

# Wesley Theological Seminary Course of Study School

## ***CS 522: Theology in the Contemporary Church*** **Summer Hybrid 2016**

### Instructor Information

**Faculty:** The Reverend Audrey C. Price

**Email:** [awiggins@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:awiggins@wesleyseminary.edu)

**Term:** August online; in person September 16-17, 2016

### Course Information

**Course Session Dates:** online in August; in person on September 16-17, 2016 (Wesley).

**Course Goal:** The course is designed to cover significant individuals, movements, events, and theological developments from the nineteenth century to the present. Students will read selected primary sources.

**Course Objectives:** Students will be able to:

1. Understand the origins and theological tenets of liberalism from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present, including its influence on ecumenism and process theology.
2. Understand and distinguish reaction to liberalism, including Fundamentalism, Neo-Orthodoxy, and Evangelicalism.
3. Understand the historical development and theology of the Holiness Movement, Pentecostalism, and the Charismatic Movement.
4. Understand the origins and tenets of Liberation and Contextual theologies.

**Course Expectations:** Students are expected to engage the online content and attend the September residency to receive full credit in the class. While the resident component is a normal instructional model including lecture and class time together, the online content will be asynchronous and may require further instruction. For the online portion, please take notice of the following considerations:

- a. Students will need working access to the internet and specifically Blackboard for this course;
- b. Students will need updated/current versions of Microsoft Word® and Microsoft PowerPoint®. Please consult Microsoft guidelines to address issues of system compatibility and performance if encountered; and
- c. If you have difficulties with education technology and/or Blackboard, please contact the Seminary's office of Education Technology and/or Blackboard support (see information below). If you have any questions about class information or instruction, please contact the professor: [awiggins@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:awiggins@wesleyseminary.edu)

**Prerequisites:** See COS Curriculum

## Textbooks and Supplementary Materials

### REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

1. Caputo, John. *What Would Jesus Deconstruct?*
2. Migliore, Daniel. *Faith Seeking Understanding*
3. Bettenson, Henry and Maunder, Chris. *Documents of the Christian Church*
4. Engel, Mary Potter and Thistlethwaite, Susan editors. *Lift Every Voice: Constructing Christian Theologies from the Underside*

### SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTBOOKS:

- A) Knight, Henry H. *From Aldersgate to Azusa Street*
- B) Miguel De La Torre (ed.) and Stacy Floyd-Thomas (ed.) *Beyond the Pale: Reading Theology from the Margins*, Westminster John Knox Press, 2011.
  1. Cone, James H. *A Black Theology of Liberation*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010.
- C) Gutierrez, Gustavo. *Theology of Liberation*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1973.

## Assignments and Participation

Online Assignments: Post all online assignments on Blackboard under the “Assignments” tab. There will be a submission portal for the assignments listed below.

### **Pre-Course Assignment due August 8, 2016**

- A) Read **Chapters 1-5** in *Faith Seeking Understanding*.
- B) Post papers addressing these questions (each answer should be one page)
  1. Migliore writes about three approaches or “methods” of doing theology. What are they? Assess their strengths and weaknesses.
  2. According to Migliore, what is the source of the doctrine of the Trinity? What is the difference between the “economic” and the “immanent” Trinity? Define subordination, modalism, and tritheism. Define the psychological and social analogies of the Trinity.
  3. How does the doctrine of the Trinity inform our understanding of creation? How should we understand the relationship between science and theology?
  4. What is the theodicy question? How does the gospel narrative address it?

### **August 15, 2016**

- (A) Post Self-Introduction
- (B) Read **Chapters 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12** in *Faith Seeking Understanding*.
- (C) Post papers addressing these questions (each answer should be one page)
  1. How does the concept of “relationship” help to clarify and deepen our understanding of
    - a. the image of God, and

- b. the fallen, sinful nature of humanity?
2. How does the doctrine of the Trinity shed light on the personhood of Jesus Christ? How would you explain the phrase “Jesus died for us?”
3. Name and assess the strengths and weaknesses of the models of the church that Migliore names in chapter eleven.
4. To what model of church does your church demonstrate? How has reading Migliore informed you in terms of defining your church? implementing church? revisioning?
5. What is Barth’s critique of infant baptism? Assess the argument for and against this practice. In United Methodist theology is Holy Communion an ordinance, a sacrament, or both?
6. In seeking to understand religious pluralism, how might the distinction between revelation and salvation be important? Be sure to define these terms.

### **August 16, 2016**

A) Respond to Blackboard online posting

### **August 17, 2016**

(A) Read Caputo’s, *What Would Jesus Deconstruct?*

(B) Post papers addressing these questions (an adequate answer would be two pages in length)

1. How does Caputo define “deconstruction”? What does he mean by being “lost”? Caputo deflects criticism that his position entails relativism and that it is nihilistic. Define these terms. Is he successful? Explain.
2. If Jesus pays a surprise visit to your church and wants to see the books, what would Jesus deconstruct? Outline 2-3 theological topics and perspectives and engage Caputo when explaining Jesus’ “deconstruction” during this surprise visit. (2-3 pages)

### **August 18, 2016**

(A) Reference Bettenson & Maunder, *Documents of the Christian Church* (4<sup>th</sup> Edition), **Section XV and Section XVI**

(B) Post 4-page paper addressing **one** of the following topics:

1. The 2016 presidential election in the United States has surfaced a heated debate regarding immigration, Christian-Muslim relations and acceptance of other people and their faith in the United States. Reflect upon the readings and write a theological reflection paper that you would present to your church to lead and educate them in this nationally conversation.
2. Inter-faith and Interreligious dialogue remains a “hot topic” in the twenty-first century. Reflect upon the reading and building upon insights gained, discuss the value of continuing the dialogue. What one or two points do you view as most interesting/important for dialogue in the context of your ministry? What insights do you offer to the dialogue?

## **August 19, 2016**

A) Respond to Blackboard online posting

## **September 15-16, 2016**

(A) Read prior to class:

- a. Bettenson & Maunder, *Documents of the Christian Church* (4<sup>th</sup> Edition), **Section XIV**
- b. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, **Chapter 9 – Confessing Jesus Christ in Context**
- c. Engel, Mary Potter and Thistlethwaite, Susan editors. *Lift Every Voice: Constructing Christian Theologies from the Underside*

(B) Assignment: TBD

### **Blackboard Tracking:**

Blackboard tracks student activity when logged in and accessing our course via Blackboard.

### **Grading Procedure:**

#### **Grading**

Online Participation 10%

Self-Introduction

Blog/Discussion

Classroom Participation 10%

Online Assignments 40%

In Class Assignments 40%

#### **Late Assignments**

Assignments not received by the due date will have the grade lowered according to the policy noted below.

Grades will be reduced:

- a step (e.g. from B to a B-) for assignments (a) posted after the date and time due on Blackboard; and (b) handed in after the start of class (for in person class assignments),
- and a full letter grade for any assignments 24 hours past due.
- Assignments over 48 hours past due will be lowered two letter grades.
- We need to talk if an assignment is over 72 hours past due.

*\*Grades will be on Blackboard and can be accessed by clicking MyGrades in the course menu.*

### **Grading Scale:**

The instructor assumes that everyone in the class is capable of the work required to receive a “B” grade for each assignment. The following interpretations of the meaning of each

grade have been developed to help class members review their work to identify strengths and problems.

**B** means that the basic elements of the assignment have been faithfully included, the argument is internally coherent, and clearly articulated.

**B+** means the assignment is also well crafted.

**A-** means that the assignment is not only well crafted, but it also probes the issues with considerable insight.

**A** means the assignment is well crafted, reveals considerable insight, and moves beyond the range of the student's prior knowledge to begin to construct new perspectives and meanings for the subject. In other words, it shows the student's imagination at work; it has a creative edge.

**C+** means that the assignment lacks clarity or focus, tends to reveal more the writer's opinions than the results of the writer's analysis, and lacks reflective insight into the issues being discussed.

**C** means that the assignment does not move beyond the reporting of information from readings and/or class discussions to engaging them with issues being discussed; it may indicate inappropriate or misuse of data and readings.

**C-** means that despite some moments of focused discussion and insight, major gaps exist in the development of the argument or discussion.

**F** means the individual needs to see me immediately.

### Students With Disabilities

If you have a physical, psychological, or learning disability and might require accommodations in this course, please contact the Office of Community Life early in the semester regarding Wesley's policies and procedures for documenting and accommodating disabilities at ext. 86. The seminary allows accommodations only through this policy.

### Technical Support

Students are responsible for meeting course deadlines. If you experience technical problems, please exercise one or all of the following options:

- Blackboard Support at [blackboardsupport@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:blackboardsupport@wesleyseminary.edu)
- By phone at (202) 885-6091
- Blackboard/E Support Ticket at <http://blackboardsupport.wesleyseminary.edu> or <http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/MyWesley/eSupport.aspx>

Please let me know when you contact Blackboard support as well so I will be aware you are having technical problems.

## Technical Considerations

Blackboard site requires use of:

- An Internet connection. A high speed Internet connection is highly recommended
- An Internet browser (supported browsers include: Internet Explorer, Firefox, and Safari).
- An appropriate web browser configuration.

Any computer capable of running a recently updated web browser should be sufficient to access our Blackboard site. However, bear in mind that processor speed, amount of RAM and Internet connection speed can greatly affect performance. Those using dial-up connections will experience longer page load times and much slower performance.

For Blackboard Support: (202) 885-6091 or [blackboardsupport@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:blackboardsupport@wesleyseminary.edu)

## Academic Misconduct

All students have signed the Covenant of Professional Ethics and Behavior. This must be adhered to, particularly in regards to academic honesty and plagiarism.

Plagiarism is regarded as a serious offense and will result in substantial penalties, including the possibility of academic dismissal. The Faculty regards the following as forms of plagiarism or dishonesty:

- copying from another student's paper
- giving or receiving unauthorized assistance to or from another student during an examination
- using unauthorized material during an examination
- borrowing and presenting as one's own (i.e., without proper attribution) the composition or ideas of another.

The mutilation, defacement, or stealing of library materials are examples of academic dishonesty and/or professional misconduct and are also subject to disciplinary action.

### **A Note on Plagiarism**

There are two kinds of plagiarism, both equally serious. First, there is plagiarism that occurs when a student uses someone else's work word-for-word without placing the cited material in quotation marks. Even if you cite sources in a bibliography at the end of your paper, if you have used someone else's words and have not properly placed those words in quotation marks (and cited the course appropriately in a footnote or parentheses), you have plagiarized.

Second, there is plagiarism that occurs when you use someone else's ideas without acknowledging that you have done so. For example, if you find some really interesting information on the Internet, change the wording a bit, and put that information into your paper without properly acknowledging (in a footnote or parentheses) that you have used this source, you have plagiarized.

In both cases, the work that you have turned in is not your own, original work, but someone else's work that you have copied. Please note well that plagiarism will not be tolerated in any Course of Study course.

## **Weather Policy**

Include the Seminary's weather policy: If the seminary is open we will have class. If the seminary is closed, class is cancelled. If the seminary is closed there will be a recorded message at the main switchboard number: 202-885-8600.

## **Inclusive Language Policy**

Bearing in mind that language reflects, reinforces, and creates social reality, the Seminary expects class conversation and written work to employ language that respects the equal dignity and worth of all human beings. In particular, linguistic sexism and racism are to be avoided.