

STRS 2055 Theology of Religions
Fall Semester 2006
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A Christian-based but interreligiously open exploration of how and whether the many religions may find a place in one's theology. After an introduction to today's major Christian theologies of religions, we shall look at how Christian theology historically addressed such questions. Two substantial theologies of religions will then be explored, as well as a comparative theological essay bearing upon like questions. All these theologies will deeply involve Hinduism as well as Christianity. Finally, a Buddhist view of some major Christian scriptural passages will widen and complete for the time being this ongoing endeavor. The course's purpose is to prepare Christian and other ministers, devotees, intellectuals and leaders to encounter others' religions eagerly and truthfully, and to explain to themselves and to their fellow religionists how such an effort is an important part of serious religious commitment today.

The course fulfils the Interreligious Dialogue-Ecumenical requirement of JSTB's M.Div. curriculum.

Required Reading:

Introducing Theologies of Religions, by Paul Knitter. Orbis Books paperback.

Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism, by Jacques Dupuis. Orbis Books PB.

Hindu God, Christian God, by Francis X. Clooney. Oxford U. Press hardcover.

The Unity of Reality, by Michael von Bruck. Paulist Press PB, available used via Amazon, etc.

The Good Heart, by the Dalai Lama. Wisdom Publications PB, also available used via Amazon, etc.

Other short readings possible, but few.

Course Requirements:

Sept. 26, Oct. 17 (or 20), Nov. 10, Dec. 1, and Dec. 15 are the due dates for

3-4 page concise critiques, one on each of our five books. About one page on the book's good points, one on its bad points, and one on your own theological evaluation (i.e., how does it match up to your own developing theology of religions?).

Class attendance and discussion. Negatively, more than two unexcused or uninformed absences begin to affect one's grade.

Grading:

25% for attendance/discussion. 15% for each of the five critiques.

Class Meetings and Reading Assignments:

- Sept. 5-8 Introduction, Overview, and the 'Replacement' model.
Knitter, 1-79.
- Sept. 12-15 'Fulfilment' and part of 'Mutuality' models. Knitter, 80-162.
- Sept. 19-22 'Mutuality' and part of 'Acceptance' models. Knitter, 163-246.
- Sept. 26-29 'Acceptance' model and conclude Knitter. Critique paper due
Sept. 26. Dupuis, 1-83.
- Oct. 3-6 Biblical and Church history of theology of religions questions.
Dupuis 84-129, 193-244.
- Oct. 10-13 Dupuis' theology of religions I. Dupuis, 244-53, 280-313, 330-90.
- Oct. 17-20 Dupuis' theology II. Second critique paper due Tuesday or Friday.
Clooney, iv-viii, 3-61.
- Oct. 24-27 Reading week.
- Oct. 31-Nov. 3 Conclude Dupuis' theology; begin Clooney's. Clooney, 62-128.
- Nov. 7-10 Clooney's Christian and Hindu comparative theology. Critique
Paper due Nov. 10. Clooney, 129-95.
- Nov 14-17 Continue and conclude the comparative theology.
von Bruck, 1-92.
- Nov. 21-24 Prof. likely at AAR meeting either Nov. 17 or 23; and Thanks-
giving holiday. So, either one or no classes (stay tuned). Von Bruck,
93-185.

Nov.28-Dec. 1 von Bruck on Hindu Nondualism and the Trinity. Critique paper due Dec. 1. von Bruck, 186-277.

Dec. 5-8 von Bruck's Hindu-Christian theology of religions.
Dalai Lama, 1-88.

Dec. 12-15 The Dalai Lama's Buddhist-Christian Interpretation of New Testament passages. No class Dec. 15, but final critique paper due.
Dalai Lama, 89-130.