

TESP 124RSS Sally Vance-Trembath Spring 2017

51805 Theology Ethics & Spirituality 124R:RSS: Theology of Marriage-TR 02:00 PM Kenna 104

TESP 124 Theology of Marriage RTC3 Religious Studies Seminar: RS and Honors Program Students ONLY—Limited to 18 Students

Prof. Vance-Trembath

Tues/Thursday 2-3:40 in 104 Kenna Hall

NO LAPTOPS, iPADS, OR OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES DURING CLASS TIME

(Paradigm Shift Pathway)

Office Hours: 313 Kenna Hall 11-12:00 on Tuesdays and Thursday and by appointment

Email: svancetrembath@scu.edu

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; we shall also inspect the teachings through the theological notion of "reception." Reception is the process whereby a teaching articulated by the magisterium is integrated into the Christian life of the community. This notion of reception displays the way that the Catholic tradition takes seriously the human mind and imagination. In this course, we shall discover how this process works by applying it to marriage and family life. All Christian teaching should nourish the Christian life and animate service to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. A hallmark of Catholic Theology is its intellectual coherence; we shall be looking for such coherence with the contemporary intellectual landscape.

Place in the Core: RTC3

The University values critical reflection about religion. This course addresses that value by exploring the two foundational learning outcomes for the University Core requirement. They are:

- 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 religious questions in explicit dialogue with Catholic Christianity's truth claims about the human community's relationship with the Living God. This is a course in the *theology* of marriage. In true and long-standing Catholic style, we mark use of the critical disciplines from many

vectors in the academy in order to approach humane questions with coherence and integrity.

Texts:

Reading posted on *Camino*. The link for Lessons contains a folder for Reading Assignments

Prodigal Summer by Barbara Kingsolver OR *The Good Husband* by Gail Godwin OR *The Love Hunter* OR *North of Hope* by Jon Hassler.

Course Goals:

- Students will be able to describe and explain the Christian theologies of Creation, Incarnation and Sanctification as each one intersects with, and is displayed in, Christian communities.
- Students will be able to assess how or whether these teachings are consistently expressed in various Christian notions of family from early Christianity to the present.
- Students will be able to describe the nature and mission of the Church for the purpose of inspecting the Catholic teaching that the family is the domestic Church.
- Students will be able to describe the function of the Liturgical Year in individual spiritual life and in family life. (The presumption here is that the Liturgical Year clusters Creation, Incarnation and Sanctification into a teaching/practice framework that can animate marriage and family life.
- Students will learn the shift from deductive to the inductive reflection that is displayed in contemporary theology in order to engage insights from contemporary scholarship regarding intimate relationships and family life.
- Students will acquire the tools for applying these insights to their own discernment when they begin to reflect upon their own committed, enduring commitments.

Requirements:

Critical Analysis of 2 Readings in Dialogue (30%) Instructions on Camino
Class Attendance and Engagement: 30%

Critical Book Report 40% 7-10-page essay that engages the narrative of one of the selected novels in order to illuminate a feature of the class material on the Theology of Marriage.

Attendance and Participation:

Class attendance is important. Attendance at all class meetings is expected. Attendance in class is your professional activity; part of your performance is careful, prepared attendance. Your grade will be lowered for excessive absences. The daily reading outside class will act as the frame for the material presented in class each day. The readings provide you material that we shall be placing in conversation with the material presented in class. In this way, each class day models the form of analysis that I will be asking you to use when you write your paper. The class is incomplete without the material presented each day. If you

miss class, it is your responsibility to get the notes and to learn the material for the day you missed. Note:

- I shall not re-teach the material; that is not the purpose of office hours. I will certainly clarify any questions you have based on class notes that you have carefully reviewed.
- If you are sick or unable to attend, please notify the professor. Notifying the professor of illness or necessary absence is both courteous and professional.
- I do not have a "policy" regarding "free absences." I do not expect you to miss class any more than your employer "expects" you to miss work. I do however, understand that things happen and illnesses strike us all.
- Attendance is assumed in this class. If you do not plan to attend class every class meeting, I suggest you drop the course.
- I do not quantify excessive absences to a set number. I make that judgment based on many factors that have come to be my judgment process.

Theological Presuppositions:

Theology is critical reflection upon faith. Because this class is a university class, the critical reflection, it will be even farther away from catechesis than any adult education or more advanced high school classes you may have attended. One of the hallmarks of Catholicism is how it has embraced and encouraged the intellectual life. At the same time, this critical reflection has as its object the most personal and meaningful aspects of human life. It reflects upon our experience of the Living God and that God's personal presence in each person's inner life and in the corporate life of the community. Therefore, a constitutive part of the critical reflection is the respect for and attention to the various experiences of God that all of us will bring to this study. I shall work to achieve this standard and ask that you do so as well. While this course may indeed enhance and develop your own faith life, it is not materially about your faith life; it is materially concerned with critical reflection upon the meaning of human existence and God's existence. Wherever you as an individual person find yourself with regard to these questions of meaning, will in no way effect the grade you earn in this course. You earn a grade that describes how well you engage these questions at the university level.

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/>
(Links to an external site.)

Academic Integrity:

Students need to be aware of and follow the university's academic integrity policy.

Please review the University's policy regarding academic integrity

<http://www.scu.edu/academics/bulletins/undergraduate/Academic-Integrity.cfm>
(Links to an external site.)

Violations of academic integrity through cheating or plagiarism may result in failure of the course.