

TESP 4 – The Christian Tradition

Winter 2016
TTh 12:10-1:50PM
ENGR 106
Professor Enrico Beltramini
Office Hours: By appointment before or 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 a cultural, historical, scriptural, and theological exploration of the Christian tradition from ancient times to the present. The course focuses on 1) the roots of Christianity in the ancient Near East and the beginnings during the Roman Empire; 2) the spread of Christianity through the world; 3) the diversity with which the tradition has been interpreted in the lived practice of ordinary believers; and 4) the relationship of Christianity with other religious and nonreligious traditions throughout the world.

Core Curriculum Learning Goals and Objectives (for RTC 1)

- I. 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 and method; Ambiguity)
- II. 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)

Course Goals

- I. Students will be able to express a critical understanding of the theological foundations and historical map of Christian tradition.
- II. Students will be able to articulate the relationship of Christian tradition to a significant social, cultural, or political issue of our time.
- III. Students will be able to describe and evaluate the positioning of Christianity within the global pluralism of religions.

Required Texts

Augustine, *Confessions*. Translated by Henry Chadwick. Oxford World Classics. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991. ISBN-10: 0199537828.

Thomas à Kempis. *The Imitation of Christ*. Translated and Edited by Ronald Knox and Michael Oakley. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005. ISBN-13: 978-0898708721

Merton, Thomas. *The Seven Storey Mountain*. 50th-anniversary edition. New York, NY: Mariner Books, 1999. ISBN-13: 978-0156010863

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 October 1, when topics will also be selected. Students will be required to present in class, as a group, on **March 15 at 12:10**. The list of topic suggestions includes: 1) Eucharist; 2) Gregorian chant; 3) Martin Luther; 4) Martin Luther King, Jr.; 5) Glossolalia (speaking in tongues); 6) Christian icons.
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 reflections 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 February 18.** 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 **February 11 at 12:10**. 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 1:1-6:4; 2) Augustine's *Confessions*, Books I-III (pp. 3-51); 3) Luther's 95 Theses.

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 **March 17 at 12:10**. 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, **March 17, at 12:10.**

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, tables, 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
January 5	Course Introduction: The religious mind. The Christian mind. Christian Tradition. Syllabus Review	Syllabus	
January 7	"In the Beginning," The Creation of the Christian Story in Hebrew Tradition	Genesis 1:1-3:24	
January 12	The People of the Covenant. The Sacrifice of Isaac	Genesis 11:27-25:18.	SHORT QUIZ
January 14	Exploring the Jesus Story	Matthew 5:1-12; Luke 6:20-26	PRESENTATION GROUPS FORMATION
January 19	Introducing Paul	The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans	
January 21	Introduction to Augustine and Ancient Christianity	Augustine's <i>Confessions</i> , Books I-III (pp. 3-51)	FIRST REFLECTION ESSAY DUE
January 26	Augustine, Sin and Grace	Augustine's <i>Confessions</i> , Books IV-VI (pp. 52-110)	
January 28	Augustine, Conversion and Mysticism	Augustine's <i>Confessions</i> , Books VII-X (pp.111-178)	
February 2	Introduction to <i>The Imitation of Christ</i> and Medieval Christianity	Thomas à Kempis. <i>The Imitation of Christ</i> , Book I (pp. 3-44)	SHORT QUIZ
February 4	<i>The Imitation of Christ</i> . Exploring Christian Mysticism	Thomas à Kempis. <i>The Imitation of Christ</i> , Book II (pp. 45-68)	
February 9	Review of the course so far, main assumptions,		

	themes, and outputs		
February 11	IN CLASS MIDTERM		
February 16	<i>The Imitation of Christ.</i> Mysticism and Theology	Thomas à Kempis. <i>The Imitation of Christ</i> , Book III and IV (pp. 69-209)	
February 18	<i>The Imitation of Christ.</i> Mysticism and Hierarchy	Thomas à Kempis. <i>The Imitation of Christ</i> , Book IV (pp. 171-209)	CHURCHES VISIT SUMMARY REFLECTIONS
February 23	Introduction to Luther and the Reformations	Luther's 95 Theses	
February 25	The Protestant Reformations: Calvin	Calvin on Christian Life	SECOND REFLECTION ESSAY DUE
March 1	Introduction to <i>The Seven Storey Mountain</i> and Contemporary Christianity	Thomas Merton, <i>The Seven Storey Mountain</i> , Introduction, A Note To the Reader, Part One (pp. 1-184)	
March 3	<i>The Seven Storey Mountain.</i> Spirituality in the Contemporary World	Thomas Merton, <i>The Seven Storey Mountain</i> , Part Two (pp. 185-282)	
March 8	<i>The Seven Storey Mountain.</i> West Meet East	Thomas Merton, <i>The Seven Storey Mountain</i> , Part Three (pp. 283-462)	THIRD REFLECTION ESSAY DUE
March 10	Christian Imagination	J. R. R. Tolkien and the <i>Lord of the Rings</i>	
March 15	IN CLASS PRESENTATIONS		
March 17	IN CLASS FINAL EXAM		FINAL PORTFOLIO DUE