

Spring 2008  
THEO-4374-N  
Mod Challenges to Christianity  
Smith, Randall Brian

**UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS  
STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF COURSE & TEACHING  
COMMENTS**

**1. List the most valuable learning experiences you have gained from this course and this instructor.**

**2. What would you change about this course and/or this instructor to make them more effective?**

please let us out of class on time

return assignments when promised

**3. Other general comments:**

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Perhaps add more reading (seriously!)  
I would have really liked ~~an~~ <sup>the</sup> work  
(of fiction?) as pt of the curriculum  
w/ which all the other readings might  
use as a medium for interacting w/ one  
another

3. Other general comments:

Thank-You!

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1. List the most valuable learning experiences you have gained from this course and this instructor.

Humanity comes from within and  
we must be conscious of it.

2. What would you change about this course and/or this instructor to make them more effective?

Nothing.

3. Other general comments:

Dr Smith was a hilarious  
professor. Always laughed in  
his class.

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**2. What would you change about this course and/or this instructor to make them more effective?**

No movies!!

**3. Other general comments:**

DR. Smith, you're a  
great person. I really  
ENJOY TAKING CLASSES WITH YOU.

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**3. Other general comments:**

Wonderful Professor!!!  
I would recommend him to  
everyone.

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The first half of the course was not as interesting as the second. Also there is such a strong emphasis on philosophy & I think that should be explained early on.

**3. Other general comments:**

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Dreams of Modern Society as a Result of <sup>Reasoning</sup> ~~Reasoning~~ and of Features of Reasoning

2. What would you change about this course and/or this instructor to make them more effective?

Less Focus on Paper More Quizzes

3. Other general comments:

The Course Content Was Excellent and the Organization of the Course Was Great.

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a new way of thinking.

2. What would you change about this course and/or this instructor to make them more effective?

GIVE us more quizzes/precepts... no matter how happy I was that you didn't collect them, they made me study. I wish we could have finished the movies

3. Other general comments:

FANTASTIC



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To much reading, I spent more time preparing for this course than any other and still nothing stuck! The movies were a waste of time. No direction on exams. The reading needs to be condensed more.

**3. Other general comments:**

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2. What would you change about this course and/or this instructor to make them more effective?

Just be able to cover all material in class. Often times we would spend so much time on one reading we were not able to touch upon the other

3. Other general comments:

Though my grade doesn't reflect I gained much knowledge I am walking away with a great gain. I am not a good test taker but the information I was able to receive has made a difference for me in understanding some issues I have had.

Thanks!

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Information about relativism etc.  
Descartes & Galileo

2. What would you change about this course and/or this instructor to make them more effective?

Maybe more focused. I thought there was a lot of information to cover. May have learned more if less material. Had to skim a lot of it.

3. Other general comments:

Enjoyed the class & your teaching style. Especially liked the more informal discussions etc.

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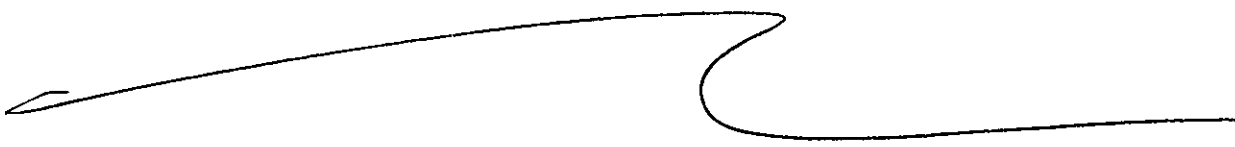
Self-examination; ambition to pursue great ideas further;  
philosophical frameworks - mental forms, shapes of an idea;  
spectrum of disagreement + recognition of fundamental under-  
lying questions.

2. What would you change about this course and/or this instructor to make them more effective?

For the sake of the students, to a lesser degree, and  
for the sake of Dr. Smith, to a greater, I must ask  
a ~~q~~ simple question: why do you use profanity?

3. Other general comments:

As always, <sup>a</sup> great & memorable experience  
of my life.



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As always, good thought questions presented in course regarding nature of life.

2. What would you change about this course and/or this instructor to make them more effective?

Galileo/Descartes was over-emphasized + modernity not enough —  
yes, we are working on different systems but to a literature student  
"modernity" beginning in 1600's is absurd.  
Assignments were piled on — Quiz + Precs + Reading + film a  
bit too much, + I am no slacker.

3. Other general comments:

Great professor + have taken from him before but was overall  
disappointed w/course. Misleading title, perhaps?

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1. List the most valuable learning experiences you have gained from this course and this instructor.

When a class is said to be self-taught, it means memorizing what he says. I didn't feel that when I expressed myself on the midterm it was fair, because how I learn is summary w/out examples & I was counted off on it. If he wanted us to regurgitate information like all sec classes he should've just said so.

2. What would you change about this course and/or this instructor to make them more effective?

It was good at the beginning of the semester but at the end, like all other theology courses I have had, they try to rush through & put more information into less time.

3. Other general comments:

I did admire his enthusiasm about the subject

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1. List the most valuable learning experiences you have gained from this course and this instructor.

- a tie between textbook knowledge and current events/ issues
- a somewhat better understanding of Church teachings.

2. What would you change about this course and/or this instructor to make them more effective?

- More ~~material~~ recently published or contemporary reading material.
- More graded work besides tests (more frequent quizzes perhaps?)

3. Other general comments:

- I was pleasantly impressed (overall) by both the course and the instructor. Some material was very bland but some was quite interesting. Instructor was highly entertaining in that he had such a strong interest in the course material, which is always a positive.

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Thinking critically and deeper about everyday things and experiences.  
I learned to critically question my self + why I/other  
do things.

- 2. What would you change about this course and/or this instructor to make them more effective?**

I think more discussion would make a difference  
but there is a lot to get through.

- 3. Other general comments:**

Thoroughly enjoyed this class!



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1. List the most valuable learning experiences you have gained from this course and this instructor.  
*Dr. Smith did an excellent job of teaching me how to read effectively and for maximum comprehension. The assigned readings were extremely interesting and the synthesis of concepts they each related was masterful. I have a much better understanding of the cultural attitudes of the modern world and their roots, and a keener awareness of the Church's message about the inherent dignity of the human person. This class has provided a solid foundation for my social goals as a Catholic.*
2. What would you change about this course and/or this instructor to make them more effective?  
*nothing whatsoever.*
3. Other general comments:  
*Thank you Dr. Smith for sharing your knowledge and gifts as an effective educator.*

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The synthesis of History, Philosophy and Science was excellent.  
This was invaluable to me.

2. What would you change about this course and/or this instructor to make them more effective?

- Sometimes I felt that lectures could have spent more time with an examination of the individual texts; the lectures, while very good were sometimes slightly repetitive, such that I felt that the time might have been better spent examining the texts themselves
- Don't stop having quizzes. My reading slacked when the quizzes stopped. I know that's my fault, but "help!"

3. Other general comments:

You're hilarious, even if you are an "effing fool"

- Intellectually, this course kept my attention (which is rare)  
The lectures were engaging. ~~AMAZING~~ ~~AMAZING~~

Thank you very much

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1. List the most valuable learning experiences you have gained from this course and this instructor.

I don't have time to fill this out properly so I'm just going to cut to the chase:

① You are one of the best teachers on campus.

② The only suggestion I can give you is to offer a little more guidance to the students. ~~For~~ For example, I was utterly lost after reading The Copernican Revolution. It

2. What would you change about this course and/or this instructor to make them more effective?

was only after you quizzed us on it (which I probably failed) that you lectured on it so I could understand. I'm the kind of learner that needs to know what the purpose of the reading is so that I can ~~apply~~ apply what I am reading to that purpose. If I would have known <sup>ahead of time</sup> that that particular text was supposed to show me ~~the~~ how scientific theories function I would have been much better off. Maybe add a single sentence for

3. Other general comments:

~~Each reading in the table of contents~~ ~~stating a general purpose?~~ Each reading in the table of contents stating a general purpose? I know you think students are just interested in knowing what will be on the test, but this has nothing to do w/ my above suggestion. I am just a "theory person" that has a really hard time learning when I don't know what to apply what I'm learning towards

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Understanding of misconceptions in the science versus religion conflict. Understanding of the Galileo situation in the Church. Fresh epistemological outlook in terms of the modern world. ~~about the modern world~~

We were able to see how pervasive Descartes' ~~view~~ "you can't know anything" outlook has seeped into the general <sup>psyche</sup>.

2. What would you change about this course and/or this instructor to make them more effective?

Nothing... Well maybe a little more flexible ~~schedule~~ schedule in readings because we fell behind too easily. Force the precs and quizzes, ~~don't~~ Don't ~~let them~~ leave them by the wayside.

Change the instructor? Not on your life!

3. Other general comments:

Excellent course, ~~Brig~~ Brilliant Professor, scintillating lectures.

we're Not an "effing Tool"

Every student should take this course especially pre-med and science majors. Smith, loved this one. You really outdid yourself.

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1. List the most valuable learning experiences you have gained from this course and this instructor.

The examination of the false conflict between faith and science, and the development of modern notions of separation between the will, the intellect, and being.

Also, modern concept of human person.

2. What would you change about this course and/or this instructor to make them more effective?

More time spent on class discussion of readings. keep having quizzes!

More time spent on latter readings and moral issues i.e. abortion, cloning, war, technological usage, ~~birth~~ contraception, etc.

3. Other general comments:

Dr. SMITH is not an  
F-ing tool.

Good class to round out education at UST.  
Excellent overall class.

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Various challenges of modernity Christianity

2. What would you change about this course and/or this instructor to make them more effective?

- Better use of class time.
- Be explicit about the moral critique and comments.
- The content of 'eternal happiness' fit into your topic of modern challenges.
- Does it stop there @ science, it seems that the focus on 'Science stem challenges....'.

3. Other general comments:

Dr. Smith,

- Very good sum-up presentation at the last lecture of the year.
- Thank you for your effort in not speaking swear words.
- Hope you found your last podium.

God bless.