

University of Central Arkansas
Feminist Theology
RELG 4330
Fall 2005

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Harrin 207
 450-5384

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an upper-division, reading-intensive seminar on the development of feminist theology. The overall goal of the course is to acquaint students with the motivations behind and variety of perspectives in feminist approaches to theological work. This acquaintance with some of the primary concerns of and works in feminist theology is then intended not only to expose students to a particular field of inquiry, but to provide them with a socio-critical hermeneutics that can be applied in their own thought and reflection on ultimacy. Specific objectives of the course include familiarizing students with many of the themes and issues treated by feminist theologians, as well as introducing them to the works of leading figures in the field.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Freeing Theology: The Essentials of Theology in Feminist Perspective (FT), C. LaCugna, ed.
Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion (WSR), C. Christ, ed.
A Feminist Ethic of Risk (FER), S. Welch (2000 Revised edition)
Touching Our Strength: The Erotic as Power and the Love of God (TOS), C. Heyward
Postcolonial Imagination & Feminist Theology (PIFT), P. Kwok
Power in the Blood? The Cross in the African American Experience (PITB), J. Terrell
Feminist Interpretation of the Bible (FITB), L. M. Russell, ed.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Mid-term Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%
Theological Journal	20%
Weekend Ponderings	15%
Attendance/Participation	15%

Exams: Each student is required to complete a mid-term examination and a final examination. Details on exam requirements will be provided in class.

Theological Journal: Each student is required to maintain a journal throughout the semester that reflects upon their own understanding of or experiences of ultimacy, and how the readings and discussions impact their thinking on this topic. Journals will be collected periodically throughout the semester.

Weekend Ponderings: All students will be expected to initiate and contribute to on-line discussions over the assigned readings. Each week, two students will be assigned the task of posting a “thought” for the weekend, to which the class will respond. Initial postings must be made by noon on Saturday, and responses made by noon on Monday.

Attendance/participation: Attendance at and active participation in all class meetings is expected as this is an upper-level seminar course. Students should come to class having read the assigned readings and be prepared to discuss them. More than two absences during the course of the semester may result in the final grade being lowered one or more grades at the discretion of the instructor.

READING & DISCUSSION SCHEDULE

Aug 29 Assessment of student background and interests
 Overview of course

PART I: Feminist Theology and its Sources

Aug 31 What is Theology? What is Feminist Theology?
 FT, 1-29

Sep 7 Back to the Beginning: Women’s Experiences and Theology
 WSR, 7-17, 25-52, 228-245

Sep 12 Scripture as Theological Source
 FT, 31-54; WSR, 84-92

Sep 14 FITB, 41-64, 86-95

Sep 19 FITB, 30-40; 96-107; Guest 107-130 (hand-out)

Sep 21 Experience and Tradition as Theological Sources
 FT, 59-82

Sep 26 WSR, 149-158; Plaskow, “Authority, Resistance and Transformation” [hand-out;
 article in *Good Sex: Feminist Perspectives from the World’s Religions*]
 **In Her Own Time (in-class video)*

Sep 28 Scripture, Tradition and Community as Theological Sources
 FITB, 125-146; FT, 161-184
 GUEST SPEAKER (local theologian speaking on “doing theology”)

Oct 3 Anthropology as Theological Source
 FT, 139-160; WSR, 246-258

PART II: Feminist Theologies

Oct 5 Feminist Theology and God
 FT, 83-114; WSR, 210-218
 JOURNALS DUE

Oct 10 Feminist Theology and Mother God/Goddess/Eros
 WSR, 107-119; 273-288; Lorde, “The Erotic” [hand-out]

Oct 12 Carter Heyward’s *Touching Our Strength*
 TOS, 1-47

Oct 17 TOS, 48-86

Oct 19 TOS, 87-157

Fall Break

Oct 24	Mid-term Exam Due
Oct 26	Feminist Theology and the Messiah/Jesus FT, 115-137
Oct 31	JoAnne Marie Terrell's <i>Power in the Blood?</i> PITB, 1-99
Nov 2	PITB, 99-144
Nov 7	Feminist Theology and Ethics FT, 211-234
Nov 9	Beverly Harrison articles
Nov 14	Sharon Welch's <i>A Feminist Ethic of Risk</i> FER, 13-64
Nov 16	FER, 67-122
Nov 21	FER, 123-180

Thanksgiving Break

Nov 28	Pui-lan Kwok's <i>Postcolonial Imagination & Feminist Theology</i> PIFT, 1-99
Nov 30	PIFT, 100-167
Dec 5	PIFT, 168-208
Dec 7	PIFT, 209-230/Wrap-up
Dec 16	Final Exam Due (1:00pm)

Statement on Students with Disabilities:

The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, please contact the UCA Office of Disability Services, 450-3135.

Statement on Academic Misconduct:

The misrepresentation of academic work by a student as the student's own work is considered plagiarism or academic misconduct, and is subject to penalties as outlined in the Student Handbook. Students should familiarize themselves with the definitions of and potential consequences of academic misconduct provided in the Student Handbook under "Academic Policies." The instructor reserves the right to apply these penalties at her discretion.

Statement on Sexual Harrassment:

As stated in the Student Handbook, sexual harassment by any faculty member, staff member, or student is a violation of both law and university policy and will not be tolerated at the University of Central Arkansas. Students should familiarize themselves with the definitions of and procedures for reporting possible incidences of sexual

harassment as outlined in the Student Handbook under the “Sex Offense Programs and Policies” section.