

Catholic Ethics and Jesuit Spirituality

TESP 70 in 308 Kenna Hall

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Course Description: This course explores central themes in Catholic theological tradition through two lenses: Catholic Moral Theology and Ignatian discernment. Some of the most important Catholic theological reflection is grounded in Jesuit spirituality. Jesuit Richard McCormick's work provided the foundation for the renewal in Moral Theology in particular. We shall excavate McCormick's work in order to discover the traces of Ignatius' understanding of the human imagination.

Required Texts: *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*. John F. Thornton and Susan B. Varenne, General Editors, (New York: Vintage Books, 2000).

Corrective Vision: Explorations in Moral Theology. Richard A. McCormick, S. J., (Kansas City, MO: Sheed and Ward, 1994).

Calendar

Week One

Introduction: From Soul to Imagination: Ignatius' Genius

Read *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* pp. xiii- 12. Preface by Avery Dulles, Chronology, and Translator's Preface, The First section of the *Exercises*.

Week Two

What is Moral Theology? How is Moral Theology related to the Mysteries of our experience with God?

Read

Chapter 6 in *Corrective Vision* "The Search for Truth in the Catholic Context," pp. 69-81.

And

"The First Week" in *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* pp. 15- 32.

Week Three

Theological Reflection and Discernment

Read

Chapter 5 in *Corrective Vision* "Discernment in Ethics: What Does It Mean?" pp. 55- 68.

And

"Rules for the Discernment of Spirits," pp. 115- 121 and "Some Notes Concerning Scruples," pp. 123- 124 in *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*.

Week Four

Historical Context: Vatican II and the Consequences for Moral Theology

Read "Moral Theology from 1940- 1989: An Overview," in *Corrective Vision*, pp. 1- 22.

Week Five

Historical Context Continued.

Continue reading the Overview.

Week Six

The Reign of God and the Institutional Church

Read "The Kingdom of Christ" in *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*. pp. 35- 70

And

"Moral Theology in the Year 2000," pp. 23- 39 and "Theologians and the Magisterium," in *Corrective Vision*.

Week Seven

Critical Theological Reflection: Listening to a Theologian "Do Theology"

Read

"Self-Assessment and Self-Indictment," pp. 40- 45 and "How My Mind Has Changed," pp. 46- 54 and "Who or What is the Preembryo?" pp. 176- 188 in *Corrective Vision*.

And

"The Fourth Week" pp. 73- 87 in *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*.

Week Eight

Theology as Service to the Reign of God

Read "Theology as Public Responsibility," and "The Shape of Moral Evasion in Catholicism," pp. 122- 132 in *Corrective Vision*.

Week Nine

Applications of Principles

Read one of the following chapters in *Corrective Vision*:
9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, or 19.

Week Ten

Summary

Evaluation: The currency for the "professional" activity in university work is a grade.

1. "Daily Work" Essays: 50% of the evaluation

2-3 pages weekly. (These exercises will provide building blocks for your Critical Book Report.)

The purpose of these regular assignments is to hone your skills in crafting arguments at the university level. The kind of writing we shall be using in this course is "**rhetoric of inquiry**," that is, this course is a conversation about Catholic Theology in dialogue with a variety of other voices. Your professor will raise several questions and provide several "answers" to the questions from the authoritative sources for the course. You will be expected to raise your own questions about the material in the course. These questions will provide a strategy for your writing called "framing." **Framing** is a metaphor for using information, terms and ideas from one text as a lens through which to examine other texts. Examining one text (or set of material from class) through the lens of another "text" (your own experience and judgment in dialogue with another authority) assists you in saying something new. In these essays you are the authority who is trying to teach your reader what you want them to learn from your experience of the course and the work that you have been doing.

I will give you several options for the paper assignments as the course progresses. I ask that you write these essays in 2-3 pages of critical university-level discourse where the form enables the transfer of ideas; in other words, check your spelling and sentence and paragraph structure. These short essays give you opportunities to display three university-level skills: sophisticated knowledge, critical judgment about the knowledge, and the integration of that knowledge and judgments into a conversation with ideas and judgments of your own.

2. Critical Book Report: 30% of the evaluation

6-8 page analysis on a text, journal article or film that has been approved by the professor.

This task is an exercise in conversation with an important author. Its purpose is not primarily to demonstrate that you have read the book, as is the case in a more basic report. Instead, I ask that you briefly summarize an idea or selection from the book that you have chosen. Then create a dialogue with your own judgments that have been influenced by another idea or selection from in-class conversations and presentations. The essay will contain the basic argument of the book. From there, I ask you to engage the author in a conversation about the topic and her or his argument. The essay should be between 6-8 pages long. All papers submitted during the course should be typed on 8.5 x 11 inch paper, double spaced, must have a 1.5 margin on the left and an inch margin on the right, top and bottom." Please make sure the pages are numbered and that you follow a style sheet such as the *MLA Style Sheet* or Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers* or *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

I use the following categories to evaluate your work:

- 1. Did you actively address the topic as stated?** 15 points.
- 2. Does your essay demonstrate that you have engaged the content and method of the class so far?** 15 points.
- 3. Do you make use of university level discourse, that is, do you defend or explain any judgments or claims you make?** 30 points.
- 4. Is the form carefully crafted?** 10 points.
- 5. I also note creativity and style. Papers that earn 100% will have some creative aspect and will not have clumsy or simply "workpersonlike" discourse.** 20 points.
- 6. Mechanics: Papers that have mechanical errors will not earn the grade of A. I will stop reading at 3 such errors.** 10 points.

A paper that earns an "A" grade will not only be free of errors in form, it will be creative and will engage the topic at a high level of discourse.

3. The remaining 20% of your evaluation comes from the Final Exam and Attendance and Participation.

Assessment Tools:

1. A Rhetoric of Inquiry: Framing

- a. Framing a problem or argument is a way of naming something. It is therefore one thing and not another.
- b. Framing provides both definition and description.
- c. As an organizing principle, framing brings into focus the things a writer values.
- d. Framing specifies a writer's argument, enabling it to both be tested and critiqued.

2. Composition Rubric

When you submit essay to me as draft I will make notations in the margin and give you my comment on another sheet next to the number. I will also place that number under the headings below so that you can see your strengths and weaknesses.

Level 6 few or no sentence level errors

Level 5 good use of university-level sources
effective communication to the target audience

Level 4 good transitions and logical organization relevant, effective introduction and conclusion

Level 3 exposition of information is linked to analysis; not merely a report or summary
paragraphs and sections are linked concretely to argument and position.
Level 2 clear thesis that reveals the argument and the position, Adequate Development: a. counterarguments, b. sub-theses, c. facts are correct, d. good use of supporting evidence

Level 1

follows the assignment as it relates to the state of the question either in the academy in general and appropriately uses course material explores a fruitful topic that might advance the discussion at the university level

Grading Scale

A Demonstrates all the characteristics at all levels and exhibits a curious mind at work that is in dialogue with the course as it is currently proceeding.

B+ Falls short in one of aspect of Levels 1- 6

B Falls short in two aspects of Levels 1- 6

B- Falls short in three aspects of Levels 1- 6

C Falls short in some aspects of Levels 3-6

D Falls short in several aspects of Levels 3-6

F Does not respond to the task as assigned

