

TESP 4 – The Christian Tradition
Fulfills **RTC 1** core curriculum requirement

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Course Description

This course, which fulfills the Religion, Theology, and Culture (RTC) 1 core curriculum requirement, introduces students to Christian theology, ethics, and spirituality, focusing on the role that Christian perspectives play in controversial issues throughout history and particularly in the world today. Students explore Christian theology through reading scripture and contemporary works to understand who Jesus was to the religious communities for whom the gospels were written and how historical and contemporary Christian communities interpret and apply Christian teachings. Students explore Christian ethics through examining Christian ethical perspectives from a variety of denominations on a variety of current issues.

Course Objectives

After taking this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the most important contours of the history of the Christian tradition
2. Describe and give examples of Christian practices and/or beliefs from several different Christian denominations in globally distinct regions.
3. Compare, contrast, and analyze primary sources such as New Testament passages that offer differing perspectives.
4. Analyze Christian theological and ethical perspectives from a variety of denominations on current issues, including arguing in support of a given work's strengths and critiquing its weaknesses.

Core Curriculum Learning Objectives – Religion, Theology, and Culture (RTC) 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 as well as Method; Ambiguity)
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; Religious Reflection)

Religion Department Objectives

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 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.

NOTE

Only students who attend the first day of class are eligible to take this course. No student who misses the first day of class will be allowed to continue in this course.

Required Materials

There are no textbooks for this course. All readings are available as handouts and on the course Camino website. Each student must purchase:

- An i>Clicker, available at the SCU Bookstore. If you have an i>Clicker from another course it can be used for this course as well.
- A blank notebook for taking notes and for in-class work.

Electronic Devices

No electronic devices of any kind (laptops, tablets, cell phones, and so forth) are allowed during class time. Please turn off all such devices and put them out of sight before class begins.

Certain specific class activities will involve accessing the internet or using your cell phone; in these instances, you may not bring out your device until the activity is announced and you must put it away at the end of the activity. Any students with disabilities or other special needs that require an exception to this policy must speak with me and provide the relevant documentation from the Disabilities Resources Office.

Class Participation

Full class participation requires being prepared: read the assignment; look up terms or concepts you don't understand; and make notes on points you consider important, intriguing, or problematic. Plan to contribute to discussion in every class based on the notes you have taken. I will call on all students, even those who do not raise their hands, to assure that every student has the opportunity to contribute. I recognize this may be uncomfortable. In your personal and professional lives you will be required to contribute ideas in group settings. This class will help you to overcome any discomfort you may have in speaking up.

Assignments

Participation/Attendance – 20%

Grade is based on attendance; submitting discussion preparation assignments; bringing reading materials, course notebook, and a working i>Clicker to each class meeting; student self-evaluation of participation; and professor assessment of participation.

- There are circumstances where students need to miss classes. I am happy to grant an excused absence whenever a student presents a note from an MD or from the appropriate SCU office (Office of Student Life, Athletics Department, etc.). Students must let me know about absences beforehand whenever possible. If something in your life is causing you to miss class or to struggle in the course, please let me know so that we can work together to help you succeed.
- Each student is allowed one unexcused absence during the quarter.
- Any unexcused absences beyond the first will result in a 5% reduction in your final grade for the course. This reduction is not limited to the 20% of the course grade allotted for attendance and participation.
- An unexcused absence is also given for activities that negatively affect in-class participation or disrupt other students, including but not limited to: texting, internet browsing, or other non-class-related use of electronic devices; side chatting during class; not fully participating in class activities; not bringing required reading materials to class; etc.
- I take attendance at the beginning of each class. If you are not present by the time your name is called, you will be marked absent. If you arrive late, you must see me

after class to make sure that I note your attendance. Three late arrivals will count as an unexcused absence. Arrival more than fifteen minutes after the class starts counts as an unexcused absence for the day.

- At a few points during the course, there are discussion preparation assignments related to the readings. These assignments are due via Camino by the beginning of class. No late discussion preparation assignments accepted.
- To receive full participation credit, students must bring all materials to class every day: printed versions of all required readings; a working i>Clicker; and the course notebook and writing implements.

Course Notebook – 10%

Students will keep a single notebook for taking notes on readings and lectures; and for completing in-class exercises and writing assignments. Students are responsible for dating every entry in the notebook and for bringing the same notebook to class every day.

Quizzes on Readings – 20%

Throughout the quarter, there will be in-class i>Clicker quizzes on key concepts from the readings. Quizzes start at the beginning of class. Because these are in-class quizzes, they cannot be made up due to absences or late arrivals. The lowest two scores are dropped to allow for absences, technology issues, etc. (*Core curriculum objective #1*)

Group Presentation – 10%

Student groups present on a controversial issue in Christianity, including preparing materials and dynamic activities to engage the class in analysis and discussion of varying sides of the issue. (*Core curriculum objectives #1 & #2*)

Term Paper – 25%

Students analyze a current public figure, law, or policy based on the perspectives of two contrasting Christian ethicists and the student's own perspective. The term paper is a five-part assignment that includes an outline, a first draft, peer feedback, HUB feedback, and a final draft. (*Core curriculum objectives #1 & #2*)

Final Paper – 15%

Students write a two-part essay based on their experiences in the entire course. The first part answers the question “what is the most important thing that I learned and this class,” and analyzes academically a theme the student identified in readings and class discussion, using examples from at least three diverse sources. The second part answers the question “how did I grow as a result of this class,” and presents the students' reflections on how they grew as a person or as a student. (*Core curriculum objective #1 & #2*)

Ungraded Writing Exercise

In addition, an ungraded essay is due by the beginning of the second day of class. While this assignment is not graded, late submissions will result in deductions from your final grade for the course.

Late Assignments

Late assignments will receive a full-grade deduction from the entire assignment for each day late. Thus an assignment turned in up to 24 hours late reduces a B assignment to a C, 24-48 hours late reduces a B assignment to a D, and so forth. For assignments submitted on Camino, a late grade will be assigned according to the Camino “late” designation, which occurs on assignments submitted even one minute late.

Grading Scale

A	=	94-100
A-	=	90-93.9
B+	=	88-89.9
B	=	84-87.9
B-	=	80-83.9
C+	=	78-79.9
C	=	74-77.9
C-	=	70-73.9
D+	=	68-69.9
D	=	64-67.9
D-	=	60-63.9
F	=	59.9 or lower

Grading Criteria

When assigning grades to your written work and presentations, I use the following criteria:

A = Outstanding work that exceeds the standards of thoroughness, creativity, and thoughtful engagement with the topic.

B = Good work that meets all of the assignment requirements

C = Adequate work that meets all or most of the assignment requirements

D = Unsatisfactory work that fails to meet all of the assignment requirements

F = Unacceptable work

Feedback

I provide individual feedback to students on the introductory essay, the course notebooks halfway through the course, the in-class presentation, and the essay assignments, pointing out successes and offering constructive feedback on ways to improve weaker areas. Because I post all grades on Camino, students will have ongoing access to information regarding their progress in the class. I encourage and welcome all students to contact me via e-mail or phone, stop by during office hours, and/or set up appointments with me to discuss their experience in the course and to address any questions or struggles they might have.

Course Evaluation

I offer students two anonymous narrative evaluation opportunities: one during the first half of the course, and one at the end of the course. I use the first evaluation to make immediate adjustments in response to student concerns wherever possible and reasonable.

Academic Integrity

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. Any breach of academic integrity, or suspicion of breach of academic integrity, will result in an academic penalty ranging from a 0 on the assignment to an F for the entire course. I also report any breaches of academic integrity to the Office of Student Life. Breaches of academic integrity include but are not limited to:

- Plagiarism from a printed source, the internet, or lectures from other courses

- Copying another student's work. The penalties apply to all parties. It is your responsibility to make sure no one copies your work.
- Working with another student on an essay assignment (sharing an outline, sharing cited quotes, etc.)
- Cheating
- Using your own work for more than one assignment in this class or another class without permission
- Turning in another person's work as your own

Disability Resources

If you have a disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact Disabilities Resources, Benson 216, (408) 554-4109, 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 as soon as possible. While I am happy to assist you, I am unable to provide accommodations until I have received verification from Disabilities Resources.

Accommodations for Pregnancy and Parenting

Santa Clara University provides reasonable accommodations to students who are pregnant, have recently experienced childbirth, and/or have medically related needs. Pregnant and parenting students can often arrange accommodations by working directly with their instructors, supervisors, or departments. Alternatively, a pregnant or parenting student experiencing related medical conditions may request accommodations through Disability Resources.

Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct (Title IX)

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/dating violence, or stalking, I encourage you to tell someone promptly. For more information, please consult 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, bguthrie@scu.edu. Reports may be submitted online through <https://www.scu.edu/osl/report/> or anonymously through Ethicspoint <https://www.scu.edu/hr/quick-links/ethicspoint/>

Reporting Practices

I want you to feel comfortable coming to me with issues you may be struggling with or concerns you may be having. At the same time, 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. 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 OSU 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.

Day	Date	Module	Assignment
1	M 9/18	None (Course introduction)	
2	W 9/20	Creation Stories	Ungraded Writing Exercise
3	F 9/22	Christian History 0 to 500	Quiz?
4	M 9/25	Narratives of Jesus's Birth	Discussion Preparation Assignment
5	W 9/27	Narratives of Jesus's Resurrection	Quiz?
6	F 9/29	Christian Perspectives on President Trump	Quiz?
7	M 10/2	Christian History 500 to 1000	Quiz?
8	W 10/4	The Sutra of Jesus Christ	Quiz?
9	F 10/6	Controversial Topic #1	Quiz?
10	M 10/9	Christian History 1000 to 1500	Quiz?
11	W 10/11	Christian History 1500 to Present	Quiz?
12	F 10/13	Controversial Topic #2	Quiz?
13	M 10/16	Christianity in Palestine	Quiz?
14	W 10/18	Abortion in the Bible and Church History	Quiz?
15	F 10/20	Controversial Topic #3	Quiz? Course notebooks
16	M 10/23	Abortion in the Catholic Church	Quiz?
17	W 10/25	Global Christian Perspectives on Abortion	Quiz?
18	F 10/27	Controversial Topic #4	Quiz?
19	M 10/30	Christianity and Halloween	Quiz?

Day	Date	Module	Assignment
20	W 11/1	Christian Abortion Perspectives	Discussion Preparation Term Paper Outlines
21	F 11/3	Controversial Topic #5	Quiz?
22	M 11/6	The Amish I	Quiz?
23	W 11/8	The Amish II	Quiz?
24	Fri. 11/10 - Term Paper Writing Day: No Class		
25	M 11/13	Term Paper Peer Reviews	Term Paper 6:00 a.m.
26	W 11/15	Bigger Questions I	None
27	F 11/17	Bigger Questions II	Term Paper Revisions HUB Feedback
28	M 11/27	Controversial Topic #6	Quiz?
29	W 11/29	Bigger Questions III	None
30	F 12/1	Bringing the Course to a Close	None
Mon. 12/4, 12:10 p.m. - Final Paper & Course Notebooks Due			

Ungraded Writing Exercise

Contents

The ungraded writing exercise needs to address the following two topics:

- Devote approximately one quarter of your essay to the question: what is your personal worldview? You may define this in terms of denominational religious affiliation, unaffiliated spirituality, agnosticism, skepticism, atheism, or so forth.
- Devote approximately three quarters of your essay to the following questions on the primary source reading for the next class: the creation narrative in Genesis 1:1-2:4 and the creation narrative in Genesis 2:4-3:24, attached at the end of this syllabus.
 - What is God *like* in Genesis 1:1-2:4? Consider the following questions to help you articulate your answer: What name is given to God? Where is God located? What is God's "personality" like? How does God act? How orderly/disordered is God? How celestial/earthly is God? How human-like/otherworldly is God?
 - In what order does God create things in Genesis 1:1-2:4? What is the relationship between God and humans? Between man and woman? Between humans and animals?
 - What is God *like* in Genesis 2:4-3:24? Consider the following questions to help you articulate your answer: What name is given to God? Where is God located? What is God's "personality" like? How does God act? How orderly/disordered is God? How celestial/earthly is God? How human-like/otherworldly is God?
 - In what order does God create things in Genesis 2:4-3:24? What is the relationship between God and humans? Between man and woman? Between humans and animals?
 - Devote one paragraph to speculating on the question: to what do you attribute the differences in these two creation stories?

Guidelines

- Minimum length: 500 words – typed, double-spaced
- Include a single-spaced heading on the first page of your paper
- Your discussion of the creation stories in Genesis should include direct quotes to illustrate your points.
 - Citation style for quotes from the Bible: (Gen 1:2) (Gen 2:15), etc.
- Print your paper and bring it with you to class
- While this assignment is not graded, late submissions will result in deductions from your final grade for the course, in accordance with the policy for late assignments as outlined in the syllabus
- I will offer written comments on what you submit

Genesis 1:1-2:4
New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

1 In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. ³Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

⁶And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” ⁷So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. ⁸God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

⁹And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. ¹¹Then God said, “Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.” And it was so. ¹²The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. ¹³And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

¹⁴And God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. ¹⁷God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

²⁰And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” ²¹So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. ²²God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on

the earth.”²³ And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

²⁴And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. ²⁵God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”

²⁷So God created humankind in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

²⁸God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” ²⁹God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. ³⁰And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. ³¹God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

2 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. ²And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. ³So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation. ⁴These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

Genesis 2:4-3:24 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

2 ⁴In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; ⁶but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground— ⁷then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. ⁸And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches. ¹¹The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; ¹²and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. ¹³The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. ¹⁶And the LORD God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; ¹⁷but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.”

¹⁸Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.” ¹⁹So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. ²⁰The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. ²¹So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. ²²And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³Then the man said,

“This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;

this one shall be called Woman,
for out of Man this one was taken.”

²⁴Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. ²⁵And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’” ²The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; ³but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’” ⁴But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die; ⁵for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. ⁷Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

⁸They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?” ¹⁰He said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.” ¹¹He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” ¹²The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.” ¹³Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent tricked me, and I ate.” ¹⁴The LORD God said to the serpent,

“Because you have done this,
cursed are you among all animals
and among all wild creatures;
upon your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.

¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will strike your head,
and you will strike his heel.”

¹⁶ To the woman he said,

“I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing;
in pain you shall bring forth children,
yet your desire shall be for your husband,
and he shall rule over you.”

¹⁷ And to the man he said,

“Because you have listened to the voice of your wife,
and have eaten of the tree
about which I commanded you,
‘You shall not eat of it,’

cursed is the ground because of you;
in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life;

¹⁸ thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;
and you shall eat the plants of the field.

¹⁹ By the sweat of your face
you shall eat bread

until you return to the ground,
for out of it you were taken;

you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.”

²⁰ The man named his wife Eve, because she was the mother of all living. ²¹ And the LORD God made garments of skins for the man and for his wife, and clothed them.

²² Then the LORD God said, “See, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever” — ²³ therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴ He drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a sword flaming and turning to guard the way to the tree of life.