



SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY

Madrid

Semester	Fall 2017
Course	THEO-3420 Women and God: Feminist Theology
Classroom:	PRH 8
Class Days and Time	MW14:30–15:45
Prerequisite(s)	THEO-100
Credit(s)	3
Professor	Dr. Carlos A. Segovia
Professor's e-mail	carlos.segovia@slu.edu
Office	SIH 315
Office hours	TR 11:00–12:00 (and by appointment)

1. Course purpose and objectives

This course is designed to offer a broad understanding of the issues and implications of contemporary feminist theology at the crossroads of poststructuralist philosophy and postcolonial theory.

Students who successfully complete the course will have achieved the following learning objectives:

- to understand the ways in which the feminine and the sacred have become intertwined in history, as well as the causes and effects of their estrangement
- to canvass the main results achieved in the contemporary feminist study of religion
- to critically assess the current intersecting of feminist theology, poststructuralist philosophy, and postcolonial theory
- to determine, by one's own lights, how to better deal with all the aforementioned issues

2. Course description

In the early years of contesting patriarchy in the academy and religious institutions, feminist theology often presented itself as a unified front, a sisterhood. The term “feminist theology,” however, is misleading. It suggests a singular feminist purpose driven by a unified female cultural identity that struggles as a cohesive whole against patriarchal dominance. Upon closer inspection, the voice of feminist theology is in fact a chorus of diverging perspectives, each informed by a variety of individual and communal experiences, and an embattled scholarly field, marked by the effects of privilege and power imbalances. This complexity raises an important question: How can feminist theologians respect the irreducible diversity of

women's experiences and unmask entrenched forms of privilege in feminist theological discourse?

Accordingly, the course divides into six sections:

- INTRODUCING OUR TOPIC
- PRE-MODERN TEXTS AND CONTEXTS
- FROM MODERN FEMINISM TO FEMINIST THEOLOGY
- REINTERPRETING SEX, SIN, AND DESIRE
- THEORISING/CONTESTING POWER
- AFTERTHOUGHTS AND CONCLUSIONS

To study and discuss over the aforementioned topics, readings from the textbook and several other writings, analyses of works of art and artefacts, as well as the visioning of relevant videos, will be suggested in advance.

3. Textbook

The text for the course is Margaret D. Kamitsuka, *Feminist Theology and the Challenge of Difference*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

It is required and available at SLU Madrid bookshop.

Nevertheless, a Kindle edition can be purchased at www.amazon.com

4. Supplementary bibliography:

- Joseph Campbell. *Goddesses: Mysteries of the Feminine Divine*. Novato, CA: New World Library, 2013.
- Riane Eisler. *The Chalice and the Blade: Our History, Our Future—Updated with a New Epilogue*. New York: HarperCollins, 2011.
- Susan Frank Parsons, ed.. *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Theology*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Mary McClintock Fulkerson and Sheila Briggs, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theology*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Kwok Pui-Lan. *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005.
- Rosemary Radford Ruether. *Goddesses and the Divine Feminine: A Western Religious History*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2005.

5. Students' requirements and grading rationale – with a note on attendance

In this course final grades are calculated as a weighted average of three scores: two exams and participation. The scores are weighted as follows:

Midterm exam:	33.33%
Final exam:	33.33%
Participation:	33.33%

Exams: The exams must be taken on the dates assigned (see Section 6 below). Violations of this policy will result in the loss of a grade point (from B to C, for example) in all but the most exceptional cases.

Participation: This component of your final grade will be based on oral exercises and presentations and commitment to the class workshops and discussions.

Please note that, as a student in this course, you are required to adhere to the university's Academic Honesty Policy. Cheating, falsification, and plagiarism are strictly forbidden. Plagiarism is the intentional representation of someone else's thoughts or words as if they were one's own. Any violation of this policy will result in an F for the pertinent academic exercise. A detailed statement of the policy may be found at http://spain.slu.edu/academics/academic_advising/docs/Academic_integrity.pdf.

Seven or more absences FOR ANY REASON constitute an unrecoverable loss of course content and will result in an F for the course. Mobile phones, computers, and tablets are to be switched OFF in class. Students are expected not to interrupt class by leaving the room and returning during the class period.

6. Course calendar

Note: The days scheduled for the students' presentations are marked with an asterisk ()*

1. INTRODUCING OUR TOPIC

Rethinking religion – and the feminine	Sept. 4
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2. PRE-MODERN TEXTS AND CONTEXTS

Antigone	Sept. 6
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Diotima	Sept. 11
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Esther	Sept. 18
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*Eve	Sept. 20
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3. FROM MODERN FEMINISM TO FEMINIST THEOLOGY

Women's experience as the source of feminist theology	Sept. 25
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Decentering race and sexuality	Sept. 27
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• WORKSHOP # 1 / <i>A living goddess</i>	Oct. 2
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4. REINTERPRETING SEX, SIN, AND DESIRE

*Sex Oct. 4

*Sin Oct. 9

The desire of the divine Oct. 11

— M I D T E R M E X A M Oct. 16

• WORKSHOP # 2 / *Did YHWH have a wife?* Oct. 18.

5. THEORISING/CONTESTING POWER

The maleness of God Oct. 18

The Christian cross Oct. 20

• WORKSHOP # 3 / *Women and the (western) Church* Oct. 25

*The Muslim veil Oct. 30

• WORKSHOP # 4 / *Islam in women perspective?* Nov. 6

Moving beyond exclusivism Nov. 8

*Rethinking solidarity Nov. 13

• WORKSHOP # 5 / *Ecofeminism, Christianity, and the Soul* Nov. 15

• WORKSHOP # 6 / *Gyn/Ecology: The Meta-Ethics of Radical Feminism I* Nov. 20

..... *II* Nov. 22

6. AFTERTHOUGHTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Session # 1 Nov. 27

Session # 2 Dec. 2

Session # 3 Dec. 4

Session # 4 Dec. 11

Session # 5 Dec. 13

— F I N A L E X A M (1 5 : 3 0) Dec. 14

Please bear in mind the following dates, as well:

Sept. 17	Last day to drop a class without a grade of W and/or add a class Last day to choose Audit (AU) or Pass/No Pass (P/NP) options
Oct. 12	Holiday (University closed)
Oct. 13	Holiday (University closed)
Oct. 16	Last day to submit Transfer Application for spring semester
Oct. 30	Last day to drop a class and receive a grade of W
Nov. 1	Holiday (University closed)
Nov. 2	Registration for Spring 2018 semester begins
Nov. 9	Holiday (University closed)
Dec. 6	Holiday (University closed)
Dec. 8	Holiday (University closed)

Note: Campus and course announcements will often be handled by e-mail. Students should check their "@slu.edu" e-mail regularly.

7. Guidelines for taking your exams and preparing your presentations

Your midterm exam will consist of a multiple-choice quiz relative to sections I-III of the programme (see Section 6 above). In turn, in your final exam you will be asked to formulate a question relative to sections III-VI of the programme and to briefly elaborate on it with the help of two concepts of your choice; you will be allowed to bring your class and home notes to the final exam.

Students' presentations are mandatory. Further indications on how to prepare them will be provided in due course.

8. Academic integrity

Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors. The mission of Saint Louis University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity." Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care and community service via which SLU embodies its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern.

The governing University-level Academic Integrity Policy can be accessed on the Provost's Office website at <https://www.slu.edu/the-office-of-the-provost/academic-affairs-policies>. Additionally, SLU-Madrid has posted its academic integrity policy online: <https://www.slu.edu/madrid/academics/student-resources/academic-advising/policies-and-procedures#43>. As a member of the University community, you are expected to know and abide by these policies, which detail definitions of violations, processes for reporting violations, sanctions and appeals.

The professor will review these matters during the first weeks of the term. Please direct questions about any facet of academic integrity to your faculty, the chair of the department of your academic program or the Academic Dean of the Madrid Campus.

9. Collection of student work for assessment

Saint Louis University - Madrid Campus is committed to excellent and innovative educational practices. In order to maintain quality academic offerings and to conform to relevant accreditation requirements, the Campus regularly assesses its teaching, services, and programs for evidence of student learning outcomes achievement. For this purpose anonymized representative examples of student work from all courses and programs is kept on file, such as assignments, papers, exams, portfolios, and results from student surveys, focus groups, and reflective exercises. *Thus, copies of student work for this course, including written assignments, in-class exercises, and exams may be kept on file for institutional research, assessment and accreditation purposes.* If students prefer that Saint Louis University - Madrid Campus does not keep their work on file, they need to communicate their decision in writing to the professor.

10. Students with special needs

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.

University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Academic Dean's Office (San Ignacio Hall) or by going to <https://www.slu.edu/madrid/campus-life/student-services/disability-services>.

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations **must** contact Disability Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Once successfully registered, the student also **must** notify the course instructor that they wish to access accommodations in the course. Please contact Disability Services at disabilityservices-madrid@slu.edu or +915 54 58 58, ext. 230 for an appointment. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Once approved, information about the student's eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors via email from Disability

Services. For more information about academic accommodations, see "Student Resources" on the SLU-Madrid webpage.

Note: Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one are encouraged to contact Disability Services.

11. Title IX statement

Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g. sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX deputy coordinator, Marta Maruri, whose office is located on the ground floor of Padre Rubio Hall, Avenida del Valle, 28 (mmaruri@slu.edu; 915-54-5858, ext. 213) and share the basic fact of your experience with her. The Title IX deputy coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the SLU-Madrid's Counseling Services on the third floor of San Ignacio Hall (counselingcenter-madrid@slu.edu; 915-54-5858, ext. 230) or Sinews Multipletherapy Institute, the off-campus provider of counseling services for SLU-Madrid (www.sinews.es; 917-00-1979). To view SLU-Madrid's sexual misconduct policy and for resources, please visit the following web address: <http://www.slu.edu/Documents/Madrid/campus-life/SLUMadridSexualMisconductPolicy.pdf>.