Theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar (YMA 9365 N) Summer I 2014
Rev. Msgr. James B. Anderson Credits 3

1. Course Description

1.1 Catalog Description: A study of the life and thought of one of the most important and least understood theologians of the twentieth century. The course will first investigate his tributaries of influence and then focus on his central insight of Being as love while attempting a review of his theological project based upon beauty, goodness, truth and unity.

1.2 Goals: Students will (1) become familiar with the life and thought of Hans Urs von Balthasar; (2) gain an understanding of the tributaries influencing his theology; (3) be introduced to the best available systematic understanding of his theology; (4) be well equipped to investigate his thought further; (5) be prepared to explain Balthasar’s theology of the Paschal Mystery in terms of the Trinitarian mystery.

2. Topical Outline:

Part One: Hans Urs von Balthasar: His Cultural and Theological Education

Part Two: The Tributaries of Influence
2.1 Erich Przywara and the Analogy of Being
2.2 The Dialogue with Karl Barth
2.3 Goethe, Nietzsche and the Encounter with German Idealism
2.4 Balthasar and the Church Father
2.5 Von Balthasar’s Retrieval of Irenaeus
2.6 Arienne von Speyr and the Community of St. John

Part Three: Balthasar’s Synthesis of Theology and Holiness
2.7 The Ignatian Exercises in the Work of Balthasar
2.8 Exegesis and Contemplation in the Work of Balthasar

Part Four: Jesus Christ: Form and Norm of the Human Person – Theological Style
2.9 The Paschal Mystery and the Trinity
2.10 Dare We Hope that All Be Saved?

Part Five: The Trilogy of Love
2.11 The Aesthetics
2.12 The Theodramatics
2.13 The Theologic
2.14 The Epilogue

Part Six: Balthasar’s Contribution to Ecumenism and Inter-religious Dialogue

Part Seven: Truth is Symphonic: An Overview of Balthasar’s Theology

3. Required Reading Textbooks:


4. Format of Presentation: Specific readings will be assigned for each class or series of classes. These readings will be chosen from the required texts and other sources announced in class. The professor’s lecture will assume familiarity with those readings. Students will be expected to contribute to the class discussion by asking questions and making observations.

5. Required Workload:
5.1 Students are expected to complete the assigned reading and actively participate in class. The effort to participate in class will help you to attain one of the important goals of liberal education, the ability to express yourself with clarity, ease and persuasion.
5.2 There will be a final written and oral exam to take place during the last class on Monday, June 16, 2014.

5.3 A final synthesis project in the form of an Annotated Bibliography on a topic chosen from the course, due on Sunday, June 22, 2014. Please submit the whole assignment as a single file. The Annotated Bibliography will be no more than ten pages. The bibliography should be seen as a preparation for a major research paper or eventual journal article.

6. Grading: Final exam (oral and written) 40%; Final project 40%; Attendance and participation, 20%.

7. Academic Standards

7.1 Academic Honesty: All the work you do in this course is expected to be your own. Absolutely no cheating or plagiarism (using someone else’s words or ideas without proper attribution) will be tolerated. Any cases of cheating or plagiarism will be handled according to university policy and reported to the University’s Academic Misconduct Committee. They will also be reported to appropriate ecclesiastical authorities where applicable.

As stated in the Norms of Conduct for the University of St. Thomas, academic misconduct includes: (a) cheating (using unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise), plagiarism, falsification of records, unauthorized possession of examinations, intimidation, and any and all other actions that improperly affect the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement; (b) assisting others in any such act; (c) attempting to engage in such acts.

Plagiarism is using the work of another person and claiming it as your own. The most common types of plagiarism include:

- Using a paper or portion of a paper prepared by someone else;
- Quoting someone else’s language or words without proper quotation or citation;

and

- Paraphrasing someone else’s ideas, framework, or insights without giving credit to the original author in a citation.

Students are very strongly urged to consult the following websites for additional information on plagiarism and how to avoid it:

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_plagiar.html
http://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/polisci/integrity/quiz/

Academic misconduct in any form is unacceptable and suspected violations will be pursued aggressively.

7.2 Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend every meeting. Any absences without substantive reason (in the judgment of the instructor) will adversely affect your final grade. Regardless of the reasons for absence, students are responsible for the whole content of the course.

8. Office Hours: Email is the preferred way of reaching the instructor. You may also phone my office during regular business hours. If you would like to have a conversation outside of business hours, please email to arrange an appointment. My email address and phone number are given at the top of the syllabus.
9. Submission of Work

9.1 Work should be submitted electronically in an email attachment as a Microsoft Word or Rich Text file, to andersjb@stthom.edu


This is how my Final Project should appear:

9.3 Use this label format in three places:
   a. In the topic of the email;
   b. As the name of the file
   c. In the header on page one (1) of the paper, placed in the top left hand corner.

9.4 Rationale for the format: This format will organize each student’s work under his/her own name in my files, and facilitate my retrieval of each document without having to re-label it.

10. Calendar of Classes:

   The graduate class meets on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings form 7:00pm to 9:45pm for the duration of the Summer I session as follows:

   Week One  May  19
              20
              22

   Week Two  May  26 Memorial Day – No Class
              27
              29

   Week Three June  02
                  03
                  05

   Week Four  June  09
               10
               12

   Week Five  June  16 Final Exam