

Description: Religion 200 is a course in theology, exploring religious perspectives on a number of contemporary social issues. The goals of the course are to develop informed awareness of the issues and to learn practices of theological reflection. This is a writing-intensive course. Reflective essays and a major term paper count for 55 percent of credit. **The Oxford College Honor Code applies to all course work.** **Instructor:** Hoyt Oliver. Office: Humanities 204. Tel. 784-8369. **Texts:** Tillich, Dynamics of Faith (DOF); Christ & Plaskow, Womanspirit Rising (WR); Cone, God of the Oppressed (GOTO); Armstrong, The Battle for God (BFG); McDaniel, With Roots and Wings (RAW). **Requirements:** 3 tests (45%); 5 essays (25%); 1 term paper (30%)

Attendance is expected. Each unexcused absence over 2 incurs 2-point penalty. 3 tardies = 1 absence

1. WHAT IS FAITH?

Th, Aug 30 Introductory session; film, "Koyaanisqatsi"
Tu, Sep 4 DOF, chs I & 11
Th, Sep 6 DOF, chs III & IV
Tu, Sep 11 DOF, chs V, VI, conclusion. **Essay I due.** Either: 1) Do an analysis of the faith you have been taught, using Tillich's framework; or 2) Write a story or poem about a person of faith you have known, incorporating Tillich's insights.

11. WOMEN IN RELIGION

Th, Sep 13 WR, 1: Saiving, Ruether, Daly
Tu, Sep 18 WR, 11: Collins, Tribble, Fiorenza, McLaughlin, Pagels
Th, Sep 20 WR, III: Fiorenza, Collins, Morton **Term paper theses/outlines due**
Tu, Sep 25 WFR, IV: Plaskow, Daly, Washbourn, Starhawk
Th, Sep 27 **Essay 2 due.** Write about how one religious group (preferably your own) thinks about, and acts toward, women.

Tu, Oct 2 **Test # I**

III. LIBERATION THEOLOGY

Th, Oct 4 GOTO, Parts 1, 11, III
Tu, Oct 9 GOTO, Parts IV, V, VI
Th, Oct 11 GOTO, Parts VII, VIII
Tu, Oct 16 semester break
Th, Oct 18 GOTO, Parts IX, X
Tu, Oct 23 **Essay 3 due.** Write about a specific case study of social evil in the world today and what religious groups should do about it, using liberation theology approach

IV. RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM AND SOCIETY

Th, Oct 25 BFG, Chs 1,2,3 **Term paper first drafts due - including reference page**
Tu, Oct 30 BFG, Chs 4,5,6
Th, Nov 1 BFG, Chs 7,8
Tu, Nov 6 BFG,Chs9,10 **Essay 4 due.** Write an essay about a specific example of fundamentalist religion involved in a conflict in the world today.

Th, Nov 8 **Test # 2**

V. ECOLOGICAL THEOLOGY: Caring for Planet Earth

Tu, Nov 13	RAW, Intro., chs 1,2,3
Th, Nov 15	RAW, chs 4,5,6 Term papers due (2-point penalty for each day late)
Tu, Nov 20	RAW, chs 7,8
Th, Nov 22	Thanksgiving break
Tu, Nov 27	RAW, Chs 9,10 Essay 5 due. Write an essay on a specific threat to our ecological life-system today, and make a theological response.

VI. SHARING WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

Th, Nov 29	class reports on term paper themes
Tu, Dec 4	class reports on term paper themes
Th, Dec 6	class reports on term paper themes
Tu, Dec 11	review, and orgy on quadrangle

Thurs, Dec. 13, 2:00 - 5:00: Test # 3

TERM PAPER GUIDELINES

- 1) Paper should be about a **specific contemporary social issue**. (i.e., not historical, not private, not trivial). There should be evidence that you have studied this issue in depth, using appropriate sources. Scholarly studies from library; internet sources; and general-public sources should all be considered.
- 2) Paper must reflect upon the social issue from a **theological** perspective. "Theology" here is used in a general sense: it need not be Christian, but may come from other world faith-traditions with which you are familiar (e.g. Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Native American, Wiccan, African, etc.)
- 3) Paper must have a **clear central thesis**, and be organized in a clear, flowing discussion. **Your own critical reflections** should be included, not just material from sources you consult.
- 4) Paper must follow accepted procedures of referencing. **Proper reference credit must be given every time you use others' ideas - not just for direct quotations.** Include page of "Works cited."
- 5) Some compulsive (or lazy) student is sure to wonder, **"How long does the paper have to be?"** The answer is: "Long enough!" You probably can't do justice to any significant topic in fewer than 12 pages, and your instructor won't read more than 40 pages!
- 6) **You need not limit your choice** of topic to those covered in our course syllabus.

*If I'm uptight about my religion,
it isn't faith, it's addiction.*