

## TESP 4: The Christian Tradition

MWF 2:15-3:20

Kenna Hall 212

Professor Elizabeth Drescher

Kenna 311

Office Hours: 11:30AM-12:30PM Mondays and Wednesdays, and by appointment

\*\*Please email me or let me know in class if you plan to come to scheduled office hours.

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\*\*Please note: This syllabus may be adapted throughout the quarter to address the learning needs of the class.\*\*

### Course Description

This course is a cultural, historical, scriptural, and theological exploration of the Christian tradition from ancient times to the present. The course focuses on 1) the foundations of Christianity in the Roman Empire in the ancient Near East; 2) the spread of Christianity through the world; 3) the diversity with which the foundational tradition has been interpreted in the lived practice of ordinary believers; and 4) the relationship of Christianity with other religious and nonreligious traditions throughout the world.

### Core Curriculum Learning Goals and Objectives (for RTC 1)

- 1.1 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. (Knowledge of global cultures; Complexity of content and method; Ambiguity)
- 1.2 Students will be able to use critical approaches to reflect on their own beliefs and the religious dimensions of human existence. (Critical thinking; Complexity of method; Reflection)

### Course Goals

1. Students will be able to express a critical understanding of the theological foundations and historical map of Christian tradition.
2. Students will be able to articulate the relationship of Christian tradition to a significant social, cultural, or political issue of our time.
3. Students will be able to describe and evaluate the positioning of Christianity within the global pluralism of religions.

### Required Texts

Augustine, *Confessions*. Translated by Henry Chadwick. Oxford World Classics. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991. ISBN-10: 0199537828

Miles, Sara. *City of God: Faith in the Streets*. New York: Hachette, 2014.

Starr, Mirabai. *Julian of Norwich, The Showings: A Contemporary Translation*. Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2014. ISBN-10: 848255934

*The Bible, NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION (NRSV)*. Available in many print editions and online at BibleGateway.Org. **Recommended:** *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha: New Revised Standard Version*. Edited by Michael D. Croghan, et al. Fourth Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. ISBN-10: 0195289609

## Assessment and Grading

1. **Thoughtful, Active, Creative, Critical Engagement (20%)** – Your active, thoughtful participation in each class based on careful study of and reflection on assigned readings and other materials is essential to your success in this course. Attendance is only a precondition for engagement in class sessions, not the measure of it (see attendance policy below). Intellectual engagement will be assessed through your consistent, informed contributions to class discussions, active and meaningful contributions to small group exercises, and respectful and courteous engagement with your student colleagues and the professor.

During the second class session student groups will determine the best way to express “thoughtful, active, creative, critical engagement” from week to week in the course. This may include weekly blog posts, TweetChats, a Pinterest board, short essays, summary presentations, or other options suggested by students and approved by the professor.

2. **Lived Tradition Presentation (10%)** – Working in groups of 4 to 5 students, students will prepare a 15-minute presentation on a practice, a person, or a theme in the Christian tradition which, drawing on background research from two *academic articles*, analyzes how people in different times and places have sought to deepen their relationship with “the living God” of Christian faith. The presentation should use images or video clips to illustrate the topic of the presentation. Presentation groups will be formed during the second week of class, when topic suggestions will also be provided.

Bear in mind as well that content from the presentation will be included in the final comprehensive examination. That is, students are meant to teach and learn from each other.

3. **Christian Service Attendance (10%)** – Each student must attend 2 different Christian worship services in denominations with which s/he is not familiar (e.g. Baptist, Christian Scientist, Episcopalian, Evangelical/ Nondenominational, Mar Thoma, Quaker; especially ethnic or multi-ethnic congregations). A list of churches will be provided the first week of classes, but students may also suggest an alternative to the professor in advance of a visit. Guidelines for visiting a church are on Camino. **Students will sign up for church visits the second week of class.** The class after attending each of the 2 services, students will submit a 300-word summary (1-2 pages) of how different elements of the Christian Tradition studied to that point in the quarter were expressed in the denomination visited. On Fridays, we’ll have a “Take me to church” segment in which students share what they’ve learned and what questions emerged from their visits.
4. **Midterm Exam (15%)** – An open-book/open-note midterm examination will be in class on **February 26**. The exam will be comprised of both multiple choice and short essay questions.
5. **Essays (30% – 15% each)** – Students will write two essays during the course. The first 1500 to 2000-word essay (4 to 5 pages) will be written collaboratively, with 4 students working together on the project. The second 2000 to 2500-word essay (7 to 8 pages), which is due on the last day of class, will be written individually.

The first essay is a research essay in which small groups will analyze a specific person or theme in the Bible, in Augustine’s *Confessions*, or *The Showings of Julian of Norwich* in its social historical context, considering its deeper meanings and its application to the lives of Christians today. Students will draw upon their own reading of the primary texts (scripture, the *Confessions*, or *The Showings*) as well as their collaborative research from *academic sources* on the figure or theme they are exploring. Papers should draw upon two articles from scholarly journals.

Research will be graded on the basis of (1) evidence of careful reading and understanding of the assigned texts in light of class discussion; (2) thoughtful, independent reflection on the topic illustrated by conceptual clarity; (3) critical reflection on academic research on the topic; and (4) writing quality.

The second essay is an autobiographical essay in which students compose their own “confessions,” “showings,” or “revelations,” using the spiritual narratives of Augustine, Julian, or Sara Miles as a guide. The essays must be couched in a distinctive literary frame not used by one of our authors (this will

become clearer through the quarter). The idea is not to copy the autobiographical style used by our writers, but to consider the questions they raise, the spiritual topics they explore, the key moments and people in their lives as guides to explore students' own lives.

Students must also incorporate reflections from their reading of one scholarly journal article into their essay, putting their own experience into the context of wider discussions of how spiritual identity is formed and developed over time in religious traditions like Christianity. This does not of course mean that every student will claim a Christian identity. Rather, her or his essay will shed light on religious identity and tradition (or nonreligious identity, for that matter) generally with the Christian tradition as a comparative element.

Autobiographical essays will be graded on the basis of 1) evidence of careful reading and understanding of the assigned texts in light of class discussion as illustrated by the range of questions and topics explored; (2) analytical and introspective depth of self-reflections as illustrated by the intellectual rigor of their paper; ; (3) creativity of the literary frame; and (4) writing quality.

Please note that papers are to be turned in during class. **Papers will not be accepted via email.** Papers should be double-spaced, using 12-point Times New Roman font. Students are encouraged to print on both sides of the page if possible.

6. **Library Research Workshop (Minus 5 points for non-attendance)** – To help students prepare for the essays and presentation, a class session will be devoted to understanding the Santa Clara University library, research databases, and approaches to preparing a high quality, academic paper. Details will be provided in class. While there are no additional points for attending the workshop, *students who do not attend will have 5 points deducted from their final grade.*
7. **Final Exam (15%)** – Students will be required to take an in-class, closed-book final examination. (Date TBD) The comprehensive exam will assess students understanding of the diverse expressions of the Christian tradition explored through the course. It will cover all course topics, readings, and other assigned materials, including content from student presentations.
8. **Extra Credit (Up to 10 Points)** – Throughout the quarter, students will have opportunities to earn extra credit by attending on-campus lectures and events offered by the University. Students are responsible for identifying potential opportunities by reviewing the Campus Calendar on the SCU website. Students will earn 3-5 points (as determined by the professor) after they submit a 300-word reflection on the lecture or event as it related to their understanding of the Christian Tradition in the class after the event or lecture date. The Religious Studies Department, the Ignatian Center for Jesuit Education, and the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics offer a number of lectures, retreats, and other relevant events through the quarter, but other centers and departments are also worth exploring for opportunities.
9. **Final Portfolio** – Students are required to keep all graded work, including extra credit assignments, in a portfolio, which will be turned in at the end of the quarter before the final grade is assigned. The final portfolio allows the professor to assess progress in your work throughout the quarter, noting the extent to which students have responded to suggestions offered on one assignment in subsequent assignments. Graded work not included in the portfolio will not be counted in the final grade. Final portfolios will be submitted in class on the day of the final exam.

## Course Policies

### Attendance

Attendance will be taken in each class. Prompt attendance for each class session is required. **More than two excused or unexcused absences will negatively impact a student's final grade.** Arriving late or leaving early more than three times will count as an absence. If students must miss a class, it *is their own responsibility to get notes from a classmate and make up missed work.* The professor *will not* meet with students during office hours to make up material from missed classes.

## Academic Integrity

Students should read and understand the University's policy with regard to academic integrity:

<http://www.scu.edu/academics/bulletins/undergraduate/Academic-Integrity.cfm>.

Suspected violations of academic integrity (“e.g., plagiarism, falsification of data, misrepresentation of research...and other acts generally understood to be dishonest”) will be investigated immediately, and students shown to have violated the University academic integrity policy will receive a failing grade on the assignment and may also fail the course.

It is worth noting that what constitutes plagiarism is often misunderstood, and students often plagiarize unintentionally. Students are advised to take particular care when quoting, summarizing, or paraphrasing another source in writing assignments or oral presentations so that the student does not appear to be representing the words, thoughts, or ideas of the source as her or his own. The University of North Carolina provides a handout on plagiarism that may be helpful for students to review:

<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html>.

## Disability Accommodation

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.

## Electronic Devices

Students may use laptops for note taking and group work in class, including online research. However, cell phones, PDAs, pagers, mp3 players, and other electronic devices are not permitted. Students may not make or respond to phone calls or text messages nor may they send or receive emails or update social networking statuses during class.

Should the use of *any* electronic devices by *any one student* to be disruptive, the privilege of using laptops will be revoked for *all students* and the offending student(s) will be marked absent for that class session.

Cell phones or other electronic devices used for personal communications in class (e.g., texting, tweeting, posting) will be removed from the offending student and returned at the end of the quarter.

## Title IX 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](http://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](mailto:bguthrie@scu.edu). Reports may be submitted online through [www.scu.edu/osl/report](http://www.scu.edu/osl/report) or anonymously through Ethicspoint: [www.ethicspoint.com](http://www.ethicspoint.com) <http://stage-www.scu.edu/hr/quick-links/ethics-point/>

While I want you to feel comfortable coming to me with issues you may be struggling with or concerns you may be having, please be aware that there are some reporting requirements that are part of my job at Santa Clara University.

For example, if you inform me of an issue of harassment, sexual violence, or discrimination, I will keep the information as private as I can, but I am required to bring it to the attention of the institution's EEO and Title IX Coordinator. If you inform me that you are struggling with an issue that may be resulting in, or caused by, traumatic or unusual stress, I will likely inform the campus Student Care Team (SCU CARE).

If you would like to reach out directly to the Student Care Team for assistance, you can contact them at [www.scu.edu/osl/report](http://www.scu.edu/osl/report). If you would like to talk to the Office of EEO and Title IX directly, they can be reached at 408-554-3043 or by email at [bguthrie@scu.edu](mailto:bguthrie@scu.edu). Reports may be submitted online through [www.scu.edu/osl/report](http://www.scu.edu/osl/report) or anonymously through Ethicspoint: [www.ethicspoint.com](http://www.ethicspoint.com). Additionally, you can report incidents or complaints to the Office of Student Life (OSL), Campus Safety Services, and local law enforcement. For confidential support, contact the Counseling and Psychological Services office (CAPS), the YWCA, or a member of the clergy (for example, a priest or minister).

Finally, please be aware that if, for some reason, our interaction involves a disruptive behavior, a concern about your safety or the safety of others, or potential violation of University policy, I will inform the Office of Student Life. The purpose of this is to keep OSL apprised of incidents of concern, and to ensure that students can receive or stay connected to the academic support and student wellness services they need.

### Grading

Grading is based on an assessment of the quality of students' work in each of the areas described above. Grades are not measures of personal worth. Students are encouraged to talk with the instructor about their progress in the course and their work on specific assignments during regularly scheduled office hours. Grades assigned to individual papers, quizzes, and exams will not be changed on the basis of negotiation with students unless there is an administrative or mathematical error.

Please note that, according to the Santa Clara University Academic Integrity Policy, "the instructor alone has final responsibility for assigning grades." Once final grades are assigned, they can only be changed if there is an administrative error. That is, the professor's grade assignment is final and cannot be appealed by the student on the basis of the assessment itself. This means that it is in the student's interest to meet with the professor well before the final grade is assigned to discuss her or his status in the course.

96-100	A	87-89	B+	77-79	C+	67-69	D+	59 or Below	F
95-90	A-	83-86	B	73-78	C	63-68	D		
		80-82	B-	70-72	C-	60-62	D-		

### Course Schedule

\*\*Please note: This syllabus may be adapted throughout the quarter to address the learning needs of the class.\*\*

Date	Topic	Academic Preparation
September 21	Course Welcome	Getting to know one another
September 23	Course Introduction: Does Christianity Matter Anymore?	Please review the syllabus in detail and come prepared with questions, comments, and course engagement practices.
September 25	What is religion? What is Christianity?	On Canvas: Robert Orsi, "Everyday Miracles: The Study of Lived Religion," pp. 1-21 of <i>Lived Religion in America: Toward a History of Practice</i> , ed. by Donald D. Hall
September 28	"In the Beginning..." – The Creation of the Christian Story in Hebrew Tradition	Genesis 1:1-6:4

September 30	The People of the Covenant	Group 1: Genesis 9:8-17; 2 Samuel 7 Group 2: Genesis 12-17 Group 3: Exodus 19-24 Group 4: Hebrews 8; Jeremiah 31:31-34
October 2	Exploring the Jesus Story: Incarnation, Ministry	Group 1: Gospel of Matthew Group 2: Gospel of Luke
October 5	Exploring the Jesus Story: Death, Resurrection	Group 3: Gospel of Mark Group 4: Gospel of John
October 7	Exploring the Christian Story: Pauline Christianity	Acts of the Apostles
October 9	Exploring the Christian Story: Eucharistic Community	Paul's Letter to the Romans Paul's Letter to the Corinthians
October 12	Introduction to Augustine and Ancient Christianity	Augustine's <i>Confessions</i> , Introduction and Book I Example Essay on Camino
October 14	Augustine, Sin and Grace	Augustine's <i>Confessions</i> , Books II-IV
October 16	Augustine, Seeking Grace	Augustine's <i>Confessions</i> , Books V-VII
October 19	Augustine, Conversion and Mysticism	Augustine's <i>Confessions</i> , Books VIII-X
October 21	<b>REQUIRED Library Research Workshop</b>	Details TBD
October 23	Introduction to Medieval Christianity	<i>The Showings of Julian of Norwich</i> , Part I
October 26	Medieval Mysticism	<i>The Showings of Julian of Norwich</i> , Part II
October 28	Gender and Piety in Medieval Christianity	<i>The Showings of Julian of Norwich</i> , Part III, Ch. 51-64
October 30	Halloween in the Christian Tradition	Anderson M. Rearick III. "Hallowing Halloween: Why Christians should embrace the devilish holiday with gusto—and laughter." (Canvas) Lauren Winner, "Good News for Witches" (Canvas)
November 2	What Does Julian Teach Us Today?	<i>The Showings of Julian of Norwich</i> , Part III, Ch. 65-86
November 4	<i>Midterm Review</i>	Bible, Augustine, Julian <b>**FIRST REFLECTION ESSAY DUE**</b>
November 6	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>
November 9	The Protestant Reformations: Luther, Calvin, & Cranmer	Luther's 95 Theses (Canvas); The Book of Common Prayer at Three Hundred Fifty (Canvas)
November 11	The Christian Tradition in America	John Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity" (Canvas) The Diary of Jarena Lee (Canvas)
November 13	Modernizing the Christian Tradition	"Evolution and Wonder: Understanding Charles Darwin" (Canvas)
November 16	The Christian Tradition Today: New Ministers	Sara Miles, <i>City of God</i>
November 18	The Christian Tradition Today: New Ministers	Sara Miles, <i>City of God</i>
November 20	The Christian Tradition Today: New Mysteries	Sara Miles, <i>City of God</i> – <b>ONLINE CLASS</b>
<b>November 23-27</b>	<b>THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY</b>	<b>NO CLASSES!!!</b>
November 30	Christianity & Religious Unaffiliation	Pew, "America's Changing Religious Landscape" Report. Online at <a href="http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/">http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/</a>
December 2	Lived Traditions Presentation	Reading assigned by groups
December 4	Lived Traditions Presentation	Reading assigned by groups <b>**SECOND REFLECTION ESSAY DUE**</b>
Week of December 9	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	Time and Location TBD