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Office hours: Thurs 12–2 & by appointment

Rutgers University
Loree 131
T/Th 2:15–3:35

SEMINAR ON THE ORIGINS OF WESTERN MORALITY (840:426:01)

The course treats the ways that early Christian groups appropriated Jewish and Hellenistic moral traditions and reshaped them according to their developing interests. These interests came to shape the moral language, laws, politics, social codes and sociality of Christian Europe and America. The course will pay particular attention to the roles of Hellenistic philosophy, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, the letters of Paul, the teachings attributed to Jesus in writings from the end of the first century C. E., and the development of ascetic practices and ideology. Issues of importance to the course include the variety of ancient options available for thinking about ethical psychology, the concept of *porneia* (harlotry) and the attack on traditional Mediterranean religion, the family/household and opposition to it, wealth/poverty, slavery, sexual ethics and gender norms.

LEARNING GOALS

This course will fulfill goals for the following writing intensive core requirements:

- a. (s2) Students will work at revision and peer-review of their writing in 2 ways: 1) by engaging in peer editing of an 12–15 page paper draft 3) in responding to the instructor's comments on their paper-draft. These assignments will teach students to respond effectively to editorial feedback from peers and the instructor through successive drafts and revision.
- b. The daily reading responses, writing assignments, and peer-review groups will teach students to communicate effectively in modes appropriate to the study of religion and ancient Greek, Jewish, and Christian moral traditions.
- c. The midterm, final, and writing assignments will teach students to evaluate and critically assess sources for ancient moral traditions and use appropriate conventions of attribution and citation.
- d. The midterm, final, and writing assignments focus on teaching students to analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. Attendance: regular attendance and participation is a significant part of your grade. In the case of illness or emergency, please inform the instructor as soon as possible that you will not be able to attend class and make arrangement to make up the work missed. More than two unexcused absences will result in a failing grade for class participation. In the case of more long-term illnesses or other issues, please provide a note from a health-care provider, or, if appropriate, from a dean.
2. Reading responses: for every class, students will complete a reading response for the assigned readings, post it to Sakai before class begins, and bring a copy to class to facilitate discussion. Responses should be at least 100 words and include 2 discussion questions. The reading responses will be graded based on whether or not it shows knowledge of the assigned readings; the lowest 3 grades will be dropped. If you miss

class due to illness or emergency, you may submit the reading assignment to me directly via e-mail. Responses are grades as follows:

A+: shows exceptional knowledge of readings and critical analysis

A-: shows good effort to understand the readings

F: shows little or no effort

3. Exams: a mid-term and an in-class exam covering the readings for the second half of the course.
4. Paper: a 12–15 page research paper on a topic to be selected by the student in consultation with the instructor. Students must consult with the instructor, provide a draft of the paper in April, and work with other students in peer-review reading groups (normally 3-4 students). Failure to submit a draft or to participate in peer review will result in a failing grade for the final paper.

Assignments will be weighted roughly as follows:

- a. Midterm 20%
- b. Final 20%
- c. Paper 35%
 - i. 10% 1st draft and peer review
 - ii. 25% final paper
- d. Reading responses and participation 25%
 - i. 10% responses
 - ii. 10% class discussion
 - iii. 5% brief class presentation on paper

Books Required for Purchase:

Kathy Gaca, *The Making of Fornication: Eros, Ethics, and Political Reform in Greek Philosophy and Early Christianity*

Anthony Long, *Hellenistic Philosophy*
*The Harper-Collins Study Bible**

Other Resources: Additional readings will be available on Sakai and can be found in the appropriate Resources folder. For texts of the Hellenistic philosophers and critical discussion, see A. A. Long and D. Sedley, *Hellenistic Philosophy: Translations of the Principal Sources, with Philosophical Commentary* (vol. 1).

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

Tues 9/4 Introduction to the Course

PART 1: TRADITIONAL VALUES AND THEIR CRITICS

Thurs 9/6 Ancient Cities, Families/Households, and Their Power
Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*, selections (Sakai)
New Testament texts on the household: 1 Cor 7; Mark 3:31–5; Matt 10:34–41; Luke 14:25–7, 8:19–21, 9:59–62, 18:28–30; Col 3:18–4:1; Eph 5:21–6:9; Titus 2:3–9

Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*, likely dating to about 360 bce, is a dialogue about household management that represents one view on the ideal structure and maintenance of a traditional Mediterranean household. As you read, make notes about the

* Oxford Study Bible is recommended as an alternative to Harper Collins

persons/roles/relations addressed in the text. What is the role of the head of household and how does this relate to women and slaves? What kinds of assumptions and values does the writer seem to hold in relation to women, slaves, and the head of household? What kind of work is done in the household/estate and who does it?

The New Testament texts are not all from the same time period and are not all written by the same authors (consult the historical order and time-line handouts for specifics). As you read, make notes about the persons/roles/relations addressed in each of the NT texts and think about how this compares to the modern so-called nuclear family. Who counts as members of a household in antiquity? What ideas about the family are upheld, redefined, or challenged in each of these texts?

Tues 9/11 The Cynic Critique of Traditional Morality
Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers: On Diogenes, Crates, and Hipparchia* (Sakai)

With what traditional social values and norms do the Cynics take issue? What types of training (*askêsis*) do they practice? The Cynics have sometimes been criticized as mainly attacking or criticizing others, without developing much of an alternative philosophy. Does this critique seem to have any merit? Why or why not?

Thurs 9/13 Introduction to Hellenistic Philosophy and Its Context
Long, 1–13
Tad Brennan, “The Ancient Philosophical Background,” 21–34 (Sakai)

No class meeting, online forum project: in place of class meetings, students will post a more substantial reading response than usual in the designated online forum for 9/13 and respond to at least two other posts. Reading responses must consist of 1-2 substantial paragraphs (roughly 350 words) and must be posted by beginning of (what would be) the normal class meetings time (9/13, 2:15). Responses to other posts should be a couple of sentences at a minimum and must be completed by 5 pm on Sunday, 9/15.

PART 2: THE STRUCTURED SELF: THE EPICUREANS AND THE STOICS

Tues 9/18 Epicureanism
Long, 14–41

Thurs 9/20 Epicureanism
Long, 42–74

Tues 9/25 Stoicism
Long, 107–175 (you may skim 121–147)

Thurs 9/27 Stoicism
Graver, *Stoicism and Emotion*, 15–60 (Sakai)

Tues 10/2 Stoicism
Graver, *Stoicism and Emotion*, 133–171 (Sakai)

Thurs 10/4 Plato on Eros and Social/Political Theory
Gaca, *Making of Fornication*, 1–11; 23–58

Tues 10/9 Stoics on Eros and Social/Political Theory
Hesiod, *Theogony* (Sakai)
Gaca, 59–93

PART 3: JEWISH TRADITIONS, APOCALYPSES, AND DIVINE COMMAND ETHICS

Thurs 10/11 First Exam

Tues 10/16 Judean Epic, Divine Law, Cultic Purity and Holiness
Exodus 34:1–35:19; Deut 9:1–12:32; Lev 11:1–22:33
Olyan, *Rites and Rank*, 3–14 (Sakai; pages 3–14 of the pdf are required reading, 15–62 recommended)

Thurs 10/18 Judean Apocalyptic Traditions
1 Enoch 1–32 (Sakai); Daniel 7–12

Tues 10/23 Religious Polemic and Apology
Jeremiah 10; Deut 32–33; Isaiah 40; 45
Wisdom of Solomon 12:3–16:29
Josephus, *Against Apion* (par. 151–181, Sakai)

PART 4: JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND GREEK MORAL TRADITIONS

Thurs 10/25 The Platonic and Pythagorean Revivals
Gaca, 94–116

Tues 10/30 Introducing Paul and Early Christianity
1 Thessalonians; Galatians
Stowers, “Does Pauline Christianity Resemble a Hellenistic Philosophy?” in *Paul Beyond the Judaism/Hellenism Divide*, 81–102 (Sakai)

Thurs 11/1 Paul on Self-Mastery
1 Corinthians
Stowers, “Self-Mastery” from *Paul in the Greco-Roman World*, 524–50 (Sakai)

Tues 11/6 Paul and Self-Mastery in Romans
Romans

1 paragraph description of paper due at the beginning of class.

Thurs 11/8 Paul, Porneia and the LXX according to Gaca
Gaca, 119–159

Tues 11/13 Paul, Porneia and the LXX according to Gaca
Gaca, 160–189

Thurs 11/15 Introducing Jesus and the Gospel Traditions
Gospel of Mark; Infancy narratives of Matt and Luke (Matt 1–2; Luke 1–2)
Synoptic Exercise (Sakai)

No class meeting, online forum project: students will post a more substantial reading response than usual in the designated online forum for 11/15 on Sakai and then read and respond to other posts (read all, respond to at least 2). Reading responses should consist of 1-2 substantial paragraphs (roughly 350 words) and must be posted by the beginning of (what would be) the normal class meetings time (11/15, 2:15). Responses to other posts should be a couple of sentences at the minimum and must be complete by 5 pm on Sunday, 11/18.

Tues 11/20 No Class, Instructor at Conference
Bibliography and outline of paper due, uploaded to Sakai by 5 pm.

Thurs 11/22 No Class, Thanksgiving Recess

Tues 11/27 Jesus as Teacher of Ethics According to the Synoptic Gospels
Matthew 5:1–7:27 (sermon on the Mt); Luke 6:17–49 (sermon on the plane)
Mark 4:10-12 and Matt 13:10-17 (on parables)
Stowers, “The Gospel of Matthew and Stoic Ethics” 1–28 (Sakai)

Rough draft of paper due to peer review group (and posted to the assignments page on Sakai by 7 pm)

Thurs 11/29 Tatian and Clement
Gaca, 221–272

Tues 12/4 Epiphane and Augustine: Asceticism and Sexual Asceticism
Gaca, 273–291
Augustine, selections from *The City of God* and *On Marriage* (Sakai).

Thurs 12/6 Second Exam

Tues 12/11 Student presentations

1 page response to rough drafts due in class to instructor and to members of working groups.

Final Paper Due uploaded to Sakai by 3 pm, December 17th.

Late papers will automatically lose 5 points for each 24 cycle past the due date. Extensions may be granted in extenuating circumstances with a letter from a dean or medical doctor.