

Theology 5243A Theology of Marriage and Sexuality

FALL 2012

Tuesdays: 7:30 p.m. - 9:50 p.m.

Sept. 11th to Dec. 4th, 2012
Room 102, St. Peter's Seminary

Instructor: Fr. Peter Amszej
Office hours by appointment

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a theological and pastoral investigation of the meaning of Christian marriage and human sexuality. It covers the scriptural, historical and theological development of the sacrament of marriage. Also covered are themes including the theology of the body, heterosexual and homosexual moral concerns, divorce and family life, and new challenges to marriage today.

B. GOALS

This course will allow the students to grow in the following knowledge, skills and attitudes;

KNOWLEDGE:

1. To understand the Roman Catholic tradition of marriage, its foundation in God's revelation to us in Sacred Scripture, Sacred Tradition and human reasoning regarding God's salvation at work in marriage and family life;
2. To understand the methodology of moral theology as it applies to questions of marriage, human sexuality, and the 21st century, drawing on the four sources: (1) biblical themes of scripture, (2) the historical testimony of the Catholic moral tradition, (3) rational philosophical reasoning, and (4) the influences of modern sciences such as psychology and sociology;
3. To acquaint the student with some of the classical Christian writers dealing with marriage and human sexuality, along with more recent writers;
4. To include other faith-based and secular perspectives important for critical and ethical dialogue in a secular and pluralistic society;
5. To acquaint the student with some of the more recent theological attempts to articulate or understand marriage and human sexuality;
6. To understand how the action of the Holy Spirit in the world can make it possible for a faith-based position to impact on the secular systems legislating on moral questions;
7. To investigate more intentionally the recent writings on "The Theology of the Body" of Pope John Paul II.

SKILLS:

1. To enable the student to understand the scriptural background and applicability of divine inspiration and revelation pertinent to marriage and sexuality;
2. To expect the student to understand, and for Catholics to be able to accept, the Church's Magisterium as the normative source of teachings on faith and morals, and to appreciate the openness of the tradition to historical development in the understanding of the sacrament of marriage and of the teachings on human sexuality;
3. To enable the students to read and analyze appropriately the documents of Church teaching on marriage and human sexuality;
4. To develop a practical set of prudential and pastoral skills in dealing with people struggling to live up to Church teachings regarding marriage and human sexual encounters;
5. To assist the students to integrate what they have learned by witnessing and using adult modes of education regarding various kinds of lectures, discussions, role-playing scenarios, audio-visuals, written projects and reflective modes of learning.

ATTITUDES:

1. To develop in the student a critical awareness of the present moral climate regarding marriage and human sexuality in order to promote the dignity of the human body, of marriage and the family as seen by our Christian and Catholic tradition;
2. To foster a sense of compassion and care for all those who struggle in areas of marriage and divorce as well as various difficulties encountered in living out one's own sexuality;
3. To help the student to embrace and resist when necessary, disagreement and ambiguity in the relationship of the teachings of the church and its application through an attitude of "mercy-in-truth";
4. To allow for just and hope-filled approaches in articulating our church teachings in school and pastoral settings regarding human relationships;
5. To encourage the attitude of Jesus in teaching the Father's will about marriage and human sexuality as lived out with the grace of the Holy Spirit in our often broken world;

C. ASSESSMENT

1.	10 Online-Submitted Answers to Weekly Reading Assignments	10%
2.	In-class Presentation of News Story Related to Marriage & Sexuality	10%
3.	Mid-Term Oral Exam Based on a Selected Textbook [Oct. 16 th]	20%
4.	In-class Presentation of Catholic Teaching on Sexuality for Youth & Accompanying Written Research (6-8 pages) [Nov. 27 th]	30%
5.	Final Written Exam	30%
	TOTAL	100%

Explanation of assignments

#1. These will be short written answers submitted through the university's online learning website: <http://owl.uwo.ca>

#2. Each student will be expected to present one news story during the semester and moderate a discussion on its relevant aspects. The presentation/discussion should last about 30 minutes. A sign-up sheet for presentation dates will be available during the first class.

#3. Each student will be expected to read one short textbook on the sacrament of marriage, summarize it and be able to discuss applications of its ideas. The oral exam will be about 20 minutes in length. The three textbook options for the oral exam are:

- 1) Theology of Christian Marriage by Walter Kasper. New York: Crossroad, 1980.
- 2) Marriage by Dietrich von Hildebrand. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1942.
- 3) Morals and Marriage: the Catholic Background to Sex by T. G. Wayne (i.e., Thomas Gilby, O.P.). New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1936.

#4. In-class presentation should be about 20 minutes in length. Possible topics will be handed out later in the semester.

#5. Date of final exam will be determined later in the semester.

D. TEXTBOOK (*Required*)

Carl Anderson and Jose Granados, *Called to Love: Approaching John Paul II's Theology of the Body*, New York: Doubleday, 2009.

The book is available to buy at the UWO Book Store and one copy is on reserve in the seminary library.

E. STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

Week 1

Sept. 11th – Marriage Today / Reflection on Our Personal Experience of Marriage in our Families

Week 2

Sept. 18th - Lectio Divina: Marriage in Scripture

- 1st online answer due

Week 3

Sept. 25th – History of Church Teaching on Marriage & Sexuality: Part I

- 2nd online answer due

- 1st news story presentation

Week 4

Oct. 2nd – History of Church Teaching on Marriage & Sexuality: Part II

- 3rd online answer due

- 2nd news story presentation

Week 5

Oct. 9th – Marriage Preparation; Marriage Liturgy; “Same-Sex Marriage”

- 4th online answer due

- 3rd news story presentation

Week 6

Oct. 16th – Mid-Term Oral Exam

Week 7

Oct. 23rd – Guest presenter: Mr. Michael Tremblay from the Marriage Tribunal of the Diocese of London

Divorce, Annulments and How We Can Keep Marriages Together

- 5th online answer due

Week 8

Oct. 30th – Encountering Love: The Experience of the Body and the Revelation of Love (chapters 1 through 4 of the Anderson/Granados textbook)

- 6th online answer due

Week 9

Nov. 6th – The Redemption of the Heart (chapters 5 through 7 of the Anderson/Granados textbook)

- 7th online answer due

- 4th news story presentation

Week 10

Nov. 13th – The Beauty of Love: The Splendor of the Body (chapters 8 through 10 of the Anderson/Granados textbook)

- 8th online answer due

- 5th news story presentation

Week 11

Nov. 20th – Special Topics in Sexuality

- 9th online answer due

- 6th news story presentation

Week 12

Nov. 27th – In-class Presentations of Catholic Teachings on Sexuality for Youth

Week 13

Dec. 4th – Tools to Evangelize the Culture re: Marriage & Sexuality

- 10th online answer due

- 7th news story presentation

F. POLICIES REGARDING SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS AND TESTS

Students are responsible for knowing the University's academic policies and regulations and any particularities of their won course of study. These can all be found at the University's website (<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>). Ignorance of these policies is not an excuse for any violation thereof. The following policies are particularly important to note:

I Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the dates as given above. Assignments may note be dropped off at King's.

II It is the responsibility of the student to organize his or her work so that the assignments are completed on time. For a serious reason, a student may approach the professor before the due- date, and may be granted an extension at the discretion of the professor. **Any medical reasons will be confirmed by proper documentation as approved by the Dean's Office.** A penalty of 10% of the value of the assignment will be deducted for each day it is overdue without permission.

III **No electronic devices will be allowed during tests or the examination, unless approved in advance by Student Services at the University of King's.**

IV **Students who miss tests will negotiate a "make-up" date with the professor. Any medical reasons will be confirmed by proper documentation as approved by the Dean's Office.**

V **Plagiarism:** Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt by quotation marks and/or footnotes. Plagiarism is a major academic offense. Students may be required to submit their work in electronic form for plagiarism checking.

VI **Selection and Registration of Courses:** Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded, that all prerequisite course(s) have been successfully completed, and that they are aware of any anti-requisite course(s) that they have taken.