

RELC 5559-002—Contemporary Catholic Theology:
Perspectives from a Global Church
 University of Virginia, Fall 2016

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Class Meetings: TH 2-4:30PM
Class Location: Clark G054
Office Hours: TBA
 Appointment by email

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This graduate seminar explores Catholic theology written in the 21st century with special attention to its global and relational dimensions. Texts have been selected based on their ambitious theological agendas, intellectual rigor, and high regard among Catholic theologians today. Given the richness and scope of each text, most will be treated over the course of two seminar meetings in order to allow for a close and careful reading which does not forego engagement with the broader implications (ethical, social, political, ecclesial, etc.) of each text.

ASSIGNMENTS:

- Students are expected to attend each class and come prepared to engage in critical discussion of the assigned text. Students will be evaluated on the overall quality of participation and demonstrated capacity for collegiality and professionalism. – 15%
- **Each student will offer a 10-minute presentation of major theses arising from one course text (schedule determined during the first week of semester).** More than simply reading from a script, presenters should offer an engaging rendering of the text. The presentation will be accompanied by a two-page document outlining 3-5 central theses from the text and 3-5 discussion questions emerging from the text. Theses/question sheets will not be more than two pages long, no exceptions. – 15%
- **Each student will submit six (6), one-page constructive response essays.** Whereas the presentations should address basic theses of the text and raise questions to promote discussion, response papers should evaluate the strengths and limitations of the text with special attention to its significance within the larger field of Catholic theology. – 15%
- **A final research essay of no more than 30-pages should be posted to Collab by December 8 at 5pm.** Students will present brief abstracts of their research during the final week of class. Essays will not exceed the page limit of 30 pages; work in excess of this limit will not be evaluated – 70%

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION POLICIES:

- Two-page documents to accompany presentation should be emailed directly to Prof. Flores on **Thursdays no later than 10am.**
- Constructive response essays and final essay should all be posted to Collab “Assignments” tab under the appropriate assignment title. Essay should be

submitted in Microsoft Word using the following file format:

LastName_Reflection1 or **LastName_FinalResearchEssay** (i.e. Gonzalez_Reflection4, Jones_FinalResearchEssay)

- Final research essay extensions will be considered under extenuating circumstances, however, **a new deadline will be assigned and enforced**. Submissions that do not adhere to deadline will be subject to a third of a letter grade reduction.

AUDITOR EXPECTATIONS:

- Graduate Students and Doctoral Candidates are invited to audit the seminar.
- Auditors are expected to register as auditors through UVa SIS.
- Auditors are expected to attend every seminar.
- Auditors are expected to complete all readings and participate in every aspect of the seminar, including presenting on one text and submitting discussion questions in lieu of full response essays.
- Prospective auditors unwilling to meet these expectations are respectfully asked to not audit this course.

COURSE TEXTS:

Required:

1. Leonardo Boff, *Come, Holy Spirit: Inner Fire, Giver of Life and Comforter of the Poor* (Orbis, 2015)
2. Agnes M. Brazal and Maria Teresa Davila, eds., *Living With(out) Borders: Catholic Theological Ethics on the Migration of Peoples* (Orbis, 2016)
3. Lisa Sowle Cahill, *Global Justice, Christology, and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge, 2013)
4. M. Shawn Copeland, *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race, and Being* (Fortress, 2010)
5. Orlando O. Espin, *Idol and Grace: On Traditioning and Subversive Hope* (Orbis, 2014)
6. Elizabeth A. Johnson, *Ask the Beasts: Darwin and the God of Love* (Bloomsbury Continuum, 2015)
7. Fergus Kerr, *Twentieth-Century Catholic Theologians* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2006)
8. Andrew Prevot, *Thinking Prayer: Theology and Spirituality Amid the Crises of Modernity* (University of Notre Dame, 2015)
9. Lamin Sanneh, *Disciples of All Nations: Pillars of World Christianity* (Oxford, 2008)

All texts available on reserve at Clemons Library.

Articles, book reviews, and supplemental texts are available via UVa Collab.

COURSE OUTLINE:

UNIT I: INTRODUCTION AND FOUNDATIONS

Week 1: Global Catholicism in Historical Perspective

8/25: Sanneh

Week 2: 20th Century Theological Foundations, 21st Century Debates

9/1: Kerr, Chapters 1, 7-12

UNIT II: Catholic Theology in Global Perspectives

Week 3-4: God, Trinity, Creation

9/8: Johnson, Chapters 1-5 – PRESENTATION

9/15: Johnson, Chapters 6-10 – RESPONSE ESSAY I

Week 5-6: Christology and Soteriology in Global Ethics

9/22: Cahill, Chapters 1-4 – PRESENTATION

9/29: Cahill, Chapter 5-8 – RESPONSE ESSAY II

Week 7: Pneumatology and Liberation Theology

10/6: Boff, Chapters 1-7 – PRESENTATION

10/13: Boff, Chapters 8-13, Conclusion – RESPONSE ESSAY III

Week 9-10: Prayer

10/20: Prevot, Introduction and Part I – PRESENTATION

10/27: Prevot, Part II – RESPONSE ESSAY IV

Week 11-12: Idol, Tradition, and Popular Catholicism

11/3: Espin – PRESENTATION

11/10: No Seminar Meeting – RESPONSE ESSAY V

Week 13-14:

11/17: Copeland – PRESENTATION

11/24: Thanksgiving, no seminar meeting – RESPONSE ESSAY VI

Week 15: ANTHROPOLOGY AND ETHICS

12/1: Brazal & Davila, Introduction, Part I, Part II, Part III, Part V (Phan essay only), Part VI, Part VII

DECEMBER 8: *Research Paper Due*