<table>
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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Seminar in Systematic Theology I</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Religious &amp; Pastoral Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course Number</td>
<td>REL 347</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semester and Year</td>
<td>S216</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting Times and Location</td>
<td>Every other Tuesday, 6:30 pm-9:20 pm, January 19, February 2 &amp; 16, March 1 &amp; 22, April 5 &amp; 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Credit Hours</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Section</td>
<td>01</td>
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<td>Contact Information</td>
<td>Kate Lassiter, Ph.D.</td>
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<td>Classroom Building 21-E</td>
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<td>Office Hours: Monday &amp; Wednesday 9-12; by appointment</td>
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<td>(513) 244-3253</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:kate.lassiter@msj.edu">kate.lassiter@msj.edu</a></td>
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<td>PDFs and websites available on Blackboard under “Library”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course Description</td>
<td>This seminar-style course investigates key areas in systematic Christian theology in their historical and contemporary development, including Christology, doctrine of God, pneumatology, ecclesiology, soteriology, theological anthropology, liturgy &amp; sacraments, and revelation, doctrine, &amp; creed. Particular attention is given to theological hermeneutics, analysis, and reflection.</td>
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<td>Course Content</td>
<td>While the simplest theological maxim, God is love, undergirds all theological discourse, the corpus and range of thought responsive to this maxim is complex, creative, and fruitfully contested. The Christian theological tradition is a conversation that has its origins in the Jewish tradition and stretches forward, dialoguing with cultures and philosophical ideas that it encounters along the way. Academic theologians organize this expansive and impressive pattern of thought and discourse systematically, categorizing thoughts, histories of theological development, and discussions into certain areas, such as thinking about the Holy Spirit (pneumatology) or about Jesus of Nazareth as savior (Christology). However, none of these categories stands alone; they are interdependent.</td>
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<td>In Seminar I, we will: define theology and theological method; articulate the relationship between revelation, Scripture, and Tradition; describe foundational claims in doctrine of God and Trinity; describe the human predicament; articulate Christological claims in light of the human predicament and doctrine of God; and describe the work of the Spirit in light of Christological claims.</td>
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<td>Theological claims are never divorced from the prayers, problems, hopes, and suffering of believers. That is, theology is always embedded within a community of people practicing their faith. Theology is lived. As such, our course is attentive to grounding theology within the reality of communities of believers, in both historical and contemporary ways.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Strategies</td>
<td>Lecture, small group discussion, large group discussion, writing, research, &amp; reflection.</td>
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<td>Attendance Policy</td>
<td>Attend all 7 classes. You may miss only ONE class for any reason. THERE ARE NO EXCUSED ABSENCES, with the exception of documented accommodations</td>
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through the Disability Services office. You will receive an F if you miss more than one class.

**Dropping the Course**

- **Seven-Week Classes**
  - Week(ends) 1-3 No record of dropped class.
  - ("W" grade begins the day after the 3rd week(end) meeting)
  - Week(ends) 4-5 Grade of “W” for dropped class.
  - Week(ends) 6-7 No drops accepted.
  - (the day after the 5th week(end) meeting)

**Incomplete Policy**

Undergraduate: [http://registrar.msj.edu/undergraduate-catalog/rights-policies/academic-policies/grades/](http://registrar.msj.edu/undergraduate-catalog/rights-policies/academic-policies/grades/)

**Academic Honesty Policy**

Undergraduate [http://registrar.msj.edu/undergraduate-catalog/rights-policies/academic-policies/academic-honesty/](http://registrar.msj.edu/undergraduate-catalog/rights-policies/academic-policies/academic-honesty/)

**Disability Policy**

In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Mount St. Joseph University provides academic adjustments and auxiliary aids for students with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit or restrict one or more major life activities such as walking, seeing, hearing, or learning. Students with disabilities should contact Meghan Littrell, the Director of Learning Center & Disability Services, to present documentation and develop individualized accommodation plans (244-4524, Meghan.Littrell@msj.edu, Learning Center, Room 156 Seton). Students who have already registered with MSJ Disability Services are encouraged to discuss their accommodations with their course faculty at the beginning of each semester. Additional information can be found at [http://www.msj.edu/academics/disability-services/](http://www.msj.edu/academics/disability-services/).

**Technology Policy**

Technology is ubiquitous. However, research suggests that all of us are tiny addicts when it comes to technology and that we are losing our ability to focus for long periods of time (listen to this story: [http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=127370598](http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=127370598)). Further, your use of technology impedes both your learning and the learning of others around you. For the most part, no computers, no cell phones, no other devices. If you do not have a technology addiction and use e-books, we can talk. However, research also suggests that we interact with electronic readings differently than we do with readings that are in print, e.g. we are less attentive. The point of all of this is to develop the capacity for long attention and to being fully present and fully alive in every moment.

**Communication Policy**

My contact information is listed at the top of the syllabus. I check email at least once a day, Monday through Friday. I refrain from checking email on Saturday and Sunday. Create space to look at the syllabus, assignments, and readings with sufficient time to ask clarifying questions. Call me on my office phone during office hours or visit in person if you have questions. I prefer face-to-face and voice-to-voice communication over email.

**Late Work Policy**

Do your work on time. Anything late is automatically reduced by 50% if I receive it within 24 hours of its due date. No points are available after 24 hours and it will not be evaluated.

**Grading Scale**

1000 points are available for the course. At the end of the semester I will add the total points earned for each assignment and divide by a 100, resulting in a grade on a 0-100 scale. Letter grades are determined using this scale: A = 93-100; B = 83-92; C = 70-82; D = 60-69; and F = 59 and below.
Religious and Pastoral Studies Major Learning Outcomes and Performance Indicators

1. Demonstrate knowledge and comprehension of the following Judeo-Christian theological areas: biblical studies, systematic and historical theology, ethics, spirituality, and pastoral studies.
   PI 1.1: Select/apply scholarly resources
   PI 1.2: Historical, literary, contextual analysis
   PI 1.3: Ability to think theologically about an issue

2. Recognize and analyze a theological-cultural ‘situation’ utilizing methods from practical theology.
   PI 2.1: Students will identify the cultural issues in a ministry context
   PI 2.2: Students will think and reflect theologically about the issue

3. Assess issues of injustice using social analysis.
   PI 3.1: Students will identify ethical issues of social injustice
   PI 3.2: Students will develop the skills of social analysis
   PI 3.3: Students will theologically reflect on the common good strategies for justice and ethical action

4. Apply the spiritual wisdom of the Judeo-Christian tradition to discern personal vocation.
   PI 4.1: Students will demonstrate knowledge of spirituality within the Christian tradition
   PI 4.2: Students will assess their own spiritual journey and development
   PI 4.3: Students will examine their vocational call in light of the spiritual wisdom of the tradition

Course Schedule
What follows is the topic of discussion, reading that should be completed before class, and writing that should be completed before class. Please look at course assignments for assignment specifics. Students should bring all their texts to class, copies of their papers for each student, and note-taking materials.

January 19: Theology and Method
Written work: Identifying a Theological Problem
Reading: Migliore, Ch. 1; Himes, Ch. 2 & 4; PDF “What is Practical Theology”
Class leader: Dr. Lassiter

February 2: Revelation, Scripture, and Tradition
Written work: Topical Threading
Reading: Migliore, Ch. 2 & 3; Himes, Ch. 5 & 10; Dei Verbum, available at http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651118_dei-verbum_en.html
Class leader:

February 16: Doctrine of God, the Trinity, and Creation
Written work: Topical Threading
Reading: Migliore, Ch. 4 & 5; Himes, Ch. 1; PDF “Ecumenical Creeds and Arian Christology”
Class leader:

March 1: The Human Predicament
Written work: Topical Threading
Reading: Migliore, Ch. 6 & 7; Himes, Ch. 3;
Class leader:

March 22: Christology, Part I
Written work: Topical Threading
Reading: Migliore, Ch. 8; Watch *From Jesus to Christ* (first 2 hours) on PBS Frontline available here: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/religion/
Class leader:

April 5: Christology, Part II
Written work: Topical Threading
Reading: Migliore, Ch. 9; PDF “Womanist Jesus and the Mutual Struggle for Liberation”
Class leader:

April 19: Pneumatology
Written work: Topical Threading
Reading: Migliore, Ch. 10; PDF “What Is a Theologian?”; Acts Ch. 1-Ch. 6:7
Class leader:

April 26 (Not a class meeting)
Written work: 8 page final paper due

Course Assignments

1. Identifying a Theological Problem (Pre-assignment) – 10% - Due in class, printed, January 19

   What is a problem in theology that you have encountered in your studies so far? This could be a practical problem that you saw as you did an immersion course or service or internship, or a problem that you’ve experienced in church or ministry, or something you encountered as you investigated spirituality or the Bible, or an historical or academic problem that got you thinking. Begin to make a mind map or some kind of conceptual map (student’s choice if a mind map is not preferred) that begins to identify and outline the problem. Students should draw from any and all of their course work and experience. Somewhere in the mind map, students should
   a. Tell what you saw or read or experienced, and what it made you think, feel, pray
   b. Describe it as a problem using theological language
   c. Identify some themes that accompany the problem that you’ve identified

   Aim for about 2 pages between a mind map and some kind of written commentary that might include references to books, Scripture, etc. You may exceed 2 pages if need be.

2. Topical Threading – 60% (10% each) – Due in class, printed, Feb 2 & 16, March 1 & 22, April 5 & 19

   Before every class meeting, students will produce a one page (no more than one page), double-spaced typed reflection that traces a theological theme or question that they choose (one theme over the course of the semester). Students are expected to practice close and deep reading of the course texts in order to write their one page papers, citing, quoting, paraphrasing, and explaining in a clear and cogent manner. If the theme does not appear as evidently in some weeks as in others, students should still write a one page paper and begin to think about why the theme or question does not emerge.

3. Final paper – 20% - Due April 26 by 6:30 pm, on Blackboard AND printed copies to CL 21-E
In this minimum 8 page paper, students will develop a robust theological paper that takes up topics and themes that they have explored over the course of the semester. The paper is an academic paper and as such you should use and cite sources consistently using MLA format.

The writer should do the following:

a. Students should introduce the topic drawing from the problem that they wrote about for the pre-assignment.
b. Students explain how this problem is a theology problem and how they will answer it (method).
c. Students should answer it, drawing from course resources, citing and explaining key concepts, ideas, and authors along the way, and drawing them into conversation with each other and with your problem. Students’ threading papers should assist with this task.
d. Lastly, students should reflect on their understanding of their spiritual journey and where taking up these theological questions and thoughts leads them in their vocational discernment.

4. Evaluation of preparedness for class vis a vis participation and leadership during seminar meeting – 10%