



GRADUATE PROGRAM IN PASTORAL MINISTRIES

Course Number RJUS 220

Course Name RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND
CHAPLAINCY

Term: FALL 2026

Credits: 4

Course Day & Times: TUESDAYS, 6-9:00PM

Location: SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE

Instructor Information

Name: SUZANNE NEUHAUS

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Office Hours: Scheduled Via Zoom by Appointment

Course Description

Restorative Justice is both a philosophy and an approach that responds to harm, conflict and wrongdoing by addressing the needs and obligations of all those impacted. As an effective response to addressing crime and violence, a restorative approach to justice considers three primary stakeholders, persons harmed (crime victims and/or survivors), persons responsible for causing the harm (offenders), and their respective communities. Characteristic of this breadth is concern for justice done through courts of law and the healing offered through various pastoral ministries. This course introduces the three pillars of restorative justice: addressing the harm done to who have been harmed and the desire for justice; identifying the obligations created by the person(s) who caused the harm and need for accountability, and the responsibility of those of relevant communities to facilitate genuine healing and reconciliation to the extent possible, including pastoral sensitivity toward those who have a stake in the offense and its resolution course. This graduate level course focuses on Restorative Justice Principles and Practices.

The theological and historical foundations of Restorative Justice Theory and Practices will be explored in-depth. This course provides the necessary foundational knowledge for K-12 educators, higher education administrators, community leaders, peace and conflict resolution practitioners, stakeholders in the criminal justice system who may employ restorative justice practices in their work and others. The course explores the needs and roles of key stakeholders (including crime victims/survivors, offenders, communities, justice systems), outlines the basic principles and values of Restorative Justice, and introduces some of the primary models of practice. The course also explores some of the challenges to Restorative Justice, as well as possible strategies to mitigate the inherent challenges of a restorative approach to justice and discipline and an alternative to the current punitive model of justice. The course examines the historical roots of restorative justice

found in a myriad of indigenous and ancient cultures, and the inter-faith religious basis for a restorative approach to justice.

The course is centered on the issues of crime, discipline and harm within a western legal and educational context. However, significant attention is given to applications and lessons of Restorative Justice from other cultures and contexts. Of particular interest is the contribution of religious and indigenous approaches to justice and school discipline as well as applications in post-conflict situations. Ultimately, the course explores Restorative Justice as a way of seeking justice in all contexts and as a way of life. The course is highly experiential, and all students will have ample opportunities to practice restorative principles as witnesses to restorative circles, victim-offender dialogues, and family circle conferencing.

This course is offered in the fall term of 2026. It will meet via Zoom on Tuesdays from 6:00 to 9:00pm throughout quarter (see course schedule).

Please note: *There will be no class on Tuesday, November 24th, 2026.*

Mission and Goals of the Graduate Program in Pastoral Ministries

The Graduate Program in Pastoral Ministries, rooted in the Jesuit tradition, provides theological and pastoral formation for a variety of ministries. Students are inspired to serve effectively in their diverse ministry settings as they deepen their call of service to the Church and the wider world.

Engaging the church's mission of lifelong ministerial formation, the program seeks to instill commitments to justice and to human flourishing in friendship with God and companionship with one another in service of all creation. The program cultivates this charism through a critical and sympathetic engagement with the Catholic theological tradition in dialogue with a constantly changing world.

GPPM Program Learning Goals (PLGs)

By completing a Master of Arts Degree in Pastoral Ministries, students will demonstrate:

1. **Theological Foundation:** Knowledge of the broad intellectual foundation for ministry in the areas of scripture, systematic and contextual theology, and spirituality; and incorporate theological reflection to enrich their ministerial practices across varying contexts. Foundational areas are Fundamental Theology, Christology, Ecclesiology, Hebrew Bible, New Testament, Theological Ethics, and Sacraments and Liturgy.
2. **Pastoral Proficiency:** Familiarity with ministerial practices in various manifestations of church life, expressed in concrete pastoral applications which include discernment, compassion, and ministries of accompaniment.
3. **Servant Leadership:** A commitment to identify injustices and developing skills to work individually and in collaboration with other ministers in accompanying those in need and in service to the poor, the marginalized, and the alienated, both within and outside the Church.
4. **Diversity Fluency:** Awareness of and critical engagement with how one's own culture influences ministry, and then be able to engage in ministries that build the community of Christ and are sensitive to and respectful of all cultures and traditions, and individuals who

vary by race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and dynamics of wealth, poverty, and power.

Course Objectives

This course will develop students' knowledge of or skills related to:		Program Goals Addressed
1	To develop a critical understanding of the adversarial-retributive nature of the criminal justice system and its manifestations in the other areas of life.	2, 3, 4
2	To develop an understanding of the current punitive model of the criminal justice system in comparison to a restorative model of justice.	2, 3, 4
3	To develop an understanding of the theological, religious and indigenous foundations of restorative justice theory and practice.	1, 4
4	To develop an understanding of current K-12 and higher education disciplinary approaches, and appreciate how restorative justice may provide the most appropriate strategy in addressing student discipline.	2, 3
5	To develop a significant understanding of the Principles and Practices of Restorative Justice.	3, 4
6	To understand the challenges of restorative justice and responses to these challenges.	2, 4
7	To discern the role of educators, religious, legal and conflict-resolution practitioners and leaders in promoting and practicing a justice that meets the needs of those affected by conflict and harm.	1, 2, 3, 4

Required Resources (Textbooks and Course Readings)

Catholic Mobilizing Network (CMN) (2021). *CMN's Engagement Guide: Paths of Renewed Encounter: A Restorative Justice Engagement Guide for Catholic Communities*. Access online: <https://catholicmobilizing.org/engagement-guide/>

Conway, Trudy D., Matzko, David & Schieber, Vicki (2017). *Redemption and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Restorative Justice*. Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press.

Ehnow, Bobby (2026). *All Things New: A Journey from Brokenness to Restoration*. New York, New York: New City Press.

Pranis, Kay. (2005). *The Little Book of Circle Processes: A New/Old Approach to Peacemaking*. New York, New York: Good Books.

Zehr, Howard. (2015). *The Little Book of Restorative Justice: Revised and Updated*. New York, New York: Good Books.

Zehr, Howard. (2015). *Changing Lenses: Restorative Justice for Our Times* (25th Anniversary Edition). Harrisonburg, Virginia: Herald Press.

Zimmerman, Jack & Coyle, Virginia. (2009). *The Way of Council* (2nd ed.). USA: Bramble Books.

Supplemental reading materials for this course will be available on Camino. To access course materials and participate in on-line activities, please be sure to review Camino. Reminders, tools, readings and assignment descriptions will be made available through this on-line course management system. Students must use their SCU username and password to access Camino.

The instructor retains the right to make changes, additions, or deletions to the syllabus, course outline, and schedule throughout the course. Any changes will be communicated through in-class announcements, Camino notifications and/or email.

Graded Assignments

Assignment Title	Due Date	Points or %	Program Goal Addressed
Reflection on Weekly Material	Day before Class	15%	All
Secondary Paper #1	10/11/26	15%	“
Secondary Paper #2	11/8/26	15%	“
Final Integrative Paper	12/6/26	25%	“
Class Participation		30%	“

A primary responsibility in this class is active weekly participation. It is important that you attend all class sessions online and visible via Zoom and engage in class discussions. All students are expected to do the required reading, write a one-page weekly reflection on the readings and actively participate in class. Class discussions will be made based on assigned readings, the contributions of guest speakers, and a review of the assigned videos. In addition, students are required to write three (3) brief papers for this class.

1. A weekly one page critical and self-reflective paper on the readings for the week **due by the evening before the next scheduled class**. The instructor will read each reflective-paper before the class and incorporate ideas and questions from the papers in the class discussion.
2. **Secondary Paper #1** (3 pp. double-spaced with endnotes as appropriate). This paper should address the Principles of Restorative Justice and the theological foundation of restorative justice. The paper should draw primarily on course readings, as defined in the required reading lists, class discussions and your experience: How, from your own experience, do the **principles** of restorative justice respond to your experiences of harm and conflict? How do they satisfy the needs for justice for those impacted, (including crime victims/survivors, offenders and communities)? **(DUE: 10/11/2026)**

3. **Secondary Paper #2** (3 pp. double-spaced with endnotes as appropriate). This paper, based on the readings, classroom discussion and your own experience, will be your own critical assessment of restorative justice **practices**. **(DUE: 11/8/26)**
4. Final “Integrative” Paper (8-10 pp. double-spaced with endnotes as appropriate). A Critical Assessment of Integrating Restorative Justice Principles and Practices into our Social Order. What do you see as the future for restorative justice in our social order, educational and in our legal system? What are the critical issues for you with restorative justice principles and practice? How does a religious understanding of justice (from any tradition) address some of these critical issues? What suggestions do you have for addressing these issues and integrating restorative justice principles and practices into our social order? This paper should thoughtfully engage course materials, class discussion and your experience **OR**: If you have a particular topic related to restorative justice, which you would like to explore in depth, you can email a suggested paper topic to me for consideration and approval. This paper should thoughtfully engage course materials, classroom discussion and your experience. **(DUE: 12/6/26)**

Grading Criteria

Letter grades are assigned based on overall percentage, as follows:

A	94-100%	4.0	C+	77-79%	2.3
A-	90-93%	3.7	C	74-76%	2.0
B+	87-89%	3.3	C-	70-73%	1.7
B	84-86%	3.0	D+	67-69%	1.3
B-	80-83%	2.7	D	63-66%	1.0

Your grades will be visible in Camino.

All assignments are expected to be submitted on their due dates. Unless we have made special arrangements beforehand, late assignments will be docked 5% for each day past the due date that they are submitted.

Course Outline

Tuesday, September 22, 2026, Class One:

Introduction, Course Overview, An Overview of Restorative Justice

- Introductions
- Overview of Class
- An Introduction to Restorative Justice
- Catholic Mobilizing Network's Paths of Renewed Encounter

Required Reading (82 pp.):

Zehr, Howard. Zehr, Howard. (2015). *The Little Book of Restorative Justice: Revised and Updated*. New York, New York: Good Books. pp. 1-82

In addition, please familiarize yourself with the following guide:

Catholic Mobilizing Network (CMN) (2021). *CMN's Engagement Guide: Paths of Renewed Encounter: A Restorative Justice Engagement Guide for Catholic Communities*. Access online: <https://catholicsmobilizing.org/engagement-guide/>

Tuesday, September 29, 2026, Class Two:

What is Justice? What Do We Expect from Our Criminal Justice System

- Discerning Justice
- Overview of Our Criminal Justice System
- Old Testament and New Testament foundations for Restorative Justice
- Catholic Social Teaching and Catholic Social Thought

A Personal Journey from Incarceration to Reintegration to Restoration

Required Reading (235 pp.)

Conway, Trudy D., Matzko, David & Schieber, Vicki (2017). *Redemption and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Restorative Justice*. Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press. pp. 3-59

Ehnow, Bobby. (2026). *All Things New: A Journey from Brokenness to Restoration*. New York, New York: New City Press. pp. 9-198.

Tuesday, October 6, 2026, Class Three:

Theological and Historical Foundations for Restorative Justice

Punishment, Harm, Healing and Forgiveness

- Old and New Testament Foundations for Restorative Justice
- Catholic Social Teaching and Catholic Social Thought
- The Criminal Justice system – punishment for punishment's sake?
- Harms with offenders and victims
- Response of Retributive Justice and Restorative Justice
- Reconciliation and Forgiveness

Required Reading (140 pp.)

Conway, Trudy D., Matzko, David & Schieber, Vicki (2017). *Redemption and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Restorative Justice*. Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press. pp. 61-201

Tuesday, October 13, 2026, Class Four:

Societal Change through a Restorative Justice Approach

- Understanding the issues with the punishment system and imprisonment
- Restorative Justice programs
- Restorative Justice in the Church and Parish Life

Required Reading (81 pp.)

Conway, Trudy D., Matzko, David & Schieber, Vicki (2017). *Redemption and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Restorative Justice*. Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press. pp. 205-286

Tuesday, October 20, 2026, Class Five:

What does justice require *for/from* communities?

- Addressing Systemic and Structural Injustice
- Response of Retributive Justice and Restorative Justice

What does justice require *for/from* Crime Victims and Offenders?

- The stakeholders in Restorative Justice: VOC
- Needs of Communities

Required Reading (87 pp.)

Zehr, Howard. (2015). *Changing Lenses: Restorative Justice for Our Times* (25th Anniversary Edition). Harrisonburg, Virginia: Herald Press. pp. 9-97

Tuesday, October 27, 2026, Class Six:

Community Justice and Covenant Justice

- Community Justice
- Canon Law Justice
- Covenant Justice
- Living in Harmony

Required Reading (59 pp.)

Zehr, Howard. (2015). *Changing Lenses: Restorative Justice for Our Times* (25th Anniversary Edition). Harrisonburg, Virginia: Herald Press. pp. 99-158.

Tuesday, November 3, 2026, Class Seven:

Restorative Justice Practices

- History and Overview

- VORP and Beyond
- Victim Offender Conferencing
- Peacemaking Circles
- Circles in Practice

Required Reading (88 pp.)

Zehr, Howard. (2015). *Changing Lenses: Restorative Justice for Our Times* (25th Anniversary Edition). Harrisonburg, Virginia: Herald Press. pp. 159-177.

Pranis, Kay. (2005). *The Little Book of Circle Processes: A New/Old Approach to Peacemaking*. New York, New York: Good Books. pp. 3-73

Tuesday, November 10, 2026, Class Eight:

Sitting in Circles and Victim Offender Dialogue

- History and Overview
- The Process
- The Experience of VOD and Circles

Required Reading (115 pp.)

Zimmerman, Jack & Coyle, Virginia. (2009). *The Way of Council* (2nd ed.). USA: Bramble Books. pp. 1-115

Tuesday, November 17, 2026, Class Nine:

Circle Processes

- On Leadership: Becoming a Carrier of Council
- Stewardship
- The Experience—In the Circle

Required Reading (23+ pp.)

Zimmerman, Jack & Coyle, Virginia. (2009). *The Way of Council* (2nd ed.). USA: Bramble Books. pp. 116-139 plus student's choice to read one additional chapter (Chapter 7, 8, 9 or 10)

Tuesday, December 1, 2026, Class Ten

Living a Restorative Life

- The Application of Restorative Justice to all aspects of your life
- Restorative practices in education, organizational life and family life
- Truth, Justice and Reconciliation

Required Reading (68 pp.)

Zehr, Howard. (2015). *Changing Lenses: Restorative Justice for Our Times* (25th Anniversary Edition). Harrisonburg, Virginia: Herald Press. pp. 181-249.

Professional Conduct Expectations

Attendance & Punctuality

Students are expected to attend all class sessions. You are expected to come prepared, having completed your weekly assignment, and ready to engage in dialogue regarding the material. Class attendance and participation are required, and class sessions will not be recorded. Whether or not the assignments were announced during an absence, students are accountable for all course assignments.

Participation

Participation in this class is mandatory, and 30% of your grade is dependent on your attendance, preparation and participation. Please let me know in advance of class if you will be absent.

Communication

Email using our SCU email address will be our primary means of communication outside of class. You must check your SCU email and our course's Camino site every day to ensure you maintain a connection with the course content, your classmates, and your instructor.

Academic Integrity

The Academic Integrity pledge is an expression of the University's commitment to fostering an understanding of—and commitment to—a culture of integrity at Santa Clara University. The Academic Integrity pledge, which applies to all students, states:

I am committed to being a person of integrity. I pledge, as a member of the Santa Clara University community, to abide by and uphold the standards of academic integrity contained in the Student Conduct Code.

Academic integrity is part of your intellectual, ethical, and professional development. I expect you to uphold the principles of this pledge for all work in this class. I will clarify expectations on academic integrity -- including the use of AI tools such as ChatGPT and course sharing sites for all assignments and exams in this course. If you have questions about what is appropriate on any assignment, please let me know before you hand in work. For more resources about ensuring academic integrity in your work, see this [LibGuide on Academic Integrity](#).

Policies, Resources & Accommodations

Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct (Title IX)

Santa Clara University is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment free of all forms of discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual violence.

Please know that as a faculty member, California law SB 493 requires me to report any information brought to my attention about incidents of sexual harassment or misconduct to the SCU [Equal Opportunity and Title IX Office](#) (408) 551-3043. This includes, but is not limited to, disclosures in writing assignments, class discussions, and one-on-one conversations.

Should you need support, SCU has dedicated staff trained to assist you in navigating campus resources, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and filing a formal complaint with the University or with law enforcement. Please see the [Student Resources](#) page for more information about reporting options and resources.

If you or someone you know has experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence and wishes to speak to a confidential resource who is not required to report, please contact one of the following SCU resources for support:

- [SCU Wellness Center](#)
- [CAPS](#)
- Any individual (clergy, counselors) acting in a professional capacity for which confidentiality is mandated by law

I am happy to help connect you with any of these resources.

Accommodations for Pregnant and Parenting Students

Santa Clara University is committed to creating and maintaining a non-discriminatory learning environment for all students, including students who are pregnant or parenting. Absences due to medical conditions relating to pregnancy and childbirth will be excused for as long as deemed medically necessary by a student's doctor, and students will be given the opportunity to make up missed work. Students needing accommodations can often arrange accommodations by working directly with their instructors, supervisors, or departments. Students needing accommodations can also seek assistance with accommodations from the [Office of Accessible Education](#) (OAE) or from the [Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX](#). This [resource page](#) from the Title IX Office provides information regarding support for students and employees who are pregnant or parenting.

Office of Accessible Education

If you have a documented disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact the Office of Accessible Education oae@scu.edu, <https://www.scu.edu/oae> as soon as possible to discuss your needs and register for accommodations with the University. If you have already arranged accommodations through OAE, please be sure to request your accommodations through your my OAE portal and discuss them with me during my office hours within the first two weeks of class. To ensure fairness and consistency, individual faculty members are required to receive verification from the Office of Accessible Education before providing accommodations. OAE will work with students and faculty to arrange proctored exams for students whose accommodations include double time for exams and/or assistive technology.

Students with approved accommodations of time and a half should talk with me as soon as possible. The Office of Accessible Education must be contacted in advance (at least two weeks' notice recommended) to schedule proctored examinations or to arrange other accommodations.

Safety Measures

In order to meet our learning objectives, we will adhere to the highest standards for safety and mutual respect in accordance with the [Student Conduct Code](#). Any violation will be reported, as required, and noncompliance may result in disciplinary action.

Use of Classroom Recordings

Due to the personal nature of class content, as well as the related class discussions, presentations and dialogue, this class will not be recorded; all students and participants will be required to adhere to this expectation.

Copyright Statement

Materials in this course are protected by the United States copyright laws. I am the copyright holder of the materials I create, including notes, handouts, slides, and videos. You may make copies of course materials for your own use and you may share the materials with other students enrolled in this course. You may not publicly distribute the course materials without my written permission.

Technology Support

Course materials and online activities will be available on SCU's Canvas learning management system (also known as Camino). Course reminders, readings, and assignments will be available through Camino. SCU can provide you with technical assistance, and you can also reach out to our providers directly for questions. For Camino support, contact caminosupport@scu.edu or call 408-551-3572.

You can also find support resources via the help button within the Camino platform (on the left-hand navigation) to access after-hours support via email, chat, or phone.

For Zoom assistance, contact Media Services at mediaservices@scu.edu or 408-554-4520. You can also get support from the [SCU website](#) or the [Zoom Help Center](#) website.

For SCU network and computing support, contact the SCU Technology Help Desk at techdesk@scu.edu or 408-554-5700. They can provide support for MySCU Portal, Eduroam, Duo, hardware and software issues, and more.

Respect for All

It is the intent of this program that students from all backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students of all backgrounds bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. All materials and activities that are intended to be respectful of all identities and perspectives. All class participants will be expected to contribute to and abide by class agreements to ensure safe and civil dialogue and discourse. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups. In addition, if any of our class meetings conflict with your religious events, please let me know so that we may make arrangements for you.

Wellness

It is expected that you will do the best you can in this class (and all of your classes); however, it should never be at the expense of your own mental and physical health and your overall well-being. Jesuit education is grounded in *cura personalis*, concern for the whole person—mind, body, and spirit. What does this mean for you? Be kind to others, and more importantly, be kind to yourself. Attend to your sleep (quantity and quality); drink lots of water; move; get outside; and pay attention to beauty that isn't coming to you on a screen. Eat good food, laugh, enjoy friends and family, look for opportunities to connect with others in new ways, pray, meditate, or otherwise attend to your spirit. And ask for help, even if you don't think you need it. Lots of folks, including me, are here to support you. It's never too late to reach out, and I am committed to helping you.

SCU has many resources and programs to support you. These resources may be especially helpful:

Wellness Center

The Wellness center (<https://www.scu.edu/wellness>) provides resources to aid and promote student well-being across the eight dimensions of wellness, including student peer groups for healthful living, violence prevention, and recovery.

CAPS

Santa Clara students are provided confidential counseling sessions at no cost through Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS; <https://www.scu.edu/cowell/counseling-and-psychological-services-caps/>). Students have access to clinically appropriate, short-term therapy; group therapy; and other resources for care. A new 24/7 support line is also available: 408-554-5220.

SCU Culture of Care

If you are concerned for the mental or physical welfare of one of your peers, the [Office of Student Life Culture of Care](#) website provides resources for recognizing and helping someone in distress.

Academic Concerns

Please communicate any concerns regarding your progress in this class with me directly, so that I may assist you in addressing them.

SCU also has options for free academic tutoring. Students can make appointments to discuss work in a range of courses:

- [The HUB Writing Center](#) (Writing and Public Speaking)

Gender Inclusive Language

This course affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. Land Acknowledgement

Land Acknowledgement

A Land Acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes the original stewards of the lands on which we now occupy; it serves to acknowledge the negative impacts they have endured and continue to endure.

Santa Clara University occupies the unceded ancestral homeland of the Ohlone and Muwekma Ohlone people.
