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Chaminade University of Honolulu
Winter Term
January 10 – March 17
Kaneohe

Course: Religion 308 ²⁰ **Christian Reponsibility**

Examines the ethical implications of the Christian faith for the individual and community. Particular emphasis will be on the Liberation Theology movement and the analysis of John Paul II's messages on the dignity of the human person in community and the rights and responsibilities of the human person.

Time: Fridays 17:30 – 21:40

Instructor: Fritz Fritschel

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Textbook: **Introducing Liberation Theology**, Leonardo and Clodovis Boff
Selected handouts

Introduction and Description:

The course analyzes critically the implications of the Christian faith for personal and social ethics. Particular attention will be given to the nature and impact of Liberation Theology in the formation of an ethic in recent decades. The class will learn the method of this theological approach by practicing aspects of it within the class. In accord with the approach of this movement, the class will have an opportunity to contribute to the agenda and content of the course within the parameters of Liberation theology.

Students will learn of the history and development of Liberation theology, examine particular themes associated with the movement, become familiar with critiques of the thought. Select issues of ethical concern will be examined. Attention will also be given to select Papal Encyclicals that are relevant to the development of a personal and social ethic.

Class Objectives:

To understand the background and development of Liberation theology, especially with its impact upon ethical practices.

To apply the method and analysis of Liberation theology to a particular area or concern in ethical life.

To evaluate the role and impact of Liberation theology in relation to other ethical approaches within the Christian tradition.

To analyze Encyclical statements in the light of the approach and perspective of Liberation theology.

To evaluate the influence and prospect of the ethical positions held in general by Liberation theology in light of current conditions in the world.

To become familiar with the biography of at least one person associated with the general movement of Liberation theology.

Class Format:

Class periods will attempt to create a setting for cooperative understanding, analysis and criticism associated with a Christian ethic. The class time will include mini-lectures, video viewing, small group discussions, guest lectures, student presentations. The exchange of ideas and perspectives will be strongly encouraged. There is no expectation or requirement that agreement be reached on issues; however, mutual understanding and respect are necessary. Clarity of presentation and adequate support of one's own position, as relative as those terms are, should be the aim. Students are expected to participate actively in class activities.

Requirements:

The grading will be based on:

- 1. Class attendance 10 pts
- 2. Class participation 20 pts
- 3. Assignments 10
- 4. Exam 30
- 5. Class presentation 20

Students' work will be evaluated on the basis of the knowledge of the subject matter, ability to apply the knowledge, clarity and coherency of presentation, and the ability to analyze and review critically issues.

Schedule: Tentative Course Outline

Date	Topic	Reading / Assignment
1-14-0	Orientation and Introduction The Context for Doing Ethics Liberation Theology Papal Encyclicals Video	Boff, Chapters 1-3
1-21-00	Poverty and the Politics of Economics Guest Speaker	Encyclical: On Human Work Handouts Boff, Chapter 4
1-28-00	Food and Hunger Family Life and Issues of Sexuality Guest Speaker	Handouts Boff, Chapters 5-6
2-4-00	Housing and Community Life Guest Speaker	Handouts
2-11-00	Church in Society: Racism Guest Speaker	Handouts

2-18-00	Violence and Non-violence: Power Class Presentation	Handouts
2-25-00	Health Care—from Birth to Death Class Presentation	Encyclical: Evangelium Vitae
3-3-00	Environmental and Ecological Issues Class Presentation	Handouts
3-10-00	Class Presentation FinalExam	

Suggested Readings:

The Gospel in Solentiname, Ernesto Cardenal
Selected Writing, Dorothy Day
Selected Sections from Encyclicals
The Desert is Fertile, Dom Helder Camara
Christ in a Poncho, Adolfo Perez Esquivel
 Works of Jose Bonino
 Works of Gustavo Gutierrez
 Works of Juan Luis Segundo
 Feminine Liberation Theologians
 Black Liberation Theologians