2016

310-01 Marriage and Family

Marcus Mescher
mescherm@xavier.edu

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Course Description:
This course explores Christian understandings of what it means to be human, enter into loving relationships, experience intimacy, as well as the joys and hopes, fears and difficulties of married and family life. In addition to studying the theological foundations of these personal, relational, and social commitments, students will employ an interdisciplinary approach to examine socio-cultural influences on individuals, couples, and families. Topics covered include: love, personhood, relationships, sociology of sex, race, class, ethnicity, and age, human sexuality and reproductive choices, cohabitation, parenting, gender roles, divorce and remarriage, same-sex marriage, family management and decision-making, conflict and communication, life/work balance, and social responsibilities to the common good. This course draws from a diverse array of perspectives (biblical, traditional, contemporary religious and philosophical teachings, ethical principles, as well as social sciences and human experience) to empower students to make well-informed judgments about beliefs, values, practices, relationships, policies, and structures for personal and collective flourishing.

Course Objectives:
To successfully complete THEO 310, students will:
1. Explain the basics of how the Christian Tradition envisions the human person and human flourishing with respect to religion, morality, and life in community.
2. Reflect on and articulate one’s own moral identity and perspective, citing major influences, truest desires, and deepest hopes for one’s continued moral development.
3. Be able to distinguish and engage various sources and methods for religious and moral decision-making and be able to properly use these sources and methods in addressing contemporary social norms for love, marriage, and family life.
4. Reflect on the vocation of the human person for right-relationship with God, self, and others.
5. Appreciate and critically evaluate the strengths and limits as well as areas of potential for growth/change in Christian theology and ethics.
6. Form intelligent and responsible judgments of value as their understanding of the material develops.
7. Participate in respectful, well-informed discussion of religious, social, political, cultural, economic and moral issues.
8. Construct a vision for practicing moral deliberation and practices in one’s current and future personal, relational, and professional discernment.

Required Texts:
Course Assessment:

1. **Attendance and Participation (10%)**: Students are expected to be present for every class as each class meeting is considered a vital part of the learning process. Accordingly, students should arrive on time, bring a hard copy of the assigned reading and be prepared to speak to/from it, take thorough notes, and participate in discussion through raising questions and comments that will help us (a) identify the main points; (b) analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the argument(s) constructed by the author(s); and (c) apply this material to life in the world today. Please also note the following expectations:
   a. As a sign of respect to all, please be on time for class and do not plan to leave until class has concluded. If a student arrives late several times, it may be counted as an absence.
   b. If an absence is unavoidable, please email the instructor beforehand whenever possible. Excessive absences (more than 3) throughout the semester will result in a lower final grade. More than 6 absences will automatically result in failing the course. No distinction is made between “excused” and “unexcused” absences for this policy.
   c. Students should not use phones, tablets, or laptops (etc.) during class; neither should class meetings be recorded. If a student does not abide by these rules, this may result in a grade reduction. (Please note: if a student needs to use technology to accommodate a learning disability, please see the instructor, who is happy to work with you.)
   d. Each student is required to schedule at least one office hour visit before Spring Break to check-in on an individual basis (more than one office visit is most welcome, of course).

2. **Notecards (10%)**: For every class, students should bring a 3x5 note card that includes (1) on the front: a thesis statement or key quote from the assigned reading representing a main take-away from what the student learned from this material and (2) on the back: a question for clarification or to spur a lively conversation in class. Students should write their name and the corresponding date on each note card and turn it in before the start of each class. More detailed instructions are posted on Canvas.

3. **Short Response Papers (15%)**: Student comprehension of readings and class conversations will be evaluated by 10 Response Papers submitted on a mostly-rolling basis on Canvas. Students will respond to a reading/topic in a 1-page, single-spaced reflection (1 inch margins, size 12 Times New Roman font) that briefly identifies and describes key points made by the author(s), an assessment of strengths and weaknesses of these views, and a reflection that explores implications/applications of these ideas for specific practices and policies to improve conditions for marriage and family life in the world today. Check Canvas for more detailed instructions (and general due date guidelines).

4. **Essays (40%)**: Students will be assigned four 1,500-2,500 word essays throughout the semester – worth 10% each. Each task will be an opportunity to demonstrate specific and substantial understanding of the course material and effective reflection, analysis, and application of its relevance for the world today. All written work should be formatted in a Word document in standard MLA style (1 inch margins; size 12 Times New Roman font; double-spaced; use parenthetical citations, footnotes or endnotes to properly cite any ideas or phrases that are not your own). Essays should be submitted via Canvas by the deadline noted in the Course Schedule (see below). Specific instructions will be posted on Canvas; feel free to raise questions before the due date.

5. **In-Class Presentation (5%)**: Each student will be responsible for organizing a presentation and handout (to identify main points from the readings and 3-5 questions to spark lively discussion) for one class meeting. Consult Canvas for specific instructions and to indicate a preference for topics/dates.

6. **Final Essay (20%)**: In lieu of a final exam, students will be assigned a 2,000-3,000 word essay in response to *The Measure of Our Success* that summarizes/synthesizes the most important ideas, questions, and future hopes/possibilities drawn from the course. This essay will be submitted on Canvas by Friday, May 6 by 12pm. Additional instructions will be provided later in the semester; feel free to raise questions with the instructor before the due date.
**Grading Scale:**
Grading is cumulative over the course of the semester. Student participation and submitted work will earn grades based on the demonstrated level of effort, comprehension of material, thoughtful reflection, insightful analysis, and creative/constructive application following this letter grade scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-94</td>
<td>Superior work. Exceptional academic performance that is an uncommonly high academic achievement. Demonstrates mastery of the subject matter, critical analysis, effective communication and creativity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>93-92</td>
<td>Good work. An academic performance that is high quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>91-90</td>
<td>Demonstrates an above average competency in terms of critical analysis, effective communication and creativity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>89-87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>86-84</td>
<td>Fair work. A satisfactory academic performance that meets an average level of competency including understanding of basic ideas and concepts with some critical reflection and analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>83-82</td>
<td>Meeting the minimum academic performance sufficient to pass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>81-79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>78-76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>75-74</td>
<td>Failure. An unacceptable performance; not college level work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>73-71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>70-68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>67-0</td>
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This grade scale is taken directly from the Theology Department’s Grading Policy; please consult this page for more precise guidelines.

**Academic Integrity:**
All of the university’s policies regarding various forms of academic misconduct are in effect for this course. Xavier’s Academic Honesty policy reads,

The pursuit of truth demands high standards of personal honesty. Academic and professional life requires a trust based upon integrity of the written and spoken word. Accordingly, violations of certain standards of ethical behavior will not be tolerated at Xavier University. These include theft, cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized assistance in assignments and tests, unauthorized copying of computer software, the falsification of results and material submitted in reports or admission and registration documents, and the falsification of any academic record including letters of recommendation. All work submitted for academic evaluation must be the student's own. Certainly, the activities of other scholars will influence all students. However, the direct and unattributed use of another's efforts is prohibited as is the use of any work untruthfully submitted as one's own. Penalties for violations of this policy may include one or more of the following: a zero for that assignment or test, an "F" in the course, and expulsion from the University. The dean of the college in which the student is enrolled is to be informed in writing of all such incidents, though the teacher has full authority to assign the grade for the assignment, test, or course.

If a student has any questions about this policy, please consult the full Academic Honesty Policy and the instructor.

Please note that information about effective and appropriate research can be found at XU.tutor.
Course Policies:

1. **Academic achievement:** The instructor is passionate about helping students learn and grow in intellectual inquiry, critical thought, and the application of ideas discussed in this course. Toward that end, students are encouraged to communicate any particular interests or needs with the instructor and take advantage of the resources available through the Office of Student Success (CLC 514) and Learning Assistance Center (for help with study skills, tutoring, or a learning disability).

2. **Feedback:** Students will receive feedback from the instructor on written work, and as necessary, on notecards and class participation. Students will have the chance to evaluate the course’s (and instructor’s) effectiveness around midterm so improvements can be made before the end of the semester. The instructor is always happy to give or receive feedback, so feel free to request or provide feedback via phone, email, or an office visit. Please feel very welcome to stop by during office hours. Scheduling an appointment beforehand (during or outside office hours) will ensure the instructor’s undivided attention to your comments, questions, or other concerns.

3. **Class participation:** As noted above, students are expected to be actively engaged in the material and conversations by listening, taking notes, and speaking during class. Students must bring the assigned readings and be prepared to speak to/from the texts during every class meeting. Students may be called on to share their response to the readings and discussions at any time. To establish a classroom environment conducive to active, inclusive participation, we will maintain respect, honesty, and trust among everyone. This is a space that welcomes all (thoughtful and respectful) views and also seeks to get “underneath” observations or convictions to critically assess the foundational values, perspectives, and biases. As such, students are encouraged to reflect on how and why they form their comments and questions; the more we can reflect on and share how and why we are developing new inquiry and insights about the course content and its application, the more precise and profound our learning can become. To this end, side conversations, using phones/tablets/laptops in the classroom (e.g., texting), or consistently refraining from active participation will result in a lower level of learning and, correspondingly, earn a lower participation grade. If a student experiences difficulty in this learning environment, please see the instructor, who is happy to work with you.

4. **Written assignments:** Please follow the guidelines stated in this syllabus and in the assignment instructions posted on Canvas. All written assignments should follow MLA guidelines, be free of spelling and grammar mistakes, and accurately cite all source material. If student work contains numerous errors in style or content, it will earn a lower grade and may be returned to be corrected and resubmitted. If you would like help with your writing style, please see the instructor or consult the Writing Center before the assignment is due. Ideas and phrases that are not your own must be cited appropriately (per MLA, parenthetically or with footnotes). In fairness to all students, all assignments must be turned in on time and late work will earn a grade lowered in proportion to how much time has passed since the deadline. Exceptions or extensions can only be granted before the assignment due date.

5. **Workload:** As this is a 300-level course, students are expected to spend at least 6-9 hours a week outside of class time to complete assignments. Please discuss any concerns about the workload with the instructor.

6. **Extra credit:** Work for extra credit – typically an essay relating a current issue, campus event, article, etc. to course material to demonstrate a student’s understanding and application of course material – is accepted via Canvas on a rolling basis until Monday, May 2 at 5pm. For more detailed instructions, consult the course Canvas site and/or contact the instructor.

7. **Communication:** Please check your Xavier email and the course Canvas site regularly for communication about THEO 310, as any changes or updates will be shared therein. The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus and will do so with as much advance notice as possible.
Course Schedule:

Please note: All readings not included in the required texts (i.e., online readings as well as pdfs) are available in the Module and Pages sections of the course Canvas site, designated below with the double asterisk (**).

1) Monday, January 11: Introduction to the Course
   - Discuss in class:
     i. Why/how a theology of marriage and family?
     ii. Multi-disciplinary and ethical approach.
     iii. Thinking on 3 levels: personal, relational, social.

2) Wednesday, January 13: The American Dream in Crisis?
   - Read for class:
     ii. Richard Eskow, “7 Facts that Show …” AlterNet (10/22/14)**

3) Friday, January 15: Marriage, Family, and the American Dream
   - Read for class:

4) Sunday, January 17: MLK Week Kick-Off Event
   - Please join us at 6pm in the 3rd Floor of the Gallagher Student Center

5) Monday, January 18: No Class – Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
   - Please read: Alex Mikulich, “Breathing Space” America (10/26/15)**

6) Wednesday, January 20: What Does it Mean to be Human?
   - Read for class:
     i. John R. Sachs, “Creation in God’s Image,” pp. 11-24.**

7) Friday, January 22: What is Love?
   - Read for class:
     i. Eric Immel, “Rethinking Chill” The Jesuit Post (10/27/15)**
     iii. Seth Adam Smith, “Real Love is a Choice” Huffington Post (02/06/15)**
     iv. Brendan Busse, “To Be A Better Lover” The Jesuit Post (06/02/15)**
     v. Chris Pramuk, “Sexuality, Spirituality, & the Song of Songs” America (10/31/05)**

8) Monday, January 25: On the Road: A Look at College Life
   - Read for class:
     i. Donna Freitas, Sex & the Soul, pp. 25-56.
     iii. Jon Zimmerman, “We’re Casual about Sex …” Washington Post (10/13/15)**
9) Wednesday, January 27: Considering “The Ideal”
   • Read for class:
     iii. Samantha Pugsley, “My Christian Virginity Pledge …” *Salon* (08/10/14)**

10) Friday, January 29: Considering “The Truth”
    • Read for class:
      ii. Miranda Kulp, “An Entire Generation Forgot to Date” *Elite Daily* (08/08/14)**
      iii. Catherine Woodiwiss, “Millennials Talk Sex & Morals” *Sojourners* (03/27/15)**

11) Sunday, January 31: **Reflection Essay Due** (Submit via Canvas by 5pm).

12) Monday, February 1: Reconciling the Ideal & the Real
    • Read for class:

13) Wednesday, February 3: The Dark Side of Sex on Campus
    • Read for class:
      iii. Megan McCabe, “Hook-Up Culture as Rape Culture” *Daily Theology* (09/15/15)**

14) Friday, February 5: Dating, Technology, and Sex
    • Read for class:
      ii. Naomi Schaefer Riley, “Tinder is Tearing Society …” *New York Post* (08/16/15)**

15) Monday, February 8: Sex and Cohabitation
    • Read for class:

16) Wednesday, February 10: To Marry or Not?
    • Read for class:
      i. Karl Schultz, “A Vibrant Vocation” *America* (01/04/16)**
17) Friday, February 12: LGBTQ Individuals, Marriage, and Family
   • Read for class:
     ii. USCCB, “Always Our Children” (1997)**
     v. Celso Perez, “Zero Tolerance” America (12/08/15)**

18) Monday, February 15: What is Marriage? Drawing from Scripture and Tradition
   • Read for class:
     iv. Richard Clifford, “Learning from Our (First) Parents” America (10/24/14)**

19) Wednesday, February 17: A Theology of Marriage
   • Read for class:
     iii. Richard Gaillardetz, A Daring Promise, pp. 17-32.
     iv. William May, “Understanding Marriage …” NCR (10/12/15)**

20) Friday, February 19: Comparing Culture with Theology
   • Read for class:
     i. Richard Gaillardetz, A Daring Promise, pp. 1-15.
     ii. Richard Gaillardetz, A Daring Promise, pp. 33-65.
     iii. Hanif Abdurraqib, “I’ll Never Be My Wife’s Equal” Medium (12/09/15)**
     iv. Brittany Wong, “Stay Off Social Media …” Huffington Post (04/30/15)**

21) Monday, February 22: Sex in Marriage
   • Read for class:
     iii. Richard Gaillardetz, A Daring Promise, pp. 69-91.
     v. Laurie Watson, “The Real Danger …” Psychology Today (06/27/10)**

22) Wednesday, February 24: Abuse in Intimate Relationships
   • Read for class:
     iii. Alanna Vagianos, “30 Domestic Violence …” Huffington Post (02/13/15)**
     iv. Nina Bahadur, “#WhyIStayed Stories Reveal …” Huffington Post (09/09/14)**

23) Friday, February 26: Conflict in Marriage
   • Read for class:
iv. Laurie Watson, “The Real Danger of Porn” Psychology Today (06/27/10)**

v. Helen Croydon, “It’s Time to Ditch Monogamy” New Republic (04/25/15)**

- Watch for class:
  i. Esther Perel, “Rethinking Infidelity” TED Talk (March 2015)**

24) Sunday, February 28: **Pop Culture Essay Due** (Submit via Canvas by 5pm).

25) Monday, February 29: Communication and Conflict

- Read for class:

26) Wednesday, March 2: Annulment and Divorce

- Read for class:

27) Friday, March 4: Post-Divorce and Considering Remarriage

- Read for class:
  iv. Sara Morrison, “Rethinking Custody Battles” Boston.com (07/23/15)**

28) Monday, March 7: **No Class – Spring Break**

29) Wednesday, March 9: **No Class – Spring Break**

30) Friday, March 11: **No Class – Spring Break**

31) Monday, March 14: Marriage in a Global Context – Part 1

- Read for class:
  i. Anita Jain, “Is Arranged Marriage Any Worse …” New York Magazine**
  ii. Mira Jacob, “The Arranged Marriage That Ended …” Vogue (06/26/14)**
  iii. Eleanor Goldberg, “Child Brides Photo Series …” Huffington Post (09/22/15)**

32) Wednesday, March 16: Marriage in a Global Context – Part 2

  i. Melissa Browning, “Risky Marriage: It’s Better to Be Single,” pp. 9-17.**
  ii. Melissa Browning, “Risky Marriage: Boundaries of Self,” pp. 79-95.**
  iii. Annie Kelly & Hazel Thompson, “The Vanished” The Guardian (10/24/15)**
33) Friday, March 18: Jewish and Muslim Views of Marriage
   • Read for class:
     iii. Moin Qazi, “Muslim Women Break Glass Ceiling” Chicago Monitor (08/28/15)**

34) Sunday, March 20: Interview Essay Due (Submit via Canvas by 5pm).

35) Monday, March 21: A Spirituality of Marriage and Journey toward Family
   • Read for class:
     iii. Richard Gaillardetz, A Daring Promise, pp. 93-116.

36) Wednesday, March 23: Family – The Domestic Church
   • Read for class:
     i. Lisa Sowle Cahill, Family, pp. ix-17.
     iii. Bridge Coleman, “Celebrating the Domestic Church” Millennial (09/26/15)**
     iv. Belinda Luscombe, “There is No Longer A Typical …” Time (09/04/14)**

37) Friday, March 25: No Class – Easter Break

38) Monday, March 28: No Class – Easter Break

39) Wednesday, March 30: Family and Social Bonds
   • Read for class:
     i. Lisa Sowle Cahill, Family, pp. 18-47.
     iii. David Gibson, “Families are Factories of Hope” RNS (09/26/15)**

40) Friday, April 1: A Look Inside Families
   • Read for class:
     iii. Torbjorn Tannsjo, “Have More Kids!” Gawker (08/28/15)**
     iv. Laura Willard, “18 Realistic Family Photos” Upworthy (11/18/15)**

41) Monday, April 4: What Affects Families?
   • Read for class:
     ii. Laura Bassett, “UN Assesses US Gender Equality” Huffington Post (12/15/15)**
   • Watch for class:
42) Wednesday, April 6: Families and Race
   • Read for class:
     i. Lisa Sowle Cahill, *Family*, pp. 111-129.
     ii. Nichole Flores, “Latino/a Families” JSCE (Fall/Winter 2013).**
     iii. Kirsten West Savali, “Myth of Absent Black Father” The Root (06/15/15)**
     iv. Rage Against the Minivan “Two White Girls …” (January 2016)**

43) Friday, April 8: Families and Gender Roles
   • Read for class:

44) Monday, April 11: Work/Life Balance
   • Read for class:
     i. Christine Firer Hinze, *Glass Ceilings and Dirt Floors*, pp. 102-120.
     iii. Jessica Grose, “Children Don’t Ruin …” National Post (11/19/14)**
     vi. James Kosur, “Executives Explain How They …” Business Insider (11/20/15)**

45) Wednesday, April 13: Families and the Common Good
   • Read for class:
     ii. Lisa Sowle Cahill, *Family*, pp. 130-137.
     iii. Greg Carpinello, “Imagination” Just Parenting (10/07/13)**
     iv. Robert Christian, “Time for a Preferential Option” Crux (04/03/15)**

46) Friday, April 15: Families Across Borders
   • Read for class:
     i. Kristin Heyer, *Kinship Across Borders*, pp. 61-88,**
     ii. Brian Root, “The ‘Anchor Baby’ Myth” Aljazeera (09/02/15)**
     iii. Brian Resnick, “Not an Immigration Story” National Journal (06/16/14)**

47) Monday, April 18: Family Values and Parenting
   • Read for class:
     iii. Cindy Brandt,” Are Religious Kids Meaner?” Sojourners (11/10/15)**

48) Wednesday, April 20: Which Values Do We Pass On?
   • Read for class:
     iv. Saskia De Melker, “The Case for Starting …” PBS News (05/27/15)**
49) Friday, April 22: A Call to Change
   • Read for class:
     i. John Markey, Moses in Pharaoh’s House, pp. 61-75.
     iii. Stephanie Pacheco “The Gospel of the Middle Class” America (11/09/15)**

50) Sunday, April 24: Research Essay or PSA Video Due (Submit via Canvas by 5pm).

51) Monday, April 25: Families as Agents of Social Transformation
   • Read for class:
     i. John Markey, Moses in Pharaoh’s House, pp. 123-139.
     iii. Mike Jordan Laskey, “We Are One Human Family” Millennial (12/12/13)**

52) Wednesday, April 27: Practices for Love and Justice
   • Read for class:
     i. Julie Hanlon Rubio, Family Ethics, pp. 190-209.
     iii. “The Rainbow Tide” The Economist (10/10/15)**

53) Friday, April 29: What Do You Want?
   • Read for class:
     i. Donna Freitas, The End of Sex, pp. 1-16.
     ii. Donna Freitas, The End of Sex, pp. 179-188.
     iii. Brad Harrington, “Millennials are Redefining …” The Huffington Post (12/03/15)**
     iv. Mark Manson, “You Probably Know …” Quartz (01/01/16)**

54) Monday, May 2: All Extra Credit, Revised, and Late Assignments Due by 5pm via Canvas

55) Final Essay Due: Friday, May 6 by 12pm (noon) on Canvas