

**Alabama Course of Study
Fall 2018
September 14-15, November 2-3
Birmingham-Southern
Assignment and Course Requirements**

Course: COS 522 (512) – Theology in the Contemporary Church
Instructor: Sarah Sours
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Please submit all written assignments stapled to an “Alabama Course of Study Cover Sheet” to the instructor listed above.

This course covers significant individuals, movements, events, and theological developments from the nineteenth century to the present. Students will read selected primary sources.

Students will be able to:

1. Understand the origins and theological tenets of liberalism from the early 19th century to the present, including its influence on ecumenism and process theology.
2. Understand and distinguish reactions to liberalism, including Fundamentalism, Neo-Orthodoxy, and Evangelicalism.
3. Understand the historical development and theology of the Holiness Movement, Pentecostalism, and the Charismatic Movement.
4. Understand the origins and tenets of Liberation and Contextual theologies.

Textbooks may be ordered through Mary Cook the Birmingham Cokesbury Resource Consultant (205) 821-2030, mcook@cokesbury.com or through Cokesbury online at www.cokesbury.com

Texts:

Migliore, Daniel L. Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmanns Publishing, 2014)
(ISBN: 9780802871855)

Caputo, John D. What Would Jesus Deconstruct: The Good News of Post-modernism for the Church. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2007) (ISBN: 978-0801031366)

Reference Text:

Bettenson, Henry and Chris Maunder. Documents of the Christian Church, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford Univ. Press: 2011) (9780199568987)

Your Bible.

First Assignment: (Due on the first weekend of class)

Reading: Please come to class having read:

1. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, chapters 1-7.
2. Caputo, *What Would Jesus Deconstruct*, chapters 1-3.

Written pre-work: Please come to class with the following written work, typed (double-

spaced, in a readable 12-point font, with 1-inch margins all around), and stapled together with the cover sheet.

1. Briefly describe your ministry context. Then, describe one or two areas where you struggle, and where you see your parishioners struggle, to talk about God. (One full page.)
2. According to Migliore, what does biblical inspiration mean? In what sense is the Bible the word of God? How should we interpret the Bible as the word of God *to us*? (Remember that you are describing what Migliore thinks, so insert page numbers to indicate where you are finding his insights.) (Min: one full page, max: two full pages.)
3. According to Migliore, how does God relate to the universe? Is God fully in control (omnipotent)? Does God share responsibility with humans and thus expose Godself to risk? (Remember that you are describing what Migliore thinks, so insert page numbers to indicate where you are finding his insights.) (Min: one full page, max: three full pages.)

Discussion prompts: Please come to class ready to talk about the following questions. No written work is necessary for these questions, unless you would find it helpful to have some ideas jotted down.

1. Caputo is *doing* deconstruction more than he is explaining it. But as best you can tell, what *is* deconstruction? What is it all about? How do you do it? What are you trying to do when you do it?
2. In these first few chapters, what does deconstruction allow Caputo to say about Jesus? What might this deconstructed Jesus have to say to our modern lives?

Second Assignment: (Due on the second weekend of class)

Reading: Please come to class having read:

1. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, chapters 8-14.
2. Caputo, *What Would Jesus Deconstruct*, chapters 4-7.

Written pre-work: Please come to class with the following written work, typed (double-spaced, in a readable 12-point font, with 1-inch margins all around), and stapled together with the cover sheet.

1. According to Migliore, what does salvation mean? How does Jesus's death and resurrection save us? From what does Jesus's death and resurrection save us? Who is included in God's salvation? (Min: two full pages, max: three full pages)
2. According to Migliore, what is God's final purpose for the universe? For what can and should Christians hope? (Min: one full page, max: three full pages)
3. According to Migliore, what are the sacraments, and how do they work? (Min: one full page, max: two full pages.)

Discussion prompts: Please come to class ready to talk about the following questions. No written work is necessary for these questions, unless you would find it helpful to have some ideas jotted down.

1. Which sacraments are most meaningful to the folks in your current ministry context? Might a fuller discussion of the sacraments and the means of grace help your parishioners talk about God? What other resources does modern theology offer your parishioners as they try to speak faithfully about God?
2. What are some of Caputo's diagnoses of the problems with *non-deconstructionist readings of the Bible*?
3. How, specifically, does Caputo's focus on power and powerlessness help the church live into its ministry in the modern world?

Final Presentation: (Given the last day of class.)

You will be asked to give a brief (5-min) presentation describing how one aspect of modern theology might help your church live into its faith and mission.

Final Average Grading Weights: Pre-work Papers 50%, Class Participation and Discussion 40%, Final Presentation, 10%

Paper Grading Scale:

A+ = 98, A = 95, A- = 92, B+ = 88, B = 85, B- = 82, C+ = 78, C = 75, C- = 72, D+ = 68, C = 65, D- = 62, F = 55, Plagarized = 0

Final Average Grading Scale:

100-97=A+, 96-93=A, 93-90=A-, 89-87=B+, 86-83=B, 82-80=B-, 79-77=C+, 76-73=C, 72-70=C-, 69-67=D+, 66-63=D, 62-60=D-, 59-0=F

PreCourse / MidCourse / PostCourse Work Policy

We all have deadlines that govern our lives. It is crucial that you take seriously your commitment to complete the pre-work assignments by the deadline. Extensions are granted only for extenuating circumstances. Normal pastoral duties do not constitute extenuating circumstances. Late work will be penalized. Any extension must be granted by the instructor of the class. For your protection, please keep copies of your pre-work assignments.

- All PreCourse and MidCourse work must be submitted to the professor by the date indicated on the syllabus or assigned by the professor on the first weekend. Late PreCourse/midcourse work will be accepted for two weeks following the due date (but not beyond) with the following penalties:
 1. **PreCourse/MidCourse** work submitted within one week of the due date will receive a **one letter grade deduction**
 2. **PreCourse/MidCourse** work submitted after one week of the due date but within two weeks will receive a **two-letter grade deduction**
 3. **No assignments** will be accepted after two weeks from the due date and a grade of "F" will be given in the course.
 4. **In cases where the student has registered late the same policy applies.**
- **PostCourse** work may be assigned in some courses. Post course work will be due no later than two weeks after the completion of the second weekend of the course. **No** late submissions will be accepted.