

21 507: Christology and Theological Anthropology

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
Instructor: Anne Joh, Ph.D. (Anne.joh@garrett.edu)
TA: Toar Hutagalung
Office Hours: By Appointment
Friday 1:00-9:00 p.m. and Saturday: 9:00-3:00 p.m.
Main: #301

Readings subject to changes at the discretion of the instructor.

“Texts are worldly, to some degree they are events, and even when they appear to deny it, they are nevertheless a part of the social work, human life. And of course, the historical moments in which they are located and interpreted.”

Edward Said, *The World, the Text, & the Critic*



Participants in this course examine two intimately linked theological doctrines at the heart of Christian faith: Christology and theological anthropology. These two dimensions of Christian faith and theology are two of the doctrines most often contested in the history of Christianity. Participants examine what traditionally has been identified as the “person and work” of Jesus Christ and the meaning of human being. Participants explore various ways that “Jesus” and “Christ” have been interpreted and continue to be interpreted by practitioners of Christian faith. Moreover, in the section focused on theological anthropology (i.e., what it means to be a human being from a theological perspective) participants survey past works and current debates. The question, “Who do you say that I am?” was not only posed to us by Jesus of Nazareth in the past but also remains a question continually asked of us today by those on the margins of our society, whose very human being-ness is under threat and annihilation.

OBJECTIVES

1. To introduce students to the basic language of theological and theoretical discourses on Theological Anthropology
2. To create competence in students' ability to engage in critical analysis along with theological reflection on theological anthropology through the lens of critical race analysis
3. To equip students to engage competently in rigorous academic theological discussions of theological anthropology in the Christian tradition
4. To foster and create an ethos of engaged and sustained theological analysis in everyday practices of faith and its undergirding various understandings on what it means to be 'human'
5. To sharpen students' keen awareness that the past is always linked to the present and the conditions for our future and that our understanding of the 'human' must be deconstructed in order to better understanding structures of oppression whose logic is often grounded on the subjective and problematic understanding of the 'human.'

REQUIREMENTS

1. Participation (**25% of the final grade**)

Class presence is critical in order to pass this course. Critical and constructive participation is also important for the fruitfulness of this course.

2. Class Panel Presentations (**35% of the final grade**) Weekend #2 and #3

Each student will sign up for panel presentation at the beginning of the semester. As a panelist you will come prepared with **5-7 pages double-spaced** critical reflection on the readings for that particular week (see the schedule below). This is not a 5-page sermon! The reflection paper should be submitted via email to the TA and CC'ed to the professor by **Thursday 7pm**. Possible ways to approach the panel presentation:

1) Clarification - seeking greater clarity about the nature of a given writer's position, about connections between readings, or about issues that continue from seminar to seminar. 2) Critique - identifying and briefly developing weaknesses you perceive in an assigned text. 3) Implication - exploring the implications for cultural critique, theology or something else, which you see generated by the assigned reading of the week.

3. Final Paper (**40% of the final grade**)

Each student will write a 15 page paper for their final work. The research project requires sustained engagement with at least two reading materials from the syllabus. These readings should serve as tools to analyze any real issue in everyday life (such as: immigration, inter-faith, disabilities, capitalism, etc). By doing this, students are expected to integrate their imaginative skills and their ministerial life to deal with social justice issues and the implications of how our interpretation of the 'human' influence and significantly impact these issues. The final paper should be submitted via email on **December 15th**.

These presentations and the final paper will be evaluated based on both the quality of presentation to the class and the quality of the submitted written work. (See below) The penalty for late submission (on the day of class) will be one GRADE reduction from a possible A on the presentation. Presentations and Final Paper must clearly provide evidence of **critical engagement with the READING MATERIALS!**

*For one-on-one help with the writing process, participants are encouraged to seek consultation from the G-ETS Writing Center and/or the Center for the Church and the Black Experience by requesting appointments.

**For resources on theological writing and research papers, participants might reference the following: *Writing Theology Well: A Rhetoric for Theological & Biblical Writers* by Lucretia B. Yaghjian [ISBN: 9780826418852]; *The Craft of Research* by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, & Joseph M. Williams [ISBN: 9780226065847]; *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, & Dissertations* by Kate L. Turabian [ISBN: 9780226823379]; and *Style: Toward Clarity & Grace* by Joseph M. Williams [ISBN: 978-0226899152].

GRADING RUBRIC

The Superior Paper (A/A-)

Thesis: Easily identifiable, plausible, novel, sophisticated, insightful, crystal clear.

Structure: Evident, understandable, appropriate for thesis. Excellent transitions from point to point. Paragraphs support solid topic sentences.

Use of evidence: Primary source information used to buttress every point with at least one example. Examples support mini-thesis and fit within paragraph. Excellent integration of quoted material into sentences.

Analysis: Author clearly relates evidence to “mini-thesis” (topic sentence); analysis is fresh and exciting, posing new ways to think of the material.

Logic and argumentation: All ideas in the paper flow logically; the argument is identifiable, reasonable, and sound. Author anticipates and successfully defuses counter-arguments; makes novel connections to outside material (from other parts of the class, or other classes), which illuminate thesis.

Mechanics: Sentence structure, grammar, and diction excellent; correct use of punctuation and citation style; minimal to no spelling errors; absolutely no run-on sentences or comma splices. **The**

Good Paper (B+/B)

Thesis: Promising, but may be slightly unclear, or lacking in insight or originality.

Structure: Generally clear and appropriate, though may wander occasionally. May have a few unclear transitions, or a few paragraphs without strong topic sentences.

Use of evidence: Examples used to support most points. Some evidence does not support point, or may appear where inappropriate. Quotes well integrated into sentences.

Analysis: Evidence often related to mini-thesis, though links perhaps not very clear.

Logic and argumentation: Argument of paper is clear, usually flows logically and makes sense. Some evidence that acknowledges counter-arguments, though perhaps not addressed. Occasional insightful connections to outside material made.

Mechanics: Sentence structure, grammar, and diction strong despite occasional lapses; punctuation and citation style often used correctly. Some (minor) spelling errors; may have one run-on sentence or comma splice.

The Borderline Paper (B-/C+)

Thesis: May be unclear (contain many vague terms), appear unoriginal, or offer relatively little that is new; provides little around which to structure the paper.

Structure: Generally unclear, often wanders or jumps around. Few or weak transitions, many paragraphs without topic sentences.

Use of evidence: Examples used to support some points. Points often lack supporting evidence, or evidence used where inappropriate (often because there may be no clear point). Quotes may be poorly integrated into sentences.

Analysis: Quotes appear often without analysis relating them to mini-thesis (or there is a weak mini-thesis to support), or analysis offers nothing beyond the quote.

Logic and argumentation: Logic may often fail, or argument may often be unclear. May not address counter-arguments or make any outside connections.

Mechanics: Problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction (usually not major). Errors in punctuation, citation style, and spelling. May have several run-on sentences or comma splices.

The “Needs Help” Paper (C/C-)

Thesis: Difficult to identify at all, may be bland restatement of obvious point.

Structure: Unclear, often because thesis is weak or non-existent. Transitions confusing and unclear. Few topic sentences.

Use of evidence: Very few or very weak examples. General failure to support statements, or evidence seems to support no statement. Quotes not integrated into sentences; “plopped in” in improper manner.

Analysis: Very little or very weak attempt to relate evidence to argument; may be no identifiable argument, or no evidence to relate it to.

Logic and argumentation: Ideas do not flow at all, usually because there is no argument to support. Simplistic view of topic; no effort to grasp possible alternative views.

Mechanics: Big problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction. Frequent major errors in citation style, punctuation, and spelling. May have many run-on sentences and comma splices.

The Failing Paper

Shows obviously minimal lack of effort or comprehension of the assignment. Very difficult to understand owing to major problems with mechanics, structure, and analysis. Has no identifiable thesis, or utterly incompetent thesis.

Source. Adapted from an Internet post by Patrick Rael <prael@polar.Bowdoin.EDU>.

*Course schedule is a guideline and subject to change at the discretion of the faculty.

**Deadline for the application for an INCOMPLETE posts at the beginning of the semester by the school. No INCOMPLETES accepted after the posted deadline.

***Please refer to the *G-ETS Student Handbook* in regards to the school’s policy on academic dishonesty. The instructor follows this policy very strictly.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

1. Limit use of the Internet during class.
2. Limit eating and drinking during class.

3. Practice intercultural skills with one another.
4. Faculty has (at least) 48 hours to respond to any participant communication.
5. Participants wait (at least) 48 hours before submitting a request to contest grading. To contest grading, participants should request a meeting. Participants must present a case to argue for how the graded paper aligns with the assignment expectations for rigorous graduate-level academic theological work, in addition to conforming to the stipulated grading rubrics, which serve as grading guidelines. A successful argument requires the participant bring a copy of the marked paper and provide a systematic account demonstrating how it aligns with course expectations and rubrics.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow*. New York: The New Press, 2010.
- Anderson, Victor, et al. "Race & Christianity." In *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*, 1041–1048. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Applebaum, Barbara. "White Privilege/White Complicity: Connecting 'Benefiting From' to 'Contributing To.'" *Philosophy of Education* (2008): 292–300.
- Bonilla Silva, Eduardo. *Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality*. New York: Roman and Littlefield, 2003.
- Copeland, M. Shawn, Hopkins, Dwight N., Mathewes, Charles T., et al. "Chapter 2: Human Being." In *Constructive Theology: A Contemporary Approach to Classical Themes*, edited by Serene Jones & Paul Lakeland, 77–116. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2005.
- Fernandez, Eleazar S. *Reimagining the Human*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice, 2004.
- Hong, Grace. *Death Beyond Disavowal: The Impossible Politics of Difference*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015.
- McIntosh, Peggy. "White Privilege," *Independent School* 49 (Winter 1990): 31–36.
- Tinker, Tink. *Missionary Conquests: The Gospel and the Native American Genocide*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993.

SCHEDULE

WEEKEND 1: Sept. 20-21

Introductory remarks and business and sign-up for presentations

Bonilla-Silva, *Racism without Racists*. All chapters.

Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege," *Independent School* 49 (Winter 1990): 31–36.

Barbara Applebaum, "White Privilege/White Complicity: Connecting 'Benefiting From' to 'Contributing To'" in *Philosophy of Education* (2008): 292–300.

Victor Anderson, et al. "Race & Christianity." In *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*, 1041–1048. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

*Movie Screening: Race, The Power of Illusion.

PANEL Presentation on M. Alexander's Book

WEEKEND 2: Oct. 25-26

M. Shawn Copeland, Dwight N. Hopkins, Charles T. Mathewes, et al. "Chapter 2: Human Being." In *Constructive Theology: A Contemporary Approach to Classical Themes*, edited by Serene Jones & Paul Lakeland, 77–116. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2005.

Eleazar S. Fernandez, *Reimagining the Human*. Read All Chapters

David H. Kelsey, "Human Being." In *Christian Theology: An Introduction to Its Tradition & Tasks* edited by Peter C. Hodgson & Robert H. King, 167–193. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1994.

Tink Tinker, *Missionary Conquest*. Read all chapters

PANEL Presentation on *Reimagining the Human*

WEEKEND 3: Nov. 15-16

Grace Hong, *Death Beyond Disavowal*. Read all chapters.

Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*. Read all chapters.

PANEL Presentation: *The New Jim Crow*

FINAL PAPER due on December 10th