

# Theologies of Justice & Peace

Theo 421 – Spring 2015

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Office hours:

1:30 – 3:00, Tuesday & Thursday

10:30 – 12:00 Wednesday



## Course Description

An examination of the views of various religions and ideologies on issues of justice and peace, with special attention to the Catholic and of the Christian teachings on such issues as war and peace, violence, economic justice, the environment, criminal justice, and social justice. Special attention is given to how fundamental presuppositions and principles of each group studied affect their views on justice and peace, and contribute to or hinder dialogue and peaceful interaction with other groups. In addition to Christianity, students will study (at least) one far eastern worldview (e.g. Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism),\* one tribal religion (Native American, African Tribal),\* Islam,\* and one secular worldview (e.g. Marxism, capitalism, secular humanism).\* Students are required to investigate one worldview in depth through a semester-long research project. This course fulfills the Human Diversity requirement in the core curriculum. Prerequisites: THEO 101 and one 200-level or 300-level THEO course, and PHIL 115.

*\*Worldviews receiving particular attention in this section in addition to Christianity will be:*

1. Buddhism.
2. Mayan religiosity.
3. Islam.
4. Political realism

## Course Readings & Resources

- Mason, Herbert. *Gilgamesh: A Verse Narrative*. New York: New American Library, 1972.
- Smith, David Whitten, and Elizabeth Geraldine Burr. *Understanding World Religions: A Road Map for Justice and Peace*. Second edition. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014.
- Volf, Miroslav. *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996.
- Wink, Walter. *The Powers That Be: Theology for a New Millennium*. New York: Doubleday, 1998.
- **PLUS: On-line course packet on Blackboard**

Assignments & Evaluation	Assignment	Due	%
	Participation (incl. leading discussion of one reading, and NPPF workshop)	throughout; cf. sign-up sheet for date to lead discussion	10

Research notecards (and/or quizzes if necessary)	collected randomly throughout semester	5
Research journal (online)	update regularly; assessed after 2/18, 3/19, end of semester	15
1st short research paper	3/19	15
2nd short research paper	4/22	15
Literary work	5/6	15
Final "value-added" integration paper	5/13	15
Annotated bibliography (online)	updated regularly, assessed at end of semester	10

**Assignment definitions:** All aspects of this course revolve around an integrated research project, in which students focus their studies through sustained engagement with the people, beliefs, assumptions, practices and identity issues of a worldview other than their own. Specific assignments are summarized in a separate [project overview](#) and other handouts. Different kinds of tasks and assignments are defined here:

- **Participation** – This is particularly important in a research-oriented, seminar-style class such as this. All students are expected to participate regularly and consistently. Your professor recognizes that students learn and participate in different ways, however. Some learn by thinking outloud, some need to listen a while before forming their own conclusions. Note, therefore, that well-reasoned and respectful contributions to class will value more than the sheer quantity of a student's interjections.
- **Leading discussion** – At least once in the semester, each student must open and lead a seminar-style discussion of an assigned reading for the day. A sign-up sheet will be available by the end of the first week of class. Students should try to make introductory remarks that will set the stage for further discussion, not summarize so thoroughly that they actually preempt discussion. They should also have a variety of questions at the ready in order to facilitate discussion.
- **Research notecards** – Every student should prepare a half-page note card for each chapter or article assigned for class. *Important exceptions are Gilgamesh and chapters from the Understanding World Religions* by Smith & Burr. Assessment will be based on a random selection from the class. [Http://courseweb.stthomas.edu/gwschlabach/notecard.pdf](http://courseweb.stthomas.edu/gwschlabach/notecard.pdf) provides a sample note card. You are of course encouraged to enter additional notes in your research journal.
- **Annotated bibliography (online)** – At every step of the research process students must enter a proper bibliographic entry for every source they find useful, together with a 1- to 5- sentence annotation. This way, your professor can comment along the way. Assessment will be completed at the end of the semester.
- **Research journal (online)** – This is the central gathering point for most of your research notes and reflections about the project as you proceed. Six specific journal entries are assigned throughout the course. These assignments will be of two types:
  1. **Reflective journal entries** – If you have ever kept a personal journal, you may have some idea what these are like – more extensive than a “diary” but less formal than an essay. Class assignments will provide specific topics. Length and tone should be equivalent to a 2-5 page essay (600-1600 words) but journal entries are not expected to be quite so well-crafted and polished as a formal essay or research paper.
  2. **Research journal entries** – In length and tone, assigned research journal entries should be equivalent to a 3-6 page essay (900-2000 words), but do not have to be quite so well-crafted and polished as a formal essay or research paper. The main difference between reflective and research journal entries is that reflective entries can be more internally directed and research journals are

more outwardly directed. *Unassigned research journal entries can be in any format, tone, and length, so long as they prepare you to handle evidence accurately and fairly when it comes time for you to write your research papers. Doing these online allows your professor to make suggestions as you proceed.*

- **Short research papers** – Though only 4-6 pages (1200-2000 words) in length, these should have all the apparatus of any research paper – footnotes or parenthetical references, bibliography, conformity to an academic stylebook such as the MLA, APA, CMS or Turabian – and should follow a clear argumentative outline employing a clear and evident thesis, sub-theses, well-crafted paragraphs and conclusion.
- **Literary work** – Here we open up, with the only formal requirement being that you not plagiarize. Length can be anywhere from 3 to 8 pages as long as the specific assignment is fulfilled. Suggested genres are short story and dramatic dialogue -- although poetry, music and visual arts might also be possible, in consultation with your professor.
- **Final “value-added” integration paper** – Much of the above now feeds into a 12-15 page final research paper. You are free – in fact expected – to take entire paragraphs and sections from your earlier papers, along with re-polished paragraphs from your journal entries, and weave together a final research paper, replete with the necessary scholarly apparatus. Note the word “weave” however. The added value of this paper will be that it holds together in such a way that the seams do not show. In other words, previous material should be edited together to form a coherent whole in which the reader can follow a single argumentative thread.
- **Any alternatives?** – *Methods for recording and organizing research findings can be personal and even idiosyncratic. Students who can demonstrate that they have well-established proven research and note-taking strategies of their own may petition for alternative approaches to these assignments.*

**Exams and quizzes:** Because this course is oriented around research skills and writing, no exams will be given. Pop quizzes may be given, however, if your professors begins to sense they will be needed to insure accountability to reading assignments.

**About attendance:** Significant absences will affect your grade. Because this class relies heavily on classroom discussion and participation it is not really possible to “make up” for missed classes. If you must miss a class, you (not your professor) are responsible to compensate as best you can by borrowing notes or handouts from other students.

**About promptness:** I reserve the right to reduce the grade on any late assignment by up to half of a letter grade per day late, except in cases of documented medical or family emergencies.

**About extra-credit opportunities:** Students may receive extra credit for attending any event sponsored by the Theology Department or the Justice & Peace Studies Department (plus others as announced). Notes taken at the event are accepted as evidence of attendance. Credit will be used to compensate for any missed research notes.

**About academic integrity:** The requirements of academic integrity preclude the unacknowledged use of other people’s words and ideas in one’s own writing. Such use is known as “plagiarism.” Information on [UST policies regarding academic integrity](#) is available the undergraduate catalog. It is your responsibility as a student to understand these policies, recognize plagiarism and avoid it. As applied to this class, academic integrity does **not** preclude discussions on readings, brainstorming, or mutual assistance in formulating approaches to assignments. Collaboration must end, however, when each student begins writing. Your written work must be your own.

**For students with disabilities:** Qualified students with documented disabilities who may need classroom accommodations should make an appointment with the Enhancement Program – Disability Services office. Appointments can be made by calling 651-962-6315. You may also make an appointment in person in O’Shaughnessy Educational Center, room 119. For further information, you can locate the Enhancement Program on the web at <http://www.stthomas.edu/enhancementprog/>.

**Grading scale**

97-100	A+	74-76	C
94-96	A	70-73	C-
90-93	A-	67-69	D+
87-89	B+	64-66	D
84-86	B	60-63	D-
80-83	B-	< 60	F
77-79	C+		

**Course Outline & Schedule**

Your professor reserves the right to make changes in this schedule of topics, readings, and tasks. Any changes will be minor and announced in advance.

\* Indicates that a designated student will open and lead a seminar-style discussion of reading.

Section 6 5		Topic	Reading / Assignment
2/4	2/3	<b>Introductions</b>	Syllabus
	2/5	The formative power of myths, stories and worldviews	Smith, "Introduction"
2/11	2/10	Friends, enemies and the making of civilization	Gilgamesh epic (pp. 11-92 only) <b>Start journaling!</b>
	2.12	Dialogue: What will it take?	*Liechty, " <a href="#">Moving Beyond Agreement</a> " Newbigin, "The Basis, Purpose and Manner of Inter-Faith Dialogue" (available at <a href="http://www.newbigin.net">http://www.newbigin.net</a> )
2/18	2/17	<b>Recognizing the Other</b>	<b>Due: Research project task 1: reflective journal entries</b> Volf, Introduction, pp. 13-31 *Volf, ch. 1: Distance & Belonging, pp. 35-55
	2/19	Secular worldview: "Realism"	*Snyder, " <a href="#">One World, Rival Theories</a> "
2/25	2/24	Far Eastern worldview: Buddhism	Smith, ch. 2 Sivaraksa, " <a href="#">Engaged Buddhism</a> "
	2/26	<b>Nobel Peace Prize Forum (NPPF) workshop preparation</b>	<b>Readings to be determined.</b>

	3/3	Recognizing Exclusion	*Volf, ch. 2: Exclusion, pp. 57-98
3/4	3/4* (not 3/5)	7-9 p.m. NPPF workshop: joint session with Justice & Peace Studies and Opus College of Business Students.	Readings to be determined.



All students are encouraged to attend the Nobel Peace Prize Forum in Minneapolis March 6-8 for extra credit. Go to <http://nobelpeaceprizeforum.org> for schedule and online registration.

\*Section 6 students who are unable to attend Wednesday, March 4, Nobel Peace Prize Forum workshop may attend a half day of the Nobel Peace Prize Forum in Minneapolis instead. (Extra credit only for additional attendance.)

3/11	3/10	The myth of redemptive violence Worldviews of resistance	<b>Reminder: begin annotated bibliography</b> *Wink, <i>Powers that Be</i> , intro & chs. 1-2 Smith, ch. 7
	3/12	Worldviews of resistance contined The challenge of globalization	Smith, ch. 10 *Barber, " <a href="#">Jihad vs. McWorld</a> "
3/18	3/17	Primal-indigenous worldview: The Maya	Smith, ch. 6 *Higueros, " <a href="#">Introduction to Mayan Religiosity</a> "
	3/19	The Maya continued	*Linda Green, " <a href="#">Localization of the Global</a> " <b>Due: Research project tasks 2 &amp; 3: research journal entries, 1<sup>st</sup> short research paper.</b>
3/25	3/24	<b>Embrace, act I: Hospitality ("opening the arms")</b>	*Volf, ch. 3: Embrace, pp. 99-131
	3/26	<b>Embrace, act II: Acknowledging boundaries ("waiting")</b>	*Volf, ch. 3: Embrace, pp. 131-165
4/8	4/7	Islam	<b>Reminder: Keep adding to your research journal and annotated bibliography</b> Smith, ch. 5  * <a href="#">USIP Special Report, Islamic Perspectives on Peace and Violence</a>

	4/9	Islam, continued	Gülen, " <a href="#">A Comparative Approach to Islam and Democracy</a> "  *Ilkcaracan, " <a href="#">Women, Sexuality, and Social Change in the Middle East and the Maghreb</a> "
4/15	4/14	<b>Embrace, act III: Reciprocity ("closing the arms")</b>	*Volf, ch. 4: Gender Identity, pp. 167-190
	4/16	<b>Embrace, act IV: Ongoing negotiation of difference ("opening the arms again")</b>	*Volf, ch. 5: Oppression & Justice, pp. 193-231
4/22	4/21	Christian theologies of Justice and Peace	<b>Due: Research project task 4: 2<sup>nd</sup> short research paper</b>  *Wink, <i>Powers that Be</i> , chs. 3-4  Smith, ch. 4 Smith, ch. 9
	4/23	Proposal: Diaspora Christendom	*Volf, ch. 6: Deception & Truth, pp. 233-273
4/29	4/28	Peacebuilding practices	*Wink, <i>Powers that Be</i> , chs. 5-6  Smith, ch. 11
	4/30	Until justice and peace embrace – the hard cases	*Wink, <i>Powers that Be</i> , chs. 7-8  Smith, ch. 12
5/6	5/5	How can we forgive such a thing?	<b>Due: Research project task 5: Literary paper</b>  *John Paul II, " <a href="#">No Peace Without Justice, No Justice Without Forgiveness</a> " (World Day of Peace message, 2002)  Wink, <i>Powers that Be</i> , ch. 9
	5/7	So is religion the problem?	*Volf, ch. 7: Violence & Peace, pp. 275-306
5/13	5/12 5/14	Test cases and/or reports	<b>Due: Research project task 6: Final "value added" integration paper</b>
5/20	5/22	Personal reflections	Wink, <i>Powers that Be</i> , ch. 10 & epilogue  <b>Due: Research project task 7: Final reflective journal entry</b>  <b>Due: Finalized annotated bibliography</b>