

## FACULTY SIGNATURE COURSE SUMMARY REFLECTION

The purpose of this annual review of required/signature courses is to determine the extent of individual course quality and consistency across the academic program. Both full time and adjunct faculty who teach these courses over a three-year period will complete the course summary. Course summaries are then reviewed with program directors and the Vice President of Academic Affairs to inform program improvements.

**Course Code:** T-300 \_\_\_\_\_ **Course Name:** Introduction to Theology \_\_\_\_\_

Course Registration Number(s): T 300, 22 Registered \_\_\_\_\_

# Students: 20 \_\_\_\_\_ Class Avg.: 89.7 \_\_\_\_\_ Failures: 1 PI

Delivery Mode: Hours/week 3 hours-- 2 hours synchronous, one hour asynchronous

In Person    Hybrid-    Online    Experiential Learning

### Course Delivery Overview:

- What changes (if any) were implemented since the last delivery?  
(If it is your first time teaching this course, please provide a general overview.)

Streamlined requirements (fewer reflection papers, only one assignment due each week)  
Counted the number of pages in the reading assignments and kept those to 100 or less each week.

Revised the rubrics for assignments. (Every assignment has posted rubrics.)

Revised reading prompts for weekly discussion posts.

Embedded questions in pre-recorded presentations that students were to address in their weekly discussion post.

Added devotional reading: Howard Thurman, *Jesus and the Disinherited*

### What went well? (Please list contributing factors to success)

The “flipped classroom” approach is working really well in this online course. Presentations are pre-recorded and the class itself is totally interactive. Students loved the pre-recorded presentations. A benefit of pre-recording is that students can pause the video at any point or back up and review a section as needed. This is especially helpful for people working in a second language. Also, it has worked well to embed my questions for them to ponder in the presentation. I ask them to pause the video and respond to the question. These responses and any comments or questions they are posted on the discussion board by noon of the day we meet in the evening. I structure the plenary completely around their responses and questions. In effect, they set the agenda for what we will talk about in class and they are pretty engaged.

Group work is going well. Buzz groups on focused questions with report back moves things along nicely and gives more people air time to process things. Small groups went especially well. The EA’s were so capable and effective with their groups. They begin with a brief check in with all the members of the group, and spend the session processing what students have gleaned from the readings (in a discussion post everyone can see). EA’s read the posts before class and facilitate discussion.

Two other elements students really appreciate are the “gathering music” at the beginning of class and the devotional time that we start with or end with each evening. One evening as we were signing off after a particularly moving devotional, one student said, “When I leave this class, I feel human again.” Others resonated with affirmation. That was very gratifying.

### What did not go well? (Please list contributing factors to difficulties)

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Many students are struggling in their personal lives. There is a lot of stress, illness, and family crisis moments that they have to contend with--more, I think, than before the pandemic. Their coursework suffers and their mental health suffers. It does not seem that there are sufficient support systems for them. The teaching time tries to offer support and care and grace with deadlines when students are struggling. I think the follow up from faculty and EA's in the course is pretty good, but sometimes that puts a stress on the system. It's not clear what to do about this one.

The course is a pretty demanding one, so that if they are already stretched and stressed, the workload is an additional stressor. Reconsideration on the load in the course may be a good step.

### **How were the program/course learning outcomes assessed? (List PSLO's/CLO's and assessments)**

The learning outcomes addressed in this course are:

1. Think critically.
2. Construct theological meaning using biblical and Christian traditions.
3. Communicate effectively.

Points of assessment are: (And each of these entails demonstration of all of the above)

Class Participation (Level of engagement in the multiple activities of the synchronous sessions)

Weekly Discussion Posts (Responding to assigned readings and pre-recorded presentations)

2 Critical Reflection Papers

Holy Spirit Project

Statement of Faith (two drafts)

Final Paper

### **How did the course assessment methods and weights align to the level of the course?**

(Semester 1, 2, 3, etc.)?

As an introductory course, I think it was about right. Students received prompt feedback on every assignment with positive assessment (encouragement) and guidance for strengthening their work. EA's worked one on one with students who were struggling. Progress was evident in the theological reflection, communications in class, and in written work. Almost all are well prepared now to advance to the upper level theology courses.

- Would you recommend any changes to the level of rigor/depth of knowledge taught and assessed?

Not at this time. Though I will consider how to further streamline the course since the workload seems heavy to some.

### **Outline the resources and facilities used for this course including course texts, labs, etc.**

Cone, James. *A Black Theology of Liberation*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis. (The 2010 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary edition is ISBN 978-1570758959, but any earlier edition is also acceptable. The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary edition is available as an e-copy from JKM for multiple simultaneous readers)

McKim, Donald K. *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*. **Second Edition: Revised and Expanded**. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2014. ISBN 978-0664238353. (Available as an e-copy from JKM for multiple simultaneous readers)

Migliore, Daniel L. *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*. **Third Edition**. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014, ISBN 978-0802871855 **OR Second Edition**, 2004, ISBN 978-0802827876. (3<sup>rd</sup> edition available as an e-copy from JKM for multiple simultaneous readers)

Stone, Howard W. and Duke, James O. *How to Think Theologically*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996. **Third edition**

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2013, ISBN 0-8006-2967-1, **OR Second edition.**

Thurman, Howard. *Jesus and the Disinherited*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1996. ISBN978-0-8070-1029-7.

SELECTIONS FROM THE FOLLOWING TEXTS WILL BE POSTED ON ALEXANDRIA:

Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz, *In Our Own Voices: Latino/a Renditions of Theology*, Benjamin Valentin, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010.

Case-Winters, Anna. "Prayer and Providence," *Touchstones: Toronto Journal of Theology*, June, 2018.

\_\_\_\_\_. *God Will Be All in All: Deeper Implications of Incarnation*. Louisville:

Westminster/John Knox, (forthcoming in October of 2021).

Williams, Delores. *Sisters in the Wilderness*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis 1993.

Eck, Diana, *Encountering God: A Spiritual Journey from Bozeman to Banaras*, Boston: Beacon Press, 2003.

Gutierrez, Gustavo. *A Theology of Liberation*. Maryknoll NY: Orbis, 1973.

Johnson, Elizabeth. *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse*. New York: Crossroad, 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Ask the Beasts: Darwin and the God of Love*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2014.

Moltmann, Jürgen. *Spirit of Hope: Theology for a World in Peril*. Louisville: Westminster, Westminster/John Knox, 2019.

Park, Andrew. *The Wounded Heart of God: The Asian Concept of Han and the Christian Doctrine of Sin*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1991.

"Word and Spirit, Church and World," *Reformed-Pentecostal Dialogue*, World Communion of Reformed Churches, David Daniels and Henry S. Wilson, Co-Chairs.

- Do you have recommendations or requests for changes?

Not currently.

### Analysis of Student Feedback:

- What was the course evaluation response rate? 75\_%
- What were the common themes?

On all questions pertaining to faculty effectiveness the majority responded "strongly agree." 100% strongly agreed that the faculty were well prepared, gave helpful and timely feedback, and made course expectations and policies clear. Students mentioned strengths in several areas. Many loved the pre-recorded presentations (viewed before each class) and said they were excellent. They appreciated the a wide range of activities during class (plenary discussion, presentations by groups, polls, break out buzz groups, reading prompts, brief videos, music, small group discussions, devotionals). One said "no zoom fatigue" which is high praise.

One or two students say the work load in T-300 is heavier in than in most courses. It may be. We cover a lot. It is the only course in theology everyone is guaranteed to get. I wonder if it is heavy for most students or only for the one or two that note it in the evaluation.

### Recommendations for course revisions (if any):

- Please indicate if change is in response to student feedback (S), instructor feedback (IF), and/or changes in industry practices (IP).

Even with the streamlining mentioned in the course delivery overview, there was still mention of the load in this course. I will continue the steps I took this year to reduce load and see what else I might be able to implement.

- Identify if the recommendations may impact the curriculum/PSLO/Formation

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map for the program (Summer 2022).

**Identify any teaching dimension support desired** (PD, Assessment, LMS Design, Development of Blended Learning material).