



### **RTC3: The Theology of Marriage TESP 124 (Paradigm Shift Pathway)**

Tuesday/Thursday 8:30- 10:10 Kenna 104

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Office Hours: TTHR 10:30-11:30 and by appointment in Kenna 313

#### **Course Description**

This course addresses this central question: "Who or what is the Marital Community?" In Catholic teaching the family is called "the domestic Church." We shall trace the way Christianity imagined married life for both personal and corporate responses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Having inspected this history and development, we shall explore marriage as a signal way to nourish and express the Christian life. In this course we shall explore the Church's teachings about marriage to see if they display a coherent intellectual understanding of marriage. A hallmark of Catholic Theology is its intellectual coherence; we shall be looking for such coherence with the contemporary intellectual landscape.

*Note: Only those who have taken RTC 1 and RTC 2 and who have completed 88 units, will earn credit for RTC 3 courses. If you have not met those requirements, you will not earn Core-RTC 3 credit for the course. There are no exceptions and no waivers to this requirement.*

#### **The Place of RTC3 in the Core (Why do I have to take 3 Religion classes?)**

The University values critical reflection about Religion, Theology and Culture. It recognizes the distinctive relationship that Theology in particular has with Ethics, that is the study of how human persons make decisions about what enhances human life and what diminishes or is destructive to human flourishing. Christian Theology has long described Family Life as a "good." The presumption that Family life and marriage are "goods" is not a simple "given" in our contemporary situation. The claim that marriage and family life lead to human flourishing requires critical inspection. This course engages that task. However, we do so using University-level discourse that begins with central intelligible and coherent questions. University-level discourse does not begin by stipulating that marriage is a "good." Such discourse requires that we build a case for such an ethical claim. In TESP 124, we build our case theologically, that is, we position ourselves in the critical discipline of Christian Theology and apply the tools of that discipline to the contemporary questions about marriage and family life.

The Core Requirement directs us to approach our task from these two directions:

- 1. Students will identify diverse perspectives and evaluate ethical positions on contemporary questions.*
- 2. Students will evaluate and apply insights from the study of religion to open-ended questions facing contemporary society.*

In TESP 124, we approach these questions theologically. That means that we create a

dialogue with Catholic Christianity's truth claims about marriage and family.

### **Texts**

Readings are posted on *Canvas*.

Two films viewed in segments in class: *Lantana* and *Lars and the Real Girl*

### **Requirements**

**Critical Reflection Essay: (65%)** 7-10 page essay that engages the narrative of one of the selected films in order to illuminate a feature of the class material on the Theology of Marriage.

This task is an exercise in conversation with one of the films. The purpose of this assignment is to reflect upon your own ideas and/or experiences of religious teaching and/or practice in conversation with two other partners. These partners are our shared texts, *Lantana* OR *Lars and The Real Girl* and an insight from the scholarly community. (Scholarship is presented in the class lectures and in the Readings posted on Canvas; you may use one or the other or both.) The essays should have these features:

1. Briefly summarize an idea or selection from one of the films. This could be a scene, a quotation, the summary analysis of a character, a description of a conflict in the narrative, an interpretation of the film maker's intention, and other ways of inter-acting with the film.
2. Use at least one insight from the class notes OR one of the Readings. This could be a framework, a definition, an argument from one of the articles, a tradition in Christianity or other insights. You may have arrived at an insight when taking class notes or when one of the Readings intersected with another class you have taken or with principles from your own major or your own art or science or other skilled activity.
3. Create a conversation between 1 and 2 with your own critical reflections.

The essays should be written in First Person; do not use footnotes. When citing the text place the page number(s) in parentheses at the end of the line. This is not a Research Paper; it is an exercise in Creative Non-Fiction. One of the most effective ways to write Creative Non-Fiction is to make use of Framing. See below for a description of this rhetorical type.

The essay should be between 8-12 pages long. All papers submitted during the course should be formatted at 8.5 x 11 inches of main body text, double spaced, must have a 1.5 margin on the left and an inch margin on the right, top and bottom. Please make sure the pages are numbered. Place your last name in a footer so that it appears on each page. Finally, name the file with your last name and first initial as in vancertrembaths.doc or vancetrembaths.rtf or pages. **DO NOT SUBMIT A PAPER COPY. All essays are due by 10:00 pm on June 13, the day after the last exam date.**

### **Short Reading Responses (25%)**

These assignments will be posted on Camino. They are 1-2 page responses to selected articles. The calendar for these will be posted early in the quarter.

### **Attendance: (10%)**

Class is important. As students at Santa Clara University, you are members of the Academy. Engaged presence in the class is not a category that I am willing to quantify ahead of time; it requires an exercise of judgement that I shall make as a more seasoned member of the Academy. Your membership in the Academy is a form of professional activity and so class attendance is expected. I do not expect you to miss class anymore than an employer expects you to be absent. So there are no "free absences" in this class. That said, there are situations that come up that will mean that you need to miss class. When that happens, I expect to hear ahead of time by way of email. I also ask that you arrange with at least one other student in the class to exchange emails so that you may ask that person for the notes from class. If absence is excessive and I make the judgement that you were not properly engaged as a member of the Academy, I will reduce some percentage of the 10% that is earned by attendance.

### **Housekeeping**

- Please use your SCU email account. This will be the major way that I communicate with students.
- If you use a laptop, please do not be rude by using it for anything other than taking notes. The only program that should be open is your word-processing/note-taking program. Please treat your colleagues and me with professional respect by not opening a browser during class time; class time is for our work together not for your private work. Please also do not put me in the position of having to monitor your behavior. If you use the

laptop for any other purpose, you are not engaged in our academic task appropriately. You are not fully present to the class if you are texting someone during class. In addition, your lack of attention to the professor and your academic colleagues is rude and distracting.

Your phone or other devices should be turned off during class. My phone is; I expect yours to be too.

### **Disability Accommodation Policy**

*The Office of Disabilities Resources* has been designated by the University to ensure access for all students with disabilities to all academic programs and University resources. Types of disabilities include medical, physical, psychological, attention-deficit, and learning disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are provided to minimize the effects of a student's disability and to maximize the potential for success. Santa Clara University follows the law that states: "Professors cannot change essential course requirements." Any accommodation must be arranged through the Office of Disabilities Resources. From Undergraduate Bulletin: "To request academic accommodations for a disability, students must contact Disability Resources (408) 554-4111; TTY (408) 554-5445. Students must register with Disabilities Resources and provide appropriate documentation to that office prior to receiving accommodations."

Please visit the Office's Website for more information.

<http://www.scu.edu/advising/learning/disabilities/>

### **Academic Integrity**

Students need to be aware of and follow the university's academic integrity policy. See <http://www.scu.edu/academics/bulletins/undergraduate/Academic-Integrity.cfm>. Plagiarism will lower your grade and may result in an F for the course.

**Calendar TBD** The Calendar will be posted on Canvas.