

Saint Paul School of Theology
TH 351 Science, Theology, and Ministry: Love and Altruism
Spring 2005

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Office Hours: By appointment and during posted office hours, which may vary weekly because of the instructor's course and committee schedule

Class Meeting: Tuesday, 1:10-4:00 p.m.
Kansas-Winger Building Room 507

Course Description

Catalog Description: This course provides a special opportunity to equip ministers with the information needed to be religious in a scientific age and to be ministers to persons struggling with science issues. Such issues are increasingly at the heart of what it means to be human and to conduct one's life with integrity. The course addresses the mutual relevance of pastoral concerns, science, and Christianity. Part of the course explores how Christianity has influenced the development of science, how science has impacted the content of theology, how Christianity and science are set in cultural context, and how Christianity can engage in interreligious dialogue about science. This class is limited to 20 students. No prerequisites. (3 credit hours)

Love and Altruism Topics: The Science, Theology, and Ministry Course that focuses on Love and Altruism integrates (1) ethology and primate studies with (2) theological reflections on love. From the sciences, the course examines the definition of and evidence for altruism in nonhuman animals, especially chimpanzees. Some attention to scientific debate about emotions in animals provides the data and anecdotal observations about love and related social expressions, as well as the antitheses of love (violence, for example). From Christian theology, the course the divine attribute of love, the effect of divine love on creation, and evil as the antithesis of creative and created love. The integrative work of the course reflects on how understandings of love influence ministry, in particular ministries of justice.

Course Teaching-Learning Objectives

1. The priorities for teaching and learning in this course are (a) the consonance of theology and science and (b) imaginative integration of theology and science for ministry contexts.
2. Teaching and learning begin with understanding method (how scholars investigate topics and draw conclusions), sources (what information scholars consult to form new ideas, and language (how scholars express ideas) in the integration of science and Christian theology. Students should familiarize themselves with scholarly methods of religious studies and models in scientific worldviews.
3. Teaching and learning depend on sophisticated reading of texts. Students should develop the skills of empathetic and critical reading. The diverse contexts that form theology and science create worldviews that may not be your own. Diverse worldviews demand charitable readings of texts for the sake of understanding the authors' points of view and with awareness that theology and science are neither abstracted from culture nor limited to singular "correct" forms of expression.
4. Teaching and learning involve critical thinking, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis. One pedagogical strategy for appropriating these skills is reading texts and writing assignments with awareness of perspectives marginalized by class, gender, race, religion, and sexual orientation. The love and altruism course concludes with special attention to how scientific and theological understandings of love/altruism shape ministries of justice.
5. Teaching and learning result in leads to praxis. The goal of the course is to consider applications of theology and science integration to ministry contexts.

Required and Recommended Texts

All required texts are on reserve at the Saint Paul School of Theology library.

Barbour, Ian G. *Religion and Science: Historical and Contemporary Issues*. HarperCollins, 1997.

Barbour, Ian G. *When Science Meets Religion*. HarperCollins, 2000. (Selections only.)

James H. Cone. *God of the Oppressed*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1975. (Selections only.)

De Waal, Frans. *The Ape and the Sushi Master: Cultural Reflections of a Primatologist*. Basic Books, 2001. (Selections only.)

Goodall, Jane. *Reason for Hope: A Spiritual Journey*. Warner Books, 1999. (Selections only.)

Granten, Eva-Lotta. *Patterns of Care*. Unpublished dissertation, 2004.

Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *The God of Life*. Orbis, 1991. (Selections only.)

Howell, Nancy R. “The Importance of Begin Chimpanzee.” *Theology and Science* 1(2)

Haught, John F. *God after Darwin: A Theology of Evolution*. Westview Press, 2000.

Marks, Jonathon. *What It Means to Be 98% Chimpanzee: Apes, People, and Their Genes*. University of California Press, 2001. (Selections only.)

Nygren, Anders. *Agapé and Eros*. SPCK, 1953.

Polkinghorne, John, editor. *The Work of Love: Creation as Kenosis*. Eerdmans, 2001.

Post, Stephen G., et al., editors. *Altruism and Altruistic Love: Science, Philosophy and Religion in Dialogue*. Oxford University Press, 2002.

Richardson, W. Mark, and Wesley J. Wildman. *Religion and Science: History, Method, Dialogue*. Routledge, 1996.

Stanford, Craig. *Significant Others: The Ape-Human Continuum and the Quest for Human Nature*. Basic Books, 2001. (Selections only.)

Williams, Daniel Day. *The Spirit and the Forms of Love*. University Press of America, 1981.

Bibliographic Sources

Johnson, Byron, et al., editors. *Research on Altruism and Love: An Annotated Bibliography of Major Studies in Psychology, Sociology, Evolutionary Biology, and Theology*. Templeton Foundation Press, 2002.

Van Huyssteen, J. Wentzel Vrede, et al., editors. *Encyclopedia of Science and Religion*. MacmillanUSA, 2003. “**Altruism**” article is required reading.

Course Schedule

Introduction to the Course

The course begins with review of the syllabus and of the standpoint of the course, which is contemporary scholarship that engages both science and religion through dialogue or integration. Brief discussion and lecture explore the relationship of science and religion. This session is informed by Ian Barbour's models of the relationship between science and religion: conflict, separation, dialogue, and integration. This session includes the PBS video, *Faith and Reason*.

February 8

Topic: The first session of the course reviews the rationale, content, design, and goals of the course, as well as an introduction to the history of the relationship between science and religion.

Recommended Reading: Course syllabus.

February 15

Topic: The second session reviews the four relationships between science and religion observed by Barbour and discusses Nancey Murphy's discussion of the relationships of science, theology, philosophy, and ethics (see Richardson and Wildman).

Required Reading: Barbour, *When Science Meets Religion*, Chapter 1.

Relationship of Chimpanzees/Animals and Humans

Because the course examines altruism and love in chimpanzees, the content must include discussion of two important logical points. First, the discussion must establish the reasons for seeking a behavioral analogy between humans and chimpanzees. The analogy is established by both genetics and evolution. Second, the course must discuss the emotions and behaviors related to love and altruism in chimpanzees.

February 22

Topic: The third session of the course considers how scientists justify an analogy or continuum between humans and chimpanzees. The discussion considers the evolutionary relationship between humans and chimpanzees first and then explores how genetic mapping continues to make a case for the biological relation of humans and chimpanzees.

Required Reading: Stanford, *Significant Others*, Preface.
Marks, *What It Means to Be 98% Chimpanzee*, Chapter 1.

March 1

Topic: The fourth session of the course explores the complex social and emotional behaviors of chimpanzees, with particular attention to components of behavior that might assist in defining love and altruism. Such components might include sympathy and grief, as well as behaviors such as violence, which represent the opposite of love. The session includes video clips from the film *Reason for Hope* and *Among the Wild Chimpanzees*.

Required Reading: de Waal, *The Ape and the Sushi Master*, Chapters 10-11.
Goodall, *Reason for Hope*, Chapters 8 and 10.

March 8

Topic: The fifth session continues the topic started in the fourth session. The discussion will center around viewing *Why Dogs Smile and Chimpanzees Cry*, a film especially interested in animal emotions and the wide-spread expression of emotions in social \ animals.

Required Reading: de Waal, *The Ape and the Sushi Master*, Chapters 10-11.
Goodall, *Reason for Hope*, Chapters 8 and 10.

Concepts of Love in Christian Theology

The next unit of reflection concerns theological definitions of love. In particular, the readings lead discussion toward the attribute of divine love and its implications for divine power and creativity. The theological discussion must also consider how human love is understood in light of the human relationship to God.

March 15

Topic: The sixth session of the course reviews classical formulations of divine love within the Christian tradition. Interpretation of divine love clearly influences how divine power and creativity are understood. Note that the classical formulations (as expressed by Nygren) are subject to criticism in contemporary theology.

- Required Reading: Nygren, *Agapé and Eros*, Part One, Chapter 1
- March 22
- Topic: The seventh session of the course continues discussion of classical formulations of love in Christian theology.
- Required Reading: Nygren, *Agapé and Eros*, Part One, Chapters 2-3
- March 29
- Reading Week—No class meeting.
- April 5
- Topic: The eighth session of the course examines an alternative interpretation and categorization of theological concepts of love. The contrast between Nygren's and Williams' doctrines and categorizations of love should highlight different concepts of God generate different understandings of God's love and power and different concepts of the God-human relationship.
- Required Reading: Williams, *The Spirit and the Forms of Love*, Chapters IV and VI
- April 12
- Topic: The ninth session of the course continues discussion of Williams' theological interpretation of love. The discussion includes reflection on theodicy in relation to divine love.
- Required Reading: Williams, *The Spirit and the Forms of Love*, Chapters VII-VIII

Science-Religion Dialogue on Love and Altruism

Scientists, philosophers, and religious scholars provide paradigms for understanding how dialogue with science can inform theological reflection on divine love. Class discussion will proceed analytically and critically to discuss whether science requires revision of theological doctrine, how theological doctrines assist in building a worldview based on love/altruism, and how ministry can be informed by exploration of love and altruism.

April 19

Topic: The tenth session of the course engages discussion of essays on love, altruism, and creation. The class undertakes the task of defining *love* and *altruism* as part of the science-religion dialogue.

Required Reading: “Altruism,” *Encyclopedia of Science and Religion*. Polkinghorne, *The Work of Love*, Chapters 1-5

April 26

Topic: The eleventh session of the course continues discussion of creation and love. The class content focuses on creation as expression of love, as well as the nuances that creation and *kenosis* give to the understanding of divine love.

Required Reading: Polkinghorne, *The Work of Love*, Chapters 6-11

May 3

Topic: The twelfth session of the course invites students to become more constructive in engaging science-religion dialogue on love and altruism. As the readings examine important essays, the discussion explores applications to theology and ministry.

Required Reading: Post, *Altruism and Altruistic Love*, selected chapters including 1, 3, 4, 5, 8

May 10

Topic: Session thirteen continues the project of session twelve.

Required Reading: Post, *Altruism and Altruistic Love*, selected chapters including 10, 13, 17, 19

Ministries of Justice: Love and Altruism

May 17

- Topic: The final session of the course highlights chimpanzee studies and why understanding our biological “next of kin” may be crucial in developing appropriate concepts of love and justice. The discussion explores the relation of altruism and justice as a paradigm for justice in ministry toward humans and nature.
- Required Reading: Howell, “The Importance of Being Chimpanzee”
Selections from James Cone and Gustavo Gutiérrez:
Cone on love and righteousness:
A Black Theology of Liberation, pp. 66-74
Gutiérrez on God’s faithfulness:
The God of Life, Chapter III

Course Requirements

1. Class participation is expected of each student. By class participation, I mean that each student must attend class regularly and engage in discussions. Students must attempt all required reading and written assignments. This does not mean that students fully understand material, but that they are familiar with the texts and know which passages are puzzling. Class participation allows students to raise questions and to achieve some understanding of course content. At the end of the semester, students assess the quality of their class participation and assign themselves a letter grade. This is accomplished through a self-evaluation work sheet, which makes explicit the criteria for good class participation. The instructor also assigns a class participation grade. The Class Participation Self-Evaluation Work Sheet (attached to the syllabus) is due Tuesday, May 3.
2. One semester-long writing project is a theology journal based on the reading assignments. The theology journal requires one entry for each day of the course (fourteen entries in all). Each entry should reflect on reading assignments for the day. The focus of each entry is love or altruism. Select one theme for theological reflection and consider that theme from the perspective of the authors read. Establish a main point for discussion and develop a standpoint on the reading by showing detailed knowledge of reading assignments and the ability to raise critical or original insights, questions, or evaluations. ***The goal of the reading journal is for each student to develop reflection on the theme of love and altruism as an exercise in theological reflection in relation to development of ministry identity.*** Consider the journal to be a formal academic writing assignment rather than a personal journal. Each entry must be typed in 11 or 12 point font and double-spaced with margins of 1 inch (which should yield about 500 words for two pages). Entries should be 1-2 pages in length. Journal entries will be submitted March 15, April 19, and May 17.
3. A ministry paper of 10-15 pages is required. Based on your theological reflection in the journal, develop an essay that names your theological understanding of divine love, explains how your understanding of love is influenced by both science and religion, and explains concretely how your understanding of altruism influences your ministry identity. The paper may reflect on one concrete aspect of your ministry or on an overarching vision for your ministry. The paper must be typed in 11 or 12 point font and double-spaced with margins of 1 inch. The paper must follow guidelines for form and citations found in Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, sixth edition. The paper is due on any day between May 3 and 10, but students must commit to one of these dates as a self-assigned deadline. Students may co-author papers. If you email papers to the professor, be sure to copy to yourself so that you can confirm that the attachment and transmission worked correctly. Another way to confirm that the professor receives the paper is to program “received” and “read” responses at the time the original email is sent.

Professorial Idiosyncrasies: (1) Please do not submit written work in binders or folders—a single staple in the upper left corner is preferred. (2) Consider submitting papers printed on the unused side of scratch paper or printed on both sides of a clean sheet of paper made from recycled fibers.

Grading

Criteria for grading follow.

Students in consultation with the instructor determine how grading will be assessed. At the end of the term, students receive letter grade in accordance with policies and descriptions outlined in the 1998-2000 catalog.

Class Participation		_____ %
Self-evaluation	_____ %	
Professor evaluation	_____ %	
Reading Journal		_____ %
March 15	_____ %	
April 19	_____ %	
May 17	_____ %	
Ministry Paper		_____ %

Student Responsibilities

Students must abide by policies established in the Saint Paul handbook and catalog. Pay special attention to the policies on Integrity of Work Submitted and Class Attendance found in the catalog. The professor reserves the option to fail a student for a single instance of plagiarism. The professor reserves the option to fail a student strictly for habitual failure to attend class or for habitual tardiness.

Professor's Responsibilities

My job is to teach with integrity the scholarship representative of my field, to see that students learn as much as possible, and to create a comfortable environment for learning. These goals cannot be accomplished without genuine attention to the unique strengths, experiences, and expectations that both the professor and students bring to the classroom. My goal is to provide encouragement and support for your learning. Sometimes flexible procedures and learning options are necessary to facilitate the kind of teaching and learning that should occur here. I am anxious to hear what energizes you, what disappoints you, where you disagree, and what helps you learn. PLEASE SEE ME IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, OR SPECIFIC NEEDS.

Learning-Disabling Conditions

It is the Saint Paul faculty commitment to facilitate the learning of students capable of graduate-level seminary work. Any student who has a condition that may prevent full demonstration of his/her abilities (e.g., difficulty seeing or hearing, dyslexia, or other learning disabilities) should contact the instructor and the Office of Student and Community Life) immediately to discuss learning needs, alternatives that have worked for the student in the past, and mutually accountable accommodations to ensure the student's full participation and evaluation in the course.

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. Please see me whether the accommodations you need are long-term or short-term.

Criteria for Evaluating Course Work

Regardless of whether you write a paper, answer an essay question, voice an oral presentation, or create any original project, the academic context requires that certain minimal requirements characterize your work. While there are subjective components in the grading process, most professors are concerned that you become well educated in four basic qualities of excellent academic work:

1. ***Demonstration of an empathetic understanding of the content of texts and resources.*** Your topic should not only be well researched in the library, through interviews and observations, and from assigned readings and class discussions, but you should be able to provide a fair description and a clear understanding of texts and resources. This is apparent in the ability to describe and discuss precisely and accurately what an author has written or a speaker has said. Evaluation, response, and critique follow accurate representation of another's ideas—earn the privilege of criticizing a viewpoint by showing that you really understand it.
2. ***Clear critical thinking that provides appropriate specific evidence for conclusions.*** Use the most precise historical, empirical, or contemporary data or information to support the claims of your thesis and paragraphs. Conclusions follow from and are supported by evidence. Be sure that your evidence is relevant, accurate, and detailed. Adherence to clear critical thinking, relevant and accurate evidence, and logical organization constitute sound arguments. Even creative writing requires logical relationships among ideas to assist your readers in following the plot or main point.
3. ***Creativity that moves beyond reporting someone else's ideas.*** Your creative addition to academic discourse might include questioning, evaluating, applying, criticizing (positively or negatively), developing, or responding. You might see a connection between two or more ideas. You might see information from a unique perspective. The minimal requirement of academic work is correctly repeating what is read or discussed. Excellent work moves beyond repetition to unique insights, organization, correlations, and theses. Work to find your own scholarly and professional voice.
4. ***Flawless grammar, spelling, and form.*** Excellent written work is conscious of proofreading and good communication. Oral presentations are equally accountable for careful expression. A brilliant thesis can be lost in a paper or project that obscures its ideas with careless communication. Your readers and listeners should not have to guess what you mean—help them by speaking and writing well.

Class Participation Self-Evaluation Work Sheet
Saint Paul School of Theology

Nancy R. Howell

Name: _____ **Course:** _____

Circle the number that best describes your class participation in each category if 1 is excellent, 2 is very good, 3 is average, 4 is satisfactory, and 5 is poor.

Preparation

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| I conscientiously attempted reading assignments. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| I reflected seriously on reading assignments. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| I worked to bring depth to comments and questions by preparing more than superficially for class. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| I prepared written assignments on time and when the syllabus or my self-assigned deadlines required them. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| I checked spelling, grammar, quotations, and footnotes before submitting papers. | 1 2 3 4 5 |

Class

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| I attended class weekly. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| I always attended class on time. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| I contributed to class discussions. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| When I talked in class, I remained focused on the topic of class discussion. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| I listened respectfully to comments and questions raised by other students. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| I brought my questions to class or to the professor. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| I expressed disagreement constructively. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| I shared my responsibilities for successful class sessions. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| I supported other students' efforts in class discussions or assignments. | 1 2 3 4 5 |

Attitude

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| I remained involved and engaged in the course. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| I was constructive in relationships with others. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| I put extra effort into the course—such as study groups/partners, library research, recommended or supplemental reading. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| I contributed my share of the work in collaborative writing or projects. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| I made appointments with the professor when I needed assistance or wanted to discuss the course. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| I took responsibility for my learning. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| My understanding of theology has grown. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| My understanding of ministry has grown. | 1 2 3 4 5 |

I assign myself the following letter grade: _____
(Enter A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, or F in the blank.)

Please submit any additional reflection on class participation that should affect your grade in writing on the back of this page. This work sheet is intended to assist you in thinking about the quality of your participation in class. Any interpretations, additions, or connections of criteria should be included in your additional reflections.

