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FAITH SEEKING UNDERSTANDING
(*Fides Quaerens Intellectum*: FQI)
TF 102-3
FALL 2012
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:00 – 4:20 p.m.
Schlegel Hall 122

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Faith Seeking Understanding (FQI) is a team-taught, interdisciplinary course in theology and ethics that is usually taken in the fall semester of the first year. FQI is designed to follow the summer course for entering students, Transforming Seminary Education (TSE), and to anticipate the two-semester course History of Christian Experience (HCE1 and HCE2).

The purpose of FQI is to help students gain greater confidence and competence in thinking theologically and ethically. The course intends to prepare students for this task by providing an introduction to systematic theology and ethical method. Students will reflect on the interplay between belief and behavior, as they wrestle with traditional doctrines and contemporary issues in theology and ethics. They will gain skill in reading theological texts and thinking doctrinally. Furthermore, the course encourages students to think self-critically about their own ethical and theological commitments.

Student learning outcomes:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Show deepening awareness of multiple expressions of Christian faith on central doctrines examined in the course;
2. Claim their vocations as theologians of the Church – able to articulate their own emerging positions on central matters of Christian faith and life, in awareness of and conversation with other views;
3. Demonstrate growing ability to think theologically, imaginatively, and contextually about ethical issues;
4. Reflect critically on the complex relations between belief and behavior, with special reference to topics of ethical reflection in the course;

5. Identify for further study and reflection areas in which their own positions are in transition or their questions unresolved.

Requirements:

1. Attendance and informed participation, including in discussion sections (15%)

2. Three papers (15%, 20%, 20%)

Students will prepare three brief papers (3-4 pages) responding to the prompts distributed in class on the days indicated in the syllabus.

The papers are to be submitted to both instructors through CAMS (or by email) by the end of the day on Monday, September 17; Monday, October 22; and Monday, November 19.

Papers will be written following the conventions of academic writing.

We highly recommend that you take advantage of the services of the Academic Support Center, located on the first floor of Schlegel Hall, in preparing your written assignments for this course.

In unusual circumstances, requests for extensions may be made in advance. Late papers will be penalized by a loss of a grade (e.g. from B+ to B) for each day they are late.

3. Oral final examination in groups: claiming the role of theologian of the Church (30%)

Questions will concentrate on articulation of the student's emerging theological and ethical understandings, in awareness of and conversation with diverse positions.

Preparatory questions will be distributed in advance. Times for the meetings will be arranged for the final week of the semester.

Required Texts:

Farley, Margaret. *Just Love: A Framework for Christian Sexual Ethics*. New York, NY: Continuum, 2006. ISBN: 9780826429247.

Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *On Job: God-Talk and the Suffering of the Innocent*, tr. Matthew J. O'Connell. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1987. ISBN: 0883445522.

Peter C. Hodgson and Robert H. King, eds. *Christian Theology: An Introduction to Its Traditions and Tasks*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1985. ISBN: 0800628675.

Russell, Letty. *Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1993. ISBN: 9780664250706.

Yong, Amos. *The Spirit Poured out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005. ISBN: 978-0801027703.

Library Reserves:

These are available on CAMS or on the Web; other readings may be added during the course.
Please make your own copy of the readings to bring to class on the day they are discussed.

Adams, Marilyn McCord. "Truth and Reconciliation," Unpublished manuscript; used with permission.

Augustine of Hippo. *Confessions*, revised, tr. Maria Boulding. Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 1997, pp. 39; 67-74; 214-218; 226-229.

Geertz, Clifford. "Religion as a Cultural System," *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic, 1973, pp. 87-125.

George, K. M., "Bearing Witness to Christ and to Each Other in the Power of the Holy Spirit," http://globalchristianforum.org/manado_updates/bearing_witness_to_christ.php.

Isasi-Diaz, Ana Maria. "A Hispanic Garden in a Foreign Land," *Inheriting our Mothers' Gardens: Feminist Theology in Third World Perspective*, eds. Letty M. Russell, Katie Geneva Canon, Kwok Pui-lan, and Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, pp. 91-106.

Luther, Martin. "A Sermon on Keeping Children in School," *Callings: Twenty Centuries of Christian Wisdom on Vocation*, ed. William C. Placher. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2005, pp. 220-7.

Rahner, Karl. "Our Relationship to Jesus," *The Love of Jesus and the Love of Neighbor*, tr. Robert Barr. New York: Crossroad, 1983, pp. 25-46.

Tillich, Paul. "First and Second Dialogues," *Ultimate Concern: Tillich in Dialogue* by D. Mackenzie Brown. <http://www.religion-online.org/showbook.asp?title=538>.

LPTS Classroom Policies:

Inclusive Language:

In accordance with Seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities.

Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible's images for God. See for further assistance:

http://www.lpts.edu/Academic_Resources/ASC/avoidinggenderbiasinlanguage.asp. 3.

Academic Honesty:

All work turned in to the instructors is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Use of another's language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy, and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism: it will have consequences and may result in failure of the course. Multiple occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary.

Students unfamiliar with issues relating to citation practices and academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For the Seminary policy, see The Code of Student Conduct 6.11; *Student Handbook*, p. 19.

Special Accommodations:

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center (kmapes@lpts.edu) during the first two weeks of a semester and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Citation Policy:

Citations in your papers should follow the Seminary standard, which is based on these guides:

Kate Turabian. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center.

Attendance Policy:

According to the Seminary catalog, students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify one of the instructors of their absence from class, either prior to the session, when possible, or within 24 hours of the class session. Multiple unexcused absences may count negatively in grading, and missing 4 or more class sessions is grounds for failure in the course.

In case of absence, it is the responsibility of the student to find out what was said in class, especially concerning modification of assignments, ordering of class sessions, etc.

Tentative Schedule of Classes and Assignments

<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject/Assignment</u>
TH S 6	Introduction to the course
T S 11	<p>The vocation of the theologian Read: Augustine of Hippo. <i>Confessions</i>, pp. 39; 67-74; 214-218; 226-229 (CAMS) Ana Maria Isasi-Diaz, "A Hispanic Garden in a Foreign Land" <i>Inheriting our Mothers' Gardens</i>, pp. 91-106 (CAMS) The description of the first paper will be distributed in class.</p>
TH S 13	<p>The vocation of the theologian Read: Martin Luther, "A Sermon on Keeping Children in School," <i>Callings</i>, ed. William C. Placher, pp. 220-7 (CAMS) Marilyn McCord Adams, "Truth and Reconciliation" (CAMS)</p>
<u>First Paper Due: Monday, September 17 by midnight.</u>	
T S 18	<p>God Read: Langdon Gilkey, "God,"--chapter 3 in Hodgson & King</p>
TH S 20	<p>Images of God and Images of the Good Read: Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System," <i>The Interpretation of Cultures</i>, pp. 87-125 (CAMS) Paul Tillich "First and Second Dialogues," <i>Ultimate Concern: Tillich in Dialogue</i> by D. Mackenzie Brown. http://www.religion-online.org/showbook.asp?title=538</p>
T S 25	<p>Theological anthropology Read: David Kelsey, "Human Being,"-- chapter 6 in Hodgson & King</p>
TH S 27	<p>Human personhood and ethical agency: Discussion sections Read: Distributed material</p>
T O 2	<p>Approaching Christian ethics through a case study Read: Farley, Preface and chapters 1-3</p>
TH O 4	<p>Ethical Reflection continued Read: Farley, chapters 4 & 5</p>
T O 9	<p>Ethical Reflection continued Read: Farley, chapters 6 & 7</p>
TH O 11	<p>Ethical Reflection: discussion sections The description of the second paper will be distributed in class.</p>

Research and Study Week

Second Paper Due: Monday October 22 by midnight.

- T O 23 Jesus**
Read: Walter Lowe, “Christ and Salvation” – chapter 8 in Hodgson & King
- TH O 25 Jesus**
Read: Karl Rahner, Our Relationship to Jesus (on CAMS)
- T O 30 Holy Spirit**
Read: Amos Yong, Introduction and chapters 1-3
- TH N 1 Holy Spirit**
Read Yong, chapters 4-7, Epilogue
- T N 6 Holy Spirit: discussion groups**
Read: K. M. George, “Bearing Witness to Christ and to Each Other in the Power of the Holy Spirit”
- TH N 8 Sin, suffering and evil**
Read: Robert R. Williams, “Sin and Evil” –chapter 7 in Hodgson & King
The description of the third paper will be distributed in class.
- T N 13 Suffering and evil**
Read: Gutiérrez
- TH N15 Suffering and evil: discussion groups**

Third Paper Due: Monday, November 19 by midnight.

- T N 20 Church**
Read: Russell, Preface and chapters 1-3

Thanksgiving Break

- T N 27 Church**
Read: Russell, chapters 4-6
- TH N 29 Church**
Read: Peter C. Hodgson and Robert C. Williams, “The Church” – chapter 9 in Hodgson & King
- T D 4 Concluding topics**
- TH D 6 Concluding discussion**