

Contemporary Theologies

Wednesdays 1:30-4:20

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Course Overview:

This course introduces students to three influential conversations happening in contemporary Christian theology, as well as a variety of constructive approaches to theology. These conversations explore the history and traditions of Christianity in relation to empire, to the emerging themes of multiplicity and polydoxy within religiously plural communities, and to racism.

Objectives:

1. Become familiar with a variety of contemporary theological proposals.
2. Gain understanding of both challenges and standards for constructive theology.
3. Learn various methodological approaches to constructive theology, including interdisciplinary work.
4. Hone specific writing skills, including the formation of a constructive theological thesis.
5. Enter the fray of constructive theological conversation.

Requirements:

1. Read texts closely.
2. Actively participate in class discussions and activities.
3. Present one of the readings to the class, including a detailed summary and important questions to consider. A hard copy of this will be submitted to the professor.
4. Write two essays.
5. Complete a collaborative, oral final examination. This entails engaging in a small group discussion with the professor to demonstrate knowledge of the texts and competence in theological conversation.

Readings:

There are three required texts for the course.

Keller, Catherine and Laurel Schneider, eds. *Polydoxy: Theology of Multiplicity and Relationality*. New York: Routledge, 2011. ISBN 978-0-415-78136-7 \$36.04

Pui-lan, Kwok, Don Compier, and Joerg Rieger, eds. *Empire and the Christian Tradition: New Readings of Classical Theologians*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007. ISBN 978-0-8006-6215-8 \$39.00

Jennings, Willie. *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010. ISBN 978-0-300-15211-1 \$23.00

Writings:

There are three writing assignments for this course: a six page paper engaging one of the authors in the first third of the course; an eight page paper engaging one of the authors in the second third of the course; and a three page seminar presentation that summarizes and poses questions in response to one of the readings. In addition, students will have 24 hours after their final examination to submit a brief addendum to their oral remarks.

Papers are due in the professor's office by 5PM on the due date. Late papers will be docked one-third of a grade if they are turned in 15 minutes late and for each additional 24 hours afterward. For example, a paper turned in 20 minutes late would be reduced from an A to an A-, while a paper turned in

25 hours late would be reduced from an A to a B+. Papers turned in 72 hours after the due date will not be accepted.

Grading:

Class participation 15%, first paper 20%, seminar presentation 10%, second paper 25%, final examination 30%.

LPTS Classroom Policies:

Inclusive Language:

In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible's images for God. See for further assistance

http://www.lpts.edu/Academic_Resources/ASC/avoidinggenderbiasinlanguage.asp.

Academic Honesty:

All work turned in to the instructors is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Use of another's language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy, and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and may result in failure of the course. Multiple occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues relating to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For the Seminary policy, see The Code of Student Conduct, 6.11; the Student Handbook, p. 19.

Special Accommodations:

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center (kmapes@lpts.edu) during the first two weeks of a semester and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Citation Policy:

Citations in your papers should follow the Seminary standard, which is based on these guides:

Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center.

Attendance Policy:

According to the Seminary catalog, students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify one of the instructors

of their absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session.
Missing 4 or more sessions of the course puts you in danger of failing the course.

Calendar:

2/15: Introduction

2/22: Pui-lan, 1-45.

2/29: Pui-lan, 123-138, 153-184.

3/7: Pui-lan, 185-200, 215-243.

3/14: Pui-lan, 337-352, 439-470.

3/16: First paper due by 5PM.

3/28: Keller and Schneider, 1-16, 19-35.

4/4: Keller and Schneider, 81-125.

4/11: Keller and Schneider, 167-202.

4/18: Keller and Schneider, 217-257.

4/20: Second paper due by 5PM.

4/25: Jennings, 1-64.

5/2: Jennings, 65-116.

5/9: Jennings, 207- 294.

Final examinations to be scheduled.