111-33 Theological Foundations

Elizabeth Himes

Follow this and additional works at: https://www.exhibit.xavier.edu/theology_syllabi

Recommended Citation
Himes, Elizabeth, "111-33 Theological Foundations" (2020). Theology Syllabi. 1073.
https://www.exhibit.xavier.edu/theology_syllabi/1073

This Restricted-Access Syllabus is brought to you for free and open access by the Theology at Exhibit. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theology Syllabi by an authorized administrator of Exhibit. For more information, please contact exhibit@xavier.edu.
THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS
THEOLOGY 111, Section 33 | 3 sem. hours
Fall 2020
Monday, Wednesday, Friday | 2:00 PM - 2:50 PM
Main Campus | Cintas Center | Room 202

Instructor: Elizabeth Himes, M.A.Theo., M.Ed.
Adjunct Faculty, Department of Theology (Hinkle Hall)
My office is in my home; no in-person meetings during the pandemic
himese@xavier.edu
Contact me through email. I hope to respond within 24 hours, Monday – Friday, or within 36 hours on weekends.

Course Description
A basic study of human and religious faith, especially the Christian faith, the connection between faith and religion, the personal and social value of religion, the diversity of world religions, and the issues connected with religious diversity and global responsibility; a basic understanding of theology and how it relates to faith, along with different ways of reading scripture and tradition and how those readings affect issues of gender, class, race, violence, evil, and sin. Required course for E/RS.

Student Learning Outcomes
As a result of completing THEO 111, students will be able to:

1. Describe how reflection on the range of human experiences and evolving religious traditions enables a sense of the Divine and/or contributes to life’s meaning.
2. Identify how religious tradition develops over time in response to historical period, human experience, and cultural contexts.
3. Describe key features of the Christian understanding of being human and the demands of right relationship with the Divine, other humans, and the environment.
4. Apply the critical methodology and interpretative strategies of contemporary biblical scholarship to texts in both Hebrew Bible and Christian Scripture that express key biblical themes (creation, covenant, community, and/or liberation).
5. Identify key concepts and practices of at least one non-Christian religion in critical dialogue with Christianity.
6. Formulate a theologically informed response to the environmental crisis and to at least one other significant social issue, such as economic inequality, gender inequality and gender-based violence, and/or racial inequality.
7. Explain the Jesuit values of Xavier University and articulate how the practices of Ignatian spirituality provide strategies for human wholeness and creative social engagement.

Attendance
Generally, students may have no more than two unexcused class absences within the term. For each additional unexcused absence, a 10% deduction from the participation grade will be given. Student illness and authentic pandemic safety measures are normally excused. See XU Pandemic Student Illness Policy below. “Class” includes in-person classes, synchronous “hybrid” and remote/online classes with students meeting at the same time, and required
asynchronous (not at the same time) events substituting for traditional classes. Students are asked to inform the instructor promptly through email himese@xavier.edu when they cannot attend class or need other accommodations in THEO 111 beyond the Grading Assistance benefits listed below. Please note that failure to “attend” a test or exam, whether in-person or online, is serious and usually invites a failing grade on that assessment without a legitimate excuse.

Student athletes who will miss class to participate in official Xavier athletics travel are asked to inform the instructor directly of these conflicts in writing and in advance.

XU Pandemic Student Illness Policy
Xavier University is committed to the health, safety, and care of all individuals within our community. As part of our Ignatian values and in the spirit of cura personalis, Xavier University wishes to disincentivize class attendance when students may be sick. For the duration of the pandemic, students who are ill will be excused from classes when following the following procedures:

- Students must adhere to University health and wellness procedures for self-evaluation, follow-up, and quarantine as necessary.
- Students who are in quarantine due to close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, but who are not themselves symptomatic, are expected to attend class remotely and complete course assignments.
- Untruthful student claims about illness may be regarded as a violation of the Student Handbook.

On-time Attendance and Assignments
Students are expected to arrive on time for class, whether they are in-person or remote. Persistent tardiness will negatively impact a student’s final grade.

- Assignments are due on time. Late assignments will be penalized by a letter grade per day, after all Covid-19 Compassion Coupons have been used. (See below)
- Students needing accommodations for health, please see “Attendance.”

Assessment and Grading
The Theology Department follows an eight-point grading scale and provides policies for the just scoring of writing assignments. It is strongly recommended that students review these policies at https://www.xavier.edu/ theology-department/ undergraduate-studies/major/grading-policy . Additional information about academic integrity can be found at the end of this document.

A=94-100; A-=92-93; B+=90-91; B=87-89; B-=84-86; C+=82-83; C=79-81; C-=76-78; D+=72-75; D=68-71; F=67 or below

- Grading through the Canvas system can use slightly different math formulas than the instructor’s, especially regarding rounding. Students should regard the cumulative grading on Canvas as advisory only! The instructor’s grade will be considered final. Students should email the instructor if a concern arises.
Grading Assistance

- The instructor will drop the student’s lowest short quiz score.
- The instructor will drop the student’s lowest short reflection writing assignment (a short homework essay or online discussion response).
- **Covid-19 Compassion Coupons** – Each student will be given two virtual coupons. Each is worth an extra 48 hours to turn in regular homework, without penalty. The coupons will be applied automatically to the first two allowable late assignments. (At the discretion of the instructor, students who enroll late may forfeit coupons for work deadlines missed prior to participation.) These may not be used on the major paper, the major project, exams (tests during and at the end of the term), or quizzes; nor may they be used on any work due 11/16/2020 or later. Students who use no coupons by the end of term will receive bonus points.
- Students experiencing grade anxiety or fear of failure should contact the instructor as soon as possible. YOU CAN SUCCEED IN THEO 111!

Additional Assistance

Students needing learning help, additional information on class expectations in the event of illness or disease exposure, or other guidance should contact the instructor using email.

Students who have difficulty with spoken or written English, and students who have little or no knowledge of religion or Christian traditions, might find this course difficult. Please ask the instructor for assistance. There are alternative learning methods that may help. You can do it!

Support systems are available to all students at Xavier. Do not hesitate to reach out to the good people in the following offices for help. They each have web pages chock-full of help, too.

- Start at the Road through Xavier webpage for current students for help with:
  - Remote learning orientation and tech help
  - Remote library services
  - Email, Canvas, and your student records (Self-service)
  - University announcements
- Commuter Services – parking, driving, snow emergencies, and social life
- Office of Academic Support – free tutoring (Conaton Learning Commons)
- Office of Disability Services – support services to offset disability and enhance success 513-745-3280
- Counseling Services - free and confidential mental health resources, including Covid-19 counseling (Health United Bldg.) - 513-745-3022, option 2; 24/7 therapist after hours through XU police number 513-745-1000
- Health Services – “TriHealth at Xavier” 513.745.3022 opt. 3
- University Library - Research Desk at 745-4808. The theology librarian is Megan Kickbush.
- Writing Center – free tutoring to improve writing skills and the drafting of quality papers
• Center for Diversity and Inclusion – supporting students across race, class, sexual orientation, and gender identities
• Safety and Security – XUPD 513-745-1000 (Flynn Hall)
• Center for Faith & Justice - Personal religious and spiritual engagement; chaplains

**Student and Faculty Diversity** – Students and faculty at Xavier, including those studying and teaching in the Theology Department, are diverse. We come from a wide range of spiritual traditions, language and ethnic groups, orientations, and places of origin. This class will intentionally strive to welcome and demonstrate respect for all. A diversity of perspectives will be accepted when shared respectfully. A student who perceives another as lacking in respect should kindly inform that person of the objection. If the situation is not remedied, the instructor should be informed.

Each student will have the opportunity to share a preferred manner of address by using name cards during the class. Remote students might wish to adjust their visible Zoom names. “All for One” demands that we respectfully support the self-identification of classmates.

**Academic Integrity per University Policy**

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. You should be aware of the University policy on Academic Honesty, [http://www.xavier.edu/library/xu-tutor/Xaviers-Policy-on-Academic-Honesty.cfm](http://www.xavier.edu/library/xu-tutor/Xaviers-Policy-on-Academic-Honesty.cfm)

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.” Your instructor may use plagiarism detecting software, such as Turn-It-In, to review your written assignments.

**Theo 111-33 Learning Activities with Percent of Final Grade**

**Readings and Weekly Homework** - Students are expected to come prepared for class having read all required readings and having completed any other assigned homework. Consistent and serious failure to be prepared could lead to a failing grade in the course.

**10% Major Paper** - This five-page writing assignment seeks to help the student connect lessons learned in class with concrete examples demonstrated in *Barking to the Choir: The Power of Radical Kinship* by Gregory Boyle. Demonstrated student growth in reflective skills and material integration is key. Projected due date Sept. 30.
5% Group project – A group presentation on a topic to be announced from the non-Christian theologies module, later in the term.

15% Class Participation & Engagement – includes attendance and online discussion

10% Names and Actions of God Worksheet – There are three turn-in dates for this on-going self-guide into the nature of the Divine Mystery, as reflected on by various writers and traditions.

15% Reading/lesson-reflection papers – short essays or responses to readings, class lessons, or other class materials designed to focus student attention:

- To encourage careful reading
- To inspire reflection and integration of class material
- To engage students in a spiritual quest for all that is sacred and truthful
- To help students develop habits of study and performance for college success

10% Quizzes – in-person or online as announced; to assess knowledge and homework completion

35% Exams – Two mid-term exams (tests) at 10% each, plus end-of-course final exam 15%.

+1% Prayer/Reflection Leader – Extra credit will be given to students who thoughtfully prepare and present a two-minute prayer or spiritual reflection to begin a class.

Textbooks *= required


*Bible – A modern scholarly English translation of the Bible with Old and New Testaments, preferably the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). The New American Bible Revised Edition (NABRE) and several others are acceptable. YOU WILL NEED TO TAKE NOTES EITHER IN THE BOOK MARGINS OR ON STICKY NOTES so you will want a Bible other than one used for worship and family tradition. The Harper Collins Study Bible: NRSV with apocryphal books and concordance; is recommended and used in other Xavier classes: (Harper Collins 2006) ISBN: 978006122840. Online Bibles, while very useful and sometimes free, might be a problem for in-class work.

Other readings – These required and optional readings will be provided through the Canvas class page and often through the Xavier Library.
Module Summary

For lesson details, updates, grades, and more consult Canvas regularly.

HW = homework assignment

August 2020

10 Pre-class introductory letter to students
HW: Ice-breaker response to intro letter Due by Aug. 19.

17-21 Introduction to Theology and this Class

HW Student Information Form, due Aug. 21.
Read: Elizabeth Johnson, Quest for the Living God Introduction before Aug. 19.

Class business: syllabus, Zoom, textbooks, challenges of Covid
Remote learning & Canvas
Approach to the class
Why come to Xavier?
Define theology
Fundamental vocabulary

24-26 Finding God: Images of the Divine & the Human Search for Meaning

Read: Johnson, chapt 1 before Aug. 24, and chapt. 2 before Aug. 26
HW: Intro to Names of God Worksheet Part 1, due Sept. 4

Images of the Divine
Names that may not be spoken
Intro to Christian Trinity as one way of explaining multiple actions of Divine
What Does It Mean to Be Human? Johnson, p. 13, etc.
Discussion of Johnson
Basic family groups of religions; where Catholics fit in (CCC 838-843)

28 NO IN-PERSON CLASS. Quiz & Movie

Online quiz to be completed during this class period, 2:00 PM to 2:30 PM ONLY, through Canvas. Then begin film homework.


HW: Comment on the Canvas Discussion question as prompted, DUE Aug. 29 at midnight. By August 30 at midnight, reply thoughtfully to the comments of at least two other students.

Read: Barking to the Choir, pp. 1-90, by September 4.
8/31 - 9/4 Jesuit Spirituality

8/31 Discussion of Major Paper due Sept. 30.
Highlight XU webpages from Mission and Identity and Jesuit Resource
Sts. Ignatius & Francis Xavier
Society of Jesus

Read: webpages Mission and Identity and Jesuit Resource for 9/2; Barking to the Choir, pp. 1-90 for Sept. 4

September

2 Magis, etc. from webpages
Spiritual Exercises

*Asynchronous remote class on Nov. 2 could be moved into this module.

4 Discussion of Barking to the Choir, pp. 1-90.

Due today: Names of God Worksheet Part 1  (Part 2 will be due Oct. 9.)
HW: Continue reading Choir to p. 153 for 9/7, making notes that will help with the Major Paper.

7-9 Social Justice Part 1: Common Good, Service and Doing Justice

Luke 1:46-55 Magnificat – the lowly will be lifted up
Discuss Barking to the Choir, to p. 151

Consistent Ethic of Life (Bernardin)

Common Good and Overview of Issues Confronting November Voters

11 Mid-term Exam #1 – All material to date, likely online with no in-person students

HW: Read Choir to end by Sept. 16; prep for Major Paper, due Sept. 30

14-16 Introduction to the Bible: In the Beginning Was the Word

Table of Contents
How to find and notate chapter & verse
Timeline within the text compared to timeline of composition
Primary Historical Contexts: OT & Exile to Babylon; NT, Romans, Persecution
Authorship, prophesy & apocalyptic literature

16 Quiz: Final chapters of Choir

18-25 Hebrew Scriptures – Genesis
Read: Gen 1-3

Creation
Covenant & the covenantal community Gen 17:1-22
Gen 1, Gen. 11 - Word & Language
What does it mean to be the “Word of God?”
Myth & Story
Finding Meaning through Exegesis
Limitations of Literal Interpretation

25
Possible quiz

28-10/2 Hebrew Scriptures – Exodus

Read: Ex 1:1-6:13; 9-20

Slavery/freedom
Purification through Water & Desert
Covenant with Moses
The Law – Decalogue

30
DUE: Major Paper

October

5-9 Christian Scriptures – Gospel of Mark

Read: Gospel of Mark

Define gospel, epistle
Who is Jesus? In Mark
Who is Jesus? Compare to other Gospels
Analyze the plot, characters, and mystery of Mark

9 Due: Names of God Worksheet Part 2. (Part 3 due Nov. 18)

12 Exam #2. Details TBA

H.W. Read for October 19, Johnson, chapt. 3 & 4

14-16 Tradition

Theology as an ongoing dialogue between experience, tradition, and social reality
Brief overview of Christian history
Catholic “Tradition” versus “tradition” and role of Magisterial teaching
Effect of religious traditions over and against one another
Examples of Magisterial teaching
19-23  God of Compassion and Life

19  Quiz on Johnson readings, chaps. 3 & 4

Class discussion of Johnson’s major points.

HW: Begin reading Johnson, chaps. 5, 6, & 7. After reading each chapter, complete the short response essays on Canvas. These are due by midnight as follows: chap. 5 on Oct. 25, chap. 6 by midnight on Oct. 27, and chap. 7 by midnight on Oct. 29. Start this work now!!!! There is a lot to cover in the next two weeks.

23  OPTIONAL REMOTE CLASS:
Working groups compare and contrast with biblical teaching, traditional religious doctrines, social justice and Jesuit teachings, and the practical justice shown in Choir. Chart these.

26-11/2  Contemporary Theologies, especially within the Christian Tradition

Due: Short essays on chapt.5 due by midnight on 10/25.

26  Liberation – Johnson, review chapt 4
Due: Short essays on chapt.6 due by midnight on 10/27.

28  Feminist – Johnson, chapt 5; Dryer, Making Sense of God (option)
Due: Short essays on chapt. 7 due by midnight on 10/29.

30  African American - Johnson, chapt. 6

HW: Prepare group presentations on religions of the world

November

2  *NO REGULAR CLASS (This could be moved, if remote class needed earlier.)
Watch Rev. Bryan Massingale lecture on racial justice: “The Magis and Justice”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eyMYQFjzmZQ  55 min.
Quiz and discussion on Canvas due by midnight

4  Latin American/ Hispanic – Johnson chapt 7

6-16  Theologies of the Non-Christian World

6  Islam, Perspectives and Practices
Read for today: excerpts from God is One: The Way of Islam (Speight)

9  Islam, Relationship to Christianity
Read for today: Excerpts from Muhammad and Jesus (Phipps)
Nostra Aetate

11-16  Group presentations on religions of the world
18-20  **Social Justice 2: Care of Creation/ the Environment**


Science in contemporary Catholic thought
Compare to Genesis

23  **Social Justice 3: Migration, Refugees, and Exile**

Compare to Exodus, Matt 2

Vatican II & recent Catholic teaching

**FINAL EXAM TBA**