

## Contemporary Theologies

Spring 2017

Wednesdays and Fridays, 10:00-11:20

Shannon Craigo-Snell

Schlegel 200

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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 ecology, racism, and trauma. On each topic we will read both doctrinal and practical texts. The goal is to practice applying systematic theology in concrete situations.

### Objectives:

This course addresses the following SLO of the M.Div. program:

*SLO3: that students develop an understanding of the contemporary social and cultural context in which they will do ministry and develop the ability to reflect critically and constructively on the theological and ethical choices it poses in light of the reality of social injustice and ecological destruction in a global context*

Assignments within the course are designed to assess these outcomes, as indicated in parenthetical notations below.

### Requirements:

1. Read assigned texts closely. These texts are chosen for their representation of multiple contemporary theological views and methods and for their engagement with multiple forms of oppression, including racism and ecological destruction.
2. Actively participate in class discussions and activities.
3. Present one of the readings, providing a hard-copy two-page summary of the text and three open-ended questions for the class to consider and discuss.
4. Write one 7-8 page essays, engaging one of the readings and presenting a constructive theological argument. This includes writing drafts and participating in class editing activities.
5. Write one 7-9 page essay, in which the student chooses an issue facing the church today, identifies (with the help of the class an professor) a theological resource to draw upon, and formulates what this systematic view a relevant doctrine implies for the needed behavior of contemporary churches.
6. 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 (SLO15, SLO16). Students will have 24 hours after their final examination to submit a brief addendum to their oral remarks.

### Readings:

James H. Cone, The Cross and the Lynching Tree (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2011).

Kelly Brown Douglas, Stand Your Ground: Black Bodies and the Justice of God (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2015).

Serene Jones, Trauma and Grace: Theology in a Ruptured World (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009).

Shelly Rambo, Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2010).

Pope Francis, Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2015).

Christiana Z. Peppard, Just Water: Theology, Ethics, and the Global Water Crisis (Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 2014).

**Late Policy:**

Papers are due in the professor's office by 5PM on the due date. Papers will be docked one-third of a grade if they are turned in late for each additional 24 hours afterward. For example, a paper turned in an hour 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 20%, second paper 20%, final examination 25%.

**Calendar:**

2/3 Introduction

2/8 Francis, 7-92

2/10 Francis, 93-160 \_\_\_\_\_

2/15 Peppard, 1-67

2/17 Peppard, 68-114

2/22 Peppard, 115-188 \_\_\_\_\_

2/24 documentary

2/27 first paper due

3/1 Cone, xiii-64

3/3 Cone, 65-119

3/8 Cone, 120-166 \_\_\_\_\_

3/10 Douglas, xi-89

3/22 Douglas, 90-134

3/24 Douglas, 137-203

3/29 Douglas, 204-232 \_\_\_\_\_

3/31 documentary

4/3 deadline for approval of constructive topic and resource

4/5 Rambo, 1-80

4/7 Rambo, 81-110

4/12 Rambo, 111-172 \_\_\_\_\_

4/14 Jones, 1-67

4/19 Jones, 69-97

4/21 No class.

4/26 Jones, 101-165 \_\_\_\_\_

4/28 documentary

5/3 Presentation of constructive projects

5/5 Conclusion

Oral exam to be scheduled.

### **Use of 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. For more information see: <http://pts.libguides.com/content.php?pid=469569&sid=4083885> 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.

### **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. Two occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues related to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For more information, see the Policy for Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.

### **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](mailto:kmapes@lpts.edu)) during the first two weeks of a semester (or before the semester begins) 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 Seminary standards, which are based on these guides:

American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 6th ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2010.

Turabian, Kate L., Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. 8th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

*The Chicago Manual of Style*. 16th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

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 the instructor of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. Six or more absences (1/4 of the course) may result in a low or failing grade in the course.