

SYLLABUS

TESP 4:27661 Theology, Ethics & Spirituality (Area 2)
Mon-Wed-Fri at 8:00 a.m. to 9:05 a.m.

FALL 2015

Prerequisites: None

This course fulfills Santa Clara's Core Requirement for RTC 1

Instructor: Janet Giddings

Office: Kenna Hall 305

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 10:45 to 12 noon and by appointment

Phone: 551-3000 x 4273 **Email:** jgiddings@scu.edu

Classroom: Kenna 310

Course Description (SCU)

A theological examination of the Christian tradition covering such topics as religious experience and the meaning of God; Jesus experience and the meaning of God; Jesus in the Gospels; the development and history of the Christian churches; the relevance of Christianity in the 21st century global world.

Welcome from Professor Giddings,

I welcome students interested in exploring Christian tradition from its roots and beginnings to its various expressions today. This course introduces students to the tradition and practice of Christian theology, ethics, and spirituality. We will explore how Christian tradition was/is developed and expressed through both intellectual and practical ways in different parts of the world. Theology and spirituality of the Jesus Movement (early Christians) is studied through a focused reading of scripture. Learning about and considering Jesus and his Jewish life, spiritual exemplars in the tradition, environmental challenges, the Catholic Pope and Silicon Valley; and, ethical questions posed in *Women Deacons*, regarding women and the diaconate in the Roman Catholic tradition, will be studied, discussed, and scrutinized in this course.

Purpose of the Core Course in Religious Studies

At Santa Clara University, the study of religious belief and practice in various cultural contexts (including your own) is one of the central features of the Core Curriculum. This is an essential part of Jesuit education. The study of religion at Santa Clara is not about making the student believe certain teachings or limiting their inquiry to one tradition. We want you to think critically about religious experiences, practices, and beliefs, including your own religious identity (or other ways you identify your beliefs) and those of others.

Courses in Area 2 deal with three dimensions of "faith seeking understanding," a phrase that has classically described theology as a discipline. Theology seeks to articulate the truth of faith; ethics, the implications of faith in human life and activity; and spirituality, the practice and understanding of the experience of faith. All three dimensions are pursued in dialogue with culture in its various forms of discourse, and all three aim specifically to situate the Jewish or Christian faith tradition within contemporary approaches to the study of religion.

Course Goals

1. Students will be able to express a critical understanding of the theological foundations of Christian tradition.
2. Students will be able to compare and contrast at least two different cultural and/or theological expressions of Christian tradition.
3. Students will be able to describe and evaluate the positioning of Christianity, Catholicism in particular, within the pluralism of the United States.

Religious Studies Department Goals

1. Students question and probe religion for what it reveals about human beings, their diverse societies, traditions, convictions and aspirations.
2. Students use diverse materials and demonstrate formal postures of inquiry into religion and in order to go beyond a simple description of religion to a reflective engagement with it.
3. Students propose and investigate the "big questions" --that is, the meta-reflective questions that ask how and why we ask the questions that we do about religion.

Core Curriculum Learning Goals and Objectives (LGOs)

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. (Knowledge of Global Cultures; Complexity; Ambiguity)

1b. Students will be able to use critical approaches to reflect on their own beliefs and the religious dimensions of human existence. (Critical thinking; Complexity; Reflection)

Study Units

1. Theology in the Gospel of Mark
2. Jesus the Jew
3. Spirituality
4. The Pope's Encyclical and Christian responsibility for the environment
5. Christian Plurality
6. Ethics: Women Deacons

Required Texts (bring the book to class on days when it is listed as required)

Levine, Amy-Jill. *The Misunderstood Jew: The Church and the Scandal of the Jewish Jesus*. New York: HarperCollins, 2006.

Light, Aimee. *God at the Margins: Making Theological Sense of Religious Plurality*. Minnesota: Anselm Academic, 2014.

Macy, Gary, et al. *Women Deacons: Past Present Future*. New York, NY: Paulist Press, 2011.

The New Oxford Annotated Bible. NRSV. Or, online Bible Gateway. You must bring the Bible to class; or print out the gospel and bring it to class.

Online: There will be study guides, short films, helpful handouts, and other information, posted in Modules.

Assessment: 100 points possible

20: Informed participation: means in-class participation based on your reading.

Students are required to participate regularly in class discussions. Full credit will be given for active, *informed* participation directly concerning the text, film, or website under consideration. While the instructor will occasionally solicit and/or accept personal points of view to begin or encourage discussion, it is essential to the course of study to discuss assignments and/or questions raised on the assignment topics. Only students who consistently demonstrate a close reading of the homework will receive an 'A' in this area.

Homework: There will be 5 short homework papers on reading assignments. 1) a 2-page personal reflection paper on being misunderstood and, 2) a 2-page response paper to our study of the environment, Silicon Valley, and Christianity; 3) 3, 1-page response papers to each of the chapters in *Women Deacons*. Homework is not graded. Not turning in homework will deduct points from your participation grade. Each assignment is worth: 5 points @ 25 % of participation grade. Homework papers are submitted in-class, hard copy. (*LGO 1a, 1b*)

20: Test: Theology; Mark; Misunderstood Jew: written test may consist of short answer, identification, and essay. (*LGO 1a, 1b*)

20: Spirituality: students will research and write on one spiritual exemplar. This could be a paper or power point. This assignment will be uploaded to Camino. (*LGO 1a*)

20: Christian Encounters Paper: This paper will require a larger amount of research, analytical skill and keen writing, which demonstrates proper format and serious scholarship. The paper requires 6-7 pages of writing; and Works Cited/Works Consulted page. See Camino for assignment directive. This paper is to be uploaded to Camino. (*LGO 1*)

20: Group presentation and argument: Group members will present an argument for/against woman as deacons in the Catholic Church; the argument form will be posted in Camino. Groups will include at least one outside scholarly source (other than *Women Deacons* book) to help make their argument. (*LGO 1,2*)

In fulfillment of Core learning goal 1a, papers and quizzes will ask you to demonstrate a grasp of central religious ideas and practices of Christianity commensurate with the material covered in the course. The student will demonstrate an understanding of at least two different expressions of Christian tradition from distinct regions of the globe. (These also fulfill all course learning objectives).

1. Group presentation on theology in Mark's gospel. Each group will be assigned a selection in Mark and will research theological commentaries. (*LGO 1a*)
2. Spirituality: A Group presentation and 2-3 page paper on one historical person who exemplifies spirituality or mysticism within the tradition. (*LGO 1a*)
3. Test: will provide the student an opportunity to demonstrate close reading and comprehension of assigned readings and films. This test includes: theology; Gospel of Mark; The Misunderstood Jew (*LGO 1a,1b*)

4. Research paper: *Christian Encounter* with people in the margins. Six-seven pages of writing, demonstrating a grasp of data and information, analytical skills, and summary of one's findings. Students will research 1 group in two different regions. (*LGO 1a, 1b*)

*In fulfillment of **Core learning goal 1b**, the papers will ask you to reflect critically on your own beliefs or thoughts about the religious dimensions of human existence that are raised by a study of the Christian tradition. (These also fulfill all Religious Studies department learning goals).*

- 4) Argument Paper: *Women Deacons* (*Gender; Spirituality; Diversity*).
- 5) Critical Reflection: Homework paper: reading the *Misunderstood Jew*, students will reflect on how they have been misunderstood and how that manifested in their lives. (*Critical thinking, Complexity, and Reflection*)

Various types of paper assignments:

1. In writing the response paper you will demonstrate a grasp of the central ideas and/or problems in the assigned text. You will be graded on a proper introduction of the author and title of work, a concise summary, thesis statement, use of at least one quotation to provide context and that supports your thesis.

2. Reflection paper: is personal. You will reflect on ways you may have been misunderstood in regards to your religious tradition or philosophy. You will make analogies to ways Jesus was misunderstood.

3. Research paper: Research sources are scholarly, E.g. Journal essays or books. If you are not certain as to whether or not your source is appropriate for university level research, please see your professor. The paper should integrate research into the study/thesis of the paper. This paper is uploaded into Camino.

- Note: If the professor agrees to accept a late paper for this assignment, the paper will lose one letter grade for each day it is late. Meeting deadlines is essential to success in this course.

5. Group argument presentation and individual response paper: Groups will argue your case on *Women Deacons*. The argument must follow: Claim; Premises (2); Warrant; Opposing view/Counterclaim; Rebuttal; Conclusion. Students must use scholarly sources in addition to the *Women Deacons* book.

Assessment criteria:

- “A” work is excellent. An “A” paper is focused with an explicit thesis statement. It exhibits a clear, effective and organized line of thought as well as thorough understanding of the material. It has no English usage problems, anticipates possible objections to its point of view and/or supporting arguments, and frequently provides pertinent citations to make its case. The writer’s voice is firm, confident, and clear.
- All papers will follow MLA Writing Style Guidelines and Formatting, 7TH Edition. You may find MLA format at the [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#).
- If the professor allows a rewrite of any required paper, her corrections on the original paper may not indicate ALL the transgressions demonstrated in the paper. If a student is given the *opportunity* to rewrite a paper, it is her/his responsibility to correct any and all problems with the paper. A rewrite may or may not result in a higher grade.
- Papers are deducted points when there is a digression in any of the areas mentioned above and including errors in syntax, grammar and spelling, punctuation, awkward or nebulous writing; poor organization; carelessness, or food on the paper.
- A finished paper is a final draft. This means you have edited the paper and **stapled** it. Unstapled papers may be either rejected or a **10% reduction** in grade will be applied. If the paper is required to be uploaded to Camino, it must be on time (prior to class) for that day.

Grading: 6-point scale

A 95-100	B 79-84	
A- 91-96	B- 75- 80	
B+ 85-90	C+ 69-74	and so on

Attendance Policy

Students should come to each class prepared to 1) be present for the full 65 minutes we are together in our classroom, and 2) contribute to and support the learning community for which we are all responsible. These two statements guide the instructor’s attendance policy.

Consistent attendance is essential to the course dynamic and to a learning environment. Consistent absence will require a meeting with the professor to discuss if you need to be referred to a supportive campus department to help you achieve success in the course. Remember, your best way to be successful in this course is to communicate with your instructor.

Generally, legitimate excuses for an absence are illness, or a family emergency. Both will need to be supported by appropriate documentation. A note from the Cowell Student Health Center does not automatically excuse your absence. As a courtesy, please inform the professor when you know you will not be in class. Thank you.

If you registered into the course on the second or a subsequent day of class, you must meet with the professor in her office to go over what you missed. Coming into the course late means that you arrive with absences. Please attend all classes once you are registered into the course.

Emergency and/or necessary absences will result in the student making up missed in-class work and all assignments. Therefore, even though there are classes missed for good reason, the student must demonstrate an understanding of, and produce paperwork that fulfills the missed in-class or out of class assignment(s).

All students must be in class for student presentations. Absences during presentations will result in a half-grade reduction in participation grade unless absence is justified/documented and excused with the professor.

Disruptive Behavior

Tardiness is disruptive. Tardiness is disruptive to the professor and students. It can distract some students from concentration and can challenge them to regain a focus. It is a major distraction for the professor. Consistent tardiness will result in a reduction of your grade. Two tardy's = warning.

3 tardy = loss of 20% participation points 4 = loss of 50% of participation grade
5 tardy= drop one entire grade level on the final grade.

Consistent restroom breaks during class may result in the same consequences. Please use the restroom prior to class. If you have a medical challenge that makes it necessary to leave the classroom regularly, please make certain the professor is made aware and the professor will work with the student in the appropriate manner.

Disability Policy

To request academic accommodations for a disability, students must be registered with Disabilities Resources, located in Benson 216. Students register using DR Online Services at www.scu.edu/disabilities. Students need to register and provide professional documentation of a disability prior to receiving academic accommodations. Please read "Required Documentation" on the website before starting the registration process. Students may contact Disabilities Resources at 408-554-4109 if they have questions.

Academic Integrity

The instructor expects your moral standard to fit the Jesuit mission and the work you produce will be your own. When you consult or borrow the ideas of others you must give them credit by citing their work. Plagiarizing will result in an “F” for the entire assignment and may lead to more serious consequences if consistent. Please view the SCU policy at: www.scu.edu/studentlife/resources/integrity.cfm.

Hub Writing Center

You may be asked to take a paper to the Writing Center and work with one of the excellent tutors there. Also, you may want to consult with the Center on your own to update your writing skill. There is drop-in assistance as well. Located in Benson, Lower Level, Room 022. Phone: 1-408-551-3286.

NOTE: If an extra credit opportunity is offered, the credit will be used at the professor’s discretion and will not erase consequences of absences, consistent tardiness, or failure to meet assignments.

In class:

- Laptops: NO; unless you have purchased an ‘e’ book; clear with the professor
- Quizzes: No bathroom breaks; phones put away/off.
- No taping of any kind may occur without explicit written permission from the professor or Disability Resources.
- Texting in class: NO. You may be asked to leave class for texting. If this is a problem that occurs more than once, your participation grade will be deducted 50%. If the problem persists, a meeting with the professor is an absolute.

LEARNING SHOULD BE FUN

Generally, most students perform as scholars at SCU. I assume you will as well. My classes are friendly and I appreciate students who work within a friendly environment. Please be respectful and follow this syllabus.

I am dedicated to supporting you in your scholarly efforts. I am available during office hours and also by appointment. I am on campus most of the day on Mondays and Wednesdays. Come visit me!

Prof Giddings