Fall 2012

REL 3563 (0926) AMERICAN CATHOLICISM

TIME: Tuesday period 4 (10:40-11:30); Thursday periods 4-5 (10:40-12:35)
PLACE: Matherly 119
CREDITS: 3 Semester Hours
Fulfills Humanities Gen. Ed and 4 Gordon Rule
INSTRUCTOR: David G. Hackett
Office - 122 Anderson Hall
Office Hours - Tuesday 11:30-1:30; Thursday 12:40-1:40 and by appointment
Phone 273-2929; e-mail dhackett@ufl.edu
ENROLLMENT: 40
FORMAT: Discussion

DESCRIPTION:
This course explores the history of American Catholicism from the perspective of popular piety, spirituality and social justice. Topics to be considered include: the immigrant church; popular practices; spirituality; social justice; Vatican II; and the contemporary church.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
1) learn about the historical experiences of Catholics in the United States from the colonial era to the present.
2) understand some of the diverse ways that Catholics have employed their religious tradition to make sense of the world and their place in it
3) learn how to reflect critically on how you arrived at your beliefs and values and bring to consciousness the degree that these might be shaped by outlooks in the various cultures and subcultures in which you participate.
4) improve your skills in writing and constructing persuasive arguments

There is substantial assigned reading for this course. To do well, you must complete the assigned readings.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS
Mark S. Massa, Catholics and American Culture (1999)
Peter Manseau, Vows (2005)
David Riccho, Catholic Means Universal (2000)
REQUIREMENTS, EXPECTATIONS, AND RESOURCES:

1) Attendance. Class attendance is required. If you are absent from more than three classes without a written excuse, your final grade will be reduced one-third of a grade (e.g. B+ to B) for every absence after the first three. If you arrive late to class or leave early, I reserve the right to mark you absent.

2) Heard on the street (5% of grade). ONCE you will be responsible for presenting some contemporary Catholic issue that you have recently read or heard about and you believe needs some common exploration by the class. What you are going to discuss, and why you think it is important, should be emailed to me prior to class. You will be assigned your day for completing this task on the first days of class and according to the alphabetical list of class members.

3) In-class seminar presentation (10% of grade). Twice you will make a brief, 5-minute presentation (about 2 pages, 600 words, double-spaced) to the class introducing a specific reading or readings. Your presentation should analyze the reading’s primary themes and identify any problematic elements in it, and must offer questions to guide reading discussion. Your presentation is due to me as an email attachment by 12:00 noon the day before the class meeting in which the reading is discussed. Late presentations will lose one-third of a grade (e.g. B+ to B). You will be assigned your days for completing this task on the first days of class and according to a reverse alphabetical list of class members.

4) Devotional experience (5% of grade). Weekly you will be asked to one or more times participate in morning, noon, and/or evening prayers at St. Augustine Church and/or read and reflect on the readings used in these prayers. You will keep a journal of your reflections (likely a computer file), which will be submitted to me twice during the semester (10/25 and 12/4). These readings are available at Divine Office.org.

4) Five reaction papers (80%). You will write five reaction papers in response to class readings and discussions. The second through fourth papers will demonstrate your understanding and evaluation of the current section’s readings. The fifth paper will include reflections on the class as a whole as well as the current section’s readings. Assignment dates, due dates, recommended length, and % of final grade are as follows.

First Paper - Your Relationship to Catholicism
Assigned 8/28, Due 9/4 3 pages (900 words) 10% of final grade.

Second Paper - Popular Catholicism
Assigned 9/18, Due 9/25, 5 pages (1,500 words) 15% of final grade

Third Paper - Spirituality and Social Justice
Assigned 10/16, Due 10/23, 5 pages (1,500 words) 15% of final grade

Fourth Paper - Vatican II
Assigned 11/8, Due 11/15, 5 pages (1,500 words), 15% of final grade

Fifth Paper - Spirituality and the Contemporary Church
Assigned 11/27, Due 12/11 7 pages (2,100 words), 25% of final grade
Late or Make-Up Papers: You may receive an extension on an assignment only in extraordinary circumstances and with prior approval from the instructor. If an extension is not granted, the assignment will be marked down 1/3 grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each school day it is late.

Papers will be graded according to the following criteria. An A essay demonstrates not only a factual command of the material but also the ability to construct a coherent and complex argument-driven thesis that is supported by evidence and presented in clear and accurate prose. A B grade will be assigned to essays that possess both an identifiable thesis and adequate factual command, but that lack sufficient detail, or clarity and/or complexity in thinking or writing. Grades in the C range reflect essays that lack a thesis, or that provide minimal detail or evidence, or that exhibit significant writing problems. D grades will be assigned to essays that are clearly inadequate in content, organization, and writing.

The Writing Requirement (Gordon Rule) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. Effective Summer A/C 2009, an additional grading component has been added to successfully complete and receive word credit for courses that meet the university writing requirement (Gordon Rule). Course grades now will have two components. Professors will indicate whether or not students met the writing requirement AND will assign a course grade. Therefore, to receive writing credit students must receive a grade of C or higher AND satisfactory completion of the writing component. It is possible not to meet the writing requirement and still pass the class. Students should review their degree audits after receiving their grades to verify receipt of credit for the writing component.

6) Grading Scale
Final letter grades will be assigned according to the following scale: A 93–100; A- 90-92; B+ 87-89; B 83-86; B- 80-82; C+ 77-79; C 73-76; C- 70-72 D 60-69; E 0-59.

7) Common Courtesy. Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off during class. Students who receive or make calls during class will be asked to leave. You may take notes on a laptop computer or other device, although the instructor reserves the right to ask you to turn off the computer. The instructor also reserves the right to ask any student engaging in disruptive behavior (e.g., whispering, reading a newspaper) to leave the class. Repeat violations of these rules will result in dismissal from the class.

8) Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The university specifically prohibits cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery, conspiracy, and fabrication. For more information about the definition of these terms and other aspects of the Honesty Guidelines, see http://www.chem.ufl.edu/~itl/honor.html. Any student demonstrated to have cheated, plagiarized, or otherwise violated the Honor Code in any assignment for this course will fail the course. In addition, violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines shall result in judicial action and the sanctions listed in paragraph XI of the Student Conduct Code.

9) Accommodation for Disabilities. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

10) Counseling Resources available on campus for students:
11) Software Use. All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

*available on electronic course reserve

INTRODUCTION

Thursday 8/23
Orientation. No reading assignment.

Tuesday 8/28
Catholics in the U.S. Today

Readings: *Chester Gillis, Roman Catholicism in America (Columbia, 1999), 8-47

First Paper Assigned: What is your relationship to Catholicism? If you understand yourself as a Catholic, provide an overview of your history. What are your expectations for this course? If you are not Catholic, what is your religious background (if any), and what are your expectations for this course.
Due 9/4 Three pages (900 words) 5% of final grade

I Colonial Catholicism
A. Pluralism, Syncretism, Conversion

Thursday 8/30
Reading: Fisher, A Communion of Immigrants, 1-23
Meet at Saint Augustine Catholic Church (on University Avenue)

Tuesday 9/4
B. English Catholics in the New World

Reading: Fisher, A Communion of Immigrants, 24-42

First Paper Due

II The Immigrant Church
Thursday 9/6  
Reading: Fisher, A Communion of Immigrants, 43-92  
Film: Out of Ireland

A. Popular Catholicism

Tuesday 9/11  
Reading: Robert A. Orsi, The Madonna of 115th Street, 1-74

Thursday 9/13  
Reading: Robert A. Orsi, The Madonna of 115th Street, 75-231

Tuesday 9/18  

Second Paper Assigned: Popular Catholicism  
Due 9/25 5 pages (1,500 words), 15% of final grade

Submit Your Journal

III Coming of Age

Thursday 9/23  
Reading: Fisher, A Communion of Saints, 92-129

A. Spirituality

Film: Merton: A Film Biography

Tuesday 9/25  
Reading: Merton, Seven Story Mountain, 3-184

Second Paper Due

Thursday 9/27  
Reading: Merton, Seven Story Mountain, 185-282

Tuesday 10/2  
Reading: Merton, Seven Story Mountain, 283-462

Thursday 10/4  
Readings: Massa, “Young Man Merton” in Catholics and American Culture, 38-56  
*James Martin, “The True Self” in his My Life with the Saints (Loyola, 2006), 43-72
B. Social Justice

Tuesday 10/9  Reading: Massa, “The Downward Path” in Catholics and American, 102-127.
            Film: “Don’t Call Me a Saint”

Thursday 10/11  Field Trip: Class Meets at the Gainesville Catholic Worker House

Tuesday 10/16  Discuss Field Trip

Third Paper Assigned: Spirituality and Social Justice
Due 10/23, 5 pages (1,500 words) 15% of final grade

C. Fifties Catholicism

Thursday 10/18  Reading: Massa, “Oh the Irony of it All” in Catholics and American Culture, 1-10
            Film: Going My Way

Tuesday 10/23  Readings:
Massa, “Life is Worth Living” in Catholics and American, 82-101
Massa, “A Catholic for President” in Catholics and American, 128-137
*Garry Wills, “Memories of a Catholic Boyhood” in his Bare Ruined Choirs (Doubleday, 1971), 15-37

Third Paper Due

III  THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

A. Background

Thursday 10/25  Readings:
Fisher, A Communion of Immigrants, 114-165
Maureen Sullivan, 101 Questions and Answers on Vatican II, 1-121

Submit your Journal

B. The Laity

Tuesday 10/30  Readings:
Mark Massa, “Into Uncertain Life” in Catholics and American, 148-171

C. Nuns and Priests

Thursday 11/1  Reading: Peter Manseau, Vows (2005), xi-136
D. Public Activism
Tuesday 11/6  Reading: Manseau, *Vows*, 137-212

E. Birth Control

*Fourth Paper Assigned: Vatican II*
Due 11/15  5 pages, (1,500 words), 15% of final grade

IV CONTEMPORARY CATHOLICISM

A. The Sex Abuse Scandal
Tuesday 11/13  Reading: Manseau, *Vows*, 302-357  

Thursday 11/15

*Fourth Paper Due*

Tuesday 11/20 - No Class

*Thanksgiving Holiday*

Tuesday 11/27  Reading: Riccho, *Catholic Means Universal*, 33-96

*Fifth Paper Assigned: Spirituality and the Contemporary Church*
Due 12/11, 7 pages (1,800), 20% of final grade

Thursday 11/29  Reading: Riccho, *Catholic Means Universal*, 96-186

Tuesday 12/4  The Future of the Catholic Church

*Submit your Journal*

*Fifth Paper Due Tuesday, December 11th at noon*