

RELC 3559: Slavery and Liberation

University of Virginia, Fall 2015

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Class Meetings: MW 2:00-3:15

Class Location: Gibson S242

Office Hours: TTH 11-11:50, F 10-10:50

Appointment by email

Course Hashtag: #LiberationSyllabus

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In this seminar, participants examine slavery and human trafficking (both in historical and current manifestations) and their legacies through the lens of Liberation Theology, especially as expressed in Black, Womanist, and U.S. Latino/a Christian theological conversations. Beginning with an overview of Liberation Theology's themes, methods, and Latin American Catholic origins, the course studies slavery in relation to Christian doctrine—especially theological anthropology, Trinitarian theology, Christology, soteriology, theological aesthetics—and crucial ethical issues, including racism, labor ethics, food ethics, global economic ethics, environmental ethics, and bioethics.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- To **encounter** Christian theological studies in the context of marginalized communities.
- To **develop** a strong grasp of the methodology and articulations of liberation theologies.
- To **examine** salient social issues through the lens of liberation theology.
- To **articulate** clear and nuanced arguments supported by evidence and analysis.
- To **practice** concrete skills necessary for public engagement, especially writing, critical and imaginative thinking, and information literacy.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES:

- **You are expected to attend every class meeting.** You are permitted two (2) absences for any reason (no professor approval necessary). Additional absences require approval from Prof. Flores. More than two unexcused absences will result in a reduction of your participation grade.
- **You are expected to arrive on time for every class meeting.** Each class begins promptly at the designated time. Tardiness disrupts your professor and classmates. The habit of tardiness reflects poorly on your capacity for professionalism in any field that you may choose to pursue. More than three (3) late arrivals will result in a reduction of your participation grade.
- **You are expected to switch your cell phone to silent or vibrate prior to every class.** Please store your device away from your work surface. Unapproved use of cell phones during class will result in a reduction of your participation grade.
- **You are expected to use laptops and tablet devices responsibly during class.** These devices can be powerful tools in the classroom setting. They can also distract from the communal interaction and conversation that is the foundation of liberal arts

education. Thus, these devices are permitted for taking notes, for viewing texts, and for facilitating group work. Using these devices for browsing the Internet during class will result in a reduction of your participation grade.

- **You are expected to complete the assigned reading every week.** Please come to class prepared to discuss the primary arguments, salient points, and possible critiques of each text. Failure to complete reading and prepare for class participation will result in a reduction of your participation grade.
- **You are expected to read and bring the assigned text to class.** Repeated failure to bring texts to class will result in a reduction of your participation grade.
- **You are expected to submit assignments by their designated deadlines.** Late assignments will only be accepted in cases in which demonstrable circumstances indicate that an extension is necessary.
- **Students with documented disabilities can expect appropriate accommodations whenever necessary.** All students with special needs requiring accommodations should present the appropriate paperwork from the Student Disability Access Center (SDAC). It is the student's responsibility to present this paperwork in a timely fashion and follow up with the instructor about the accommodations being offered. Accommodations for examinations (e.g., extended time, low distraction environment) should be arranged at least one week before an exam. The SDAC is located in the Department of Student Health and can be contacted at (434) 243-5180/5181.
- **Student athletes are expected to present official notification of expected absences as soon as this information is available.**

HONOR CODE:

Prof. Flores expresses her trust that every student in this course will fully comply with all of the provisions of the University's Honor Code. By enrolling in this course, you have agreed to abide by and uphold the Honor System of the University of Virginia, as well as the following policies specific to this course:

- **All graded assignments must be pledged.** Please record your pledge at the end of each written assignment and examination.
- **Collaboration in the form of discussion and peer review is permitted on written assignments for this course.** Discussing essay ideas and consulting other students for help refining arguments, revision feedback, and editing is encouraged in this class.
- **Unattributed use of material is prohibited on all assignments in this course.** For written work, all references must employ Chicago style citations, including footnotes. The final research paper must include a bibliography in addition to footnotes. If you are unfamiliar with this citation style—the standard in the field of religious studies—please consult the Chicago Manual of Style (16th edition) or a reference consultant through the University Library. For examinations, students may use parenthetical citations of any outside quotations.
- **Students may form study groups and employ common study materials for examinations (i.e., study guides); however, students are prohibited from seeking assistance from any other student or source during the examination.**

- **All suspected violations will be forwarded to the Honor Committee.** Further, Prof. Flores may decide to give an immediate zero on that assignment regardless of any action taken by the Honor Committee.

Please inform Prof. Flores if you have any questions regarding the course Honor policy. If you believe you may have committed an Honor Offense, you may wish to file a Conscientious Retraction by calling the Honor Offices at (434) 924-7602. For your retraction to be considered valid, it must be filed with the Honor Committee before you are aware that the act in question has come under suspicion by anyone. More information can be found at <http://www.virginia.edu/honor>. Your Honor representatives can be found at: <http://www.virginia.edu/honor/2015-2016-representatives/>.

GRADING POLICY:

Prof. Flores will evaluate written work based on **thesis/argument, evidence** (quality and factual correctness), **writing quality**, depth of **analysis/insight**, and **creativity/inspiration**.

- **Appealing Grades:** A student may email Prof. Flores to request an appointment for grade review 48 hours after an assignment has been returned.
- **A Note on Drafts:** Prof. Flores **will not** read drafts of written assignments in this class. She will, however, meet with you during office hours to discuss your paper topic, thesis, and outline. A strong essay structure can improve the overall quality of the work.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

PARTICIPATION:

- ***SEMINAR PARTICIPATION/POLICY ADHERENCE – 20%***

RESEARCH & WRITING:

- ***FORUM POSTS – 25% (5% for each essay)***
Five (5) essays of 500 words each (plus or minus 10 percent) applying ideas, themes, and arguments from each unit to a particular social issue or event. Chicago Style footnotes not included in word count.
- ***FORUM POST RESPONSES (VIA UVA COLLAB) – 5%***
Write brief and thoughtful comment on a set number of classmate's forum posts.
- ***FINAL RESEARCH PAPER – 30%***
Each student will determine the topic of her or his research paper, which will explore a particular theme or issue from the course in greater detail. The essay will be 10-pages double-spaced. It will employ Chicago Manual of Style footnotes and include a bibliography. Footnotes will be included in the page count; the bibliography is separate from the word count. Students are encouraged to consult Prof. Flores as they define and pursue their research agenda.

Prof. Flores will not grade any material that exceeds the clearly defined limits of each assignment (more than 550 words for forum posts, more than 10 double-spaced pages for research papers)

EXAMINATIONS:

- **FOUNDATIONS EXAMINATION – 10%**
The exam will include term definitions, short answer questions, and an essay question. The student will be permitted to use an outline of her or his essay as long as it is hand-written on a 4x6 index card.
- **TOPICS EXAMINATION – 10%**
The exam will include term definitions, short answer questions, and an essay question. The student will be permitted to use an outline of her or his essay as long as it is hand-written on a 4x6 index card.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Kevin Bales and Ron Soodalter, *The Slave Next Door: Human Trafficking and Slavery in America Today* (ISBN: 978-0-520-26866-1)

Leonardo Boff and Clodovis Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology* (ISBN: 0-88344-550-6)

M. Shawn Copeland, *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race, and Being* (ISBN: 978-0-8006-6274-5)

John W. de Gruchy, *Christianity, Art and Transformation* (ISBN: 0-521-77205-2)

Maureen H. O’Connell, *If These Walls Could Talk: Community Muralism and the Beauty of Justice* (ISBN: 978-0-8146-3340-3)

(CR) Course Reader – Available for purchase from N.K. Print & Design (formerly Brillig Books)

(OL) Online Resource – Available through links on the syllabus

All course texts are on reserve at the Fine Arts Library except Bales and Soodalter which is available as an electronic resource through the UVa Libraries website.

COURSE OUTLINE

N.B. Each reading—including online resources—lists an approximate page count to help the student allocate her or his time, but each text will take a different amount of time to read depending on one’s personal reading style, the complexity of argument, etc.

COURSE INTRODUCTION**Week 1 – Course Introduction**

Aug. 26: *The Long Juneteenth: Pursuing Liberation from Slavery (30 Pages)*

(CR) Martin A. Klein, “Chronology” (13 Pages)

(CR) Kevin Bales and Zoe Trodd, “Introduction: The Long Juneteenth” (17 Pages)

UNIT I: INTRODUCING LIBERATION THEOLOGY**Week 2 – Liberation Theology: Introduction and Method**

Aug. 31: *What is Liberation Theology? (16 Pages)*

Boff and Boff, Chapter 1, “The Basic Question: How to Be Christians in a World of Destitution” (10 Pages)

(OL) Robert Goizueta, [“What is Liberation Theology?”](#) (6 Pages)

Sept. 2: *How is Liberation Theology Done? (56 Pages)*

Boff and Boff, Chapter 3, “How Liberation Theology is Done” (21 Pages)

(CR) Gustavo Gutierrez, "Conversion: A Requirement for Solidarity" (12 Pages)

(CR) Miguel A. De La Torre, "Introduction" (6 Pages)

(OL) [Gaudium et Spes](#) nos. 1-46 (17 Pages)

Week 3 – Liberation Theology: Themes and Origins

Sept. 7: Key Themes of Liberation Theology (23 Pages)

Boff and Boff, Chapter 4, "Key Themes of Liberation Theology" (23 Pages)

Sept. 9: Liberation Theology in Historical Context (39 Pages)

Boff and Boff, Chapter 5, "A Concise History of Liberation Theology" (12 Pages)

(CR) Roberto Oliveros, "History of the Theology of Liberation" (27 Pages)

Sept. 11: Forum Post 1 Due (Post to Collab by 5pm)

Week 4 – Liberation Theology and the Catholic Church

Sept. 14: Perspectives on Liberation Theology (52 Pages)

Boff and Boff, Chapter 6, "Liberation Theology Worldwide" (12 Pages)

(OL) Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, "[Instruction on Certain Aspects of The 'Theology of Liberation'](#)" (18 Pages)

(OL) Joshua J. McElwee, "[Pope meets with liberation theology pioneer](#)" (3 Pages)

(OL) William Doino Jr., "[The Errors of Liberation Theology](#)" (3 Pages)

(OL) Antonio Spadaro, "[A Big Heart Open to God: The exclusive interview with Pope Francis](#)" (16 Pages)

Sept. 16: Foundations Examination

Sept. 18: Forum Post 1 Responses Due (Post to Collab by 5pm)

UNIT II: FREEDOM AND SLAVERY: THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL INQUIRY

Week 5 – Human Freedom

Sept. 21: Imago Dei: Individuality and Relationality (19 Pages)

(CR) Michelle A. Gonzalez, "Who We Are: A Latino/a Constructive Anthropology" (19 Pages)

Sept. 23: A Liberative Theological Anthropology (61 Pages)

Copeland, Chapter 2, "Enfleshing Freedom" (31 Pages)

Copeland, Chapter 3, "Marking the Body of Jesus, the Body of Christ" (30 Pages)

Week 6 – Enslaved Humanity

Sept. 28: What's Wrong With Slavery? (31 Pages)

Copeland, Chapter 4 "Turning the Subject" (21 Pages)

(CR) Kwame Anthony Appiah, "What's Wrong with Slavery?" (10 pages)

- Sept. 30:* ***Slavery and Social Sin (50 Pages)***
 (OL) M. Shawn Copeland, [“Revisiting Racism”](#) (4 Pages)
 (OL) M. Shawn Copeland, [“Overcoming Christianity’s Linger-
 ing Complicity”](#) (4 Pages)
 (CR) Kristin Heyer, “Social Sin and Inhospitability to Immigrants” (20 Pages)
 (CR) Reinhold Niebuhr, “Man and Society: The Art of Living Together” (22
 Pages)
- Oct. 2:* ***Forum Post 2 Due (Post to Collab by 5pm)***

UNIT III: SLAVERY AND ITS LEGACIES

Week 7 – Slavery and the Making of Racism

- Oct. 5:* ***NO CLASS – Reading Day***
- Oct. 7:* ***Slavery and the Making of Racism (45 Pages)***
 Copeland, Chapter 1, “Body, Race, and Being” (16 Pages)
 (CR) James Cone, “The White Church and Black Power” (29 Pages)
- Oct. 9:* ***Forum Post 2 Responses Due (Post to Collab by 5pm)***

Week 8 – Jesus and Surrogate Suffering

- Oct. 12:* ***Slavery and Surrogate Suffering (32 Pages)***
 (CR) Delores S. Williams, “Black Women’s Surrogacy Experience and the
 Christian Notion of Redemption” (14 Pages)
 (CR) M. Shawn Copeland, “To Live at the Disposal of the Cross” (18 Pages)
- Oct. 14:* ***Lynching and the Eucharist (57 Pages)***
 Copeland, Chapter 5, “Eucharist, Racism, and Black Bodies” (22 Pages)
 (CR) James Cone, “‘The Terrible Beauty of the Cross’ and the Tragedy of
 the Lynching Tree” (35 Pages)
- Oct. 16:* ***Forum Post 3 Due (Post to Collab by 5pm)***

UNIT IV: SLAVERY ENDURES

Week 9 – Human Trafficking and Labor Exploitation in the Global Economy

- Oct. 19:* ***Global Commodity Chains (40 Pages)***
 Film Screening: *Food Chains (2014)*
 Bales and Soodalter, Chapter 1, “The Old Slavery and the New” (15 Pages)
 Bales and Soodalter, Chapter 2, “House Slaves” (25 Pages)
- Oct. 21:* ***Exploitation in the Global Economy (74 Pages)***
 Film Screening Continued
 Bales and Soodalter, Chapter 3, “Slaves in the Pastures of Plenty” (35
 Pages)
 Bales and Soodalter, Chapter 4, “Supply and Demand” (39 Pages)

Oct. 23: Forum Post 3 Responses Due (Post to Collab by 5pm)

Week 10 – Solidarity as a Social Virtue

Oct. 26: Cultivating Solidarity (70 Pages)
Bales and Soodalter, Chapter 6, “Eating, Wearing, Walking, and Talking Slavery” (23 Pages)
(CR) Laurie Cassidy, “Picturing Suffering: The Moral Dilemmas in Gazing at Photographs of Human Anguish” (24 Pages)
(CR) Meghan J. Clark, “Engaging the Future of the Human Rights Project and Building Solidarity” (23 Pages)

Oct. 28: Consuming Solidarity (24 Pages)
(CR) Julie Hanlon Rubio, “Toward a Just Way of Eating” (18 Pages)
(OL) Willis Jenkins, [“Worrying About the Food Movement”](#) (4 Pages)
(OL) Nichole M. Flores, [“The Invisible Woman”](#) (2 Pages)

Oct. 30: Forum Post 4 Due (Post to Collab by 5pm)

Week 11 – Green Solidarity

*Nov. 2: Neighbor to Nature (*50 Pages)*
(OL) Excerpts from [Laudato si](#) (Pages TBA)

Nov. 4: Moral Incompetence and Pragmatic Action (44 Pages)
(CR) Willis Jenkins, “Atmospheric Powers: Climate Change and Moral Incompetence” (44 Pages)

Nov. 6: Forum Post 4 Responses Due (Post to Collab by 5pm)

UNIT V: JUSTICE AND RESTORATION

Week 12 – Theories of Justice

Nov. 9: Love and Justice (31 Pages)
(CR) Daniel C. Maguire, “Theories of Justice: What’s so good about the common good?” (13 Pages)
(CR) Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz, “Reconciliation: An Intrinsic Element of Justice” (18 Pages)

Nov. 11: Justice as Reconciliation (67 Pages)
O’Connell, Part 2, “Murals: Painting *Philia*” (32 Pages)
O’Connell, Part 4, “Prisons: From Degradation to Restoration” (35 Pages)

Week 13 – Aesthetics and Justice

Nov. 16: Beauty and Restoration (33 Pages)
O’Connell, Part 5, “Arts and the Body Politic” (33 Pages)

Nov. 18: Beauty and Redemption (81 Pages)
de Gruchy, Chapter 1, “The power of sacred images” (42 Pages)

de Gruchy, Chapter 3, “The redemptive power of beauty” (39 Pages)

Week 14 – Thanksgiving Week

Nov. 23: *Topics Examination*

Nov. 25: *NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Recess*

Week 15 – Art and Social Transformation

Nov. 30: *Imagination and Transformation (33 Pages)*

de Gruchy, Chapter 4 “Restoring broken themes of praise” (33 Pages)

Dec. 2: *Painting the Public Square (42 Pages)*

de Gruchy, Chapter 5 “Art in the public square” (42 Pages)

Dec. 4: *Forum Post 5 Due (Post to Collab by 5pm)*

Week 16 – Art and Interfaith Dialogue

Dec. 7: *Blessed to be a Witness (39 Pages)*

O’Connell, Part 6, “Holy Experiment: Religious Imagery in the Public Square” (39 Pages)

Forum Post 5 Responses Due (Post to Collab by 5pm)

Finals Week

Dec. 14: *Research Paper Due (Post to Collab by 5pm)*