

SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE PROGRAM IN PASTORAL MINISTRIES
**LIBERATION AND DECOLONIAL THEOLOGIES AND GODS
PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR**

FALL 2023

THEO 252: HYBRID & ONLINE (MONTEREY)

Tuesdays 6:00 PM-8:00 PM

(Oct. 17, Nov. 7, Nov. 14, Nov. 21, Nov. 28, Dec. 5)

Saturdays 9:00 AM-3:00 PM

(Sept. 30, Oct. 28, Dec. 16)

INSTRUCTOR: Robert Lassalle-Klein
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TELEPHONE: 510-206-4904
OFFICE HOURS: Online every
Wed. noon to 12:45 p.m.
& online by appt.

Course Description

This course explores our role as disciples and ministry professionals in helping our communities respond to the suffering and hope embodied in diverse struggles for dignity and human rights. The primary focus will be on liberation theologies, understood as reflection on solidarity with the liberation struggles oppressed people (ourselves or others) in light of biblical traditions that God has a special concern for them/us. Decolonial theologies provide a secondary focus, grounded in the same traditions, but with a heightened focus on voices and ways of knowing that are not Eurocentric, white, or rooted in the colonial powers. We examine the emphasis of each tradition on solidarity with the historical struggles of specific U.S. communities as a response to God's preferential concern. Students will read some of the classic texts of Christian liberation theologies, selected texts from decolonial voices, and biblical, spiritual, and theological texts on God's preferential option for the poor. The course will conclude with more recent contributions on migration, ecotheology, anti-racism, LGBTQ love, and indigenous theologies.

Required Books:

1. Copeland, Shawn. *Knowing Christ Crucified: The Witness of African American Religious Experience*. 2018. 224 pages. \$10/ \$18
2. Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. *Not "A Nation of Immigrants": Settler Colonialism, White Supremacy, and a History of Erasure and Exclusion*. Beacon Press (August 24, 2021).

3. Sobrino, Jon. *No Salvation Outside the Poor: Prophetic-Utopian Essays*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Press, 2008.
4. Reader. (Available at no cost on Camino)

Learning Goals and Objectives:

1. **Goal 1: Theological Foundation**-Knowledge of the broad intellectual foundation for ministry in the areas of scripture, systematic and contextual theology, and spirituality; and incorporate theological reflection to enrich their ministerial practices across varying contexts (GPPM Goal 1). By the end of this course, students will be able to:
 - a) **Objective 1:** Summarize the key claims of 1) classic texts of Christian liberation theologies; 2) selected texts from decolonial theologies; and 3) biblical, spiritual, and theological texts from the Abrahamic traditions regarding God's preferential concern for poor, oppressed, or marginalized people(s);
 - b) **Objective 2:** Evaluate the emphasis of each text/tradition on human agency in response to God's self-offer in the invitation to solidarity with the historical struggles of specific communities for human dignity and rights.
 - c) **Objective 3:** incorporate the material above in theological reflection with your ministerial community.

2. **Goal 2: Diversity Fluency**-Awareness of and critical engagement with how one's own culture influences ministry, and then to engage in ministries that build the community of Christ and are sensitive to and respectful of all cultures and traditions, and individuals who vary by race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and dynamics of wealth, poverty, and power (*GPPM Goal 4*). By the end of this course, students will be able to:
 - a) **Objective 1:** describe and evaluate the relationship of one's own culture and ministerial community to the suffering, hopes, and liberation struggle(s) of one or more oppressed groups.
 - b) **Objective 2:** describe and evaluate my responsibility as a ministry professional for the relationship between settler colonialism and racism in the U.S., and its impact on U.S. migrants and racism today.
 - c) **Objective 3:** use the material studied in this class to assist your ministerial community in accepting God's self-offer in the invitation to kindness and solidarity in response to the suffering and oppression of others.

Course Requirements and Methods of Evaluation:

1. **Participation and Course Responsibility: 30%**
 - a. **Attendance:** Students are expected to attend *every* class session and will be held responsible for the assigned material. Please inform me of all absences at least twenty-four hours before class by emailing ralassalleklein@scu.edu or by phoning 510-206-4904.

- b. Reading Summaries:**
Students will be asked to complete assignments summarizing the assigned readings in preparation for each class. Answer each question with at least one paragraph. You may write as much as you want, but you should at least do the minimum. Answers may be taken directly from the readings. Citations are not required, though it is recommended that you provide page numbers in parentheses at the end of each answer.
 - c. In class discussion**
Class participation entails active engagement in class discussions. This involves preparing the readings, asking questions, the frequency and clarity of your contributions, knowledge of the reading matter under discussion, the ability to articulate a position, the clarity and power of your reflections, and attentive listening to others.
 - 2. Short Papers: 40%**
Students will write two short reflection papers on topics related to the major themes from the course. All essays/answers must be double spaced, typed, in 12-point type with one-inch margins and at least 5 pages long. They should be checked for spelling and grammar, and must include citations and footnotes. Essays should be turned in to the DIGITAL DROP BOX IN CAMINO on the day assigned. Late essays will only be accepted with permission on the class after the due date. The grade for late essays will be automatically reduced by 20% unless you provide a written excuse and receive permission to be late. Further information will be provided in class and on *Camino* regarding these papers.
 - 3. Term Project and Paper: 30%**
There will be one term project and an eight to ten page paper asking students to synthesize the major themes from the course in relation to an issue from your ministry. Details regarding the project and paper will be announced in class.

Policies & Protections for You

1. Attendance

If you're sick or something comes up, please notify the professor in advance by email or phone. *Remember: You're not doing yourself or anyone else any favors if you come to class sick—you can always make up the work.* You're allowed one absence with no impact to your grade. If you miss three classes (30% of our meetings), it will not be possible to pass the course. The class will not be recorded for viewing unless 2 or more students give several days' advance notice of their absence; viewing a recorded class is not a substitute for your engaged presence in class, and still will be marked as an absence.

2. Zoom Policy

The use of video-conferencing software to record or replace in-person attendance is not allowed, except in exceptional circumstances with the permission of the instructor and Program Director.

3. Use of Technology in & Recording of Class

Cellphones should be turned off during class, and laptops may only be used for authorized collaborations or for viewing course readings. The *Student Handbook* prohibits video- or audio-recording or streaming of private, non-public conversations and/or meetings, inclusive of the classroom setting, without the knowledge and consent of all recorded parties. If you require the recording of classroom lectures, discussions, simulations, and other course-related activity for a documented disability, make arrangements through Disabilities Resources (see below) and discuss this with the instructor. If for some reason other than disability you would like to record the class, please seek the permission of the instructor first, and then of the class.

4. Academic Integrity

Students at SCU pledge themselves to Academic Integrity, as part of the University's commitment to fostering a cultural of integrity (www.scu.edu/academic-integrity). The Academic Integrity pledge, which applies to all students, states:

I am committed to being a person of integrity. I pledge, as a member of the Santa Clara University community, to abide by and uphold the standards of academic integrity contained in the Student Conduct Code.

You are expected to uphold the principles of this pledge for all work in this class. The standards of the University preclude any form of cheating, plagiarism, or falsification of data. A student who commits any offense against academic honesty and integrity will receive a failing grade for the course without a possibility of withdrawal. An offense may also dictate suspension or dismissal from the University, and the matter will be brought to the attention of the Graduate Program Director.

It is each student's responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism and what the consequences are. Plagiarism is the practice of claiming, or implying, original authorship by incorporating material from someone else's written or creative work, in whole or in part, without adequate acknowledgment (footnotes or citations constitute adequate acknowledgment). Unlike cases of forgery, in which the authenticity of the document is in question, plagiarism is concerned with the issue of attribution. To avoid plagiarism, you simply need to attribute all ideas that are not your own to the true source, using the citation style appropriate for our class (see the style sheet on the course website).

Try to avoid heavy citation of sources in your work, especially direct quotation. If your paper is mostly other people's words and ideas, your own original thought—your digestion, paraphrase, organization and synthesis of ideas—won't be visible. If you've cited the sources adequately, this would not be plagiarism, but it would be a low-scoring paper because there's not enough of your thought to evaluate.

5. Disability Accommodation Policy

If you have a disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact Disabilities Resources, Benson 216, www.scu.edu/disabilities, as soon as possible to discuss your needs and register for accommodations with the University. If you have already arranged accommodations through that office, please discuss the arrangements with the professor during office hours early in the quarter.

While the professor is happy to assist you, she is unable to provide accommodations until she has received verification from Disabilities Resources. The Disabilities Resources office will proctor exams if you need double time and/or assisted technology. Disabilities Resources must be contacted in advance to schedule proctored examinations or to arrange other accommodations; contact them at least two weeks in advance of your exam. For more information, you may contact Disabilities Resources at 408.554.4109.

6. Title IX Protections

SCU provides reasonable accommodations to students who are pregnant, have recently experienced childbirth, and/or have medical needs related to childbirth. Pregnant and parenting students can often arrange accommodations by working directly with their instructors, supervisors, or departments. Alternatively, a pregnant or parenting student experiencing related medical conditions may request accommodations through Disability Resources.

SCU has a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, domestic/dating violence or stalking, we encourage you to tell someone promptly. For more information, please consult the University's Gender-Based Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policy (<http://bit.ly/2ce1hBb>) or contact the University's EEO and Title IX Coordinator, Belinda Guthrie (408.554.3043, bguthrie@scu.edu). Reports may be submitted online through www.scu.edu/osl/report or anonymously through Ethicspoint: <https://www.scu.edu/hr/quick-links/ethicspoint/>.

7. Writing Tutor

The Graduate Program in Pastoral Ministries will provide writing resources and information at the start of class. This resource will be provided at no cost to you.

