Department of Theology

UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTION

Term: Spring 2014
Instructor: Dr. D. Lyle Dabney
Course #: THEO 2310
Section: 104
Course Title: Explorations in Christian Theology
Topic: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

Description:

Many people today say that they are "spiritual but not religious." What does it mean to say that a person or a way of life is 'spiritual?' And how is that related—if it is related at all—to Christian talk about God as 'Spirit' or God the 'Holy Spirit?' Whereas there were once widely accepted answers to these questions, they have now become matters of confusion and debate in Christianity and contemporary culture. This second level theology course explores the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and the notion of human spirituality. It will consist of two parts, the first examining the Christian tradition and how its discourse concerning the Holy Spirit became confused, and the second part covering the Biblical Narrative and the contemporary discussion of the of the Holy Spirit. Questions such as the relation of the Spirit to God, of the Spirit to Jesus Christ in particular and to humanity in general, and of the Spirit to the physical universe will be considered.

The goals of this course are three: first, to enable the student to become conversant with the major forms of the doctrine of Holy Spirit and with notions of spirituality in both their historical development and current configurations; second, to bring the student to an understanding of the underlying logic shaping this doctrine in the tradition; and third, to help the student begin to think through how Christian spirituality and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit might best be understood today. In this way the class will be further prepared to meet the Student Learning Outcomes for the Knowledge Area of Theology adopted by the University in May of 2005. According to that document, each student should be able to perform the following three tasks:

1. Describe theologically the basic content of the Catholic faith in relation to other Christian and religious traditions as well as other world views,
2. Interpret theological texts and frameworks in their historical contexts, and
3. Articulate implications of Christian faith for growth in holiness and the promotion of justice in the contemporary world.

The student will be evaluated according to the following three criteria: a) two exams, one at midterm and the other a final, designed to demonstrate the student’s mastery of the material presented in lectures, discussions, and readings (worth respectively 30% and 30% of the student’s final grade, or a total of 60% of final grade); b) two book review and response papers, each 8-10 pages in length, of an assigned text (each worth 15% of final grade, 30% in total); and c) class participation: consisting of attendance, discussion, two brief essays (1 paragraph each), and perhaps a brief interview with the instructor (10% of final grade). The due dates for each of the assignments will be specified on the syllabus available from the first day of class on D2L. Any exam taken or paper submitted later than the dates specified on the class syllabus may be subject to a reduction of the grade earned. Subject to a curve for each class, final
grades will be assigned in general as follows: of the 100 possible points, A = 90% and above, B = 80 to 89%, C = 70 to 79%, D = 60 to 69%, F = anything below 60%.

Academic dishonesty will result in a grade of “F” or “0” on an assignment, in accordance with the ‘New University Policy on Academic Honesty’ of 2006. As specified in that policy (see http://www.marquette.edu/pages/home/resourcecommons/bulletin ), acts of academic dishonesty may include but are not limited to: copying material from a web page and submitting it as one’s own work, quoting extensively from a document without making proper references to the source, the illegitimate use of materials in any form during a quiz or examination, copying answers from the quiz or examination paper of another student, plagiarizing (submitting as one’s own ideas the work of another) or falsifying materials or information used in the completion of any assignment which is graded or evaluated as the student’s individual effort, obtaining, through theft, bribery, or collusion, or otherwise improperly securing an examination paper prior to the time and date for the administration of the examination, impersonating a candidate at an examination or availing oneself of such an impersonation, or submitting the same work for more than one course without the consent of the instructors of each course in which the work is submitted.

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class period. Any student who misses an excessive number of classes, as defined by the attendance policy of the College of Arts and Sciences (more than 4 absences for a 75 minute class), will have his or her final grade lowered or, in extreme cases (6) will be given a “WA” (Withdrawal for Excessive Absences). Once again, the policy can be found at the Marquette University website http://www.marquette.edu/pages/home/resourcecommons/bulletin.