

TESP 187: Christ and Catholic Theology Summer 2016 (Session II)

Instructor

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“Office” hours (TBA, via Skype)

Course Description

This Religion 3 course focuses on a central element of Catholic theology: the nature of Christ. Christian theology includes treatment of two major types of Christology – Christology from above, which looks at the divinity of Christ, and Christology from below, which considers the humanity of Christ. The bulk of our time will be spent looking at the humanity of Christ, but early in the course we will explore the dual nature of the second person of the Trinity. This course does not presume affiliation with or deep knowledge of the Catholic – or even Christian – tradition, as the texts we consider should be adequately engaging and clear regardless of previous exposure to the concepts and topics at hand. After looking at Jesus and Bible, Jesus and history, and Jesus and ethics, we will turn to a number of different contemporary Christologies. As we examine these different articulations of the person of Jesus Christ, we will keep in mind the contemporary context and the ramifications of particular understandings of Christ for Christians and non-Christians alike.

Objectives

Students will:

- 1 Identify diverse perspectives and evaluate ethical positions on contemporary questions
- 2 Evaluate and apply insights from the study of religion to open-ended questions facing contemporary society

There are three additional objectives beyond the two overarching RTC 3 objectives:

- 3 Students will be able to describe and assess the work of the Jesus Seminar, reflecting on what they perceive as its potential contributions to scholarship as well as its possible liabilities
- 4 Students will be able to describe how Christianity was shaped by interactions with the Roman Empire, and reflect on the effects this

arrangement had on the future of Christianity

- 5 Students will be able to compare a number of contemporary Christologies, and give an account as to why so many have proliferated over the centuries

Texts

The following texts are required, and are available at the SCU Bookstore.

Borg, Marcus J. *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time: The Historical Jesus & the Heart of Contemporary Faith*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1994.

Johnson, Elizabeth A. *Consider Jesus: Waves of Renewal in Christology*. New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1990.

Additional course readings, recommended and required, will be available on Camino. Individuals making single copies for their private use are not required to pay copyright fees.

Structure

The course is divided into three units, organized into three modules on our Camino course site. The first unit focuses on Jesus and the Bible (with an emphasis on the notion of the historical Jesus), Jesus and history (with a focus on the idea of the Christ of faith), and Jesus and ethics. The first unit provides the introductory material needed to complete the two objectives for RTC 3 courses, which are met in units two and three, as well as through online discussion threads throughout the course. The second unit turns to voices that could be said to be at the margins of theological consideration, including feminist Christology, liberation Christology, and queer Christology. The third and final unit of the course invites students to participate as members of the “Council of Santa Clara,” which gives each student the charge to present an image of Jesus they have been studying throughout the course. In addition, each student will explain both how that image connects with a contemporary issue, and also articulate the ethical implications of that image for Christians and non-Christians. This final element of the presentations is one of several opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of objectives 3.1 and 3.2.

Requirements and Grading

Participation	40%
Précis of final paper, due 11: 59 p.m. on August 2	10%
Book/article review, due 11:59 p.m. on August 11	10%
Final presentation, due at 11:59 p.m. on August 23	15%
Final paper, due at noon on August 30	25%

Regular participation in this course is vital for appropriation of the course material. We will discuss how studying the person of Jesus Christ can contribute insights to questions in contemporary society. The diversity of perspectives among both students and the authors under study will give us great resources for ethical reflection. Participation includes posting a text introduction and a video introduction, as well as engagement with the material through various exercises, including regular posted reflections, quizzes, and comments on peer discussion board posts. Regular reflections are opportunities to demonstrate mastery of the material associated with the first two units of the course, which center on the historical Jesus, Jesus and ethics, early church debates about the nature of Christ, and unexamined voices in the tradition. Satisfies Objectives 3.1 and 3.2 for RTC 3 courses, as well as Objectives 3-5.

The précis of your final paper is a short paper proposal. It should be at least one page, and it is designed to encourage you to think about your final paper early in the quarter, since the book/article review and class presentation are linked with the final assignment, too. Please include the image of Jesus you intend to explore, the contemporary issue you plan to link with that image of Jesus, and at least four sources (fully cited) that will help you with your paper.

The five-page book/article review is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your ability to summarize the main points of a book or article, and then to offer a critique of the work. If you opt for a book review, simply write a summary and critique of a book related to the image of Jesus you chose for your final paper. If you choose to write an article review, you must also provide an annotated bibliography with three additional sources (for a total of four sources).

The 10-minute video presentation showcases your independent research on one of the many images of Jesus that have been advanced in the Catholic (and broader Christian) tradition. Good preparation for this presentation will provide a smooth transition into writing the final paper, as the presentation also requires that you link your image of Jesus with a contemporary issue and offer insights into the ethical ramifications of that Christology for Christians and non-Christians today. Satisfies Objectives 3.1 and 3.2 for RTC 3 courses.

The 10-12-page final paper is designed to demonstrate mastery of Objectives 3.1 and 3.2 (listed towards the beginning of this syllabus). It is due at noon on Tuesday, August 30. The paper consists of three sections:

- Using secondary sources, identify and describe the Christology you have chosen. If you would like to cite Scripture passages aligned with this image of Jesus, that is certainly acceptable.
- Select and describe a contemporary issue that can be put into dialogue with your image of Jesus. After naming and describing the issue, explain the connection between the issue and the image of Jesus you have chosen. If

you focus on the image of Jesus as liberator, a pertinent issue could be sex trafficking or political/military oppression, to name a couple of examples.

- In the final section of your paper, assess the ethical implications of the image of Jesus you have chosen for Christians and non-Christians today.

Grading Scale

A: 94-100

A-: 90-93

B+: 87-89

B: 83-86

B-: 80-82

C+: 77-89

C: 74-76

C-: 70-73

D: 66-69

F: 65 and below

Calendar

Unit One (Weeks 1-3) – Who Do You Say That I Am? Classical Theological Positions and Sources

Part One: Mapping Biblical Portraits of Jesus

Read the Gospel of Mark and the Gospel of John (any version will do, including one you find online). After reading, create your first discussion board post, and respond to TWO peer posts - Due July 28 at 11:59 p.m. (Pacific).

Your brief written introduction is also due today at 11:59 p.m. (Pacific)

Part Two: The Historical Jesus According to the Jesus Seminar

Read pp. vii – 88 of *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*, and watch the clip on Camino under Unit 1, Part 2. After completing your assignment, read 96-137 of *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*, and apply any relevant insights to your peers' discussion posts - Due August 2 at 11:59 p.m. (Pacific)

The précis for your final paper is due August 2 at 11:59 p.m. (Pacific).

Part Three: The Christ of Faith as Examined in Early Church Controversies

Read Gerhard Lohfink, "The So-Called Historical Jesus," in *Jesus of Nazareth*, selections on Gnosticism, Marcion, and Irenaeus of Lyons, as well as "Early Christianity" from Justo González's *The Story of Christianity* (on Camino).

Complete the reading questions, watch the mini-lecture (posted in Unit 1, Part 3) and take the assigned quiz - Due August 4 at 11:59 p.m.

(Pacific).

Part Four: Jesus and Ethics

Read selected writings by John Stuart Mill, William Spohn, and James Keenan (Camino), and watch the deontology lecture (in Unit 1, Part 4). Write a post on the discussion board that indicates which of these methods (utilitarianism, deontology, or virtue ethics) seems most useful for following Jesus' example today, and comment on the posts of TWO peers - Due August 9 at 11:59 p.m. (Pacific)

Your video introduction is also due at 11:59 p.m. (Pacific) on August 9.

Unit Two (Weeks 3-4) – That Which He Has Not Taken Up, He Has Not Saved – Looking to Unexamined Voices

Read pp. 1-15, 35-63, and 97-126 in *Consider Jesus*, and complete the quiz by August 11 at 11:59 p.m. (Pacific).

Read Chapters 4, 5, 7, 8, and 10 in *Christology from the Margins* (Camino) - Due by August 16 at 11:59 p.m. (Pacific).

Students will select one of the listed chapters in *Christology from the Margins* and provide a 2-3 pp. summary (complete with citations) for fellow students on Camino. Each student will then read peer summaries and comment on them, connecting peers' summaries with the chapter upon which she or he focused.

Unit Three (Week 5) – The Council of Santa Clara

In Week 5, students will upload their presentations on the Christology they chose to focus on, sharing the image of Christ from the perspective of the author(s) whose texts were consulted for the research, stating which contemporary issue they explored through the lens of that Christology, and assessing the ethical implications of that image of Jesus for Christians and non-Christians today.

Students are expected to watch all presentations, and to be a good audience for their fellow classmates. Each student will field questions after presenting, which means that each of you will post a question in response to each student's presentation, and that you will answer your peers' questions via discussion thread. Participation in the Council of Santa Clara constitutes a significant portion of the participation grade.

Student Presentations are due on Camino at 11:59 p.m. (Pacific) on Tuesday, August 23. Questions must be posted for your peers by noon (12:00 p.m. Pacific) on Thursday, August 25, and each presenter must

respond to these questions by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, August 26.

Final papers are due on Camino at noon on Tuesday, August 30.

Policies

Attendance:

Participation constitutes a significant portion of the grade, and so attendance will be measured by means of your regular contributions to discussion threads (a minimum of two thoughtful posts per week, unless otherwise specified. That being said, I do understand that extenuating circumstances can interfere with this requirement, so it is your responsibility to be in communication if you anticipate that your posts will be delayed. Students who do not meet the minimum post requirements will face a reduced participation grade

Late Work:

Any assignment turned in past the deadline will result in a drop of half a letter grade for every day (or portion thereof) that it is late. For instance, an assignment that is submitted at 1 a.m. with an 11:59 p.m. deadline (i.e., roughly an hour late) will earn no better than an A- if the work is otherwise perfect. Please plan accordingly, though if you have a legitimate emergency, please be in communication.

A word on academic integrity:

The university has published materials related to academic integrity, including the following resource:

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

As a student at Santa Clara University, you are likely familiar with the three Cs: conscience, competence, and compassion. These values are a helpful way to think about academic integrity. By going against one's conscience, one fails to demonstrate how much has been learned in a class (competence) by taking the easy way out. With the opportunity to attain a world-class education that is centered on educating the whole person, maintaining integrity in all spheres of life will help to foster compassion for a world that so desperately needs it. Cutting corners now serves no one, and violations of the university's academic integrity policy may result in a failing grade in this course. To the three Cs, let's add a fourth: citation. Any work that is used to bolster your argument but which did not originate from your own brilliant mind must be cited. If you have questions about this, please do not hesitate to ask.

Disabilities Syllabus Statement:

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.

Title IX Syllabus Statement:

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 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

Statement for Syllabi on Reporting Practices (adapted, with permission, from Scott Lewis's SCU presentation on Title IX)

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 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. 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 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 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.