**Process and Liberation Theologies E/T 422INT**

**Meadville Lombard Theological School: Spring 2018**

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1. **Overview**

Process and Liberation theologies will be run as an intensive graduate seminar. Four purposes organize the course: 1) to acquaint students with classic thinkers, themes and ideas in process thought and liberation theology; 2) to critically juxtapose the classic themes within these traditions with more recent interventions; 3) to test and trouble these traditions in light of historical and contemporary moral and political challenges; 4) and to facilitate student integration of the varieties of process and liberationist thinking into their work as religious leaders, activists, and thinkers. [No advance familiarity with process thought or liberation theology is required.]

1. **Expectations**

In addition to reading and active participation in class, students will be expected to 1) make a presentation in class (@ 30 min presentation, 30 mins Q/A), 2) lead a text-based discussion in class (@ 60 mins), 3) and submit a short final paper by April 27, 2018 (7-10pp, double-spaced, 12pt.).

1. Your presentation should do several things: a) briefly outline a local social, political or environmental issue that you or your community are involved with (e.g. climate justice, domestic violence, racial justice, fair housing, interfaith work); b) explain why this issue is a religious concern for you; c) relate how a specific idea or concept from our reading can help you more deeply to understand and communicate the link between the issue and your religious values/faith; d) discuss how some specific idea or concept from our reading will help you to engage the issue in a new way (e.g. by helping you to develop a better theory of change, or a new method for linking strategy and tactics); e) conclude by suggesting 1 or 2 questions for discussion.
2. For your discussion, choose a specific text passage from one of the assigned readings that is particularly significant to you. The passage could be as short as a single sentence but should not be more than a single page, something that you can read aloud and analyze during discussion. During the discussion session, you will take 5 minutes to summarize in your own words what you think the text is about; take 5 minutes to explain why you think it’s important; and then, put on your “teacher hat” and facilitate discussion for the remaining 30-45 minutes. [Note: you may do this by preparing a set of questions that you will lead us through, or by asking colleagues for their impressions of the text, or something else. Note ii: this is a *discussion* based exercise—the point is to take a deep conversational dive into the text.

\*\*NOTE: By Friday March 2, please let me know (through a discussion board I will set up on Populi): 1) your presentation topic and 2) your text passage for discussion (including author, book, chapter or article title, and the specific passage).

1. In your final paper, due April 27, do three things: a) define liberation and process theologies (assuming I am your audience), by answering this question: what does it mean for theology to be qualified as “process” or “liberationist”? b) answer the same question as in (a) but assume your audience is a group of lay people in your community; c) explain how process and/or liberation theologies will inform your emerging theological framework and your practice of religious leadership. [Or, if you don’t find these theological traditions to be meaningful resources for you, explain why—it is perfectly acceptable for you to make this argument. However, if you find the language used by our particular authors difficult, as you well may, this will not be considered a meaningful reason to reject the traditions outright; answer the question by looking through the language.]

\*Grades: Participation = 25%; Presentation = 25%; Discussion = 25%; Final Paper = 25%.

1. **Statement Regarding Accommodations**

Meadville Lombard is committed to making reasonable accommodations to assist individuals with disabilities in reaching their academic potential. If a student has a disability that qualifies under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and requires accommodations, they must fill out the Request for Accommodation form found in the Appendix of the Student Handbook and submit it to the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, Ken McHugh (kmchugh@meadville.edu) (312) 212-0673. Please note that classroom accommodations cannot be provided without an approved Accommodations Form.

1. **Bibliography**
2. Liberationist Readings
	1. Miguel de la Torre, ed., *The Hope of Liberation in World Religions*, (selections, purchase or borrow)
	2. Gustavo Gutierrez, *Essential* Writings, ed. James B. Nickeloff (selections, purchase or borrow);
	3. Gustavo Gutierrez, “Two Theological Perspectives: Liberation Theology and Progressivist Theology” (PDF on Populi);
	4. Choose one:
		1. James Cone, *A Theology of Black Liberation* (purchase or borrow)
		2. Ivone Gebara, *Longing for Running Water: Ecofeminism and Liberation* (purchase or borrow)
		3. George E. Tinker, *Spirit and Resistance: Political Theology and American Indian Liberation* (purchase or borrow)
3. Process Readings
	1. John Dewey, “Existence Precarious and Stable” (PDF on Populi)
	2. Charles Hartshorne, “The Development of Process Philosophy” (PDF on Populi)
	3. Robert Mesle, *Process-Relational Philosophy: An Introduction to Alfred North Whitehead* [purchase or borrow]
	4. Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, Part I: chapters 1-3 (pp. 3- 36); Part II: chapter 8 (pp. 168-183); Part V: Chapters 1-2 (pp. 337-352) [purchase or borrow]
	5. Choose one:
		1. Any 3 chapters from Catherine Keller, *Intercarnations: Exercises in Theological Possibility* (purchase or borrow)
		2. Bernard Loomer, “The Size of God” and “Two Conceptions of Power” [on Populi]
		3. Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, Part 1: Soteriological (chapters 1-6)
4. **Reading and Class Schedule**
	1. February 5-9: Read Dewey and Hartshorne essays
	2. February 12-16: Read selections from Whitehead, *Process and Reality*
	3. February 19-23: Read Gutierrez, *Essential Writings*, Introduction, Ch. 1-2, 4 and “Two Theological Perspectives”
	4. February 26-March 2: Read de la Torre, introduction + any 4 chapters
	5. February 26-March 2: Read your choice of Keller (selections from *Intercarnations*), Loomer (essays cited above), or Whitehead (*Adventures of Ideas*, chs. 1-6)Gebara, *Longing for Running Water*, Ch. 4-6; and Whitehead, *Religion in the Making*, Ch. 2-4 [@200 pp]
	6. March 5-March 9: Read your choice of Gebara, Tinker, or Cone
	7. March 12-March 16: Develop your presentations
	8. March 19-23: 1st week of intensives in Chicago (if you’re not taking a class this week, continue preparing for class)
	9. March 26-30: Process and Liberation Theologies: in Chicago: Daily Schedule TBD
	10. April 27: Final Paper Due