) Warnek, "The History of Being" in *Martin Heidegger: Key Concepts*

**W  7.8**  G. Bataille  *Erotism: Death and Sensuality, 7-25*  
FURTHER READING:  
(1) Bataille, "The Notion of Expenditure" in *Visions of Excess*

**TH 7.9**  G. Bataille  *Erotism: Death and Sensuality, 29-62*  
FURTHER READING:  
(1) Bataille, "Sacrifices" in *Visions of Excess*

**F  7.10**  Paper #2 assigned  
G. Bataille  *Erotism: Death and Sensuality, 63-93*  
FURTHER READING:  
(1) R. Gasché, selections from *Georges Bataille: Phenomenology and Phantasmatology*
WEEK FOUR

M 7.13  Paper #2 due  
J. Derrida  
_The Gift of Death, "Secrets of European Responsibility"_  
and "Beyond: Giving for the Taking, Teaching and Learning to Give, Death"

FURTHER READING:
(1) Jan Patočka, _Heretical Essays in the History of Philosophy_, selections

T 7.14  J. Derrida  
_The Gift of Death, "Whom to Give to (Knowing Not to Know)"

FURTHER READING:
(1) R. Gasché, "European Memories: Jan Patočka and Jacques Derrida on Responsibility" in _Critical Inquiry_
(2) R. Gasché, "God, for example" in _Inventions of Difference_

W 7.15  S. Žižek  
_The Fragile Absolute: or, Why is the Christian Legacy Worth Fighting For?_ vii-xxx; 1-48

FURTHER READING:
(1) K. Wood, _Žižek: A Reader’s Guide_, 155-162
(2) Recommended YouTube video with Žižek: "Why Only an Atheist Can Be a True Christian" (8 parts)  
  YouTube link: Žižek on atheists as Christians

TH 7.16  S. Žižek  
_The Fragile Absolute, 49-98_

FURTHER READING:
(1) B. Bosteels, "Žižek and Christianity: Or the Critique of Religion after Marx and Freud" in _Žižek Now: Current Perspectives in Žižek Studies_

F 7.17  Take-home Final Exam assigned  
S. Žižek  
_The Fragile Absolute, 99-150_

FURTHER READING:
(1) T. P. Brockelman, "Following Atheism: on a Debate in Psychoanalytic Theory" in _International Journal of Žižek Studies_

M 7.20  
FINAL EXAM DUE (please submit by email)