

## Contemporary Catholic Theology

01:840:318:01

M-Th 12:35-1:55, Room FS-101

Spring 2011

Professor: Dr. Dugan McGinley

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Office Hours: Th 3:00-4:00 (by appointment)

This course explores the diverse field of Catholic Theology in the twentieth century and beyond. We begin with a brief overview of the discipline of theology and its recent history in Christianity in general and Catholicism in particular. We then survey some of the most important Catholic theologians of the last century and assess their formative impact on contemporary Catholic thought. After that, we turn our attention to liturgical theology and evaluate the reforms of Catholic worship that came with Vatican II. Finally, we will have the opportunity to analyze contemporary moral issues using the framework of post-modern Catholic moral theology.

The course load involves reading texts, writing response papers, group work, presenting outlines, participating in discussions, one long paper and a final exam. If you are not comfortable with any of these requirements (for whatever reasons), you may wish to reconsider your enrollment.

A Note about Grading: A's are supposed to be exceptional grades. In order to earn an A(-) in this course, you must complete all assignments **really well**. Your work should not only be flawless, but also above and beyond expectations. Doing all assignments **well** fits more appropriately in the B range of grades. When work is flawed, late, or incomplete, it fits into the C and D range.

### Required Texts Available at the Bookstore:

*Introducing Contemporary Theologies: The What and the Who of Theology Today*, by Neil Ormerod. Orbis Books (1997) 978-1-57075-139-4

*The Road to Vatican II: Key Changes in Theology*, by Maureen Sullivan, OP. Paulist Press (2007) 978-0-8091-4277-4

*Reforming the Liturgy: A Response to the Critics*, by John F. Baldovin. Liturgical Press (2008) 978-0-8146-6219-9

*A Morally Complex World: Engaging Contemporary Moral Theology*, by James T. Bretzke. Liturgical Press (2004) 978-0-8146-5158-2

### Course Requirements:

1. Attendance. Good attendance demonstrates a solid commitment to the course and typically influences your grades on all other aspects of the course. Some of the material covered in lectures and class discussion is not found in the textbooks; additional details may be given in class regarding particular assignments; and the exam will draw from both text and class material – so it is vital to be present. If you are sick or have an emergency, it is wise to send an email. You will be allowed two absences (beginning January 20) before your grade is officially penalized; each absence beyond that (or the equivalent in tardies or

leaving early) will lower your “Attendance and Participation” grade one notch. No “incomplete” grades for falling behind or poor attendance.

2. Participation in class. This requires completing the assignments before each class, arriving on time, taking notes, and being actively engaged in any class discussion. This also includes leading content outline discussions, in addition to your performance on occasional “pop” quizzes on the reading material. If you are absent for any reason on a day that we have a quiz or that you are expected to present material, you will simply lose credit for that particular assignment. While late written assignments will be penalized, you will be allowed one late paper (one class period) without a penalty.
3. Report on a theologian’s work. You will choose one of the theologians we are studying from the Ormerod book and find an essay, article or chapter from an anthology written by that theologian. Prepare a summary/outline of that work to present to the class and include an interesting biographical detail you learned about the theologian. Also share something from their work that challenged you to think or see things differently. We will divide these in class and you should be prepared to make your presentation on the day we are scheduled to read about and study that theologian according to the syllabus.
4. Group Outlines, due as indicated on the syllabus. You and other class members will outline an assigned chapter from each of two of the course textbooks. You may choose to work entirely as a group or divide it up and work independently. You will then be graded accordingly. You will present your outline(s) to the class as a way of helping us to learn the most important details of the assigned material. You will be evaluated based on your thoroughness, synthesis of the information, and your ability to present it clearly.
5. Response Papers based on discussion questions in the Ormerod text, due as indicated on the syllabus. These should be **one page maximum**, typed double-spaced in 12-point Times New Roman font (no larger) with 1" margins (or less) all around. Do NOT waste space for a heading; you may write your name and the date in the top margin and begin your text on the first typed line. Simply answer the given questions at the end of the chapter and demonstrate that you are thinking critically (analytically) about the material.

Remember the point of the assignment is to prove that you did the reading and thought about it. You must complete **four** (4) total, choosing either a or b from each of the 4 assigned. These are graded according to the following scale and will be lowered one whole number for each class a paper is turned in late. If not completed within the possible allotted time, the grade will be zero.

- 4 = A (Wow! Very insightful and nearly flawless! It exceeds expectations)
- 3 = B (**This is the typical grade for completing the paper as assigned**)
- 2 = C (Not complete or not clear or poorly written or some mistakes)
- 1 = D (Overly problematic, but at least you wrote something)

6. A fieldwork critique of Catholic liturgies **-or-** A Theological Investigation of a contemporary moral issue, due no later than May 2. Choose one of the following:

Liturgical Critique: You will visit three different Catholic churches and observe their Sunday liturgies. You will use the categories from the Baldovin text as a tool for analysis, so that you will not only compare and contrast your experiences, but also be able to assess how well these Masses measure up to the ideals of post-Vatican II liturgical theology. The goal is to add to the field of data on Catholic liturgy and to think more critically about the meaning of Catholic worship. The end result will be about ten pages. More instructions will be given in class.

Theological Investigation: You will choose an ethical issue that is currently up for debate in modern society. You will need to find two Catholic theologians who take differing views on the issue and then write your own theological investigation of the issue utilizing the method outlined in the Bretzke text and referencing other theologians whose work we have discussed in class. The goal is to produce a Catholic theological reflection that will move the debate to a deeper level. The end result will be about ten pages. More instructions will be given in class.

7. Final Exam, Wednesday, May 11, 12:00-3:00 pm. Absence will result in a **zero** grade.

Criteria for Evaluation:

- accuracy and precision of scholarship
- clarity of oral and written expression
- progress in critical thinking skills
- completion of assignments and readings on due dates
- thoroughness, creativity, originality and contribution to field of inquiry

Grades will be based on the following formula:

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Attendance and Participation                     | 25% |
| Outlines, Report and Response Papers             | 25% |
| Theological Investigation or Liturgical Critique | 25% |
| Final Exam                                       | 25% |

All written assignments should be turned in as a hard copy. If you need to email an assignment in order to hand it in on time (by the beginning of class), please feel free to do so. You should send it to [duganmcg@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:duganmcg@rci.rutgers.edu) BOTH as an attachment and as text in the message, **then follow it up with a hard copy**. An Attachment alone does not guarantee the paper has been received. You may also leave papers in the mailbox or under the office door as long as they are clearly marked to the attention of Dr. McGinley. Remember that if you EVER consult an outside source for something you are writing, you **MUST** acknowledge it through an appropriate citation. Portraying someone else's ideas or work as your own is **plagiarism** and any student found plagiarizing will receive an F for the entire course.

NOTE: If you would like to hand out materials for your in-class presentations and you want me to make copies, I must receive your original at least one full week in advance. Otherwise, you will need to make copies yourself. Keep in mind that making handouts is *not* a requirement.

**Schedule of Topics, Readings and Assignments:**

Readings and papers are DUE on the date for which they are listed.

|            |   |                    |
|------------|---|--------------------|
| Jan 20     | Course Introduction   |                    |
| Jan 24     | THE DISCIPLINE OF THEOLOGY<br>Methodology and hermeneutics<br>Ormerod: Chapters 1-2 |                    |
| Jan 27     | THE DISCIPLINE OF THEOLOGY<br>Methodology and hermeneutics<br>Ormerod: Chapters 3-4 |                    |
| Jan 31     | TWENTIETH CENTURY SHIFTS<br>Sullivan: Intro, Chapters 1-2 (pp. 1-59)                |                    |
| Feb 3      | TWENTIETH CENTURY SHIFTS<br>Sullivan: Intro, Chapters 3-4 (pp. 60-117)              |                    |
| Feb 7      | HANS KUNG<br>Ormerord: Chapter 5  | Response Paper #1a |
| Feb 10     | EDWARD SCHILLEBEECKX<br>Ormerord: Chapter 7   | Response Paper #1b |
| Feb 14     | KARL RAHNER<br>Ormerord: Chapter 9  | Response Paper #2a |
| Feb 17     | BERNARD LONERGAN<br>Ormerord: Chapter 10  | Response Paper #2b |
| Feb 21     | GUSTAVO GUTIERREZ<br>Ormerord: Chapter 13   | Response Paper #3a |
| Feb 24     | ELISABETH SCHUSSLER FIORENZA<br>Ormerord: Chapter 15                                | Response Paper #3b |
| Feb 28     | ROSEMARY RADFORD RUETHER<br>Ormerord: Chapter 16                                    | Response Paper #4a |
| Mar 3      | ELIZABETH JOHNSON<br>Ormerord: Chapter 17   | Response Paper #4b |
| Mar 7      | LITURGICAL THEOLOGY<br>Baldovin: Introduction                                       |                    |
| Mar 10     | PHILOSOPHICAL CRITIQUE<br>Baldovin: Chapter 1                                       | Group Outlines     |
| Mar 14, 17 | Spring Break  |                    |
| Mar 21     | HISTORICAL CRITIQUE<br>Baldovin: Chapter 2  | Group Outlines     |
| Mar 24     | THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE<br>Baldovin: Chapter 3   | Group Outlines     |
| Mar 28     | SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY<br>Baldovin: Chapter 4                                   | Group Outlines     |
| Mar 31     | MAJOR ISSUES in LITURGY<br>Baldovin: Chapter 5                                      | Group Outlines     |
| Apr 4      | The FUTURE of LITURGY<br>Baldovin: Conclusion                                       | Group Outlines     |

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|-----------------|---|---|
| Apr 7           | MORAL THEOLOGY<br>Bretzke: Introduction and Chapter 1 |   |
| Apr 11          | The RATIONAL CLAIM AXIS<br>Bretzke: Chapter 2         | Group Outlines  |
| Apr 14          | The SACRED CLAIM AXIS<br>Bretzke: Chapter 3           | Group Outlines  |
| Apr 18          | CONSCIENCE<br>Bretzke: Chapter 4                      | Group Outlines  |
| Apr 21          | MORAL DISCOURSE<br>Bretzke: Chapter 5                 | Group Outlines  |
| Apr 25          | CASUISTRY<br>Bretzke: Chapter 6                       | Group Outlines  |
| Apr 28          | SIN and FAILURE<br>Bretzke: Chapter 7                 | Group Outlines  |
| May 2           | Course Conclusion                                     | <b>Theological Investigation or<br/>Liturgical Critique</b> |
| Weds,<br>May 11 | FINAL EXAMINATION: <b>12:00-3:00 pm</b>               |   |

NOTE: If you have any special needs or a disability that requires any special accommodation to fulfill any of the above requirements, you need to provide acceptable documentation to the Office of Disability Services. Someone from that office will then make arrangements as needed with Dr. McGinley.