

SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY

TESP (Theology, Ethics, and Spirituality) 04

RTC (Religion, Theology, and Culture) 1

The Christian Tradition

FALL 2017

PROF. PARRELLA

SYLLABUS

“The world is a beautiful and terrible place. Deeds of horror are committed every minute and in the end those we love die. If the screams of all the earth’s living creatures were one scream of pain, surely it would shake the stars. But we have love. It may seem a frail defence against the horrors of the world, but we must hold fast and believe in it, for it is all we have.”

—P. D. James (1920-2014)

“When it came down to reality, what mattered except the lives of those who love? All that was precious was made up of actions and of love, of belief in the purpose beyond the habits of living from day to day.”

—Anne Perry (1938-)

“Others are succeeding in making modern life easier and easier. In fact, insufferably easy. And so, out of love of humankind and incapable of making anything easier...I have realized that my contribution to our times should be to create difficulties everywhere.”

—Johannes Climacus (S. Kierkegaard) (loose translation).

“The great and sad mistake of many people...is to imagine that those whom death has taken, leave us. They do not leave us. They remain. Where are they? In darkness? Oh, no! It is we who are in darkness. We do not see them, but they see us. Their eyes, radiant with glory, are fixed on our eyes...Oh, invisible consolation! Though invisible to us, our dead are not absent. They are living near us, transfigured—into light, into power, into love.”

—Karl Rahner (1904-1984)

“A professor is one who talks in someone else’s sleep.”

—W. H. Auden (1907–1973)

THE FIRST COURSE IN THE RELIGION, THEOLOGY, AND CULTURE CURRICULUM

The first course in Religious Studies aims to enhance critical reflection on religious belief and practice. It introduces students to the basic approaches by which scholars seek to understand what religion reveals about human beings—their societies, traditions, convictions, and aspirations. It provides an opportunity for students to enrich their understanding of their own religious lives and to better comprehend the diverse local and global communities of which they are a part. By attending to the cognitive and affective dimensions of human experience, this component of the core supports religious reflection and critical and synthetic thought.

• **Learning Goals of the RTC 1:**

(1) Knowledge Global Cultures—the intertwined development of global, including western, cultures, ideas, institutions, and religions.

(2) Habits of Mind & Heart:

• Complexity—an approach to understanding the world that appreciates ambiguity and nuance as

well as clarity and precision

- Critical Thinking—the ability to identify, reflect upon, evaluate, integrate, and apply different types of information and knowledge to form independent judgments
- Religious Reflection—questioning and clarifying beliefs through critical inquiry into faith and the religious dimensions of human existence.

• **Course Objectives:**

- (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 of 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; reflection)

REQUIRED READINGS

Salinger, Jerome David (J. D.). *Franny and Zooey*. New York: Bantam Books, 1964.

Feldmeier, Peter. *The Christian Tradition. A Historical and Theological Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

The Gospels of Saint Luke and Saint John. (Use any good, readable translation of the New Testament, such as the New American Bible, the New Revised Standard Version, or the New International Version. Many translations can be found online.)

Lane, Dermot. “The Cross of Christ as the Revelation of God.” In *Christ at the Center. Selected Issues in Christology*, 53-79. New York: Paulist, 1991; Dublin: Veritas, 1990 (in packet).

Tillich, Paul. “Symbols of Faith.” In *Main Works/ Hauptwerke*, vol. 5, *Writings on Religion*, edited by Robert Scharlemann, 250-256. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1988. Original work: *Dynamics of Faith* (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), 41-54 (in packet).

Selections from the Mystical Writings of Hildegard of Bingen, Meister Eckhart, and John Ruusbroec. In *An Anthology of Christian Mysticism*, edited and introduced by Harvey Egan, rev. ed. Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1996 [1991] (in packet).

Luther, Martin. *Eight Sermons at Wittenberg (1522)*. In Timothy F. Lull, ed., *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*, 414-444. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989 (in packet).

“Models of the Church,” edited by Frederick J. Parrella. A summary of Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church*, rev. ed., New York: Doubleday Image, 1987 (in packet).

OUTLINE OF TOPICS IN THE COURSE

This course will examine the Christian tradition both theologically and historically. Central themes include: (1) the meaning of religious experience and the person's encounter with God; (2) the background, life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus; (3) the nature and the development of the Christian Church and the meaning of its symbols and teachings; (4) ancient and medieval Christianity and the separation of Eastern and Western branches of Christianity; (5) the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century; (6) the ecumenical movement and the strengths and weaknesses of Christianity in the inter-religious and globalized world of the 21st century.

PAPERS AND EXAMS

EXAMS

There is *one* exam in this class, the final exam, to be given at the time assigned by the University:

The final exam consists of two parts:

(1) Objective Questions—100 multiple-choice questions to be answered on a scantron form.

(2) Final Report: The Christianity in Practice

Visit a local Christian Church in Santa Clara County (or elsewhere) for a Sunday worship service. In *three (2-3) pages*, report on the service: what did you learn about the belief system of the church members? Did the service move you or not? Was the service reflective of some of the ideas learned this quarter in this course? Speaking to some people at the Church might be helpful. You may want to refer to some of the readings or ideas discussed in the course.

One important rule: do **not** attend a service from your own tradition. For example, if you are Catholic, go to a Lutheran, Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal service, etc. Highly recommended would be a Greek or Russian Orthodox service. If you have no tradition, or are from a non-Christian tradition, you may choose *any* Christian Church service. You might want to attend with a friend in the class and work on the assignment together (you must submit separate papers.) In your report, be sure you tell the reader the name and address of the Church you have attended, the pastor, the time of worship, and the date you attended. ***Submit the Sunday bulletin, if there is one, with your report.***

Objectives fulfilled: 1 and 2. Students will experience diversity within the Christian tradition and reflect critically on these differences.

Papers

“Good writing is clear thinking made visible” (Bill Wheeler).

- Four papers and a brief final report are required for the course in the form used in the *Chicago Manual of Style*. The most recent edition of this work in popular form is this: *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers* by Kate L. Turabian, Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. This contains all the information on the mechanics of a term paper: capitalization, footnotes or endnotes, spelling, punctuation, bibliographies, typing, etc. Also recommended for style and good writing is William Strunk and E. B. White, *The Elements of Style*, 3rd ed., New York: Macmillan, 1979 (1935). This classic work contains chapters on elementary rules of usage, principles of composition, formation of style, matters of form, and words and expressions commonly misused in writing. Please follow the instructions on the **Writing Guides**, located at the beginning of the course packet, very carefully.

• Paper One: The Experience of God

An essay (minimum **four** pages) on the two stories *Franny and Zooey* that attempts, in the broadest sense, to answer this question: How does one learn to be authentically religious? Is religion only a personal experience or does it involve community and commitment? What does Christianity and the other great world religions have in common? How do they differ widely? From the texts: **(1)** What

does it mean to be with God before God said “Let there be light”; or **(2)** What does it mean to “shine one’s shoes for the Fat Lady”? **(3)** What does Seymour mean when he says that even if you are in a ditch with your throat cut, you must see the woman carrying a basket across the road? The student does *not* have to answer these questions *literally*; they are given as possible avenues of reflection on the stories.

Your essay should be a critical and personal reflection on the content of the two stories. Therefore, *use the text of the stories and make specific references to it*. Be certain this essay and all your essays have: **(1)** a clearly stated and defined thesis; **(2)** a clear, well-developed, and coherent argument based on the text of the stories as interpreted through your experience.

Sources: *Primary:* Salinger, *Franny and Zooey*
Secondary: Feldmeier, chapters 3, if helpful.
 The Gospels of Saint Luke and Saint John, if helpful.

Paper due: Tuesday, 4th week.

Objectives fulfilled: 1 and 2. Students will learn the central question in the major religions of East and West and use critical approaches to reflect on their own beliefs.

• Paper Two: Jesus

A theological essay (minimum **four** pages) on Jesus in the Gospels and the cross of Christ. What do the Gospels say about the God who is really God? What does the cross of Jesus mean? How is the Cross central to Christian faith and practice? Most important, how is the cross the revelation of the God who is really God, i.e., who is the God whom Jesus reveals in his life and death on the cross?

Sources: *Primary:* *Christ at the Centre*, chapter 3.
Primary: The Gospels of Luke and John
Secondary: Feldmeier, chapters 1 – 5.

Paper due: Thursday, 6th week.

Objectives fulfilled: 1 and 2. Students will use critical approaches to reflect on their own beliefs in the idea of God and what kind of God is present in Jesus.

• Paper Three: Great Writings of the Christian Tradition

Choice of One

(1) An essay (minimum **four** pages) based on the writings of the medieval mystics that consider these question(s): What was the world-view that inspired the mystics’ vision of life? Does this view make any sense to modern individuals today? How do your author(s) approach the meaning of God, faith, and the relation of their faith to daily life? If it is helpful, follow a theme that interested you in the first and/or second paper.

(2) An essay (minimum **four** pages) on the Eight Sermons at Wittenberg by Martin Luther. Select a theme that is of interest to you. Perhaps compare and contrast Luther’s idea of God with that of the medieval mystics. How are Luther’s ideas still relevant to the Christian churches today? In your

opinion, would he be more “Protestant” or “Catholic” today? Compare Luther to Tillich’s ideas of “Protestant principle” and “Catholic substance,” found in his understanding of symbols.

Sources: *Primary:* Selections from the mystical writings of Hildegard, Eckhart, and Ruusbroec.
Primary: Martin Luther. *Eight Sermons at Wittenberg (1522)*.
Secondary: Feldmeier, chapters 6–15.

Paper due: Thursday, 8th week.

Objectives fulfilled: 1 and 2. Students will reflect on two different eras, two approaches to God, and two historical traditions within Christianity; they will be able to critically reflect on their own religious traditions

• **Paper Four: A Historical or Theological Essay** (minimum 4 pages)

From Peter Feldmeier’s book, *The Christian Tradition. A Historical and Theological Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016, and other readings, select one of the following topic areas in the history of Christianity and write an essay on one of these question(s):

- (1) What is the importance of the Bible in Christianity? How does it differ as a principle of authority in Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and the in the different Protestant churches?
- (2) What are the primary differences among Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and the different Protestant churches with regard to (choose one or more): their idea of the spiritual life, their concept of church, and their relationship to the world?
- (3) What are the primary causes of the Reformation in the 16th century West, and how have four centuries changed our understanding of the meaning of “church” in both traditions?
- (4) How do Catholics, Lutherans, Calvinists, and the radical reformers differ on the idea of justification, the nature of the human person, the grace of God, and the question of good works?
- (5) What are some of the issues and factors facing the Christian churches’ attitude toward involvement with culture and the world today? What is the range of possible reactions and where do you personally stand?
- (6) How can Christians today make their faith in God and in Jesus relevant in a post-modern world?
- (7) Choose a particular problem facing contemporary Christians:
 - (a) the role of women in the church
 - (b) Christian teaching on homosexuality
 - (c) social justice
 - (d) a viable and healthy Christian sexual ethic
 - (e) “spiritual but not religious” and the meaning of prayer and sacraments in such a world-view.
- (8) Make up a question of your own from the readings, especially Feldmeier’s book, of the course and answer it. Have it approved by me in person, email, or telephone.

Note: This final paper may involve some additional research—an article or chapter in a book that explicitly deals with the topic you have chosen.

Paper due: Thursday, 10th week.

Objectives fulfilled: 1 and 2. Students will be able understand and evaluate the ambiguity and com-

plexity of different theological and historical questions; they will also be able to use critical approaches to reflect on their own beliefs and the religious dimensions of human existence.

NOTE WELL ABOUT PAPERS

On form:

- (1) Be sure to number the pages of your paper and have a title page with your name and the title of the paper. The title page is NOT page 1.
- (2) No bibliography or “works cited” page is required. All the information is contained in the footnotes. Learn to do footnotes in the proper manner. For this, consult the writing guides in your reading packet at the very beginning of the packet. This will give you all the information as well as a template for books and articles, chapters in books, et al..
- (3) All papers must be double-spaced with no additional space between paragraphs. (Go into “Paragraph” under the “Format” menu and be sure that “Spacing” on the lower left has 0 pt. under “Before” and “After.”)

On deadlines:

- (1) The first three papers must be received by the last scheduled class of this course, quarter, Thursday of the 10th week. *No exceptions can be made.*

Note well: there are deadlines and there are consequences if the student does not submit his or her paper on time. Very late papers may be returned with a grade but without comment. Late work is usually substandard work.

- (2) The final paper is due **no later than the final exam.**

ATTENDANCE

A student is expected to attend **all** classes and the material covered and announcements are the student’s responsibility. There are often reasons a student *cannot* or *does* not attend class. Failure to attend class means that the student will be unfamiliar with the assigned reading material as well as ideas presented and discussed in class for the required papers. This cannot but help have a negative impact upon the student’s final grade. Classes are given only once: if you miss class, it is your responsibility to keep up to date with the course.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT IN CLASS

Please observe the following rules of professional conduct in a class:

- Students should make every effort to arrive at the classroom on time.
- Students should be suitably dressed for an academic forum.
- No one is permitted to leave the class without permission of the professor until the class has been dismissed except for a *serious* medical emergency. **Restroom facilities are available before and after the class, *not* during the class.**
- Electronics: cell phones, iPhones, iPods, iPads, electronic tablets, et al. may *never* be used during class time, **except for course material.** Please be sure your cell phone is turned off. You would NEVER want your phone to ring in my class. Do not leave cell phones on your desk or on your lap. ***If the professor sees you texting, you will be asked to withdraw from the course***

immediately.

• You may use your computer to take notes. Again, if the professor sees you using your laptop for any other purpose than the work of this class, ***you will be asked to withdraw from the course immediately.***

Thank you for observing these simple and necessary rules.

GRADING POLICY

(1) Grades will be based on two factors:

(i) the **four** papers required for the course—80%

(ii) the final exam. Including report of church worship visit;

Weight of papers: Paper 1: 20%; Paper 2: 20%; Paper 3: 20%; Paper 4: 20%; Final Exam: 20%

(2) Papers will be evaluated on the basis of the student's ability: (a) to reveal to the reader his/her command of the assigned readings in both depth and breadth; (b) to develop a clear and coherent argument of the student's choosing based upon the required readings. *References to the texts—citations or direct quotations—are essential to a successful grade in all of the papers.*

(3) The grade of Incomplete will be given out only under special and unusual circumstances. Any student requesting an "I" must have a serious reason for doing so. For students who receive a grade of *Incomplete*: All work required for the course must be submitted no later than the beginning of the fourth week of the next term. Failure to do so means that the grade will automatically be turned over to an "F" by the Office of Student Records at the beginning of the fifth week.

(4) Students who do not attend class on a consistent basis, so that they are known by the professor and other students to be a member of the course in good standing; students who fail to contact the professor with the reason for missing class: if you do not withdraw before the required date to receive a "W", you will **not** receive a passing grade or suffer a severe reduction in your grade, whether you submit any work at the end of the term or not.

GRADES AND NUMERICAL EQUIVALENTS

The numerical equivalents are based on the University's 4.0 grading system:

A = 4.00; A- = 3.7; B+/A = 3.5; B+ = 3.3; B/B+ = 3.15; B = 3; B- = 2.7; C+/B = 2.5; C+ = 2.3; C/C+ = 2.15; C = 2.00; C- = 1.7, D/F = 0.7; F=0.

Cheating can take many forms. Please be aware that if you are caught in a situation of academic dishonesty, you will receive an F in the assignment or the exam. The most common form of cheating is plagiarism. Note carefully: *whenever you use the precise words or even the ideas of another, you must give a complete reference (author, title, city, publisher, date, page number) to your source text either in a footnote or endnote.* You may also *not* plagiarize another student's ideas or words.

At the same time, it is perfectly legitimate, even desirable, for students to talk over their topics, exchange ideas, and edit each other's papers. This is an important part of the process of learning: sharing your creative ideas with your peers. This presumes that all students collaborating with others both give and receive from such fruitful collaboration.

Santa Clara University is implementing an Academic Integrity pledge designed to deepen the understanding of and commitment to honesty and academic integrity.

The Academic Integrity Pledge 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.”

I ask that you affirm this pledge and apply these principles to your work in this class.

DISABILITIES RESOURCES

If you have a disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact Disabilities Resources, Benson 216, 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.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION (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 and dating violence or stalking, we encourage you to tell someone promptly. For more information, please go to www.scu.edu/studentlife/about/osl.cfm 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 or <http://stage-www.scu.edu/hr/quick-links/ethics-point/>

Extended Statement on Title IX and Reporting Practices (adapted, with permission, from Scott Lewis, J.D.)

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 involving 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 Office of Student Life.

If you would like to reach out directly to the Office of Student Life for assistance, you can contact them at 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. Reports may be submitted online through www.scu.edu/osl/report or anonymously through Ethicspoint: 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 Wellness Center, 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 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.

SCHEDULE

A quarter is ten weeks long. The following is a tentative reading schedule so you will know how to plan your reading intelligently. Try to follow it as best as you can. It is your responsibility, *not* that of the professor, to see to it that you are reading in a timely manner.

For the week of:

Week 1	Salinger, <i>Franny and Zooey</i> ; Feldmeier, chapters 9 and 12, if helpful.
Week 2	Salinger; Feldmeier, chapters 1–4.
Week 3	The Gospels of Luke and John; Feldmeier, chapters 5–8.
Week 4	Lane, “The Cross”; Feldmeier, chapters 3–9.
Week 5	Lane, “The Cross...”; Feldmeier, chapters 3–9.
Week 6	Feldmeier, chapters 10–16
Week 7	Selections from the Mystics, Luther’s sermons.
Week 8	Selections from the Mystics, Luther’s sermons, Tillich, “Symbols...”
Week 9	Feldmeier, chapters 17–21.
Week 10	Final week of the spring quarter; finish any uncompleted readings and complete final paper and church visit.
Week 11	Final Exam

CONSULTATION

My office is in **Kenna Hall, Suite 300, Room H**. If you wish to consult with me at any time about your papers or any other issue related to the course or your education at Santa Clara University, please make an appointment after class or by email or telephone for a mutually convenient time. You may call me at home on any day of the week at a reasonable hour with questions you may have. Be sure to leave your telephone number if you reach my voice mail in my office or home. It is always preferable to make an appointment after class or by telephone or email. A quarter goes very quickly and it is up to you to keep up with the assignments. (*So, turn off those video games once in a while!*)

Office telephone: 554.4714
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 Email: fparrella@scu.edu

*“When I shall be dead, tell the kingdom of the earth
that I have loved it much more than I
have ever dared to say.”*