FOUNDATIONS OF PASTORAL AND PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

Spring 2016

Prof. Tom Beaudoin
Fordham University, Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education

Office: Keating Hall 303, Rose Hill Campus
Office Hours: Wednesday 5:30-6:30 and by appointment.
Phone: 718.817.5965
Email: tbeaudoin@fordham.edu

About the Course

This class is intended to inform and enrich the practice of pastoral professionals through the study of practical and pastoral theologies. It is especially designed to serve as a “foundations” course in which fundamental questions about the relationship between religious tradition and contemporary practice are explored.

Course Objectives

[1] Demonstrate the relationship between research on religious tradition and professional practice (Pastoral Area goal)
[2] Understand how one’s work in a situation is reconstructed through critical and appreciative engagement with theological discourse (Course goal)

Required Books

The following books are required for the course. They are available at the campus bookstore or you may procure them otherwise on your own. All other readings will be available through Blackboard.

• Kathleen A. Cahalan and Gordon S. Mikoski (eds.), *Opening the Field of Practical Theology: An Introduction* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014)

Coursework
Presence and Participation

Successful completion of the course presumes that students will be active participants. Students should be fully prepared for all classes, demonstrate respectful speaking and listening, and be ready to discuss the readings, specifically including critical and appreciative agreements, disagreements, questions, and connections made to theological matters in students’ professional/pastoral work. No personal digital devices (cell phones, etc) may be on during class.

“A” presence and participation reflects the student’s excellence in these practices; “B” presence and participation reflects superior work in these practices; “C” reflects adequate work.

Short Papers

Beginning in the second week of class, and every week thereafter, a short paper will be due. Papers should be: written in Microsoft Word; 275-325 words, no more and no less; single-spaced; clearly written and cleanly edited; stylistically conformed to the Chicago/Turabian style manual for footnotes, etc; titled “Student Lastname Paper#” (for example, “Beaudoin 1”); and submitted as an attachment through Blackboard.

The paper must include the following elements: select and excerpt one sentence from the reading that speaks significantly and simultaneously to the whole of the reading and to your situation (this sentence does not count toward the word count); explicate how the excerpt relates to the argument of the reading as a whole; explain how it relates to your situation; discuss what the interaction of the reading with your recollection of an aspect of your situation means for your situation/practice now and/or in the future.

“A” papers reflect excellent grounded interpretation: meeting all editorial requirements (above), showing close and careful reading of the text, offering economical and thick description of a situation, and displaying clear reckoning with local implications; “B” papers are superior; “C” papers are adequate. (This coursework meets Course Objective 1.)

Final Paper

The final paper is a synthetic review of your learning during the semester. Taking your graded short papers as your primary documents, review your work, reading it critically and appreciatively, for what it indicates about what your engagement with pastoral and practical theology portend for your situation and practice. Citing your own work over the semester, answer the following questions: (1) What am I learning from practical and pastoral theology? (2) From my situation, what am I contributing to practical and pastoral theology? (3) Where does the interaction between the readings and my situation indicate that my practice can go?

Papers should be written in Microsoft Word, 1000-1250 words, no more and no less; single-spaced; clearly written and cleanly edited; stylistically conformed to the Chicago/Turabian style manual for footnotes, etc; titled “Student Lastname Final Paper” (for example, “Beaudoin Final Paper”); and submitted as an attachment through Blackboard.

“A” papers show excellence in close and careful reading of Short Papers, thorough and clear answering of the three questions, with appropriate, sufficient and critical use of evidence from course material. “B” papers are superior, and “C” papers are adequate. GSRRE “Research Readiness
Review” criteria will be distributed and discussed when the assignment is given and will be used in marking the paper. (This coursework meets Course Objective 2.)

Note on Late Work, Technology, and Plagiarism

Late work will be deducted one letter grade up to one week late, and will not be accepted after that. Cell phones and other devices that are not directly used for class work should not be on or used in class. Please be familiar with the GSRRE policy regarding plagiarism. Plagiarized work will result in failing the assignment and, usually, the course.

Note on Disabilities

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, all students, with or without disabilities, are entitled to equal access to the programs and activities of Fordham University. If you believe that you have a disabling condition that may interfere with your ability to participate in the activities, course work, or assessment of the object of this course, you may be entitled to accommodations. Please schedule an appointment to speak with someone at the Office of Disability Services (Rose Hill - O’Hare Hall, Lower Level, x0655 or at Lincoln Center – Room 207, x6282).

Course Schedule

PART ONE: BEARINGS

Wednesday 20 January 2016
Introduction

Introductions
Reviewing the syllabus

Introductory remarks on pastoral and practical theologies: basic questions, terms, problematics, and purposes; cognate discourses

Wednesday 27 January 2016
Embedded Theologizing and the Complexity of Theological Material

Reading: Edward Foley, *Reflective Believing: Reimagining Theological Reflection in the 21st Century* (manuscript), pp. 5-95

Wednesday 3 February 2016
Everyday Life as Faith: Karl Rahner


Wednesday 10 February 2016
“From Above”: Religious Teachings as Practice


Wednesday 17 February 2016
“From Below”: Religion in Practice from the Ground Up

Reading: Mary Clark Moschella, *Living Devotions: Reflections on Immigration*,
Wednesday 24 February 2016
Practice-Minded Theologies as Cultural Projects

Reading:


Wednesday 2 March 2016
Religion, Culture, and Power in Practice

Reading:


Identity, and Religious Imagination (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2008), pp. 1-212
PART TWO: INTERVENTIONS

Wednesday 9 March 2016
Pastoral and Practical Theologies Cluster 1: Critical Care for Lived Religion

Reading:


Wednesday 16 March 2016
No Class: Makeup will be attendance at the Association of Practical Theology Conference in April

Wednesday 23 March 2016
Spring Break

Wednesday 30 March 2016
Pastoral and Practical Theologies Cluster 2: Specifying Normative Ecclesial Practices

Reading:

Hospitality,” pp. 53-71; Chapter Four, “From Immigrant to Immigrant Justice Organizer: Moises Escalante,” pp. 73-89


Wednesday 6 April 2016
Pastoral and Practical Theologies Cluster 3: Discerning Communal Life

Reading: José M. de Mesa, Why Theology is Never Far From Home (Manila: De La Salle University Press, 2003), Chapter Three, “Hermeneutics of Appreciation,” pp. 112-172

Friday, Saturday, Sunday, 8-10 April 2016
Association of Practical Theology Conference:
Fordham University and UN Church Center

Choose at least 2 hours of the conference to attend (there will be no charge), although you will find it profitable to attend as much as possible this weekend; student registration will be arranged for you.

Wednesday 13 April 2016
Debriefing the Association of Practical Theology Biennial Conference

Reading: To Be Determined

Wednesday 20 April 2016
Pastoral and Practical Theologies Cluster 4: Liberating Practices


Wednesday 27 April 2016
Pastoral and Practical Theologies Cluster 5: Guiding Pastoral Work

Reading:


Wednesday 4 May 2016
“Bring It On Home”

Student Presentations and Review of the Course

Final Paper due at 12:00 noon on Monday 9 May