

Syllabus
PAX/REL 253 Despair and Hope

DePaul University

Winter 2021

Online: Asynchronous

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*“Hope is not like a lottery ticket you can sit on the sofa and clutch, feeling lucky. . . .
Hope is an ax you break down doors with in an emergency.”* – Rebecca Solnit

*“Those who hope in Christ can no longer put up with reality as it is. . . . for the goad of the
promised future stabs inexorably into the flesh of every unfulfilled present.”* – Jürgen Moltmann

About the Course:

Course Description:

This course draws upon a variety of disciplines to examine despair and hope from theoretical and applied perspectives. The course explores religious, ethical, and psychological understandings and applications of despair and hope using a number of case studies, with particular attention to how despair and hope function in global crises, the Bible and theology, and nonviolent struggle.

Course Rationale:

The *Peace, Justice, and Conflict Studies* program at DePaul seeks to introduce students to the practice of nonviolence and “strategies for resolving interpersonal, communal and international conflicts peacefully.” Efforts to overcome apathy, fear, and despair are essential for the growth and success of nonviolent activism and movements. This class examines hope and its role in nonviolent resistance.

The *Religious Studies* program at DePaul “offers students the opportunity to engage in the academic study of religion,” which “includes not only the traditional areas of sacred texts, myths, rituals, mystical experiences and doctrines, but also the ways in which political, social and economic forces shape these phenomena for religious communities.” This class draws on the disciplines of theology and biblical studies to explore responses to crises like climate change, war, economic injustice, racism, and political terror. It explores how religious and other resources help people navigate the tension between despair and hope that emerges in the face of the realities of today’s world and inspire action for change.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Students will:

1. Analyze despair and hope and differentiate them from related concepts like pessimism, sadness, grief, depression, anxiety, apathy, optimism, and faith.
2. Reflect on your own perspectives on despair and hope and the ways the class readings and discussions challenge and expand their perspectives.

3. Examine the effects of despair and hope in the context of global threats and injustices and assess how they can be consciously utilized for personal and social transformation.
4. Study how hope and despair are treated in the Jewish and Christian scriptures, using the methods of biblical studies to critically examine biblical texts in their historical and literary contexts.
5. Explore Christian theological questions related to hope and despair, including questions about suffering and about the “end” of the world.
6. Assess the role of hope in nonviolent movements for social change and analyze how activists can design tactics that employ hope to encourage action rather than apathy.

Religious Dimensions Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete the Religious Dimensions requirement will be able to:

1. Explain beliefs and practices of one or more religious traditions in their specific social and cultural contexts. In courses in which the focus is on one religious tradition, describe the diversity of strands within the tradition and explain with significant depth the modes of interpretation of the world the tradition offers both to adherents and to others.
2. Identify religious modes of thinking, acting, and feeling such as: myth and narrative, symbol, ritual, law, doctrine, ethics, religious experience.
3. Analyze the impact of religion on personal as well as communal dimensions of human life, including for example the relationship between religion and power, social integration, social transformation, and social justice.

Modes of Instruction:

This is an online, asynchronous course. We will not meet in real time—instead, you will participate in activities that can be completed on your own time (with deadlines). Each class module contains readings and activities like watching videos and video lectures, participating in discussion forums, completing short writing assignments, and taking short, low-stakes quizzes.

Course Structure:

The course is broken up into four units, each with a series of class modules and a paper. The first unit focuses on defining despair and hope and differentiating them from related concepts. The second unit looks at how despair and hope function in communication about global threats like climate change and nuclear weapons. The third unit looks at hope and despair in biblical texts and Christian theology. The final unit looks how hope functions in nonviolent actions, campaigns, and movements, with particular attention to the importance and strategic use of hope.

Textbooks:

All of the readings for this course are individual chapters and articles that are available electronically on D2L or through the library’s course reserves system. You do not have to purchase any textbooks. The readings are listed in the course schedule below. When available, I have posted translations of the readings in other languages. I encourage you to read the required texts in whatever language and format is most helpful for you.

Frequently Asked Questions:

How much time does this class take?

You should expect to spend around 8–10 hours per week on this class. That includes 3–4 hours of reading, around 3 hours on the activities in the class modules, and 2–3 hours of work on the papers. Online classes are more flexible than face-to-face courses, but they also require more self-discipline. I encourage you to *schedule* time each week that you will dedicate to the course.

What kind of technology do I need?

This course will take place entirely on D2L, DePaul’s learning management system. You will need a computer, internet access, and word processing software.

How do grades work?

This class uses a points system, where your grade is based on the total number of points you earn. The various types of assignments are not weighted, so all points are equal. It is similar to a standard grading scale, but multiplied by a factor of ten.

A	930–1000	B	830–869	C	730–769	D	630–669
A–	900–929	B–	800–829	C–	700–729	D–	600–629
B+	870–899	C+	770–799	D+	670–699	F	0–599

How quickly will I get feedback on assignments?

I am usually able to grade materials in the class modules within two days and provide feedback on unit papers within one week. I typically grade the unit papers in the order I receive them.

Is there extra credit?

You can do **extra class modules** to earn extra points. While the class schedule calls for you to complete twenty class modules that count for 15 points each (300 points total), there are a total of twenty-seven class modules, so you can potentially earn up to 105 extra points.

If I do extra class modules, can I skip other things?

The best reason to do extra class modules is because you find the topics interesting. The second best reason is to compensate for a low grade on a paper. I don’t recommend skipping the required class modules and doing optional ones instead, but there is nothing stopping you from doing so. In short, how you earn the points you need for the grade you want is up to you, but I generally advise you to follow the schedule I have laid out for you.

How do the due dates work? Can I turn in work late?

This course is designed to allow you some flexibility in when you complete work, within a structure designed to help you keep progressing through the course. Class modules are due Tuesdays and Thursdays, though there is nothing preventing you from doing them early. The four unit papers are due on Mondays. All materials are due at 10pm Central Time.

Activities in the **class modules** can be done late without penalty. I strongly encourage you to follow the schedule I have laid out—or work ahead—as it can be difficult to catch up if you get behind. You will also get more out of the course if you are keeping pace with your classmates.

Papers can be submitted late but will incur a small grade deduction (as indicated in the grading rubrics) unless you ask for and receive an extension. Extensions will be granted only for extraordinary circumstances, particularly unforeseeable events that prevent you from completing work on time. If possible, you should contact me before the due date to ask for an extension. All late work must be turned in by **Friday, March 19** so that I can submit grades on time.

Where can I get help with my papers?

You are encouraged to make use of free peer writing tutoring through the Writing Center. Writing Center tutors work with writers at all stages of the writing process, from invention to revision, and they are trained to identify recurring issues in your writing as well as address any specific questions or areas that you want to talk about. Visit www.depaul.edu/writing.

How do I avoid plagiarism?

While you are welcome to work on the class modules with other students in the class, it is cheating if someone else does your work for you or you use someone else's work without giving them credit. DePaul is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others, and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity are detrimental to DePaul's values, to your own development as a responsible member of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Please refer to the Student Handbook or visit <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu> for more about how to avoid plagiarism (and what happens if you plagiarize or cheat). Software that assists in checking for plagiarism will be used in this course.

What if I need accommodations due to a disability?

If you need accommodations, you are required to register with DePaul's Center for Students with Disabilities, which enables you to access accommodations and support services to assist your success. If you are registered with the Center for Students with Disabilities, it is helpful if you contact me within the first two weeks of the quarter to discuss your accommodations.

What if I need help with technology?

The Help Desk provides technical assistance via phone, email and web for current DePaul students, faculty and staff. Visit <https://depaul.service-now.com/sp> to get help.

How do I get help related to sexual or relationship violence?

Material raised in class can sometimes bring up issues related to sexual and relationship violence. In other instances, you may reach out to faculty as a source of help and support. It is important for you to know that faculty are required to report information reported to them about experiences with sexual or relationship violence to DePaul's Title IX Coordinator. You should also know that disclosing experiences with sexual or relationship violence in course assignments or discussion does not constitute a formal report to the University and will not begin the process of DePaul providing a response. Students seeking to report an incident of sexual or relationship violence to DePaul should contact Public Safety (LPC: 773-325-7777) or the Dean of Students and Title IX Coordinator (LPC: 773-325-7290 or titleixcoordinator@depaul.edu). Students

seeking to speak confidentially about issues related to sexual and relationship violence can contact a Survivor Support Advocate in the Office of Health Promotion & Wellness for information and resources (773-325-7129 or hpw@depaul.edu). More information is available at studentaffairs.depaul.edu/hpw/shvp.html.

What if I need other help outside of class?

Your success is our number one priority at DePaul University. University resources to help you succeed include computer labs, free or discounted software, tutoring centers, health services, and services for designated groups, such as veterans and students with disabilities. Visit go.depaul.edu/success to learn more.

What if I can't finish the class?

Sometimes things come up that may prevent you from finishing the class on time. In cases like these, you may want to withdraw or take an "incomplete." If you plan to **withdraw** after the first week of classes, I ask that you contact me to discuss your reasons before you officially withdraw. Try not to ghost me! I worry when you suddenly disappear off my roster. I can also sometimes help you find ways to avoid the need to withdraw. You can drop a course via Campus Connect without penalty (and without contacting me) through January 17. Between January 17 and **February 21**, you may withdraw and receive a grade of "W." If you stop participating after February 21, you will receive a grade based on the work you completed. Your other option is to take an **incomplete**, a temporary grade that allows you to finish major assignments after the end of the term. In order to receive a temporary grade of "IN", you must have 1) a satisfactory record in the work already completed for the course, including having earned at least **450 points**, 2) encountered unusual or unforeseeable circumstances which prevent you from completing the course requirements by the end of the term, and 3) asked me for permission.

What if I have questions or want to talk to you?

I am always happy to communicate with you, but it is sometimes more efficient if you try other sources of support first. Here's what I suggest:

1. Check if your question is answered in the **syllabus**.
2. Check the Q&A **discussion forum** on D2L and post a question if it is not already answered.
3. Feel free to **email** me at j.meyers@depaul.edu. You can also email me to set up an appointment to speak by phone or Zoom videoconference. During the week, I typically respond to emails within 24 hours. If you email me on Sunday, I will reply on Monday.

Course Requirements:

Class Modules (twenty at 15 points each = 300 points)

The course is broken up into modules, each equivalent to one class session in an in-person class. Each class module includes readings and activities designed to help you learn about the topic of the module, reflect on the topic, and develop your skills as a reader, writer, and communicator. You will sometimes be able to choose from multiple modules or series of modules. You can do extra class modules to earn additional points and boost your grade.

Unit 1: Hope Self-Reflection Paper (50 points)

Write a **2–3 page** (double spaced) paper engaging *one or both* of the following questions:

- What role does hope play in your life?
- Do hope, despair, optimism, or pessimism affect your life? Is the effect positive or negative?

Your reflection paper will be graded according to the **rubric** included with the submission folder on D2L. It is due **Monday, January 18** by 10pm on D2L.

Unit 2: Film Analysis Paper (150 points)

Choose one of the films on list in the writing guide on D2L or another film with strong themes of hope or despair approved by the professor. Watch the film and write a **3–4 page** (double spaced) analysis paper. Your analysis should center around a thesis (argument) about the film and how it fosters hope and/or despair in the viewer. **A guide to writing this paper and a grading rubric are on D2L.** It is due **Monday, February 1** at 10pm on D2L.

Unit 3, Option 1: Scripture Text Analysis Paper (250 points)

Choose a passage from a holy book from any religion and write a **4–5 page** (double spaced) paper analyzing how it engages with themes of hope and/or despair. Your paper should carefully analyze a passage of about 300 to 600 words and be based on research into the text, including:

- The content of the text (what does it say? How does it say it?)
- The historical context (when and in what circumstances was it written?)
- The literary context (how does your passage fit into the larger text it is a part of?)
- The reception history (how have people interpreted and responded to the text?)

This is a heavily research-driven paper. You should include a bibliography of works cited that includes at least five sources, at least three of which should be books. **A guide to writing this paper and a grading rubric are on D2L.** It is due **Monday, February 22** at 10pm on D2L.

Unit 3, Option 2: Book Review (250 points)

Choose one of the books listed in the paper writing guide, or another theological book on hope or despair from any religion approved by the professor, read it, and write a **4–5 page** (double spaced) review of the book. Your paper should follow the format of a book review in an academic journal and focus on evaluating the book with particular attention to its content about hope, despair, and/or related concepts. **A guide to writing this paper and a grading rubric are on D2L.** It is due **Monday, February 22** at 10pm on D2L.

Unit 4: Nonviolence Research Paper (250 points)

Research a nonviolent action, campaign, movement, or organization and analyze in a **5–6 page** (double spaced) paper on how it used or uses despair, hope, or a related concept. The paper should be organized around *arguing a thesis about the tactical uses or effects of hope or despair* in the action, campaign, movement, or organization. The paper should be followed by a bibliography of works cited listing both primary and secondary sources. **A guide to writing this paper and a grading rubric are on D2L.** It is due **Monday, March 15** at 10pm on D2L.

Course Schedule:

Unit 1: Understanding Despair and Hope

1. Tue, Jan 5: Introductions

- Video Lecture:** Introduction to the course (4 minutes)
- Checklist:** Getting Started
- Discussion Forum:** Introductions (2 posts; 5 points)
- Survey:** First Week Survey (5 points)
- Quiz:** Syllabus Quiz (5 points)

2. Thur, Jan 7: The Psychology of Despair

- Reading:** Reading, Anthony. "Despair." In *Hope & Despair: How Perceptions of the Future Shape Human Behavior*, 150–60. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004.
- Reading:** O'Hara, Denis J. "Psychotherapy and the Dialectics of Hope and Despair." *Counselling Psychology Quarterly* 24, no. 4 (December 2011): 323–29.
- Written Mini-Lecture:** Despair and Related Concepts: Are They Present- or Future-Oriented? (1 page)
- Activity:** Despair and related concepts (15 points)

3. Tue, Jan 12: The Psychology of Hope

- Reading:** Reading, Anthony. "The Nature of Hope." In *Hope & Despair: How Perceptions of the Future Shape Human Behavior*, 4–13. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004.
- Reading:** Herbert, Russell. Excerpt (pages 15–28) from: "The Psychology of Hope." In *Living Hope: A Practical Theology of Hope for the Dying*, 15–46. Werrington, England: Epworth, 2006.
- Video Lecture:** Where Does Hope Come From? (2.5 minutes)
- Worksheet:** Hope and Related Concepts (10 points)
- Discussion Forum:** The Psychology of Hope (3 posts; 5 points)

4–5. Jan 14, 19: Related Concepts (Choose Two)

4–5a. Anxiety

- Reading:** McGrath, Helen, and Hazel Edwards. "The World Is Such a Dangerous Place!: The Anxious Personality." In *Difficult Personalities: A Practical Guide to Managing the Hurtful Behavior of Others (and Maybe Your Own)*, 61–86. New York: Experiment, 2010.
- Reading:** Brueggemann, Walter. "Maintenance, then News!" In *The Collected Sermons of Walter Brueggemann*, 2:183–87. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2015.
- Written Mini-Lecture:** What Do We Know About Anxiety? (2 pages)
- Reading Quiz:** Anxiety (10 points)
- Discussion Forum:** Anxiety (2 posts; 5 points)

4-5b. Depression

- Reading:** McIntosh, Diane. "What is Depression?" In *This Is Depression: A Comprehensive, Compassionate Guide for Anyone Who Wants to Understand Depression*, 5–25. Vancouver: Page Two, 2019.
- Reading:** Tippett, Krista. "The Nature of Human Vitality: The Soul In Depression." In *Einstein's God: Conversations About Science and the Human Spirit*, 223–49. New York: Penguin Books, 2010.
- Reading Quiz:** Depression (10 points)
- Discussion Forum:** Depression (2 posts; 5 points)

4-5c. Grief

- Reading:** Lloyd, Caroline. "What is Grief?" In *Grief Demystified: An Introduction*, 23–46. London: Jessica Kingsley, 2017.
- Reading:** Sittser, Gerald L. "Sailing on a Sea of Nothingness." In *A Grace Disguised: How the Soul Grows Through Loss*, 55–68. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.
- Reading Quiz:** Grief (10 points)
- Discussion Forum:** Grief (2 posts; 5 points)

4-5d. Hope Amidst Illness

- Reading:** Weingarten, Kaethe. "Hope in a Time of Global Despair." In *Hope and Despair in Narrative and Family Therapy: Adversity, Forgiveness, and Reconciliation*, edited by Carmel Flaskas, Imelda McCarthy, and Jim Sheehan, 13–23. New York: Routledge, 2007.
- Reading:** Chandler McEntyre, Marilyn. "Hope in Hard Times: Moments of Epiphany in Illness Narratives." In *The Gift of Story: Narrating Hope in a Postmodern World*, edited by Emily Griesinger and Mark A. Eaton, 229–45. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006.
- Reading Quiz:** Hope Amidst Illness (5 points)
- Discussion Forum:** Hope Amidst Illness (4 posts; 10 points)

☆ **Monday, January 18, 10pm: Hope Self-Reflection Paper Due**

Unit 2: Hope in the Context of Global Threats

6. Thur, Jan 21: Facing Global Crises

- Reading:** Moltmann, Jürgen. "A Culture of Life in the Dangers of This Time." In *The Spirit of Hope: Theology for a World in Peril*, 3–14. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2020.
- Reading:** Amsler, Sarah. "Bringing Hope to Crisis: Crisis Thinking, Ethical Action, and Social Change." In *Future Ethics: Climate Change and Apocalyptic Imagination*, edited by Stefan Skrimshire, 129–52. New York: Continuum, 2010.
- Worksheet:** Moltmann: A Culture of Life (5 points)
- Written Reflection:** Amsler: Crisis Thinking (10 points)

7–8. Jan 26, 28: Global Threats (Choose Two)

7–8a. The Climate Crisis

- Reading:** American Association for the Advancement of Science Climate Science Panel. *What We Know: The Reality, Risks, and Response to Climate Change*. Washington, DC: American Association for the Advancement of Science, 2014.
- Reading:** Wallace-Wells, David. “The Uninhabitable Earth.” *New York Magazine* (July 10, 2017). <http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2017/07/climate-change-earth-too-hot-for-humans.html>.
- Reading:** Franzen, Jonathan. “What If We Stopped Pretending?” *The New Yorker* (September 8, 2019). <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/what-if-we-stopped-pretending>.
- Video Lecture:** Framing the climate crisis (10 minutes, including a clip from *The Newsroom* season 3, episode 3)
- Discussion Forum:** Framing the climate crisis (6 posts; 15 points)

7–8b. Nuclear Weapons

- Reading:** Science and Security Board of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. “Closer Than Ever: It Is 100 seconds to Midnight: 2020 Doomsday Clock Statement.” January 23, 2020. <https://thebulletin.org/doomsday-clock/current-time>. [If available, you will read the 2021 statement instead]
- Reading:** Anders, Günther. “Theses for the Atomic Age.” *Massachusetts Review* 3, no. 3 (1962): 493–505.
- Video Lecture:** The Nuclear Danger (11.5 minutes)
- Video Lecture:** Song analysis: “99 Luftballons” (5 minutes)
- Discussion Forum:** The nuclear threat (6 posts; 15 points)

7–8c. The Coronavirus Pandemic

All of the readings for this module have an audio option

- Reading:** Solnit, Rebecca. “‘The Impossible Has Already Happened’: What Coronavirus Can Teach Us About Hope.” *The Guardian* (April 7, 2020). www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/07/what-coronavirus-can-teach-us-about-hope-rebecca-solnit. (30 minutes)
- Reading:** Kristof, Nicholas. “We Interrupt This Gloom to Offer . . . Hope.” *The New York Times* (July 16, 2020). www.nytimes.com/2020/07/16/opinion/sunday/coronavirus-blm-america-hope.html. (17 minutes)
- Video:** Guterres, António. Press conference. March 19, 2020. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/03/1059752?>. (9 minutes) [You can skip the press questions at the end]
- Video:** Queen Elizabeth II. Coronavirus broadcast. April 5, 2020. www.youtube.com/watch?v=2klmuggOEIE. (4.5 minutes)
- Video:** Ocasio-Cortez, Alexandria. “A Better World is Possible.” June 18, 2020. www.youtube.com/watch?v=Actg7ojU17U. (1.5 minutes)
- Discussion Forum:** Framing the pandemic (6 posts; 15 points)

☆ *Monday, February 1, 10pm: Film Analysis Paper Due*

Unit 3: Suffering and Hope in the Bible and Theology

9. Tue, Feb 2: Introduction to Religious Studies and Christianity

- Reading:** Livingston, James C. “What is Religion?” In *Anatomy of the Sacred: An Introduction to Religion*, 6th ed., 3–20. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 2009.
- Reading:** Ramshaw, Gail. “Why Does Christianity Have So Many Denominations and Spiritualities?” In *What is Christianity?: An Introduction to the Christian Religion*, 91–118. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013.
- Handout:** Disciplines in the Study of Christianity (2 pages)
- Optional Discussion Forum:** Religious Studies and Christianity Q&A
- Reading Quiz:** Introduction to Christianity (15 points)

10. Thur, Feb 4: Introduction to Theodicy: Why Does God Allow Suffering?

- Reading:** Crowley, Paul G. “Searching for God.” In *Unwanted Wisdom: Suffering, the Cross, and Hope*, 67–84. New York: Continuum, 2005.
- Reading:** de Gruchy, John W. “Where on Earth Is God?” In *The End Is Not Yet: Standing Firm in Apocalyptic Times*, 43–79. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017. [You can skip or skim pages 51–63]
- Reading:** Martin, James. “Where is God in the Pandemic?” *The New York Times* (March 22, 2020). www.nytimes.com/2020/03/22/opinion/coronavirus-religion.html.
- Video Lecture:** What is theodicy? (2 minutes)
- Written Mini-Lecture:** The history of theodicy (1 page)
- Video Lecture:** Theodicy and the cross (3 minutes)
- Group Discussion Forum:** Introduction to theodicy (6 posts; 15 points)

11. Tue, Feb 9: Introduction to Eschatology: What do Christians Hope For?

- Reading:** Migliore, Daniel L. “Christian Hope.” In *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 3rd ed., 327–50. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014.
- Reading:** Rossing, Barbara. “Reimagining Eschatology: Toward Healing and Hope for a World at the Eschatos.” In *Planetary Solidarity: Global Women’s Voices on Christian Doctrine and Climate Justice*, edited by Grace Ji-Sun Kim and Hilda P. Koster, 325–47. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017.
- Video Lecture:** Eschatology in Christian hymns (14 minutes)
- Optional Discussion Forum:** Eschatology Q&A
- Worksheet:** Introduction to eschatology (15 points)

12–14. Choose either track A (Job and Theodicy) or track B (Revelation and Eschatology)

12a. Thur, Feb 11: The Book of Job

- Reading:** Gruber, Mayer. “Job.” In *The Jewish Study Bible*, edited by Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler, 1499–1505. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Reading:** Job 1–9, 19–42
- Written Mini-Lecture:** Introduction to Bible study tools (2 pages)
- Written Assignment:** Job passage study (15 points)

13a. Tue, Feb 16: Interpreting the Book of Job

- Reading:** Kepnes, Steven. “Job and Post-Holocaust Theodicy.” In *Strange Fire: Reading the Bible after the Holocaust*, 252–66. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic, 2000.
- Reading:** Gutiérrez, Gustavo. “God and the Poor.” In *On Job: God-Talk and the Suffering of the Innocent*, 39–49. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1987.
- Reading:** Dussel, Enrique. “The People of El Salvador: The Communal Sufferings of Job.” In *Job and the Silence of God*, edited by Christian Duquoc and Casiano Floristán, 61–66. New York: Seabury, 1983.
- Video Lecture:** Job and Latin American Liberation Theology (10.5 minutes)
- Discussion Forum:** Interpreting the Book of Job (6 posts; 15 points)

14a. Thur, Feb 18: Beyond Theodicy: How do we understand suffering?

- Reading:** Cone, James H. “Divine Liberation and Black Suffering.” In *God of the Oppressed*, 163–94. New York: Harper San Francisco, 1975.
- Reading:** Sölle, Dorothee. Excerpts (pages 87–93, 101–3, 107–8) from: “The Truth in Acceptance.” In *Suffering*, 87–119. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975.
- Video Lecture:** James Cone on Suffering in the Black Religious Tradition (3 minutes)
- Worksheet:** Cone and Sölle on Suffering (10 points)
- Discussion forum:** Beyond Theodicy (3 posts; 5 points)

12b. Thur, Feb 11: The Book of Revelation and Its Interpreters

- Reading:** Revelation 1–5
- Reading:** DeSilva, David A. “Debunking Popular Myths about Revelation.” In *Unholy Allegiances: Heeding Revelation’s Warning*, 1–19. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2013.
- Reading:** Gorman, Michael. “Following the Lamb: The Spirituality of the Book of Revelation.” In *Reading Revelation Responsibly: Uncivil Worship and Witness: Following the Lamb Into the New Creation*, 176–86. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2011.
- Video Lecture:** Introduction to the book of Revelation (7 minutes)
- Video Lecture:** Revelation 4–5 (8 minutes)
- Written Mini-Lecture:** Introduction to Bible study tools (2 pages)
- Written Assignment:** Revelation word study (15 points)

13b. Tue, Feb 16: Revelation as Anti-Imperial Resistance

- Reading:** Revelation 18–22
- Reading:** Meyers, Jeffrey D. Introduction to *The Nonviolent Apocalypse: Revelation’s Nonviolent Resistance Against Rome*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books / Fortress Academic, forthcoming. (10 pages)
- Reading:** Blount, Brian K. “Can I Get a Witness?: An Apocalyptic Call for Active Resistance.” In *Can I Get a Witness?: Reading Revelation through African American Culture*, 37–67. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005.
- Video Lecture:** Reading Revelation 18 as Resistance Literature (13 minutes)
- Discussion Forum:** Revelation as Anti-Imperial Resistance (6 posts; 15 points)

14b. Thur, Feb 18: Eschatology and Hope

- Reading:** Bauckham, Richard, and Trevor Hart. “The Hope of an Ending.” In *Hope against Hope: Christian Eschatology at the Turn of the Millennium*, 26–43. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Reading:** Isasi-Díaz, Ada María. Excerpt (pages 227–30) from: “*Mujerista* Narratives: Creating a New Heaven and a New Earth.” In *Liberating Eschatology: Essays in Honor of Letty M. Russell*, edited by Margaret A. Farley and Serene Jones, 227–43. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999.
- Reading:** Moltmann, Jürgen. “Meditation on Hope.” Introduction to *Theology of Hope: On the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology*, 15–36. New York: Harper & Row, 1967. [You can skip section 4 (pages 26–32)]
- Video Lecture:** The Christian story (11 minutes)
- Worksheet:** Eschatology and hope (10 points)
- Discussion Forum:** Hope and the future (3 posts; 5 points)

☆ **Monday, February 22, 10pm: Scripture Text Analysis Paper or Book Review Due**

Unit 4: Hope Amidst Nonviolent Struggle

15. Tue, Feb 23: Introduction to Nonviolence

- Reading:** Nagler, Michael N. “An Introduction to Nonviolence.” In *The Nonviolence Handbook: A Guide for Practical Action*, 1–12. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2014.
- Reading:** Vinthagen, Stellan. “The Concept of Nonviolence.” In *A Theory of Nonviolent Action: How Civil Resistance Works*, 61–81. London: Zed, 2015.
- Video Lecture:** Introduction to Nonviolence (5 minutes)
- Video:** Jamila Raqib, “The Secret to Effective Nonviolent Resistance” (9 minutes)
- Activity:** The Characteristics of Effective Nonviolence (10 points)
- Written Reflection:** Nonviolence (5 points)

16–18. Feb 25, Mar 2, 4: Nonviolent Struggles (Choose Three)

16–18a. Latin American Struggles Against Dictatorship

The readings and discussion forum in this module are available in both English and Spanish

- Reading:** Gutiérrez, Gustavo. “Joy: Victory Over Suffering.” In *We Drink From Our Own Wells: The Spiritual Journey of a People*, 114–21. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1984.
- Reading:** Romero, Óscar. “The Final Homily of Archbishop Romero.” In *A Prophetic Bishop Speaks to His People: The Complete Homilies of Archbishop Óscar Arnulfo Romero*, 6:420–22. Miami: Convivium, 2016.
- Reading:** Tutu, Desmond. Excerpts from *God Is Not a Christian: And Other Provocations*, edited by John Allen, 73–81, 156–57. New York: HarperOne, 2011.
- Video Lecture:** Music and hope (20 minutes)
- Discussion Forum:** Hope in nonviolent resistance movements (5 posts; 15 points)

16–18b. Black Struggles for Freedom and Equality

- Reading:** Boesak, Allan Aubrey. “Dare We Speak of Hope?: Only If We Speak of Struggle.” In *Dare We Speak of Hope?: Searching for a Language of Life in Faith and Politics*, 67–89. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014.
- Reading:** West, Cornel. “Prisoners of Hope.” In *The Impossible Will Take a Little While: Perseverance and Hope in Troubled Times*, rev. ed., edited by Paul Rogat Loeb, 343–46. New York: Basic, 2014.
- Podcast:** Samuel, Sigal. “Why Cornel West is Hopeful (But Not Optimistic).” *The Way Through*. July 29, 2020. <https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2020/7/29/21340730/cornel-west-coronavirus-racism-way-through-podcast>. (1 hour / 10 pages)
- Discussion Forum:** Struggles for freedom and racial equality (5 posts; 15 points)

16–18c. Hope in the Sermons of Martin Luther King, Jr.

- Reading:** King, Martin Luther Jr. “The Death of Evil Upon the Seashore.” In *Strength to Love*, 77–86. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981.
- Reading:** King, Martin Luther Jr. “Shattered Dreams.” In *A Martin Luther King Treasury*, 206–11. Chicago: Educational Heritage, 1964.
- Reading:** King, Martin Luther Jr. “A Christmas Sermon on Peace,” in *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King Jr.*, edited by James M. Washington, 253–58. New York: Harper One, 1986.
- Reading:** Stewart, Danté. “Martin Luther King Jr.: Exemplar of Hope.” *Christianity Today* (January 21, 2019). www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2019/january-web-only/martin-luther-king-day-exemplar-hope-tribute.html.
- Written Mini-Lecture:** Hope in the Sermons of Martin Luther King, Jr. (3 pages)
- Discussion Forum:** Hope in the Sermons of Martin Luther King, Jr. (5 posts; 15 points)

16–18d. Confronting the Climate Crisis

- Reading:** Orr, David W. “Hope (in a Hotter Time).” In *Hope is an Imperative: The Essential David Orr*, 324–32. Washington, DC: Island Press, 2011.
- Reading:** O’Brien, Kevin. “Nonviolent Resistance.” In *The Violence of Climate Change: Lessons of Resistance from Nonviolent Activists*, 40–60. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2017.
- Reading:** “People Versus Shell: The Inside Story.” n.d. www.greenpeace.org/usa/victories/people-versus-shell-the-inside-story. (2–3 pages, plus 3 minutes of videos)
- Discussion Forum:** Confronting the climate crisis (4 posts; 10 points)
- Written Reflection:** Nonviolence and the climate crisis (5 points)

19. Tue, Mar 9: Sustaining Social Movements

- Reading:** Moyer, Bill, JoAnn McAllister, Mary Lou Finley, and Steven Soifer. “Believing in the Power of Social Movements.” In *Doing Democracy: The MAP Model for Organizing Social Movements*, 87–98. Gabriola Island, British Columbia: New Society, 2001.
- Reading:** Kingsolver, Barbara. “How to Be Hopeful.” In *Moral Ground: Ethical Action for a Planet in Peril*, edited by Kathleen Dean Moore and Michael P. Nelson, 452–57. San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 2010.
- Slideshow:** Social Movements and Hope of Success (7 slides)
- Media:** Fake Washington Post (8 large pages)
- Video:** A Message From the Future (7.5 minutes)
- Group Discussion Forum:** Hope in social movements (6 posts; 15 points)

20. Thur, Mar 11: Finding Hope Amidst the Struggle

- Reading:** Murphy, Timothy Charles. “Hoping to Make the Impossible Possible.” In *Sustaining Hope in an Unjust World: How to Keep Going When You Want to Give Up*, 23–40. Saint Louis: Chalice, 2019.
- Reading:** Solnit, Rebecca. “Grounds for Hope.” Foreword to the third edition of *Hope in the Dark: Untold Histories, Wild Possibilities*, xi–xxvi. Chicago: Haymarket, 2016.
- Video Lecture:** Hope in Nonviolent Movements (10 minutes)
- Class Discussion Forum:** Hope and nonviolent resistance (5 posts; 10 points)
- Survey:** Course Feedback Form (5 points)

☆ **Monday, March 15: Nonviolence Research Paper Due**