

THE CONTENT OF THIS DESCRIPTION IS NOT A LEARNING CONTRACT AND THE INSTRUCTOR IS NOT BOUND TO IT. IT IS OFFERED IN GOOD FAITH AND INTENDED AS A HELPFUL GUIDE TO THE STUDENT.

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TITLE: St. Augustine: The City of God

TERM: Fall 2026-2027

PROFESSOR: Edwin Chr. van Driel

CREDIT HOURS: 3

REGISTRATION: LIMITED TO: _____
AUDITORS: X

UNLIMITED X
NO AUDITORS _____

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A crumbling empire, failing institutions, an aggressive social climate, and a church unsure about its future and anxious about the presence of God and the direction of history: this is the context in which St. Augustine wrote his massive *The City of God*. Retracing the Biblical narrative from creation to eschaton, and engaging topics as diverse as the origin of sin and evil, free will and divine omniscience, the role of states and governments, and the ultimate good and the end of history, Augustine wanted to offer a new direction to his contemporaries, but simultaneously developed a vision on the church and its place in history that throughout the centuries again and again in times of crisis has inspired theologians, philosophers, and politicians. This course introduces students to Augustine's argument, tracing both its classic nature and its contemporary applications.

CLASS OBJECTIVES:

1. To grasp something of the architectonics and detail of *The City of God*;
2. To consider the fundamental theological questions this work addresses;
3. To reflect on some of the socio-cultural contexts in which this book is embedded;
4. To reflect on the meaning of Augustine's theological vision for the challenges faced by the church and culture today.

PREREQUISITES: None.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS/READING:

- Saint Augustine, *The City of God*, book I-X. Translation and introduction by William Babcock, notes and edited by Boniface Ramsey. New City Press, 2012, ISBN: 978-1565484559, \$27.28
- Saint Augustine, *The City of God*, book XI-XII. Translation and introduction by William Babcock, notes and edited by Boniface Ramsey. New City Press, 2013, ISBN: 978-1565484818, \$39.95

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING:

- Weekly, graded discussion questions (50%)
- Midterm (20%) and final (30%), both take-home essays. Midterm will be 1500 words, final will be 2500 words. There will be set questions.

ATTENDANCE: Synchronous only course; attendance required.