

## TESP 4 – The Christian Tradition

Spring 2016  
TTh 3:50-5:30PM  
Kenna Hall 109  
Professor Enrico Beltramini  
Office Hours: By appointment after class in Kenna 317

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

### Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to both the study and the practice of Christian theology. We will do this in two major stages. The first will cover the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, and the second will cover the New Testament. That is, using the lens of the Bible, we will investigate the meaning of salvation which is reflected in the materials that we encounter. The intention of this course is to make available to each student a foundation in Christian theology which will be adequate both for personal faith and for subsequent theological activity.

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

Students will:

- I. Describe and compare the central religious ideas and practices from several traditions or within one, and from at least two globally distinct regions. (Global Cultures, Critical Thinking, Complexity)
- II. Use critical approaches to reflect on their own beliefs and the religious dimensions of human existence. (Critical Thinking; Complexity, Religious Reflection)

### Course Goals

The overall learning objective of this course is to understand how Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity understood their relationship to God, and as a derivative, to other human beings, both individually and corporately.

### Required Texts

*The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha: New Revised Standard Version*. Edited by Michael D. Croogan, *et al.* Fourth Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. ISBN-10: 0195289609.

### Assessment

1. **Thoughtful, Active, Creative, Critical Engagement** (10%) – 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.

**Note Card Summaries.** To support preparation for robust in-class discussion, each student is expecting to prepare for each of the 18 classes (excluding reviews and exams) a brief, written reflection on readings and other assignments in advance. This preparation will be summarized on one 3 inch by 5 inch note card, which the student will bring to class. These cards will be collected without warning periodically throughout the quarter.

**Quizzes.** At least two 10-point quizzes will be given during quarter to assess the thoroughness and thoughtfulness of student reading. Students will be permitted to use their note card summaries to complete the quizzes.

2. **Lived Tradition Presentation** (15%) – Working in groups of 9 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. Students are responsible to identify and select the two academic articles, but professor is available to provide suggestions and alternatives. The presentation should use images or video clips to illustrate the topic of the presentation. Presentation groups will be formed on April 7, when topics will also be selected. Students will be required to present in class, as a group, on **June 7 at 3:50**. The list of topic suggestions includes: 1) God; 2) Israel; 3) Other Nations; 4) Gospels; 5) Revelation; 6) Christian Apostles.

3. **Christian Service Attendance** (15%) – Each student must attend 3 different Christian worship services in denominations with which s/he is not familiar (e.g. Baptist, Episcopalian, Evangelical/ Nondenominational, Quaker, Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, Coptic, Armenian). Students can use Internet to identify the churches to visit or ask fellow students, friends, and the professor. After attending each of the 3 services, students will write a 500-word summary reflection of the visit. A list of topics to be covered visiting will be provided the first day of class. **The 3 summary reflections must be completed and turned in class on May 12**. Together with the 3 summary reflections, students will also turn in a **card signed by a worship leader at the 3 churches** visited to verify her or his visit.
4. **Midterm Exam** (15%) - An open-book/open-note midterm examination will be in class on **May 5 at 3:50**. The exam will be comprised of both multiple choice and short essay questions.
5. **Critical Reflection Essays** (30% -10% each) – Students will write three 1000-1500 word essays during the course (that's about 5-8 pages). The topics to cover are: 1) Genesis 1; 2) John 1; 3) Letter to the Romans.

Essays 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; and (3) 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, with 1 inch margins. Students are encouraged to print on both sides of the page if possible. Please staple papers in the top, left corner.

6. **Final Exam** (15%) - Students will be required to take an in-class, closed-book final examination on **June 9 at 3:50**. 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.
7. **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.
8. **Final Portfolio** - Students are required to keep all their work, including a.) 18 note card summaries, b.) 2 quizzes, c.) 1 group presentation, d.) 3 Christian service attendance summary reflections, e.) 1 Midterm, f.) 3 critical reflection essays, and g.) eventual extra credit assignments, in a portfolio, which will be turned in at the end of the quarter before the final grade is assigned. Students are suggested to make a copy of the portfolio for their records. 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, **June 9, at 3:50**.

## 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/studentlife/resources/upload/Academic-Integrity-Protocol-Document.pdf>

<http://www.scu.edu/studentlife/resources/upload/Academic-Integrity-brochure-2014.pdf>

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://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/plagiarism/>

### Disability Accommodation

If you have a documented disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact Disabilities Resources, Benson 216, <http://www.scu.edu/studentlife/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 initiate a conversation with me about your accommodations during my office hours within the first two weeks of class. Students who are pregnant and parenting may also be eligible for accommodations. Accommodations will only be provided after I have verification of your accommodations as approved by Disabilities Resources, and with sufficient lead time for me to arrange testing or other accommodations. 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, tablets, 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.

### 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**

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	OTHER ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
<b>March 29</b>	Course Introduction: The religious mind. The Christian mind. Christian Tradition. Syllabus Review	Syllabus	
<b>March 31</b>	"In the Beginning." The Creation of the Christian Story in Hebrew Tradition (1)	Genesis 1	
<b>April 5</b>	"In the Beginning." The Creation of the Christian Story in Hebrew Tradition (2)	Genesis 1	SHORT QUIZ
<b>April 7</b>	Eden	Genesis 2-3	PRESENTATION GROUPS FORMATION
<b>April 12</b>	Noah and the Flood	Genesis 4-6	
<b>April 14</b>	Tower of Babel	Genesis 7-11	FIRST REFLECTION ESSAY DUE
<b>April 19</b>	The People of the Covenant. The Sacrifice of Isaac	Genesis 12-22	
<b>April 21</b>	Divine Council	Deuteronomy 32	
<b>April 26</b>	Divine Warfare	Exodus 8-12	SHORT QUIZ
<b>April 28</b>	Through the Sea	Exodus 14	
<b>May 3</b>	Review of the course so far, main assumptions, themes, and outputs		
<b>May 5</b>	IN CLASS MIDTERM		
<b>May 10</b>	Incarnation (1)	Matthew 1, Mark 1	
<b>May 12</b>	Incarnation (2)	Luke 1-3; John 1	CHURCHES VISIT SUMMARY REFLECTIONS
<b>May 17</b>	Resurrection	John 19-21	
<b>May 19</b>	All Israel will Be Saved	Letter to the Romans	SECOND REFLECTION ESSAY DUE
<b>May 24</b>	God is Love	1 John	
<b>May 26</b>	Spirits in Prison?	1 Peter, 2 Peter	
<b>May 31</b>	End of the Age	Revelation 1-5	THIRD REFLECTION ESSAY

		DUE
<b>June 2</b>	Review of the course, main assumptions, themes, and outputs	
<b>June 7</b>	IN CLASS PRESENTATIONS	
<b>June 9</b>	IN CLASS FINAL EXAM	FINAL PORTFOLIO DUE