

TESP 4H Christian Tradition (Honors) - 27922: Fall 2015

Instructor: James W. Reites, S.J.

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Class Location: Kenna 212

Class Time: TR 12:10 AM to 1:50 PM

Required Texts

Martin C. Albl, Reason, Faith, and Tradition: Explorations in Catholic Theology, MN: Anslem Academic, 2015 - Revised Edition) [Denoted as Albl in the Syllabus]

College Study Bible: New American Bible, (Winona, MN: St Mary's Press, 2006) [Denoted as CSB in the Syllabus]

Additional Primary Texts that are made available on Camino.

Course Description

A reasoned examination of the history and development of the Christian tradition from the New Testament to contemporary Christianity. Readings include classics of Christian theology from major periods, portions of the Bible, and a textbook exploring major theological questions about faith and tradition. Students are encouraged to develop their own reasoned theologies in light of the class materials.

Course Goals

The Core Curriculum's Religion, Theology, and Culture 1 courses, have the following Goals (for RTC 1)

1a. Students will be able to describe and compare the central religious ideas and practices from several traditions or within one, and from at least two globally distinct regions.

1b. Students will be able to use critical approaches to reflect on their own beliefs and the religious dimensions of human existence.

Course Goals:

1. Students will be able to express a critical understanding of the theological foundations and historical map of Christian tradition. (Critical Thinking, Religious Reflection)

2. Students will be able to articulate the relationship of Christian tradition to a significant social, cultural, or political issue of our time. (Critical Thinking, Complexity, Religious Reflection)

3. Students will be able to describe and evaluate the positioning of Christianity, Catholicism in particular, within the global pluralism of religions. (Global Cultures, Critical Thinking; Complexity)

The course aims at developing a critical understanding of the Christian Tradition by developing the student's knowledge of its history, and the problems and issues that were dominant throughout this history. In particular, the course looks at how the Christian intellectual Tradition, how it has rationally dealt with fundamental faith issues. This is a course in Theology whose ultimate goal is to demonstrate the harmony of faith and reason. The course addresses the false dichotomy between the Christian understanding of reality and a scientific worldview.

This overriding horizon will be: how is this important for us today? What are the practical and personal implications of all of this? Does my learning have personal and social significance as well as having significance itself?

Course Requirements

Structure

The class will be taught by lecture and discussion. Students will engage primary texts, as well as the course text, Albl. There will be a mid-term essay [20% of grade], a final synthetic essay [30% of the grade], and three short papers on an assigned subject [25% of grade]. All of these will test for both information and understanding of issues. There will be regular, short quizzes on the readings [15%]. The other 10% of the final grade is determined by attendance and participation in class discussion, and completion of assigned readings in advance of the date assigned.

Quizzes

There will be frequent, short quizzes. They will consist for the most part on the reading assigned. The aim is to assess the quality of the reading. Study questions to guide the reading will be available through the university's Camino account (see below for more information). Quizzes will be given at the very beginning of class. For that reason, it is important to arrive on time. Grades from the two lowest quizzes will be dropped.

Participation

Participation in the class discussions is important part of the course. Class will frequently begin with a question that invites reflection. There will be occasional group discussions and group work.

Papers

There will be three papers. The first is a personal reflection in light of a guided visit to Mission Santa Clara. The second is a short spiritual autobiography (1-2 pages). You are asked to reflect on your spiritual journey with faith. The third paper will be a one page analysis of an original text.

On Line Materials

Camino: You will find the detailed syllabus, calendar, and course materials on the SCU's Internet site, camino.instructure.com. You are automatically registered on this site when you enrolled in the course.

Grading Policy

There will be a mid-term essay [20% of grade], a final, synthetic [30% of the grade], and three short papers on an assigned subject [25% of grade]. All of these will test for both information and understanding of issues. There will be regular, short quizzes on the readings [15%]. The other 10% of the final grade is determined by attendance and participation in class discussion, and completion of assigned readings in advance of the date assigned.

Evaluation Scale

A = 100-95; A- = 94-90; B+ = 89-87; B = 86-83; B- = 82-80; C+ = 79-77; C = 76-73; C- = 72-70; D+ = 69-67; D = 66-63; D- = 62-60.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is required and recorded daily. You may miss two classes for whatever reason. Each class after that will result in a loss of 10 percentage points on the Participation/Attendance part of the grade. Tardiness will result in a loss of 5 percentage points.

Academic Integrity

All written work must be uniquely and individually the student's own work. This means any source whatever that is used must be given attribution, that is must be footnoted, saying where the material came from. It is not adequate to simply cut and paste material from the internet and to present it as one's own.

While in-class discussion and outside of class discussion is certainly desirable and encouraged, the material that a student hands in must reflect the student's own labor and ought to be clearly and decisively distinguishable from the work of all other students in the class. Failure to abide by the spirit and the letter of this policy may result in a zero for that assignment or examination.

In order to discourage plagiarism, that is passing off the ideas or words of another as if they were

one's own, students are required to turn in both a hard copy of their papers and to also submit one electronically to Camino, which automatically submits the paper to <http://TurnItIn.com>. This is a service which checks your paper against the web and a database of other student papers. It provides professors with a plagiarism report.

Disability Policy

To request academic accommodations for a disability, students must be registered with Disabilities Resources, located in Benson, room 216. In order to register, please go on-line to www.scu.edu/disabilities. You will need to register and provide professional documentation of a disability prior to receiving academic accommodations. It is best to read "Required Documentation" on the website before starting the registration process in order to determine what is needed. You may contact Disabilities Resources at 408-554-4109 if you have questions.

Intellectual Community

One of the goals of the class is to foster intellectual community, a community of scholars. This is a goal of the University. In an effort to create intellectual community, the course expects active student attendance in class, appropriate classroom etiquette, and respect for diverse ways of thinking.

To facilitate participation in making a community of scholars, there will be group discussions and exercises, individual student presentations of small group work, and Socratic dialogue with the professor. Each student is encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to express his or her answers to questions, and to share their work with the class. Also, to make this work, attendance and participation are essential.

Tentative Schedule

Week 1

T Sept 22 Introduction: Syllabus, expectations. There will be in-class video.

R Sept 24 Tradition: Practice and Symbol: Mission Church Visit

Reading: Albl, Introduction, pp. 7-9.

Francis Smith, S.J., Theological Reflection on Faith [Camino]

Week 2

T Sept 29 Faith and Reason I

Reading: Albl, Chapter 1, pp. 11-26.

First Paper Due Mission Church Visit: How is Tradition expressed in Symbol and Space

R Oct 1 Faith and Reason II

Reading: Albl, Chapter 2, pp. 27-45.

McCabe, O.P., God Matters, pp. 2-9 [Camino]

Week 3

T Oct 6 Doing Theology

Reading: Albl, Chapter 3, pp. 46-72.

R Oct 8 Science and Christian Faith

Reading: Albl, Chapter 4, pp. 73-99.

Week 4

T Oct 13 Understanding the Bible I: The First Testament

Reading: Albl, Chapter 8, pp. 183-211.

Genesis 1-3 [Creation-Fall]; 12-13 [Abraham Cycle]

College Study Bible, pp. xiv-xxvii.

R Oct 15 Understanding the Bible II: The New Testament

Reading: Albl, Chapter 9, pp. 212-239.

The Gospel of Mark; Matthew 3:13-17; Luke 3:21-22; John 1
Sam Storms, Review of Can We Trust the Gospels? [Camino]

Week 5

T Oct 20 Revelation

Reading: Albl, Chapter 5, pp. 100-120.

Midterm Paper Due

R Oct 22 The Trinity

Reading: Albl, Chapter 6, pp. 121-150.
Michael Himes, "Living Conversation" [Camino]

Week 6

T Oct 27 Human Nature and Human Destiny

Reading: Albl, Chapter 7, pp. 151-182.

R Oct 29 The Historical Jesus, Part I

Reading: Albl, Chapter 10, pp. 240-262.

Week 7

T Nov 3 The Historical Jesus, Part II

Reading: Albl, Chapter 11, pp. 263-288.

R Nov 5 Christology

Reading: Albl, Chapter 12, pp. 289-312.

Week 8

T Nov 10 Ecclesiology

Reading: Albl, Chapter 13, pp. 313-338.

R Nov 12 The Catholic Church and the World

Readings: Albl, Chapter 14, pp. 339-361.
Ignatius' "Foundation: Fact and Practice,"
"Christ the King and His Call" [Camino]

Week 9

T Nov 17 T The Second Vatican Council

Reading: Nostra Aetate [Camino]

R Nov 19 TBA

Reading: TBA

Week 10

T Dec 1 TBA

Reading: TBA

R Dec 3 TBA

Reading: TBA

Final Examination

R Dec 8 Final Examination, Submission to Camino Due at 4:30 PM.