I. COURSE OVERVIEW
Theology is an enterprise in “faith seeking understanding” (a phrase coined by the 11th-century theologian St. Anselm of Canterbury). Over the centuries, different theologians have claimed their understanding of faith is authoritative by using different sources and methods. As a course in fundamental theology, our goal is to learn more about these many different sources and methods. Our goal is not to use a single rubric that will allow us to judge theological claims as ultimately right or wrong. Rather, as spiritual seekers in intellectual community, we will explore the diverse ways theological claims are made. Our goal in this exploration is to strengthen our own faith and ministries by naming, expanding, and vitalizing the sources and methods we each cherish in how we make faith-claims.

The questions that animate theological “sources and methods” include: what makes a faith-claim authoritative? What fundamental beliefs constitute Christian theology? What roles do personal experiences of God, scripture, communities, and dogma play in shaping faith? Who has the authority to say that a faith-claim is right or wrong? How can such a claim be made, and when? What is the relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and theology? What experiences should be considered revelatory of God? How should experiences of history, suffering, joy, beauty, love, and anger shape our faith? Questions of “sources and methods” lead us right to the heart of our deepest faith convictions. Our task in this class is to seek to understand the diversity of these fundamental convictions, in academic solidarity with one another. We will do so in this course in two sections. First, we will examine the fundamental sources (faith, revelation, scripture, symbols, tradition, community, and the magisterium) of the Christian tradition. In the second half of the course, we will use a heuristic guide to map five different methods theologians use to interpret sources and make them relevant today.

Some of the material may be familiar to you and some unfamiliar; some of it will appeal to you, and some of it may not. Your job is not to agree with all of the material, but to critically engage it as you seek to understand different sources and methods in Christian theology. You will wrestle with the readings, with the diverse ideas and challenges they present. If it feels hard or challenging, know that does not mean you’re doing it wrong or poorly; it means you’re doing it right. Based on your reading, you will articulate your claims in discussions and writing with a critical, respectful manner, without resorting to fideistic or reductionist claims.

II. LEARNING OBJECTIVES
- 1A. Students will demonstrate an understanding of Fundamental Theology according to the competencies articulated by this area.
- 3A. Students will employ historically informed knowledge of the tradition to assess theological positions and pastoral issues.
• 5A. Students will describe and address cultural differences in Christian practice.

• 5B. Students will demonstrate a critical appreciation of religious diversity.

III. COURSE POLICIES & EXPECTATIONS

Grading Policy Santa Clara’s grading scale indicates that an A is reserved for work that is “excellent.” Please note that an “A” does not reflect “sufficient” or even “full” engagement with the material: it is reserved for truly exceptional work. B correlates to “good,” and a C to “adequate.” You should not expect to receive an A or a B for cruising through the class with “adequate” work. These grades require consistent levels of diligent, thoughtful attention and excellent work on papers and exams. Be proud passing grades. They indicate that you have done hard work well!

Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>Honors level work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
<td>Excellent work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89-87</td>
<td>Very good work; near excellence, but has minor problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>Good work; solid performance; above average.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>Good work, but lacking some completeness, or accuracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>Acceptable work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>Adequate work, but lacking in completeness, critical thinking or accuracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>69-72</td>
<td>Perfunctory work; may be simply rehashing sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-68</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory work; shows minimal grasp of concepts or sloppy analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59</td>
<td>Failure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading Breakdown

- Class Participation 10%
- Theses and Questions 10%
- 2 Essays 30%
- Group Presentation 20%
- Exam 30%

Attendance Policy We have limited time together and I expect everyone to be present to each of our sessions. You should not expect to miss sessions and be successful in this class. For absolutely unavoidable absences, communicate with me before the class. Do not expect to tell me later and be accommodated. Students will be allowed one unquestioned, excused absence for our Zoom meetings. Unexcused absences of two or more result in one whole letter-grade deduction each (i.e. B to C). For unavoidable absences, please speak to me in advance.

The use of video-conferencing software to record or replace in-person attendance for part or all of our three in-person sessions is not allowed, except in exceptional circumstances with the permission of the instructor and Program Director.

Technology Policy If you are on the Internet—checking email or Facebook, chatting, news-skimming, tweeting, texting, gaming, shopping, et cetera—you are not in class. You are expected in this course to focus on lectures, listen purposefully to one another, thoughtfully respond to your classmates, and share your insights and questions. You will not be able to do this if you let yourself be distracted by tech that is not in service of learning. Be present to the time we spend together and to your education. You deserve it!

The Student Handbook prohibits video- or audio-recording or streaming of private, non-public
conversations and/or meetings, inclusive of the classroom setting, without the knowledge and consent of all recorded parties. If you require the recording of classroom lectures, discussions, simulations, and other course-related activity for a documented disability, make arrangements through Disabilities Resources (see below) and discuss this with the instructor. If for some reason other than disability you would like to record the class, please seek the permission of the instructor first, and then of the class.

**Office Hours and Availability** I welcome you to set up a time to talk to me individually, over the phone or Zoom. My email is on the top of the syllabus and I will give you my personal phone number in class. We can discuss questions you have about class material, strategize about how to do well in the course and the program, and connect what is going on in class to your life and the world. If there is something big going on in your life effecting you, please communicate with me about it. I am here, and the University has many resources, to help you do your best.

Email me anytime with questions. I will try to respond within twenty-four hours.

**Late Policy** Papers turned in late will be given an F unless prior arrangements are made.

**Paper Formatting** A link to the GPPM style sheet for all students can be found here, under “Writing Resources”: [https://www.scu.edu/cas/academics/graduate-program-in-pastoral-ministries/student-resources](https://www.scu.edu/cas/academics/graduate-program-in-pastoral-ministries/student-resources)

**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.*

Students are expected to uphold the principles of this pledge for all work in this class. Violations include plagiarism, cheating, outsourcing, and destruction of library or other materials needed for a course. Such violations are serious offenses to the University, your classmates, and to me. Perhaps most importantly, in these offenses you violate your own intellect and voice. Your voice matters. Cultivate and expand your voice, and trust that what you have to say is important. It important is to me. You do not need to use others’ words to say something worthwhile. Students found to have engaged in any form of academic dishonesty will, at the least, receive zero points for the piece of work concerned. For more information about Santa Clara University’s academic integrity pledge and resources about ensuring academic integrity in your work, see [www.scu.edu/academic-integrity](http://www.scu.edu/academic-integrity).

**Citations** Material taken verbatim from another source must be enclosed in quotation marks (i.e. “Generally speaking, the Roman Empire had little time to worry over the particularities of the Jewish faith.”) and should be followed by a footnote reference to the source of the material. Material paraphrased from another source should be introduced as belonging to another author (i.e. Here, Ehrman explains that the Roman Empire was quite tolerant of the Jewish religion, as long as it did not pose a threat to their rule) and should also be followed by a footnote reference to the source of the material.

Failing to cite sources constitutes plagiarism.

**Disability Resources.** *I am committed to meeting each of my student’s learning needs. If you have a disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact Disabilities Resources, Benson 216, [www.scu.edu/disabilities](http://www.scu.edu/disabilities) as soon as possible to discuss your needs and register for accommodations with the University. If you have already arranged accommodations through Disabilities*
Resources, please discuss them with me during my office hours. Students who have medical needs related to pregnancy or parenting may be eligible for accommodations.

While I am happy to assist you, I am unable to provide accommodations until I have received verification from Disabilities Resources. The Disabilities Resources office will work with students and faculty to arrange proctored exams for students whose accommodations include double time for exams and/or assisted technology. (Students with approved accommodations of time-and-a-half should talk with me as soon as possible). Disabilities Resources must be contacted in advance to schedule proctored examinations or to arrange other accommodations. The Disabilities Resources office would be grateful for advance notice of at least two weeks. For more information you may contact Disabilities Resources at 408-554-4109.

Title IX Syllabus Statement. Santa Clara University upholds a zero tolerance policy for discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct. If you (or someone you know) have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence or stalking, we encourage you to tell someone promptly. For more information, please go to www.scu.edu/studentlife and click on the link for the University’s Gender-Based Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policy or contact the University's EEO and Title IX Coordinator, Belinda Guthrie at 408-554-3043 or by email at bguthrie@scu.edu. Reports may be submitted online through www.scu.edu/osl/report or anonymously through Ethicspoint: www.ethicspoint.com

IV. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS & EVALUATION:

Participation makes up 10% of your final grade. This class is designed with the expectation that students are committed to being engaged, actively listening to lectures and contributing to group discussions. While some students will be more inclined to speak and others more inclined to listen, I expect everyone to participate as both active listener and contributor throughout the semester.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 1A & 3A

Theses and Questions cumulatively make up 10% of the final grade. On Camino, before class, you will post a 20-word thesis that answers the “Thesis Prompt” of the day, written below. The sentences are to be your interpretation of the material in response to the prompt. This means that your sentences will be your opinion while at the same time showing critical reading comprehension. There is no right answer. The point is to make one simple point about the reading that you can share in class, defend, explore, and refine in conversation with your classmates, and which could be unpacked in a larger paper. Sentences are to be no more than 20 words.

In addition, you are to post a question about the reading assignment. Your question maybe any length and about any aspect of the reading.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 1A, 5A & 5B

2 Three-page Essays on Diversity will make up 30% of your grade (15% each). A goal of this course is the critical appreciation of religious diversity within the Christian tradition. In essay 1, using Haight, Schreiter, and Gaillardetz, you are to compare and contrast different ways that sources (revelation, scripture, the magisterium, etc) can be grounded and emphasized differently in multiple cultures or plural contexts. This essay is due before class on Saturday 10/27. In essay 2, using two authors from the “revelation” section of the course, you are to compare and contrast two different theological methods and from the Christian tradition. Demonstrate that you understand each method and its social context. Explore how these diverse methodologies co-exist within Christianity. The second essay is due 12/7 via email.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 5A & 5B
In-Class Group Presentations make up 20% of your final grade. On our last Saturday class, in small groups (2 or 3) you will give a 15-20-minute presentation on some aspect of class content (a source or sources, a particular method) that you think you could give at your parish or in your ministerial context. The point of the exercise is to synthesize and teach the material in a compelling way, imagining how it might be relevant to your constituencies. The parameters of this assignment are wide. You may relate class content to a particular issue or debate in culture and politics, or to an issue in your local community. You may present a historical context surrounding a source of method that you think your constituencies might find compelling. You may keep the scope limited to exactly what we learned in class, presenting it in a way that you find interesting. You may create a homily, a video, a song, a TED-style talk, a power point, or something else entirely. It’s up to you! I will meet with each group a few weeks before the end of the term to guide and approve your ideas before you jump in. I will hand out the rubric I will use to grade the assignment then.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 1A & 3A

Final Exam makes up 30% of your final grade. After our course is over, you will complete a take-home, open book, two-hour exam, which will cover the main authors and themes of the course. The exam will be returned to me (via email) on December 10th.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 1A

V. COURSE TEXTS
ISBN: 978-0814628720

ISBN: 978-1570753879

All other texts are available on Camino as PDFs.

VI. SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, ASSIGNED READINGS AND DUE DATES

| CLASS 1: Syllabus, Introductions, & Faith, Revelation, Scripture, Symbols as Sources of Theology |
| MEETING: Saturday, 9/22 Sacramento 9am-3pm | READING: Haight, Dynamics of Faith Introduction, and Chapters 1-8, pages 1-168. (nb: This is a long reading, please organize your time to complete it before the course begins.) | THESIS PROMPT: How does Haight define Revelation? (You will do the first thesis as an in-class exercise, you do NOT need to post before class) |

| CLASS 2: Revelation, Bible, and Tradition as Sources of Theology |
| MEETING: Monday, 10/1 Zoom, 6-8pm | READING: Gaillardetz, By What Authority Chapters 1-5, pages 3-89. | THESIS PROMPT: How does Gaillardetz define Revelation? |

| CLASS 3: Magisterium as Source of Theology |
| MEETING: Monday, 10/8 Zoom, 6-8pm | READING: Gaillardetz, By What Authority Chapters 6-9, pages 93-178. -Nicene and Chalcedonian Creeds | THESIS PROMPT: What is the relationship between revelation and dogma? |
## CLASS 4: Community as Source of Theology

**MEETING:**
Monday, 10/15  
Zoom, 6-8pm  

**READING:**
Gaillardetz, *By What Authority*  
Chapters 10-12 & Epilogue, pages 179-237.

Robert Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, “What is Local Theology”  
“Theology and its Context: Church Tradition as Local Theologies”

**THESIS PROMPT:**
What is the sense of the faithful (*sensus fedei*)?

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## CLASS 5: Method

**MEETING:**
Monday, 10/22  
Zoom, 6-8pm  

**READING:**
Haight, *Dynamics of Faith*  
Chapters 9 & 10, pages 169-214.

Avery Dulles, “The Problem of Method: From Scholasticism to Models” in *The Craft of Theology, From Symbol to System*

**THESIS PROMPT:**
Why does theology need a “method”?

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## CLASS 6: Revelation in Liberation Theology

*First Diversity Essay Due*

**MEETING:**
Saturday, 10/27  
Sacramento  
9am-3pm  

**READING:**
Group 1: Gustavo Gutierrez, Chapters 1&2 of *A Theology of Liberation* (Latin American/ Economic Liberation Theology)

Group 2: Ana Maria Isasi-Diaz, selections from *En La Lucha*, (Hispanic Women’s Liberation Theology)

**THESIS PROMPT:**
For your author, what does liberation mean?  
**CLASS REPORT PROMPT:**
For your author, how is liberation connected to God’s revelation?

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## CLASS 7: Revelation “From Below” with Hermeneutics & History

**MEETING:**
Monday, 11/12  
Zoom, 6-8pm  

**READING:**
Selections from Edward Schillebeeckx

**THESIS PROMPT:**
How does Schillebeeckx understand the relationship between history and revelation?

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## CLASS 8: Revelation “From Above” with Aesthetics & Beauty

**MEETING:**
Monday, 11/19  
Zoom, 6-8pm  

**READING:**
Aiden Nichols, OP, Chapters 1&2 from *Hans Urs von Balthasar on Beauty, Goodness, and Truth*

**THESIS PROMPT:**
How does Hans Urs von Balthasar understand the relationship between beauty and revelation?

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## CLASS 9: Analogical Revelation, “A World of Grace”

**MEETING:**
Monday, 11/26  
Zoom, 6-8pm  

**READING:**
Karl Rahner, Homily from *The Great Church Year*  
&  
William Platcher, “Aquinas and the Unknowable God,” in *The Domestication of Transcendence*

**THESIS PROMPT:**
Where does Rahner locate God?
CLASS 10: Dialectical Revelation, “Naming Where God is Not” & PRESENTATIONS!

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEETING:</th>
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<th>THESIS PROMPT:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, 12/1</td>
<td>James Cone, “Who Is Jesus Christ for us Today?” from <em>God of the Oppressed</em></td>
<td>Where do these authors say God is NOT?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacramento</td>
<td>&amp; JB Metz, “The Church after Auschwitz” in <em>Passion for God</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9am-3pm</td>
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12/7: Diversity Essay 2 Due via Email

12/10: Final Take-Home Exam Due via Email