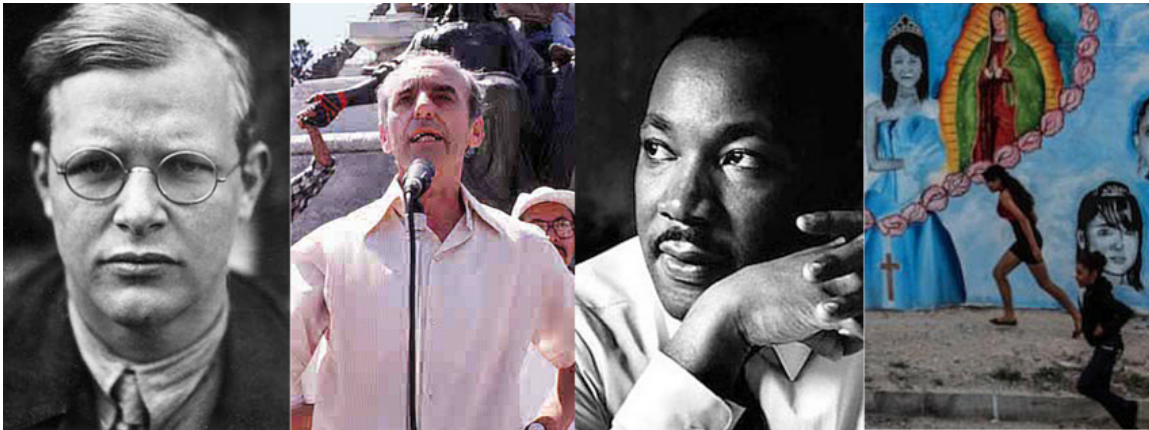


RELC 3559–002: Christian Discipleship and Martyrdom

University of Virginia, Spring 2016



Professor: Nichole M. Flores, Ph.D.
Email: nichole.flores@virginia.edu
Office Phone: (434) 243-3937
Office: Gibson S433
Twitter: @nicholemflores

Class Meetings: TTH 2:00-3:15
Class Location: Gibson S141
Office Hours: Tuesday 3:15-4:15
 Wednesday 1:00-2:00
 Appointment by email

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

What is the meaning of Christian martyrdom? How does it relate to the broader demands of Christian discipleship? What are its implications on ethical themes of love, justice, suffering, and sacrifice? This undergraduate seminar engages these themes as they appear in Christian thought, tradition, and practice. The seminar is oriented in Christian thought; however, comparative religious insights and research can be incorporated into class discussion, small group research presentations, and individual student research projects.

Syllabus Note: While this class engages historical texts, it is ultimately oriented toward addressing the themes of discipleship and martyrdom in the 21st century, especially as they manifest in our current time. Thus, the syllabus should be seen as an organic document, always—and very likely—subject to change depending on the demands of the texts and the times. Adjustments to the syllabus are announced during the first 5 minutes of each class meeting; each student is responsible for keeping track of updates. Utilize the notation space below each list of weekly readings and assignments to record adjustments.

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. While they can be a catalyst for engagement and productivity, 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 trusts every student to comply with all of the provisions of the University's Honor Code. By enrolling in this course, the student has 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.

- **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:

- **POLICY ADHERENCE – 5%**
See “Course Expectation and Policies” and “Honor Code” sections for details.
- **SEMINAR PARTICIPATION – 15%**
In general, students will be graded on the quality and quantity of participation in class discussion, small group discussion, and other class-related activities.
- **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS – 15%**
In order to stimulate seminar discussion, students will submit one (1) discussion question derived from the weekly readings. Questions will be posted to Collab each Monday by 5pm. Prof. Flores will organize the questions and use them to structure class conversation for the week. Submission will be collected over the course of the semester and graded for overall quality, especially for evidence of attentiveness to the reading assignments. Failure to submit a question will automatically result in a one-letter grade deduction.

PRESENTATION:

- **SMALL GROUP PRESENTATION – 10%**
Each group will design and deliver a multimedia presentation on one of the theologian-martyrs engaged in the course. Eschewing a strictly biographical or hagiographical orientation, presentations will engage the salient religious,

theological, and ethical issues that emerge in our common study. Each group will be assigned to a particular figure during the second week of classes.

RESEARCH & WRITING:

- **THEOLOGICAL RESPONSE ESSAYS – 15%**
Each student will submit 3 essays—one for each theologian-martyr unit—of no more than 550 words each. Portions of the essay exceeding this word count will not be graded.

- **RESEARCH PAPER – 40%**
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 no more than 10-pages double-spaced--portions of the essay exceeding this page count will not be graded. 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.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Harper Collins Study Bible

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (ISBN: 978-0-684-81500-8)

James H. Cone, *Martin and Malcolm and America: A Dream or a Nightmare* (ISBN: 0-88344-824-6)

Michael E. Lee, *Ignacio Ellacuria: Essays on History, Liberation, and Salvation* (ISBN: 978-1-62698-022-8)

Candida Moss, *The Other Christs: Imitating Jesus in Ancient Christian Ideologies of Martyrdom* (ISBN: 978-0-19-99143-8)

Nancy Pineda-Madrid, *Suffering and Salvation in Ciudad Juarez* (ISBN: 978-0-8006-9847-8)

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

All course texts are on reserve at the Fine Arts Library.

COURSE OUTLINE
PART I: INTRODUCING MARTYRDOM

UNIT 1: MARTYRDOM AND MEANING: CONTEMPORARY DEBATES

Week 1 – January 21

(CR) Patrick Gilger, “What Martyrdom Means”

(CR) Anne Barnard, “Long a Survivor in Syria, a Dutch Priest Is Slain”

(CR) James Foley, “Phone Call Home”

(CR) Rukmini Callimachi, “The Horror Before the Beheadings”

(CR) Rukmini Callimachi, “ISIS Enshrines a Theology of Rape”

(CR) John Eligon, “Michael Brown Spent Last Weeks Grappling With Problems and Promise”

(CR) Charles M. Blow, “The Perfect-Victim Pitfall”

(CR) Jacob J. Erickson, “The Martyrdom of Cecil the Lion”

UNIT 2: Scriptural and Historical Background

Week 2 – January 26 & 28

Moss, “Introduction”

Moss, Chapter 1, “Suffering Like Christ”

Moss, Chapter 2, “The Martyr as Alter Christus”

Scripture TBD

Monday, January 25: Post Discussion Question to Collab by 5pm

Thursday, January 28: Small Group Discussion on Meanings of Martyrdom, Small Group Presentation Dates Assigned

Week 3 – February 2 & 4

Moss, Chapter 3, “The Savior Martyr”

Moss, Chapter 4, “The Martyr’s Heaven”

Scripture TBD

Monday, February 1: Post Discussion Question to Collab by 5pm

Thursday, February 4: Film Screening, Constantine’s Sword

Week 4 – February 9 & 11

(CR) Lisa Sowle Cahill, Chapter 4, “Christ”

(CR) Lisa Sowle Cahill, Chapter 6, “Cross”

Scripture TBD

Monday, February 8: Post Discussion Question to Collab by 5pm

Thursday, February 11: Small Group Discussion

PART II: LIVED THEOLOGIES OF MARTYRDOM

UNIT 3: BONHOEFFER IN GERMANY

Week 5 – February 16 & 18

Bonhoeffer, Forward, Memoir, and Introduction

Bonhoeffer, Part I, “Grace and Discipleship”

Monday, February 15: Post Discussion Question to Collab by 5pm

Tuesday, February 16: Film Screening, Bonhoeffer

Week 6 – February 23 & 25

Bonhoeffer, Part II, Chs. 18-20, “Matthew 7: The Separation of the Disciple Community”

Bonhoeffer, Part III, “The Messengers”

Monday, February 22: Post Discussion Question to Collab by 5pm

Thursday, February 25: Small Group Discussion

Friday, February 26: Theological Response Essay 1 Due (Post to Collab by 5pm)

Week 7 – March 1 & 3

Bonhoeffer, Part IV, “The Church of Jesus Christ and the Life of Discipleship”

Monday, February 29: Post Discussion Question to Collab by 5pm

Thursday, March 3: Small Group Presentations

SPRING BREAK (March 5-March 13)

UNIT 4: ELLACURIA IN EL SALVADOR

Week 8 – March 15 & 17

Lee, Part I, “The Reality of History through Latin American Eyes”

Monday, March 14: Post Discussion Question to Collab by 5pm

Thursday, March 17: Film Screening, Romero

Week 9 – March 22 & 24

Lee, Part II, “Liberation: The Christian and the Historical”

Monday, March 21: Post Discussion Question to Collab by 5pm

Thursday, March 24: Small Group Discussion

Friday, March 25: Theological Response Essay 2 Due (Post to Collab by 5pm)

Week 10 – March 29 & 31

Lee, Part III, “Saving History”

Monday, March 28: Post Discussion Question to Collab by 5pm

Thursday, March 31: Small Group Presentations

UNIT 5: MARTIN AND MALCOLM IN AMERICA

Week 11 – April 5 & 7

Cone, Chapter 1, “The Making of a Dreamer”

Cone, Chapter 2, “The Making of a ‘Bad Nigger’”

Cone, Chapter 3, “I Have a Dream”

Cone, Chapter 4, “I See a Nightmare”

Monday, April 4: Post Discussion Question to Collab by 5pm

Thursday, April 7: Small Group Discussion

Week 12 – April 12 & 14

Cone, Chapter 5, “We Must Love Our White Brothers”

Cone, Chapter 6, “White Man’s Heaven Is a Black Man’s Hell”

Cone, Chapter 9, “Two Roads to Freedom”

Monday, April 11: Post Discussion Question to Collab by 5pm

Thursday, April 14: Small Group Presentations

Friday, April 15: Theological Response Essay 3 Due (Post to Collab by 5pm)

****Assigned Presentation Groups: Deadline Extended to Friday, April 22.*

Week 13 – April 19 & 21

Cone, Chapter 11, “Making Their Mark: Legacies”

NO DISCUSSION QUESTION DUE

Thursday, April 21: Film Screening, Selma

PART III: SUFFERING AND SOLIDARITY

UNIT 6: FEMINICIDE IN CIUDAD JUAREZ

Week 14 – April 26 & 28

Pineda-Madrid, “Introduction”

Pineda-Madrid, Chapter 1, “Suffering-A Social Reality”

Pineda-Madrid, Chapter 2, “Suffering, Social Imaginaries, and the Making of Evil”

Pineda-Madrid, Chapter 3, “Anselm and Salvation”

Pineda-Madrid, Chapter 4, “Responding to Social Suffering—Practices of Resistance”
Monday, April 25: Post Discussion Question to Collab by 5pm

Week 15 – May 3

Pineda-Madrid, Chapter 5, “On the Possibility of Salvation”
NO DISCUSSION QUESTION DUE

Examination Week

Monday, May 9: Research Paper Due (Post to Collab by 5pm)
