



**Course Number: THE 290-01H**  
**Course Title: Theology of Addiction**  
**Fall 2015**  
**MWF 11:30-12:30, FH 302**  
**Office Hours: MWF 8:30-9:00 and 10:00-11:30 and by appointment**

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### ***UNIVERSITY OBJECTIVES***

All courses at Alvernia are designed to foster the Core Franciscan Values of service, humility, peacemaking, contemplation, and collegiality, as set forth by Alvernia's Mission Statement, as well as to promote the General Objectives as outlined in the University Catalog.

### ***COURSE DESCRIPTION***

A study and analysis of concepts in fundamental moral theology, particular forms of addiction, and the social ethics implications of those addictions.

### ***COURSE OBJECTIVES***

Upon completing the course, the student may expect to: 1) Be able to understand various aspects of fundamental moral theology and virtue ethics; 2) Understand varied definitions of addiction; 3) Understand the role of social ethics when dealing with issues in addiction; 4) Be able to use critical reading and reasoning skills to reach a moral conclusion in issues where free will may be limited; 5) Gain a more full perspective of his or her relational place to others and other societies in a globalized and rapidly changing world.

### ***MEASURABLE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES***

Knowledge area: 1) Students will describe Christian tradition and history; 2) Students will evaluate various ethical theories and methods of moral reasoning with an emphasis on Christian approaches

Skills area: 1) Students will demonstrate critical thinking; 2) Students will develop strong writing ability to express analysis of religion clearly; 3) Students will implement critical reading skills

Dispositions/Values area: 1) Students will critique different ethical positions; 2) Students will express a reverence for creation

### ***REQUIRED TEXTS***

Goldstein, Avram. *Addiction: From Biology to Drug Policy*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2001. ISBN: 9780195146646

Hartman, Laura M. *The Christian Consumer*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2011. ISBN: 9780199746422

Rogers, Rex M. *Seducing America: Is Gambling a Good Bet?* Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1997. ISBN: 9780801057595

Rosen, Larry. *iDisorder*, New York, Palgrave MacMillan, 2013. ISBN: 9780230117570

Selman, Francis. *Aquinas 101*, Notre Dame, Ave Marie Press, 2005. ISBN: 9780870612435

Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologica* <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/index.html>

### ***SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS***

You will be assigned readings that are not from your textbooks. These will be distributed before they will be discussed in class in the simplest manner possible, usually by manner of linking you to a text via blackboard. Therefore, you will need to have access to blackboard and a reliable internet connection throughout the semester.

### ***COPYRIGHT RESTRICTION***

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[http://www.alvernia.edu/library/library\\_resources/copyright\\_policy.html](http://www.alvernia.edu/library/library_resources/copyright_policy.html).

### ***COURSE FORMAT***

As stated previously, this course will be web-enhanced – meaning that blackboard will be used as a supplemental tool. Its basic purpose will be to deliver information and materials to you. The general format of the course will be lecture and discussion based. The more discussion we have, the better the course will be for all involved.

### ***COURSE REQUIREMENTS***

#### *1. Readings*

You are expected to have completed your assigned readings before they are discussed in class. All assigned readings are of equal importance. Failure to do your readings in a timely manner will lead to your having difficulty keeping up with the class and may lead to unannounced quizzes becoming a part of the course. It will also be difficult for you to participate in discussions if you have not done the readings and that will negatively impact your participation grade.

#### *2. Attendance/Participation (15% of total grade)*

Class attendance is required for Theology of Addiction. Students are asked to inform the instructor beforehand (if possible) if a class will be missed. Unexcused absences will lower

your final grade for attendance and participation. You are allowed 2 skips in the course of the semester. Each additional absence will cause a deterioration of your participation grade. The more classes that you miss, the lower your participation grade will be. Sending text messages and ringing cell phones will not be tolerated and will certainly lower your final grade for attendance and participation. **For your benefit, let me repeat myself, do not send texts, book faces, tweet, or in any way “play” with your phone while in class if you have an expectation of receiving a passing score for attendance and participation.** You are expected to participate in classroom discussions. If you do not participate in classroom discussions, ask relevant questions, etc. you will not receive full credit for attendance and participation. Your grade for attendance and participation will be determined as much by your participating in classroom discussions and otherwise vocally adding to the class’ experience as it will be your ability to be where you should be when you should be there.

To put these requirements both bluntly and numerically: you begin the class with an 11/15 for attendance and participation. As you participate in the class, your score rises. As you disrupt the class or are absent from the class, your grade goes down.

3. *Exams* (20% of total grade – 10% each)

You will be taking 2 exams this semester. The dates of those exams are tentatively scheduled for **October 12 and December 4**. The second exam will not be cumulative and Theology of Addiction will not have a final exam. If you are absent the day of an exam, you will earn a 0 and will not be permitted to take the exam unless you have scheduled a date and time before the exam commences. However, if you receive a 0 for cheating, that will be included in calculating your final grade.

4. *Reflection Essays* (40% of total grade – 8% for each reflection)

You will be writing 5 short (approximately 3 pages each) reflection essays in the course of the semester. These reflections each require a small amount of research (1-3 sources depending on the assignment) but will largely be focused on your own thoughts. The general topics for these essays will be as follows: 1) Virtue and Vice, 2) Marijuana Legalization, 3) Sin Taxes, 4) Reducing Consumption, 5) Social Media. You will receive formal rubrics for these essays prior to their tentative due dates of **September 18, October 9, October 26, November 9, and December 2**. All reflection essays are to be submitted electronically.

5. *Writing Project* (25% of total grade – 5% for initial bibliography and 20% for final paper)

You will be writing a paper that will deal with a particular form of addiction of your own choosing. This paper should fall within the range of 10-12 pages and will need to have a bibliography of at least 5 scholarly sources. You are required to either meet with me to discuss your topic and resources or submit an annotated bibliography with a statement of topic and direction at least 3 (three) weeks (meaning prior to **November 13**). The paper is to be completed and submitted to the instructor on or before **December 4** (the last day of class). A formal rubric for this assignment will be provided. However, you can and should expect that the following will be required of the paper: a definition of addiction, the morality of the addiction you are discussing, and the social ethics implications of the addiction you are discussing. Plagiarizing on this paper will result in receiving a 0 for the

assignment. Both the bibliography and final paper are to be submitted electronically.

#### 6. *Late and Improperly Written Assignment Policy*

Late writing assignments will be penalized five percentage points per day that they are late. After eight days, any assignment will *at best* receive a score of 60 out of 100 for the assignment. An assignment that is not turned in will receive a score of 0.

Assignments that are short of required length will lose one gradation per page that it is short. This means that a final paper that is 9 pages long will have a *maximum* value of an A-. A final paper that is 8 pages will have a *maximum* value of a B+. And so on.

#### 7. *Academic Honesty*

All students are expected to adhere to the university's Academic Honesty Policy, as outlined in the *Student Handbook*. Breaches of honesty include *but are not limited to*:

- ◆ Copying another student's work
- ◆ Plagiarizing the published work of another
- ◆ Facilitating the dishonesty of another student
- ◆ Cheating on an examination.

It is your responsibility to read and understand the policy; failure to do so **does not** excuse you from adhering to the policy.

*If you cheat in an ethics class, you have failed at life.*

#### 8. *Editorial Style*

Though Chicago, Turabian, or MLA is preferred, you are permitted to use the editorial style of your field and should remain consistent across all of your submitted works.

#### 9. *Accommodations for Students with Disabilities*

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"), the University offers accommodations to students with documented learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the Disability Services Coordinator, preferably prior to the beginning of the semester, to initiate the accommodation process and to notify instructors as soon as possible so accommodations can be made early on in the semester. Course requirements will not be waived but, if possible, reasonable accommodations will be made to allow each student to meet course requirements. Students needing assistance should contact the Disability Services Office in BH 106 (inside the Learning Center), by phone (610.568.1499), fax (484-335-4486), or e-mail ([disability.services@alvernia.edu](mailto:disability.services@alvernia.edu)).

### ***GRADING POLICY & GRADING RUBRICS***

As stated above, the grading for this course will be determined in the following manner:

Attendance and Participation: 15%

Exams: 20%

Reflection Essays: 40%

Writing Project: 25%

A study guide will be provided before each exam and a rubric for each specific writing requirement will be provided when the assignment is formally given.

### **GRADING SCALE**

This course will follow the standard Alvernia University undergraduate grading scale. Each percentage point as listed above equals one point below.

### **Undergraduate Grading Policy**

A	94-100	C	73-76	P Passing Grade
A-	90-93	C-	70-72	I Incomplete
B+	87-89	D+	67-69	WP Withdrawal/Pass
B	83-86	D	63-66	WF Withdrawal/Fail
B-	80-82	D-	60-62	AU Audit
C+	77-79	F	Failure	

### **TENATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

*Readings reflect selections from the textbooks. You should expect supplementary readings to be added as we progress through these topics.*

#### *Thomistic Theology and a Theological Understanding of Addiction*

Foundations; Good and Evil

Aquinas 101 1-4; Summa I 48 and 49

Soul and Passions/Affections

Aquinas 101 6-7; Summa I-II 2, 21, 22, 24, 49

Theological Virtues

Aquinas 101 8-9, 13; Summa II-II 4, 17, 23

Moral Virtues

Aquinas 101 8-9, 13; Summa II-II 47, 58-9, 123, 141, 149-50

#### *A Medical/Social Understanding of Addiction*

Addiction 1-7

#### *An Economic Understanding of Addiction*

“A Survey of Economic Models of Addictive Behavior” by Grossman, Chaloupka, and Anderson *Journal of Drug Issues* 28(3), 1998: 631-43.

#### *Drugs*

Legal Drugs

Addiction 8, 9, 13

Illegal Drugs

Addiction 10, 11, 14

Marijuana

Addiction 12

Prevention and Treatment

Addiction 15-20

#### *Gambling*

Risk and History

Seducing 1-3

Morality

- Seducing 4, 6, 8
- Sin Tax(es)
  - Seducing 5, 7, 9
- Addiction
  - Seducing 10-11
- Consumerism/Consumption*
  - Consumerism as Addiction
    - Consumer 1
  - Avoiding Sin in Consumption
    - Consumer 2
  - Consumerism and Environment
    - Consumer 3
  - Love and Consumption (Local and Global)
    - Consumer 4
  - Consumption and the Future
    - Consumer 5-6
- Technology and Social Media*
  - Smartphones and Compulsion
    - iDisorder 1-4
  - Cyberlife
    - iDisorder 5, 9
  - Getting entangled
    - iDisorder 6-8
  - Dehumanization
    - iDisorder 11-12

### ***CHECKING ALVERNIA EMAIL AND E-CAMPUS ALERTS***

It is the student's responsibility to check Alvernia and Blackboard email accounts on a regular basis. Failure to check these accounts are not an acceptable excuse for missing important information/deadlines that may be communicated by faculty or staff of Alvernia University. It is highly encouraged that students enroll in the electronic emergency notification system called e2Campus ([www.alvernia.edu](http://www.alvernia.edu)).

### ***Course Cancellation Policy:***

Understanding that each one credit course requires 14 hours of instructional time per semester, faculty must provide activities or make-up time appropriate to the course in the case of class cancellation or faculty absence.

***This syllabus is designed so that you will have a concrete understanding of what is expected of you as a student and how your grade will be determined. While the course objectives and the manner of determining your grade will not change, the schedule and dates for topics are tentative. As the semester progresses, there may be instances that we spend more (or less) time on a given topic than originally planned (the expected primary cause for this is class interest and lively discussion). As these changes occur, recalibrations will be made to our schedule. You will always be given fair notice to account for the flexibility in scheduling.***