

PMIN 203: Christology

Winter 2026

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Office Hours: Mondays 2:00–3:00; Wednesdays 10:30-11:30, and by
Appointment

This syllabus is a draft and nearly all aspects of it are subject to change. I promise not to change the required course texts, though.

Please note that the final syllabus will take precedent over any and all aspects of this one (including assignments, due dates, and policies), even if a student has made plans based on the draft, even if a student is confused about which syllabus to follow.

Times, Dates, Locations

Wednesdays 6:00–9:00pm. In person and online.

Course Description

An introduction to contemporary Catholic Christology. This course will examine Jesus Christ as an historical figure and object of faith and, as such, the Christian answer to the human situation. Course work will center on Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom of God and will treat of his history through the Resurrection. A foundational Christology course; 4 units.

Learning Goals

This course focuses on two specific learning goals of the GPPM: 1A and 3A.

- **Goal 1:** Students will gain a broad theological foundation that will undergird inquiry into a select area of concentration. (theological knowledge)
 - **Objective A.** Students will demonstrate an understanding of Fundamental Theology, Christology, Ecclesiology, Ethics, Hebrew Bible, and the New Testament according to the competencies articulated by each of these areas.

- **Goal 3:** Students will become competent leaders dedicated to serving the Church and to creating community in parish and other pastoral settings. (leadership skill)
 - **Objective A.** Students will employ historically informed knowledge of the tradition to assess theological positions and pastoral issues.
- **Goal 5:** Students will become prepared ministry professionals able to function effectively in a diverse global religious environment. (diversity fluency)
 - **Objective A.** Students will describe and address cultural differences in Christian practice.

Course Components:

Class Participation: Active participation is essential to this class. Weekly class sessions will involve some presentation from the professor, but will mainly be an opportunity for student discussion of issues that are raised by the week's readings. *Each student should come to class sessions with one to three questions (from the readings, or just germane to the week's topic) that he or she would like to be sure we discuss.*

Reading Reflections: For every class with a reading due, students will write a brief (500–750 words) reflection on the reading(s) guided by the questions: *Who does the author say that Jesus is? (Objective 5A) How does the author's answer to this question relate to the biblical witness to and/or the church's teaching about Jesus? (Objective 1A) and How might this answer benefit people in my own ministry context? (Objective 3A).*

Final Project: Your final project will be related to the course material, and should be pastorally appropriate for your present or future ministry.

Option One: A Research Paper

This option consists of a research paper exploring an academic topic of interest, directly focused on one or more central Christological theme explored in the course with attention to theological meaning and historical development (**Learning Objectives 1A and 3A**, and, ideally **5A**). The paper should represent original research, insights, and interpretation, drawing from four to six scholarly resources beyond assigned course texts, and be 2500–3000 words in length (not including the cover page and bibliography).

Option Two: A Pastoral Project for a Specific Parish Community

Through the creation of the pastoral project, the student will demonstrate theological competency and pastoral application of the course readings, lectures, class discussions, and especially study and competency in the Christological teaching of the Catholic Church and contemporary applications of it (**Learning Objective 1A** and, ideally, **5A**).

This project has two parts: 1) all the elements needed for the pastoral project and 2) a paper (1500–2000 words) that articulates the Christological themes in the project. The paper will also include a pastoral analysis of the parish community and presentation of the hoped-for effectiveness of the pastoral project. (**Learning Objective 3A**).

Required Reading

- Edward R. Hardy, ed., *Christology of the Later Fathers*. Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox, 1954. ISBN: 978-0664241520
- Jon Sobrino, *Jesus the Liberator: A Historical-Theological View*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1993. ISBN: 0-88344-930-7
- Elizabeth Johnson, ed. *The Strength of Her Witness: Jesus Christ in the Global Voices of Women*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 2016. ISBN: 978-1626981720

Other readings will be linked to on Camino

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Part 1 – Biblical Foundations

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|----------------|---|
| Wednesday 1/7 | Biblical Foundations: Jesus: Proclaimer of the Reign of God The synoptic Gospels Sobrino, chapter 4, Excursus 1, chapter 7. |
| Wednesday 1/14 | Biblical Foundations: Jesus: Revealer of the Father Gospel of John Sobrino, chapter 5–Excursus 2, chapters 8–9 |

Part 2 – Conciliar Christologies

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|----------------|---|
| Wednesday 1/21 | Fourth Century Developments I: Athanasius and Nicaea Athanasius, <i>On the Incarnation of the Word</i> |
|----------------|---|

Creed of Nicaea

- Wednesday 1/28 Fourth Century Developments II: The Cappadocians and Constantinople
Gregory of Nazianzus, *Theological Orations* 3 and 4.
Gregory of Nyssa, *Answer to Ablabius*
Creed of Constantinople
- Wednesday 2/4 Fifth Century Developments
Tome of Leo
Definition of Chalcedon
Maximus the Confessor, "The Two Wills of Christ in the Garden."

Part 3 – Contemporary Proposals

- Wednesday 2/11 Anglo/European Men
Karl Rahner "On the Theology of the Incarnation," "The Two Basic Types of Christology."
Bernard Lonergan *Christology Today: Methodological Considerations*
- Wednesday 2/18 Latin American Liberation Theologies
Sobrinho, chapters 1–3, 10¹
Maria Pilar Aquino, "Jesus Christ: Life and Liberation in a Discipleship of Equals"
Bingemer – Masculinity, Femininity, and the Christ
- Wednesday 2/25 Black and Womanist Theologies
James Cone, "Who is Jesus for Black Theology?"
Dolores Williams "Black Women's Surrogacy Experience and the Christian Notion of Redemption."
M. Shawn Copeland, "Marking the Body of Jesus, the Body of Christ."
- Wednesday 3/4 Asian Perspectives
Kyung – Who is Jesus for Asian Women?

¹ Sobrinho is a Spaniard, and, so European, but his life and ministry have been devoted to the Salvadoran people, and his is a classic articulation of Latin American Liberation Theology.

Febella – Christology from Asian Women’s Perspective
Kwok – Engendering Christ

Wednesday 3/11 African Perspectives
Hinga – Jesus Christ and the Liberation of Women in Africa
Oduyoye – Jesus Christ
Okure – The Significance Today of Jesus’ Commission to Mary Magdalene

Final Projects Due by Wednesday March 18, 11:59pm
Absolute Deadline for all work: Friday March 20, 5:00pm

Policies

Grading Scale

The grade for this course will be calculated as follows:

30% – Class Participation
30% – Reading Reflections
40% – Final Project

Attendance

Regular attendance is an important part of any class, and is factored into your participation grade.

Attendance is all the more essential in a course like this where we meet only once a week. In general, this course observes the following policy:

- Students in the Dioceses of San Jose, San Francisco, and Oakland are required to attend class in person. Students in other locations may attend via Zoom.
- I will gladly excuse absences if they are for documented legitimate causes (medical treatment, jury duty, University mandated travel, bereavement). Please submit documentation from a medical professional, the appropriate University office (e.g., Student Life, Athletics), clerk of court, etc. Whenever possible, students should let me know about absences beforehand. In general, work and other classes are not grounds for an excused absence. (In other words, you can ask, but the answer may be no.)
- I will overlook one excused absence each quarter.

| Grade | Percentage |
|-------|------------|
| F | 0–59.99 |
| D- | 60–62.99 |
| D | 63–66.99 |
| D+ | 67–69.99 |
| C- | 70–72.99 |
| C | 73–76.99 |
| C+ | 77–79.99 |
| B- | 80–82.99 |
| B | 83–86.99 |
| B+ | 87–89.99 |
| A- | 90–93.99 |
| A | 94 – 100 |

- Excused absences beyond the first will result in a half letter grade reduction of your course grade (not just participation).
- Any unexcused absence will result in a half letter grade reduction of your course grade.
- If your absences (excused or not) are interfering with your ability to effectively participate in course we will discuss the possibility of withdrawal in order to protect you from a failing grade.

Academic Integrity

The Academic Integrity pledge is an expression of the University's commitment to fostering an understanding of—and commitment to—a culture of integrity at Santa Clara University. The Academic Integrity pledge, which applies to all students, states:

I am committed to being a person of integrity. I pledge, as a member of the Santa Clara University community, to abide by and uphold the standards of academic integrity contained in the Student Conduct Code.

Academic integrity is part of your intellectual, ethical, and professional development. I expect you to uphold the principles of this pledge for all work in this class. I will clarify expectations on academic integrity for all assignments and exams in this course. If you have questions about what is appropriate on any assignment, please let me know before you hand in work. For more resources about ensuring academic integrity in your work, see this [LibGuide on Academic Integrity](#).

Please note that I do not permit the use of generative AI under any circumstances for any assignment at any stage of your work on the assignment. [Assignments that violate this policy will receive zero credit.](#)

Late Work

If some emergency arises which makes compliance with the due date policies spelled out in the syllabus impossible in a given instance, the student must discuss the situation *in advance* with the instructor and work out some alternative. Students who miss class(es) because of involvement in university-sanctioned activities or because of the fulfillment of a legal obligation must make arrangements with the instructor for alternative assignments.

Late assignments will receive a half letter grade less than they earn for each day they are late. They will not be accepted if more than a week late excepting major personal emergencies, which must be documented. Extensions are given only in the most exceptional of circumstances. If it's a circumstance that's happening, it's unlikely to be

exceptional. **Please note that I will not accept any work after my final deadline of 5:00pm on Friday March 20.**

Writing support

Any student who is experiencing difficulty meeting the program's expectations for written work can receive support at SCU's Writing Center Center, called "The HUB." The Writing Center is located on the lower level of the Santa Clara University Library/Learning Commons and has online support. for additional information, please see the Writing Center website (<http://www.scu.edu/provost/writingcenter/>)

Classroom Environment

In a class like this, our success or failure turns upon your engagement with the material. The point is less "you come here and acquire a bunch of facts to remember (at least until the exam)," and more, "we come together and engage with each other and ideas." We're not learning information so much as we are learning how to think well. For this reason, your participation in class is essential for the class's success. The process of our class discussions will have more to do with what you learn than any information the professor might give you in a lecture.

So, in the interest of having the best possible classroom discussions, I expect students to conduct themselves in a professional, courteous, and respectful manner at all times. We can summarize this with four basic rules for our classroom:

Be Attentive, Be Intelligent, Be Reasonable, Be Responsible.

To put a finer point on some of this: it is especially important that respect and courtesy be extended to your classmates, because in order to truly engage with ideas, our classroom needs to be a safe place to do so. To that end:

- a. We will be discussing potentially controversial ideas (including religion), which may be challenging to your own thoughts, beliefs, and opinions. It is important that even when we disagree with each other, or the material (or whatever) that we do so in a respectful manner. So there will be no disparaging comments about anyone on the basis of religion (or lack of religion), sex/gender/orientation, ethnicity, political viewpoints, and so on. We will be discussing (and even arguing) about ideas, not people.
- b. Think of the classroom as an opportunity to try on new ideas. You're not bound to anything you say in the classroom (though see point a above, about what sorts of remarks are permitted). Feel free to experiment with and abandon ideas.

- c. A safe space means that you are free from personal attack or marginalization. It does not mean that you are free from hearing or engaging with ideas with which you disagree, or even ideas that you find offensive.
- d. Respectful conversation means allowing others the time and opportunity to share their viewpoints. If you are monopolizing the conversation, I will ask you to give others a chance.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct (Title IX)

Santa Clara University is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment free of all forms of discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual violence.

Please know that as a faculty member, California law and University policy require me to report any information brought to my attention about incidents of sexual harassment or misconduct to the SCU [Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX](#), (408) 551-3043. This includes, but is not limited to, disclosures in writing assignments, class discussions, and one-on-one conversations.

Should you need support, SCU has dedicated staff trained to assist you in navigating campus resources, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and filing a formal complaint with the University or with law enforcement. Please see the [Student Resources](#) page for more information about reporting options and resources.

If you or someone you know has experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence and wishes to speak to a **confidential** resource who is not required to report, please contact one of the following SCU resources for support:

- [SCU Wellness Center](#)
- [CAPS](#)
- Any individual (clergy, counselors) acting in a professional capacity for which confidentiality is mandated by law.

I am happy to help connect you with any of these resources.

Accommodations for Pregnant and Parenting Students

Santa Clara University is committed to creating and maintaining a non-discriminatory learning environment for all students, including students who are pregnant or parenting. Absences due to medical conditions relating to pregnancy and childbirth will be excused for as long as deemed medically necessary by a student's doctor, and

students will be given the opportunity to make up missed work. Students needing accommodations can often arrange accommodations by working directly with their instructors, supervisors, or departments. Students needing accommodations can also seek assistance with accommodations from the [Office of Accessible Education](#) (OAE) or from the [Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX](#). This [resource page](#) from the Title IX Office provides information regarding support for students and employees who are pregnant or parenting.

Office of Accessible Education

If you have a documented disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact the Office of Accessible Education oea@scu.edu, <https://www.scu.edu/oea> as soon as possible to discuss your needs and register for accommodations with the University. If you have already arranged accommodations through OAE, please be sure to request your accommodations through your my OAE portal and discuss them with me during my office hours within the first two weeks of class. To ensure fairness and consistency, individual faculty members are required to receive verification from the Office of Accessible Education before providing accommodations. OAE will work with students and faculty to arrange proctored exams for students whose accommodations include double time for exams and/or assistive technology.

Students with approved accommodations of time and a half should talk with me as soon as possible. The Office of Accessible Education must be contacted in advance (at least two weeks' notice recommended) to schedule proctored examinations or to arrange other accommodations.

In light of shifting health advisories related to COVID-19, exams may be administered online. Students with approved testing accommodations should contact me (at least two weeks' notice recommended) prior to the exam date to notify me of their intent to use their testing accommodations on the upcoming exam to ensure their accommodations are effectively implemented.

Safety Measures

In order to meet our learning objectives, we will adhere to the highest standards for safety and mutual respect. University policy allows faculty to require the use of face coverings in their classrooms. I may request that students wear face coverings occasionally or throughout the academic term. Failure to comply with my request is a violation of the [Student Conduct Code](#), which I will need to report. As we are online

this quarter, this will not apply for our class, but since it's required to have this statement in the syllabus, it is still included here.

Use of Classroom Recordings

All online class meetings will be recorded and made available on Camino. As is stated in the [Student Conduct Code](#): "...Dissemination or sharing of any classroom recording without the permission of the instructor would be considered "misuse" and, therefore, prohibited. Violations of these policies may result in disciplinary action by the University. At the instructor's discretion, violations may also have an adverse effect on the student's grade."

Copyright Statement

Materials in this course are protected by the United States copyright laws. I am the copyright holder of the materials I create, including notes, handouts, slides, and videos. You may make copies of course materials for your own use and you may share the materials with other students enrolled in this course. You may not publicly distribute the course materials without my written permission.

Technology Support

SCU can provide you with technical assistance, and you can also reach out to our providers directly for questions. For Camino (SCU's branded instance of Canvas) support, contact caminosupport@scu.edu or call 408-551-3572.

You can also find support resources via the help button within the Camino platform (on the left-hand navigation) to access after-hours support via email, chat, or phone.

For Zoom assistance, contact Media Services at mediaservices@scu.edu or 408-554-4520. You can also get support from the [SCU website](#) or the [Zoom Help Center](#) website.

For SCU network and computing support, contact the SCU Technology Help Desk at techdesk@scu.edu or 408-554-5700. They can provide support for MySCU Portal, Eduroam, Duo, hardware and software issues, and more.