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Office: Henry Hall 206 F
Office Hours: MWF 10:30am – 1pm
or via Zoom by appointment

Catalogue Description

Students probe the nature of human experience and religious meaning, with special attention given to experience of the Judeo-Christian God. Contemporary Catholic-Christian faith is systematically analyzed in terms of its core concepts, values and visions. This study addresses the question and critique of God in the modern world and surveys contemporary theology in a spirit that is Catholic, Christian and Ecumenical. *Offered every semester. This course fulfills the Catholic Intellectual Tradition General Education Requirement.*

Learning Outcomes

The structure, content, learning experiences, and pedagogical philosophy of this course are informed by:

1. The Marianist Educational Philosophy: *Five Characteristics of a Marianist Education* (CME)
 1. Educate for formation in faith
 2. Provide an integral, quality education
 3. Educate in family spirit
 4. Educate for service, justice, peace, and the integrity of creation
 5. Educate for adaptation and change
2. The Catholic Intellectual Tradition: *General Education Core Outcome* (GECO)

The student will explain faith and reason as integral to developing a Catholic sacramental perspective of the cosmos that leads to responsible action supporting social justice.
3. The Religious Studies Program: *Program Learning Outcomes* (PLO)

Upon completion of the undergraduate B.A. program in Religious Studies, students will be able to:

 1. Utilize the key concepts of Catholic theology in a critical reflection on integral human experience.
 2. Engage in respectful dialogue on religious meaning in our globalized, multicultural society.
 3. Employ Christian moral imagination in moral reasoning and decision making that affirms and/or challenges secular and cultural values.
 4. Generate a substantive project that is animated by the Marianist Charism.
4. RE 205: The Christian God and Human Experience: *Student Learning Outcomes* (SLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be characterized by the ability to:

 1. Correlate how the sacramental understanding of God is evident in human experience. (GECO, PLO 1, and CME 1)
 2. Describe the meaning of Jesus as foundational for the Christian response to human existence, human choices, and social justice. (GECO, PLO 3 and 4, CME 4 and 5)
 3. Explain the main themes of the relationship between humanity and God as expressed in the Judeo-Christian understanding of God. (GECO, PLO 1, CME 3)
 4. Define significant terms used to describe God not only in Christianity but also other religious traditions, particularly Judaism and Islam. (GECO, PLO 2, CME 2)

Required Materials

Ready access to required materials is necessary for continued success in our course. The course textbook is available for rent or purchase at the CUH Bookstore or from your choice of retailers. Other required articles are available for immediate download in .pdf format on Canvas. Hardcopies of all materials are also available on Library Reserve for in-library use, accessible at the Sullivan Family Library front desk; valid Chaminade student ID is required to peruse them. Please promptly inform the instructor if you encounter any difficulty in accessing any of these materials.

1. Access to internet-capable technology
 - a. Important information and course materials have been posted onto our Canvas site and will be updated regularly as needed

2. Assigned texts
 - a. Textbook (available at CUH Bookstore, Library Reserve, etc.)
 - i. Mueller, J.J., ed. *Theological Foundations*, Alternate Edition. Winona: Anselm Academic, 2011. (ISBN-13: 978-1599821344)

 - b. Class Articles (available on Canvas and on Library Reserve)
 - i. Week 5:
 1. C.S. Lewis, "*Making and Begetting.*"
 2. C.S. Lewis, "*The Three-Personal God.*"
 - ii. Week 8:
 1. Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, chapter VIII (paragraphs 52-69).
 2. Letter from the Church of Smyrna to the Church at Philomelion in Phrygia, "*The Martyrdom of Polycarp.*"
 - iii. Week 11:
 1. Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, chapters 1, 2, and 8.

 - c. Exam Articles (available on Canvas and on Library Reserve)
 - i. Packet A:
 1. Harry L. Poe and Jimmy H. Davis, "*The Religious Way of Knowing.*"
 2. Đuro Šušnjić, "*The Dialogue Between Religion and Science: Truths, Ideas and Beliefs.*"
 - ii. Packet B:
 1. Leonardo Boff, "*The Communion of the Trinity as Basis for Social and Integral Liberation.*"
 - iii. Packet C:
 1. Richard Gula, "*Law and Obedience.*"
 2. Martin Luther King, Jr., "*Letter from a Birmingham Jail.*"

3. Three Bluebooks for Examinations (available at the CUH Bookstore)
 - a. Students must provide their own Bluebooks complete to their three examinations. (Examinations will not be accepted in any other media except by prior arrangement with instructor.) Each examination will require its own Bluebook; nothing is to be written in or on Bluebooks prior to the examination. Please note that Bluebooks are not readily available in off-campus stores and are most easily purchased from the counter at the CUH Bookstore at nominal cost (≈ \$0.70).

Student Requirements

1. Completion of Assigned Texts

The careful reading of assigned materials in a timely and conscientious manner is absolutely essential. Assigned readings are to be completed and ready to be discussed on the first session of the week, ordinarily Monday. (Please see page 10 of this syllabus for a complete schedule of reading and discussion.) Students are also strongly encouraged to independently perform additional research complementary to the course material so as to aid in deepening and enhance their understanding of the texts.

2. Regular Attendance

This course emphasizes the skill of collaborative learning through sustained contribution to group discussion. Regular “attendance” is therefore a fundamental requirement. Six or more absences implies that the highest grade achievable is a “B.” Ten or more absences constitutes grounds for a recommendation to withdraw from the course. Students must register their absence with the instructor in writing via email to be excused from that day’s session prior to the beginning of class. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain pertinent materials from others in the event of an absence.

3. Active Participation

We will all strive to contribute to each other’s learning experience through the sharing of our understanding of course material and our own thoughts and ideas. Students best prepared to participate often:

- a. Create conditions conducive to classroom focus and attentiveness
- b. Are open and ready to thoughtfully and respectfully dialogue with others
- c. Pose insightful questions for the benefit of all
- d. Draw upon their own experiences to help illustrate and inform course concepts

4. Three Examinations

Students must prepare for and undertake the fifth, tenth, and fourteenth week short-essay examinations. All work is to be submitted in Bluebooks, legibly written in blue or black ink, employing university-level grammar and syntax. Oral recitation of illegible examinations may be scheduled during office hours. Make-up examinations for justified absences may be administered orally during a scheduled Zoom meeting.

5. Final Collaborative Project and Presentations

The course culminates with an experiential learning assignment that entails a real-world application of our course themes and material on issues of justice through collaborative, project-based learning that encourages students to meaningfully engage their community. Students will self-divide into small groups (4-5 students) for this project as the semester progresses. The full prompt for this collaborative project can be found on page 8 of this syllabus.

Assessment

I do not ask that you *believe* the subject matter covered in our course; I ask that you *know* it. Final grades are calculated from the student’s regular attendance and active participation (40%), the three examinations (40%), and the final collaborative project (20%). Students are highly encouraged to regularly submit reflection papers on the week’s material. These reflection papers – *not required and not graded* – will be returned with instructor comments for further student engagement and improvement. These comments may be a valuable source of insight on the level of the student’s grasp of course material and will serve as an aid in preparation for the examinations and final project.

Grading Scale

Grades earned are to be interpreted as follows:

- A Outstanding scholarship and an unusual degree of intellectual initiative
- B Superior work done in a consistent and intellectual manner
- C Average grade indicating a competent grasp of subject matter
- D Inferior work of the lowest passing grade, not satisfactory for fulfillment of prerequisite course work
- F Failed to grasp the minimum subject matter; no credit given

Course Policies

The Free Exchange of Thought

The university has long been a privileged place for the exchange of ideas and positions. This implies both the freedom to express one's thoughts *and* the responsibility to hear and respect the thoughts of others. Religious freedom and freedom of the conscience are central concepts of Catholic philosophy and theology. While students are encouraged to think about and question the concepts covered, you will be assessed solely by your ability to adequately demonstrate competence in understanding, critical appropriation, and creative synthesis of the course content and material.

Health and Safety Precautions

Our priority must be the maintenance of a safe and healthy learning environment for everyone in our university community. Every one of us has a profound personal responsibility to assess our health with utmost integrity prior to entering our classroom. You will not be penalized for missing class if you are feeling unwell. Please be sure to heed all campus guidance regarding physical distancing, the wearing of face coverings, and room capacity limitations. You are also encouraged to monitor your body temperature by using the contactless thermometers located around campus. Federal and local authorities, along with the leadership of Chaminade University, will periodically release statements on if/how our community has been impacted and what this may imply for our learning experience. Campus updates and more information can be found at <https://chaminade.edu/coronavirus/>.

Campus Classroom Decorum

Please remain seated for the duration of the course and refrain from offensive or distracting behavior including, texting and DMing, fraternizing, intentionally polemic and inflammatory discourse, and extraneous speaking. The instructor will regularly pause to invite your questions; please reserve them until asked. A break for refreshment, to be taken outdoors, will be provided with time permitting.

Electronic Devices

The use of electronic devices during periods of in-person instruction, including audio and video recording, is strictly prohibited unless permission is granted by instructor. Electronic devices may be periodically employed by the instructor to augment the learning experience; use them only as directed. Please help to minimize potential interference with our learning environment by silencing your cellphones and/or push notifications on your learning devices during instructional time.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism might be broadly defined as the misrepresentation of another's work or ideas as one's own. In the first instance of alleged plagiarism, the instructor and student will agree to meet during office hours to review the evidence supporting the allegation of plagiarism and discuss proper citation techniques. Subsequent offenses will not be tolerated. Withdrawal from this course and other disciplinary actions will be considered and pursued to the fullest extent afforded by university policy.

Style, Language, and Grammar

All work must be submitted in legible and intelligible Standard American English (AmE) or 'Ōlelo Hawai'i (by prior arrangement with instructor), according to the generally accepted standards of those languages. The Turabian style of citation and paper formatting has been traditionally preferred in the Humanities. However, students may choose to use a different citation method of their choice (APA, Chicago, MLA, etc.) so long as it is utilized accurately and consistently. Exceptions to the above guidelines may be made in consultation with the instructor for scholarly, academic expression in other formats (e.g., spoken word, song, dance, or visual art) as appropriate. In all cases, the judicious use of equitable, gender-inclusive language must always be observed.

Office Hours

Given the ongoing global pandemic, students are encouraged to select office hour options according to their needs and preferences. In-person office hours are to be held regularly in the instructor's office (Henry Hall 206 F) during hours as posted and are subject to change. It is strongly requested that all visitors wear a face covering during in-office office hours. Office hours at non-regular times, in different places, via Zoom, or by telephone are also available by appointment as scheduled through email. Students may send the instructor an email including a list of three possible dates and times during which they are available to meet.

Instructor and Student Communication

All written communication between the instructor and student must take place through official Chaminade University email addresses or through our Canvas course site. Assignments must likewise be submitted through their designated channel, ordinarily through our course Canvas site. Please do not contact the instructor through other electronic media including personal email addresses. It is imperative that you check your email on a regular basis; rapidly developing important information (such as class cancellations, academic progress reports, or requests to meet during office hours) may and will be conveyed there.

Disability Access

If you need individual accommodations to meet course outcomes because of a documented disability, please speak with me to discuss your needs as soon as possible so that we can ensure your full participation in class and fair assessment of your work. Students with special needs who meet criteria for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provisions must provide written documentation of the need for accommodations from Kōkua 'Ike: Center for Student Learning by the end of week three of the class, in order for instructors to plan accordingly. If a student would like to determine if they meet the criteria for accommodations, they should contact the Kōkua 'Ike Coordinator at (808) 739-8305 for further information (ada@chaminade.edu).

Title IX Compliance

Chaminade University of Honolulu recognizes the inherent dignity of all individuals and promotes respect for all people. Sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse will NOT be tolerated at CUH. If you have been the victim of sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse, we encourage you to report this matter promptly. As a faculty member, I am interested in promoting a safe and healthy environment, and should I learn of any sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse, I must report the matter to the Title IX Coordinator. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources by visiting Campus Ministry, the Dean of Students Office, the Counseling Center, or the Office for Compliance and Personnel Services.

Tutoring and Writing Services

Chaminade is proud to offer free, one-on-one tutoring and writing assistance to all students at Kōkua `Ike, the Center for Student Learning. Trained peer and professional tutors are available for a variety of subjects including, but not limited to, biology, chemistry, math, nursing, and English. Please check Kōkua `Ike's website (<https://chaminade.edu/advising/kokua-ike/>) for the latest times, a list of drop-in hours, and information on scheduling an appointment. Free online tutoring is also available via Smarthinking, which can be accessed from your Canvas account. Simply click Account – Notifications – Smarthinking. For more information, please contact tutoring@chaminade.edu or 808-739-8305.

Attendance Policy

The following attendance policy is from the [2020-2021 Academic Catalog](#):

“Students are expected to attend regularly all courses for which they are registered. Students should notify their instructors when illness or other extenuating circumstances prevents them from attending class and make arrangements to complete missed assignments. Notification may be done by emailing the instructor’s Chaminade email address, calling the instructor’s campus extension, or by leaving a message with the instructor’s division office. It is the instructor’s prerogative to modify deadlines of course requirements accordingly. Any student who stops attending a course without officially withdrawing may receive a failing grade.

Students with disabilities who have obtained accommodations from the Chaminade University of Honolulu ADA Coordinator may be considered for an exception when the accommodation does not materially alter the attainment of the learning outcomes.

Federal regulations require continued attendance for continuing payment of financial aid. When illness or personal reasons necessitate continued absence, the student should communicate first with the instructor to review the options. Anyone who stops attending a course without official withdrawal may receive a failing grade or be withdrawn by the instructor at the instructor’s discretion.”

Academic Conduct Policy

From the 2019-2020 Undergraduate Academic Catalog (p. 39):

“Any community must have a set of rules and standards of conduct by which it operates. At Chaminade, these standards are outlined so as to reflect both the Catholic, Marianist values of the institution and to honor and respect students as responsible adults. All alleged violations of the community standards are handled through an established student conduct process, outlined in the Student Handbook, and operated within the guidelines set to honor both students’ rights and campus values.

Students should conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the ideals of the University. This includes knowing and respecting the intent of rules, regulations, and/or policies presented in the Student Handbook, and realizing that students are subject to the University’s jurisdiction from the time of their admission until their enrollment has been formally terminated. Please refer to the Student Handbook for more details. A copy of the Student Handbook is available on the Chaminade website.”

For further information, please refer to the Student Handbook which is linked annually on the following webpage: <https://chaminade.edu/current-students/>.

Credit Hour Policy

The unit of semester credit is defined as university-level credit that is awarded for the completion of coursework. One credit hour reflects the amount of work represented in the intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement for those learning outcomes. Each credit hour earned at Chaminade University should result in 45 hours of engagement. This equates to one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester, 10 week term, or equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time. Direct instructor engagement and out-of-class work result in total student engagement time of 45 hours for one credit.

The minimum 45 hours of engagement per credit hour can be satisfied in fully online, internship, or other specialized courses through several means, including (a) regular online instruction or interaction with the faculty member and fellow students and (b) academic engagement through extensive reading, research, online discussion, online quizzes or exams; instruction, collaborative group work, internships, laboratory work, practica, studio work, and preparation of papers, presentations, or other forms of assessment. This policy is in accordance with federal regulations and regional accrediting agencies.

As you will recall from our study of Catholic Social Teaching, an *encyclical* is a document written by the pope and is addressed to the whole of humanity. Fourteen encyclicals were written between 1891 and 2020, each identifying societal issues of service, justice, and peace in their historical contexts. In these social encyclicals, popes have endeavored to help address the most pressing social issues of their day by proposing solutions and strategies informed by the spirit of the Gospel.

Three exemplars of the Catholic Social Teaching tradition demonstrate the practical significance of ongoing theological reflection. At the peak of the Industrial Revolution, Leo XIII authored an encyclical entitled *Rerum Novarum* (1891), which called upon the universal church and its members to stand against the exploitation of workers. In *Pacem in Terris* (1963), John XXIII outlines his plea for world peace during the Cold War under threat of global nuclear warfare. Most recently, Pope Francis has written *Fratelli Tutti* (2020), which urges all of us to recover a sense of community and friendship so that the divisions caused by racism, sexism, and nationalism may be healed.

I. Project Prompt

Imagine your small group of 4-5 students as advisors to Pope Francis, the spiritual leader of over 1.34 billion Catholics across the world. You are being invited to propose a topic for a new encyclical.

1. First, identify an issue of service, justice, and peace in our current world. Examples include, but are certainly not limited to, homelessness, racial injustice, sex trafficking, speciesism, indigenous marginalization, bullying, gender discrimination, environmental degradation, trade inequalities, and so forth. Your group is especially encouraged to consider issues that particularly affect the people and islands of Hawai'i. Using real-world examples and data, demonstrate where it is present, whom it (disproportionately) affects, and why it is problematic.
2. Next, draw upon key concepts of Christian theology that we have talked about in our course to help you propose a solution for the problem. Your successful encyclical proposal will provide a clear and compelling account of how and why the Gospel is relevant for addressing the problems facing our world today.

II. Finals' Week Presentations

Your small group will present your project to our class during our allotted finals session. Members may choose to appoint a spokesperson for the presentation or jointly share their project. Projects may be shared as short documentaries, a PowerPoint presentation, a collection of vlogs, or any other creative and fun way that your group would like to best present your work. At the conclusion of your presentation, you will briefly field and answer questions from your classmates about your issue/project. Presentations and your Q&A session should approximate, but cannot exceed, 12 minutes. Documentation of your entire project, including slideshows, scripts, discursive papers, or any other produced material, must be submitted to the instructor for final grading by the end of the class period during which you have presented.

Date	Day	Class	Course Material
8/22	M	1.a	Course Introduction
8/24	W	1.b	Philosophical Anthropology I
8/26	F	1.c	Philosophical Anthropology II
8/29	M	2.a	The Experience of Israel I
8/31	W	2.b	The Experience of Israel II
9/2	F	2.c	The Experience of Israel III
9/5	M	x	Labor Day – Holiday
9/7	W	3.a	An Encounter with Jesus I
9/9	F	3.b	An Encounter of Jesus II
9/12	M	4.a	The Task of Theology I
9/14	W	4.b	The Task of Theology II
9/16	F	4.c	Conclusion and Exam I Review
9/19	M	5.a	Examination I
9/21	W	5.b	The Mystery of the Trinity I
9/23	F	5.c	The Mystery of the Trinity II
9/26	M	6.a	Ecclesiology I
9/28	W	6.b	Ecclesiology II
9/29	F	6.c	Ecclesiology III
10/3	M	7.a	Sacraments I
10/5	W	7.b	Sacraments II
10/7	F	7.c	Sacraments III
10/10	M	x	Discoverers' Day – Holiday
10/12	W	8.a	Mariology
10/14	F	8.b	Martyrology
10/17	M	9.a	Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue I
10/19	W	9.b	Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue II
10/21	F	9.c	Conclusion and Exam II Review
10/24	M	10.a	Examination II
10/26	W	10.b	Moral Theology I
10/28	F	10.c	Moral Theology II
10/31	M	11.a	Catholic Social Teaching I
11/2	W	11.b	Catholic Social Teaching II
11/4	F	11.c	Catholic Social Teaching III
11/7	M	12.a	Contemporary Theologies I
11/9	W	12.b	Contemporary Theologies II
11/11	F	x	Veterans' Day – Holiday
11/14	M	13.a	Film I.a.: <i>The Mission</i> (1986)
11/16	W	13.b	Film: I.b.: <i>The Mission</i> (1986)
11/18	F	13.c	Conclusion, Discussion, and Exam III Review
11/21	M	14.a	Examination III
11/23	W	x	Thanksgiving – Holiday
11/25	F	x	Thanksgiving – Holiday
11/28	M	15.a	Course Conclusion and Review
11/30	W	15.b	Final Project Preparation I
12/2	F	15.c	Final Project Preparation II

Week	Discussion Date	Reading
1	x	<i>No reading assigned</i>
Philosophical Anthropology		Ongoing: 1. Poe and Davis, "The Religious Way of Knowing" 2. Šušnjić, "The Dialogue Between Religion and Science: Truths, Ideas and Beliefs"
2	8/29	Ready: Mueller, chapter 2
The Experience of Israel		Ongoing: Poe and Davis, Šušnjić
3	9/7	Ready: Mueller, chapters 3 and 4
An Encounter with Jesus		Ongoing: Poe and Davis, Šušnjić
4	9/12	Ready: Mueller, chapter 1
The Task of Theology		Prepared for Exam I: Poe and Davis, Šušnjić
5	9/21	Ready: 1. Lewis, "Making and Begetting" 2. Lewis, "The Three-Personal God"
The Mystery of the Trinity		Ongoing: Boff, "Communion of the Trinity as Basis for Social and Integral Liberation"
6	9/26	Ready: Mueller, chapter 5
Ecclesiology		Ongoing: Boff
7	10/3	Ready: Mueller, chapter 7
Sacraments		Ongoing: Boff
8	10/12	Ready: 1. Vatican II, <i>Lumen Gentium</i> , chapter VIII (pars. 52-69 only) 2. Letter from the Church of Smyrna, "The Martyrdom of Polycarp"
Mariology and Martyrology		Ongoing: Boff
9	10/17	Ready: Mueller, chapters 6, 10, and 11
Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue		Prepared for Exam II: Boff
10	10/26	Ready: Mueller chapter 8
Moral Theology		Ongoing: 1. Richard Gula, "Law and Obedience" 2. Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"
11	10/31	Ready: 1. Mueller, chapter 9 2. Francis, <i>Fratelli Tutti</i> , chapters 1, 2, and 8
Catholic Social Teaching		Ongoing: Gula, King
12	11/7	Ready: Mueller, chapter 12
Contemporary Theologies		Ongoing: Gula, King
13	x	<i>No reading assigned</i>
Film		Prepared for Exam III: Gula, King
14	x	<i>No reading assigned</i>
Thanksgiving Week		
15	x	<i>No reading assigned</i>
Course Conclusion		