FC 5301-FC (2266) / FC 5301-CE (2265)
Faith and Dominant American Culture

Course Syllabus

Semester: Spring, 2018
Professor: Donald S. Nesti, CSSp, nesti@stthom.edu, 713-942-5069
Course Number: FC 5301-FC (2266) / FC 5301-CE (2265)
Class Time: Saturdays, 9:00 am–noon, Malloy Hall 013 (01/20/2017 – 05/05/2017)
(No class on March 17-Spring Break; or March 31-Holy Week)

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION
The greatest challenge of the Church in America is to assist all the Baptized, The People of God, to live lives that reflect the relationship between their dual citizenships – as Catholics and as Americans. To do so, we must enter into a New Evangelization. This course will seek to assist students in developing interpretative skills which will permit them to appreciate the strengths and challenges of the dominant American way of life, both in its philosophical foundations and its practical implications: its vision, its values, representative character types, institutions, expected patterns of behavior and symbols in relation to a Catholic Christian worldview. Throughout the course, students will be involved in a reflective, participative process necessary in seeking the common good through the incarnation of the Gospel in the American context as they live life in the Spirit.

2. TOPICAL OUTLINE

2.1 Faith, Culture, Faithful Citizen
2.2 The Roots of the American Way of Life: Introduction to Five Cities
2.3 Genius of Christianity; Life of Middle Ages; Reformers’ Drum
2.4 Constitution of Church and State; Salutary Neglect; English Eighteenth-Century Intellects
2.5 Declaration and Constitution
2.6 The American Worldview and its Fruits: Primacy of the Individual over Community; Pursuit of Happiness, the historical conversation; culture and character; Three Traditions – Three Languages
2.7 Private Life
2.8 Public Life
2.9 Expanding the Vision: Contrasts and building blocks; bringing the Catholic Voice to the conversation; Human Person:
   - Individualism vs Individuality in Community
   - Authority vs Authorship
   - Truth and Consequences
   - Immediacy vs Mediation
2.10 Pursuit of Happiness: Life, Liberty
   - Success
   - Freedom
   - Justice
2.11 Foundations of Society
   - Covenant vs Contract
   - Lifestyle Enclaves vs Community
2.12 The Participative Life
- Democratic Republic
- Integrating personal and civic life
- Living personal, civic, and political life
- Practicing civic (public) and political life
  - Living in a Company of Strangers
  - Ten Expectations

2.13 Synthesis
- Bringing the Catholic Voice to the American Dream
- Participation in the New Evangelization
- Being and Becoming American Catholics

2.14 Integration

2.15 Readings Assigned for each Class:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Overview</th>
<th>Reading Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-Sat</td>
<td>Jan 20</td>
<td><strong>Foundations for Course Objectives:</strong></td>
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<td>• Faithful Citizenship Letter - What is faithful citizenship?</td>
<td>Faithful Citizen Letter from Bishops</td>
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<td>• Vatican II</td>
<td>Dei Verbum (2, 3)</td>
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<td>• Faith and Culture (DV reference). Worldview founded on perceptions of God, person, and world; response to mystery of God. Receiving faith from and living in community; salvation in community; relationship between faith and culture within systems; aspects of culture</td>
<td>Gaudium et Spes (43-60)</td>
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<td>• GS - Essential elements of Human Person</td>
<td>Evangelii Nuntiandi (17-19)</td>
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<td>• EN</td>
<td>Novo Millennio Inuente (43)</td>
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<td>2-Sat</td>
<td>Jan 27</td>
<td><strong>The Roots of the American Way of Life:</strong></td>
<td>Roots of American Order, Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4</td>
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<td>• Need for order: Create order to bring about freedom and justice; how to live in society; right relationship with God and community</td>
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<td>• Law and Prophets: Moral law – a given in the minds of founders and prophets</td>
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<td>• The Greek World</td>
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<td>• The Roman Tension - virtue and power</td>
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<td>3-Sat</td>
<td>Feb 3</td>
<td>The Roots of the American Way of Life:</td>
<td>Roots of American Order, Ch. 5, 6, 7</td>
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<td>- Genius of Christianity</td>
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<td>- Light of Middle Ages</td>
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<td>- Reformers’ Drum</td>
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<td>4-Sat</td>
<td>Feb 10</td>
<td>The Roots of the American Way of Life:</td>
<td>Roots of American Order, Ch. 8, 9, 10</td>
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<td>- Constitution of Church and State</td>
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<td>- Salutary Neglect</td>
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<td>- English 18th Century Intellects</td>
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<td>5-Sat</td>
<td>Feb 17</td>
<td>Birth of a Nation:</td>
<td>Roots of American Order, Ch. 11</td>
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<td>- Declaration and Constitution</td>
<td>Declaration of Independence</td>
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<td>Constitution of the United States</td>
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<td>John Courtney Murray</td>
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<td>6-Sat</td>
<td>Feb 24</td>
<td>Habits of the Heart – Focus on the Self:</td>
<td>Habits of the Heart, Intro, Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Pursuit of Happiness</td>
<td>David Brooks</td>
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<td>- Culture and Character</td>
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<td>- Finding One’s Self (Private Life)</td>
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<td>- Three Traditions – Three Languages</td>
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<td>7-Sat</td>
<td>Mar 3</td>
<td>Habits of the Heart – Individualism:</td>
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<td>- Love and Marriage</td>
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<td>- Reaching Out (social media)</td>
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<td>- Individualism</td>
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<td>- Private Life</td>
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<td>8-Sat</td>
<td>Mar 10</td>
<td>Habits of the Heart – Public Rights and Contracts:</td>
<td>Habits of the Heart, Ch. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11</td>
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<td>- Public Life</td>
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<td>Mar 17</td>
<td>NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK</td>
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<td>9-Sat</td>
<td>Mar 24</td>
<td>MID-TERM SYNTHESIS PAPER DUE</td>
<td>Two Columns</td>
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<td>The Saving Message of the Gospel:</td>
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<td>- Expanding the Vision</td>
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<td>- GS – Human Person</td>
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<td>- Authority vs Authorship</td>
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<td>- Truth and Consequences</td>
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<td>- Immediacy vs Mediation</td>
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<td>Mar 31</td>
<td>NO CLASS – HOLY WEEK</td>
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<td>10-Sat</td>
<td>Apr 7</td>
<td>Beatitude - Pursuit of Happiness:</td>
<td>The Beatitudes – Matthew 5</td>
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<td>• The Beatitudes</td>
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<td>• Success</td>
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<td>• Freedom</td>
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<td>• Justice</td>
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<td>11-Sat</td>
<td>Apr 14</td>
<td>Negotiating the Tensions within Dual Citizenship:</td>
<td>Two Columns</td>
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<td>• Covenant vs Contract</td>
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<td>• Lifestyle Enclaves vs Community</td>
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<td>• Church vs Church</td>
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<td>• Institutions vs Institutions</td>
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<td>12-Sat</td>
<td>Apr 21</td>
<td>The Participative Life:</td>
<td>Sacrosanctum Concilium Healing the Heart of Democracy (Palmer)</td>
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<td>• Sacrosanctum Concilium</td>
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<td>• Democratic Republic: Citizenship &amp; Voice</td>
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<td>• Healing the Heart of Democracy</td>
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<td>13-Sat</td>
<td>Apr 28</td>
<td>The Participative Life, continued</td>
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<td>14-Sat</td>
<td>May 5</td>
<td>Synthesis Discussion:</td>
<td>Evangelii Gaudium</td>
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<td>• Bringing the Catholic Voice to the American Dream</td>
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<td>• Evangelii Gaudium: Encounter, Dialogue, Discernment</td>
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<td>• Being and Becoming American Catholics</td>
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<td>15-Sat</td>
<td>May 12</td>
<td>FINAL EXAM:</td>
<td>The focus of the presentation must be:</td>
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<td>• Group Integrating Presentations</td>
<td>• Content: to manifest a synthesis of material covered in such a way as to reflect personal appropriation and integration</td>
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<td>• Implications for one’s professional or ministerial role</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Clarity of presentation</td>
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<td>• Ability to stay in timeline (length of time to be determined by number of group assignments)</td>
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3. **PEDAGOGICAL METHOD**
Lecture by professor; presentations by students on assigned matter, followed by discussion. In each segment of the lectures, students will be asked to share their reflections of the material in light of their own experience.

4. **REQUIREMENTS**

4.1 **Attendance:** Regular, punctual attendance and preparation for class. Role will be taken at each class session. With the exception of emergencies, students must inform the professor of their absence prior to the class.

4.2 **Mid-term synthesis paper** of course to date. Paper should be seven (7) pages, double-spaced, New Times Roman 12 font, one-inch margins and header at top with name, course #, and date; pages numbered at bottom. **Due at the beginning of class on March 24, 2018.**

Any delay in submission of papers without express permission from the professor prior to the due date of the paper, will result in an automatic reduction of one letter grade from the determined grade of the paper.

4.3 **Final Exam:** Group Presentations (Sat., May 12, 2018, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)
Criteria for assessing/grading final integrating presentations:

- Content: to manifest a synthesis of the material covered in such a way as to reflect personal appropriation and integration
- Implications for one’s professional or ministerial role
- Clarity of presentation
- Ability to stay in timeline (length of time to be determined by number of group assignments)

5. **GRADING**
Final grade for the course will be determined on the basis of the following:

- (30%) - Class attendance and quality of participation (includes two online sessions)
- (30%) – Mid-term Synthesis Paper
- (40%) - Final Examination: Integrating Presentation
  - Each person will receive two grades for the Final Exam which will be averaged together to determine the Final Examination Grade:
    - Individual Grade: Each person will receive an individual grade for his/her personal contribution in the presentation
    - Group Grade: A grade will be given to the presenting group as a whole
6. **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY** *(University of St. Thomas Policies & Procedures, Student Handbook, Section 3.)*

1. **Definition**

   Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:
   - Cheating on an examination or test, for example by copying from another’s paper or by using unauthorized materials before or during the test;
   - **Plagiarism**, which one represents as one’s own the work of another, whether published or not, without acknowledging the precise source;
   - Knowing participation in the academic dishonesty of another student even though one’s own work is not directly affected;
   - Any conduct which reasonable persons in similar circumstances would recognize as dishonest in an academic setting.

2. **Penalty**

   The penalty for an incident of academic dishonesty is, at the discretion of the professor, either a mark of zero for the work in question or the grade of an “F” for the course.

7. **REQUIRED READINGS**


8. **SUPPLEMENTAL READING**

   - Brooks, David.

9. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


Murray, John Courtney. *We Hold These Truths: Catholic Perspectives on the American


