TITLE: The Life and Thought of Dietrich Bonhoeffer

PROFESSOR: Jeff Nowers  jeff.nowers@utoronto.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is an exploration of the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) and an examination of his select writings. The course investigates the wider socio-political and theological contexts of Germany’s Weimar Republic, the ascendency of Hitler and Nazism, the Confessing Church, and the covert resistance to Hitler that Bonhoeffer later joined. The course also asks how these realities, together with Bonhoeffer’s writings, inform our 21st-Century North American context of Christian existence.

COURSE OUTCOMES:

Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

- understand the basic contours of Bonhoeffer’s evolving theological project and grasp the fundamental arguments of his major writings
- understand the wider socio-political and theological contexts in which Bonhoeffer was operative
- critically assess Bonhoeffer’s theological insights vis-à-vis the demands of Christian living and ministry today

PREREQUISITES:

None

TEXTS:

- supplementary readings to be posted on Blackboard or distributed in class

WRITTEN & ORAL ASSIGNMENTS/TESTS:

Short presentations and discussion of readings; take-home multiple-choice exam; 12-page research paper
CLASSROOM PROCEDURES:

Lectures; discussion of readings (seminar format); video (film)

GRADING PROCEDURES:

- seminar presentation and/or general participation: 20%
- multiple-choice exam: 40%
- research paper: 40%

ATTENDANCE:

Required

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

- All TST students are subject to U of T’s “Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters.” Copies of the code are available at <www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>. Please take special note of the section on plagiarism. For a helpful set of guidelines on how to avoid plagiarism, see <www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>. This is part of a more general—and equally helpful—website that provides advice on academic writing (<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice>).

PROGRAM OUTCOMES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE OUTCOMES: KNOWLEDGE OF THE AREA OF CONCENTRATION</th>
<th>COURSE ELEMENT</th>
<th>PROGRAM OUTCOMES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students successfully completing this course will be able to:</td>
<td>This outcome will be achieved through these course elements:</td>
<td>This course outcome corresponds to this aspect of the Basic Degree Learning Outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>• understand the basic contours of Bonhoeffer’s evolving theological project and grasp the fundamental arguments of his major writings</td>
<td>• lectures</td>
<td>• Religious heritage</td>
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<td>• readings</td>
<td>• Cultural context</td>
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<td>• seminar presentations</td>
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<td>• multiple-choice exam</td>
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<td>• critically assess</td>
<td>• lectures</td>
<td>• Personal well-being,</td>
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Bonhoeffer’s theological insights vis-à-vis the demands of Christian living and ministry today

• readings
• seminar presentations
• research paper

vocational formation, and spiritual practices
• Leadership in ecclesial and public contexts

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<tr>
<th>COURSE OUTCOMES: ABILITY WITH SCHOLARLY TOOLS AND SKILLS*</th>
<th>COURSE ELEMENT</th>
<th>PROGRAM OUTCOMES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge</td>
<td>course as a whole</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
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<td>2. Research and Scholarship</td>
<td>research paper, seminar presentations</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
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<td>3. Level of Application of Knowledge</td>
<td>research paper, seminar presentations</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
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<td>4. Professional capacity/autonomy</td>
<td>research paper, seminar presentations</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
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<td>5. Level of communication skills</td>
<td>research paper, seminar presentations</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Awareness of limits of knowledge</td>
<td>course as a whole</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
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SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Critical editions of all of Bonhoeffer’s writings have been published in the 16-volume series Dietrich Bonhoeffer Werke (DBW). Fortress Press is publishing English translations of each volume (DBWE).


* Please see the Degree Level expectations for the Province of Ontario.
COURSE OUTLINE:

Monday:  
- overview and discussion of course and syllabus
- Germany from the Weimar Republic to the Third Reich
- Bonhoeffer’s family and intellectual formation
- *Sanctorum Communio* and *Act and Being*
  [read De Gruchy, 43-97; Schlingensiepen, 1-37]

Tuesday:  
- Bonhoeffer in the U.S.
- Bonhoeffer as pastor (Barcelona, Berlin)
- student presentation(s)
- *Christology*
  [read De Gruchy, 98-124; Schlingensiepen, 38-113]

Wednesday:  
- conversion: “from the phraseological to the real”
- 1933: beginnings of the Confessing Church
Thursday:  
- Bonhoeffer and the Jews
- Bonhoeffer and pacifism
- student presentation(s)
- Ethics
  [read De Gruchy, 221-268; Schlingensiepen, 177-233]

Friday:  
- Bonhoeffer as conspirator
- new theological ideas in prison
- student presentation(s)
- Letters and Papers from Prison
  [read De Gruchy, 269-297; Schlingensiepen, 234-368]