

Faith and Critical Reason (*Eloquentia Perfecta*)

Summer 2018
THEO-1000-L21
TWTh, 1:00 PM–4:00 PM

Patrick Hornbeck, D.Phil.
hornbeck@fordham.edu, (718) 817-3240
Office Hours: By Appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION FROM THE UNIVERSITY CORE CURRICULUM

AS PART OF A LIBERAL ARTS CURRICULUM, theology aims to develop students' understanding of the relation between religion and modernity's approaches to knowledge. As part of a Jesuit education, the theology core goes further by developing students' capacity for a critical exploration of the complementary roles of faith and reason in the pursuit of wisdom and learning. In light of Fordham's commitment to encouraging "the growth of a life of faith consonant with moral and intellectual development," the theology core introduces into students' intellectual development challenges to dualistic thinking and prepares them to become more nuanced in their appreciation of the interrelations of faith and reason.

This course introduces students to fundamental theological issues as well as some of the ways that various cultures and individuals have confronted the pressing questions of meaning in human life. In dialogue with the first-level philosophy course, though using distinctively theological methods, Faith and Critical Reason invites students to engage with the fundamental question, "What does it mean to be human?" Important issues will include the dialectic between religion and modernity that has shaped our cultural heritage, the problems of religious epistemology, theodicy, the relationship of religious faith to the moral life, the relationships between religion and culture, and the validity of religious claims in the face of intractable religious diversity. Some historic theological authors are ordinarily read, as is one or more of the "masters of suspicion." When apposite, comparisons with religious traditions other than Christianity are made.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This section of Faith and Critical Reason is designed to:

- (1) help students understand and articulate the different ways in which people have historically and in the contemporary moment negotiated the relationship between faith and reason, including religious and atheistic fundamentalisms, rationalism and secularism, and faith informed by critical reason;
- (2) introduce students to the forms of theological discourse, key beliefs, and history of the Judeo-Christian tradition, equipping them with language for further theological study;
- (3) provide points of comparison between the Christian tradition and the other great religious traditions of the world, examining the possibilities of both interreligious dialogue and interreligious conflict; and
- (4) enthruse students to reflect further on the questions of theology, faith, and religion, both in formal academic settings and throughout their lives.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Careful reading of the assigned texts and active participation in class discussions (10% of final grade)
2. A series of writing assignments, including an initial paper of three pages (5% of final grade) and, at the student's choice, *either* a collection of five two-page papers (4% of final grade each) or a single twelve-page paper (20% of final grade)
3. Participation in class debates (10% of final grade)
4. A group presentation on a visit to a New York City religious community (10% of final grade)
5. A mid-term, in-class examination (20% of final grade)
6. A take-home final examination (25% of final grade)

TEXTS

The two volumes listed below will be read in their entirety and are identified on the syllabus by their titles:

- Shusaku Endo, *Silence* (London: Picador, 2015), ISBN 978-1-4472-9985-1
- Robert P. Jones, *The End of White Christian America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2016), ISBN 978-1-5011-2229-3

With the exception of the two required books, all of the texts listed on the syllabus above are available as downloads from Blackboard. It is the responsibility of each student to have obtained a copy of each reading prior to the class when it will be discussed. Students should bring either a printed or electronic copy of the appropriate text(s) to each class meeting.

SYLLABUS OF COURSE TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Thursday, July 5: Introductory Discussion and Theological Integrity

- *Assignment: write a 3-page paper responding to Williams' argument: initial draft due Tuesday, July 10; optional revised draft due Thursday, July 12*

Rowan Williams, "Theological Integrity," from *On Christian Theology* (Oxford, 2000), chapter 1, pp. 3–7

Tuesday, July 10: Theological Arguments and Theological Writing
Classic Arguments for the Existence of God

Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (London, 1920), i.2.3

Anselm of Canterbury, *Proslogion*, in *The Major Works*, ed. Brian Davies (Oxford, 1998), chapters 2–3

Wednesday, July 11: Some “Masters of Suspicion” and Contemporary Theologies I

- *Student Decisions about Writing Assignments (see p. 6 for writing assignment guidelines)*

David Hume, “On Miracles,” from *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, repr. in P. L. Quinn and K. Meeker, eds., *The Philosophical Challenge of Religious Diversity* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 29–37

Karl Marx, “Toward a Critique of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*: Introduction,” in *Selected Writings*, ed. Lawrence H. Simon (Indianapolis, Ind., 1994), pp. 27–39

Elizabeth A. Johnson, *Quest for the Living God* (New York, 2008), chapters 1, 4

Thursday, July 12: Contemporary Theologies II; Secularism; and Religious Nones

- *Short Response Papers Due: Last Names A–M*

Johnson, *Quest for the Living God*, chapter 5

Charles Taylor, “What is Secularism?” in Geoffrey Bram Levey and Tariq Madood, eds., *Secularism, Religion and Multicultural Citizenship* (Cambridge, 2009), pp. x–xxii

J. Patrick Hornbeck II, “Deconversion in Roman Catholicism: Mapping a Fertile Field,” *American Catholic Studies* 122:2 (2011), 1–29

Peter Steinfels, “Further Adrift: The American Church’s Crisis of Attrition,” *Commonweal*, October 22, 2010, <http://commonwealmagazine.org/further-adrift>

Tuesday, July 17: Sacred Texts in Christian and Non-Christian Traditions; Proselytism and Missionary Work I

- *Debate #1: The Rise of the Religious Nones (see p. 7 for debate guidelines)*
- *Short Response Papers Due: Last Names N–Z*

Buddha, “The Sermon at Benares,” in Alfred J. Andrea and James H. Overfield, *The Human Record: Sources of Global History*, vol. 1 (Boston, 1994), pp. 72–74

[Readings for Tuesday, July 17, continued:]

The Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:1–7:29 (any translation acceptable; New Revised Standard Version available on Blackboard)

Shusaku Endo, *Silence*, pp. 1–134

Wednesday, July 18: Proselytism and Missionary Work II

- *Debate #2: The Ethics of Silence (see p. 7 for debate guidelines)*
- *Short Response Papers Due: Last Names A–M*

Endo, *Silence*, pp. 135–257

Thursday, July 19: Mid-term examination and Religious Exclusivism

- *Short Response Papers Due: Last Names N–Z*

William Lane Craig, “‘No Other Name’: A Middle Knowledge Perspective on the Exclusivity of Salvation through Christ,” in Quinn and Meeker, eds., pp. 38–53

Tuesday, July 24: Religious Inclusivism and Pluralism

- *Short Response Papers Due: Last Names A–M*

Second Vatican Council, *Nostra aetate* (1965)

Jacques Dupuis, “Christianity and Religions: From Confrontation to Encounter,” in *Theology and Conversation* (Leuven, 2003), pp. 457–73

John Hick, “Religious Pluralism and Salvation,” in Quinn and Meeker, eds., pp. 54–66

Wednesday, July 25: Religion and Violence

- *Short Response Papers Due: Last Names N–Z*

Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*, 3rd edn. (Berkeley, 2003), chs. 1 and 11

Thursday, July 26: Religion and U.S. Culture (Introduction)

- *Debate #3: Religion, Violence, and Peacemaking (see p. 7 for debate guidelines)*
- *Short Response Papers Due: Last Names A–M*
- *Initial Drafts of Long Reflection Papers Due*

Robert P. Jones, *The End of White Christian America*, chs. 1 and 2

Tuesday, July 31: Religion and U.S. Politics

- *Short Response Papers Due: Last Names N–Z*

Thomas Jefferson, “A Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom” (1779)

James Madison, letter to Jasper Adams (1832)

Jones, *End of White Christian America*, ch. 3

Wednesday, August 1: Religion and the Family

- *Short Response Papers Due: Last Names A–M*

Jones, *End of White Christian America*, ch. 4

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, “Letter on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons” (1986)

Stephen Pope, “The Magisterium’s Arguments against ‘Same-Sex Marriage,’”
Theological Studies 65 (2004), 530–565

Cristina Traina, “Papal Ideals, Marital Realities: One View from the Ground,” in *Sexual Diversity and Catholicism*, eds. Patricia Beattie Jung and Joseph Coray (Collegeville, Minn., 2001), pp. 269–288

Essays by Hilary Howes, Eve Tushnet, and Deborah Word, in *More than a Monologue: Sexual Diversity and the Catholic Church*, vol. 1, *Voices of Our Times*, eds. Christine Firer Hinze and J. Patrick Hornbeck II (New York, 2014), pp. 17–31, 43–50

Thursday, August 2: Religion and Race

- *Religious Site Presentations*
- *Short Response Papers Due: Last Names N–Z*
- *Final Drafts of Long Reflection Papers Due*

Jones, *End of White Christian America*, chs. 5 and 6

Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham City Jail,” in James Melvin Washington, ed., *A Testament of Hope* (San Francisco, 1986), pp. 289–302

Bryan N. Massingale, “*Vox Victimarum Vox Dei*: Malcolm X as Neglected ‘Classic’ for Catholic Theological Reflection,” *CTSA Proceedings* 65 (2010), 63–88

Final examination: take-home exam due Monday, August 5

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

One distinguishing feature of this *Eloquentia Perfecta* section of Faith and Critical Reason is the attention that will be given to developing students' writing skills.

Each student will write an initial paper of three pages in response to Rowan Williams' argument in his essay "Theological Integrity." Initial drafts of this paper are due Tuesday, July 10. These drafts will be returned with grades and comments on Wednesday, July 11. Students will have the option to rewrite their initial drafts, with revised versions due Wednesday, July 12. If a student chooses not to rewrite the paper, the initial grade will stand; if a student chooses to produce a revised paper, the final grade will be the average between the initial grade and the grade awarded to the revised paper.

Following the initial paper, each student will have the option of choosing one of two ways of completing the writing assignments for the remainder of the course:

- Short Response Papers: Students who choose this option will produce a series of six two-page response papers over the course of the semester. Each response paper will identify a question prompted by the readings for the day on which it is due and will seek to offer a preliminary response to that question. These short papers will be graded A (100%), A- (90%), B (85%), C (75%), D (65%), F (59%), or no credit (for papers not submitted). If a student's paper contains more than five technical errors, it will automatically be assigned the grade of F and will be returned to the student for revision. Papers awarded an F under the terms of this paragraph may be rewritten and resubmitted at the beginning of the next class session; if a revised paper contains five or fewer technical errors, the grade it receives will be the grade for that particular assignment.
- Long Reflection Paper: Students who choose this option will work with the instructor to produce a twelve-page paper on one of the topics to be covered during the semester. An initial draft of the paper will be due Thursday, July 26, which will be returned to the student with comments (but no grade) on Tuesday, July 31. The final draft of the paper will be due Thursday, August 2.

Students must notify the instructor no later than Wednesday, July 11, as to which type of writing assignments they have chosen. Students who choose the "short response papers" option may elect at any point in the semester to switch to the "long reflection paper" option (with the grade on the long reflection paper replacing all grades earned on the short response papers). Students who choose the "long reflection paper" option may not switch to the "short response papers" option without the permission of the instructor.

DEBATES

One of the other ways in which this course aims to develop students' written and oral expression is through the form of public debates on key theological questions. Early in the semester, students will be divided into three debate groups of approximately six members each. For each of the three debates on the syllabus, two groups will be responsible for arguing assigned positions on the question under discussion, while the other group will comprise the jury/audience. Details on the format of each debate will be distributed in advance, but for each debate, each group will submit a paper setting forth its position, and each member of the jury/audience will submit a 1-page paper explaining her/his vote. The position papers will be worth 5% of the final grade each; the votes will be worth 2% of the final grade each.

ATTENDANCE

Frequent absences harm a student's ability to keep up with the course material and detract from participation in discussions, both of which affect a student's capacity to learn. Class attendance and punctuality are requirements, and attendance will be taken in class meetings. Because this is a summer course, the attendance policies of Summer Session apply.

Absences may be excused for reasons specified in the policies of Fordham College at Rose Hill (including illness, family emergency, or participation in university-sanctioned activities), so long as the student notifies the instructor either in advance or as soon after the absence as is reasonably possible.

EVALUATIONS

Final marks will be calculated using the following grading scale as a guide. The instructor reserves the right to raise or lower numerical averages where circumstances dictate.

A:	93–100%	A-:	90–92%	B+:	87–89%
B:	83–86%	B-:	80–82%	C+:	77–79%
C:	73–76%	C-:	70–72%	D:	60–69%
		F:	0–59%		

Assignments are to be handed in at the beginning of the class meeting for which they are due; if for some reason (e.g., a printer malfunction) an assignment cannot be handed in as normal, it must be emailed to the instructor prior to the start of class. Late work may be penalized up to one letter grade per day late. When a student is absent without excuse and misses a quiz or examination, the mark for that quiz or examination shall be zero.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Students may use laptops and other electronic devices during class, to the extent that these enhance the learning process and do not disrupt others. For this reason, texting and mobile phone use are never permitted. The instructor reserves the right to prohibit the use of electronic devices for any reason and at any time.

A NOTE ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Proper scholarship entails the responsibility to give proper acknowledgment whenever one is indebted to another for either words or ideas. It is expected that students are familiar with the University's standards of academic conduct. Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated and, if discovered, will be treated as a violation of the University Code of Conduct. Any student found to have engaged in any form of academic dishonesty will, at the very least, receive zero points for the piece of work concerned. That being said, the instructor is always happy to discuss any issues related to academic integrity.

ADA NOTICE

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 activities, coursework, or assessment in this course, you may be entitled to accommodations. Please schedule an appointment with the Office of Disability Services, located on the lower level of O'Hare Hall; telephone extension 0655.