

STMM 574: CHRISTIAN WORLD VIEWS AND SCIENCE

Fall 2012: Wednesdays 5:45-8:35

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office hours by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will explore the dialogue/disputes between science and the Christian religion. It will look at the limits of both science and religion and how each can tend to overstep its boundaries. It will explore a number of themes on which they seem to come into conflict, search out the roots of the conflict and ask how dispute might be turned into dialogue. It will also investigate how Christianity and its theology can use science to come to understand the work of God with greater depth.

GOALS OF THE COURSE

- To develop the ability to recognize the limits of both science and religion in their truth claims;
- To understand the roots of the conflicts between science and religion;
- To develop the ability to name the scientific claims on various issues;
- To develop the ability to name the religious claims on various issues;
- To develop the ability to reflect religiously and theologically on what science has to teach;
- To develop the ability to recognize how the conflicts between science and religion might be turned into dialogue.

TEXTBOOKS (In the order we will read them)

- Langdon Gilkey, *Creationism on Trial, Evolution and God at Little Rock*, Harper and Row, 1985.
- John F. Haught, *Science and Religion, From Conflict to Conversation*, Paulist Press, 1995.
- John F. Haught, *Is Nature Enough, Meaning and Truth in the Age of Science*, Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Ilia Delio, *Christ In Evolution*, Orbis Books, 2008.

METHODS IN THE COURSE

This class will be run as a seminar. Students will take turns introducing the material that we have read for each week's session, and then we will explore that material through conversation and dialogue. In introducing the material for each week, the following questions will be important:

- What are the key issues in the material we have read?
- What are the truth claims that science is making on the topic?
- What are the religious truth claims involved in the topic?
- Where does the conflict lie?
- Where do the possibilities for conversation lie?

COURSE OUTLINE

Session 1: September 19

Introduction and Organization

Session 2: September 26

Reading:

Gilkey, *Creationism on Trial*, chapters 1-6.

Introductions:

Chapters 2-4

Chapters 5-6

Session 3: October 3

Reading:

Gilkey, *Creationism on Trial*, chapters 7-8

Haught, *Science and Religion*, chapters 1-2

Introductions:

Gilkey, chapters 7 and 8

Haught, chapter 1

Haught, chapter 2

Session 4: October 10

Reading: Haught, *Science and Religion*, chapters 3-5

Introductions:

Haught, chapter 3

Haught, chapter 4

Haught, chapter 5

Session 5: October 17

Reading: Haught, *Science and Religion*, chapters 6-8

Introductions:

Haught, chapter 6

Haught, chapter 7

Haught, chapter 8

Session 6: October 24

Reading:

Haught, *Science and Religion*, chapter 9

Haught, *Is Nature Enough*, chapters 1-4

Introductions:

Haught, *Science and Religion*, chapter 9

Haught, *Is Nature Enough*, chapters 1-2

Haught, *Is Nature Enough* chapter 3-4

Session 7: October 31

Reading: Haught, *Is Nature Enough*, chapters 3-8

Introductions:

Chapters 3-4

Chapters 5-6

Chapters 7-8

Session 8: November 7

Reading:

Haught, *Is Nature Enough*, chapters 9-12

Delio, *Christ in Evolution*, chapter 1

Introductions:

Haught, chapters 9-10

Haught, chapters 11-12

Delio, chapter 1

Session 9: November 14

Reading: Delio, *Christ in Evolution*, chapter 2-4

Introductions:

Chapter 2

Chapter 3

Chapter 4

Note: No class November 21 because of Thanksgiving Break

Session 10: November 28

Reading: Delio, *Christ in Evolution*, chapter 5-7

Introductions:

Chapter 5

Chapter 6-7

Chapter 8-9

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Reading of the assigned material for each class and reflection on these readings;
- Class participation in discussion and reflection on the readings;
- Introduction of the reading material for two of the 26 opportunities listed above. We have about one hour for each of these discussions, so the introduction should be no longer than 10 minutes. It should cover the following:
 - What are the key issues in the material we have read?
 - What are the truth claims that science is making on the topic?
 - What are the religious truth claims involved in the topic?
 - Where does the conflict lie?
 - Where do the possibilities for conversation lie?
- Two very short papers summarizing the material in the introductions that you did (one for each of your two introductions). The starting point for these short papers should be your

own introduction of the material, but the paper should also reflect key points that were brought out in the discussion of the material in class. These papers should be about three pages long and are to be handed in the week after you make the introduction. The key here should be the questions listed above for the introduction.

- A critical review of an article dealing a topic in the area of the relationship of science and religion. The article should be from a journal or some other source of good academic standing (i.e., be careful in using sources on the internet). Something like the journal, *Theology and Science*, would serve well. Your review of the article should/could include such issues as:
 - What was the main thesis of the article?
 - What were the scientific truth claims and were they clearly stated?
 - What were the religious truth claims and were they clearly stated?
 - Were the roots of any conflict made clear?
 - Was there any resolution of the conflict offered?
 - Was the dialogue between religion and science on solid ground?
 - What were the strengths and weaknesses of the article?

This paper should be about 5 pages in length and is due at the beginning of the 6th class session, October 24.

- A critical review of a book dealing with a topic in the area of the relationship of science and religion. Again you will want to be careful that the book and its author are of good academic standing. The same type of questions as those listed for the review of the article should be applied to the book. This paper should be about 7 pages long and is due at the beginning of the 10th class session, November 28.

REGARDING STYLE

- Papers must be typed, double-spaced.
- Use 1-inch margins all round. Use 12 point type.
- Do not use right-hand justification as it leads to oddly spaced words.
- All papers should follow a standard manual of style. You may use either the Chicago Manual of Style or the APA standard. Both may be found at the following site: <http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/resdoc5e/>. APA can be found under social sciences and the Chicago Manual under history.
- **Staple the paper in the top left-hand corner.** Do not use plastic covers or binders.
- Keep a copy other than the one you submit.

GRADING

Two class session introductions: 15%

Two reports on class introductions: 25%

Article review: 25%

Book review: 35%

From SEATTLE UNIVERSITY'S ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Introduction

Seattle University is committed to the principle that academic honesty and integrity are important values in the educational process. Academic dishonesty in any form is a serious offense against the academic community. Acts of academic dishonesty will be addressed according to the Academic Honesty Policy.

Standards of Conduct

Without regard to motive, student conduct that is academically dishonest, evidences lack of academic integrity or trustworthiness, or unfairly impinges upon the rights and privileges of others is prohibited. A non-exhaustive list of prohibited conduct includes:

A. Committing Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of the work or intellectual property of other persons, published or unpublished, presented as one's own work. Examples of plagiarism include but are not limited to copying, paraphrasing, summarizing, or borrowing ideas, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, or an entire paper from another person's work without proper reference and/or acknowledgement. While different academic disciplines have different modes for attributing credit, all recognize and value the contributions of individuals to the general corpus of knowledge and expertise. Students are responsible for educating themselves as to the proper mode of attributing credit in any course or field. Note that plagiarism can be said to have occurred without any affirmative showing that a student's use of another's work was intentional.

B. Cheating on Exams and Other Assignments

Cheating is acting dishonestly or deceptively in connection with an assignment, examination or other activity related to a course. Examples of cheating include but are not limited to:

Copying another person's work during an examination; Allowing another person to copy one's work.