



SCU GRADUATE PROGRAM IN PASTORAL MINISTRIES

PMIN 208

THE HEBREW BIBLE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

SPRING 2024

ONLINE CLASS: THREE SATURDAY ZOOM SESSIONS
AND WEEKLY ZOOM MEETINGS

Basic Course Information

Instructor: J. David Pleins

Email: jpleins@scu.edu

Office Location and Hours: Zoom by appointment

Meeting Times: (Zoom link to be provided to course participants)

Saturday Zoom Sessions: 4/13, 5/11, 6/15, 9:00 am-3:00 pm (PST)

Tuesday Zoom Sessions: 6:00-8:00 pm (PST)

Course Description and Themes

Central Focus: This class invites students into conversations about the Hebrew Bible's concern for social justice in relation to the world today and each student's ministry.

Saturday Retreat Sessions: The Saturday sessions are structured as "retreats" devoted to three major themes and will involve a group and an individual presentation:

- (1) The biblical **quest for justice** as a ministry issue.
- (2) The linkage between the biblical vision for justice and **Catholic social teaching**.
- (3) The on-going **struggle to bring hope** to a suffering world.

Weekly Zoom Conversations: Using a discussion format based on four online module mini-projects/papers, the weekly Zoom sessions engage four key biblical perspectives on social justice and relate these perspectives to practical ministry situations. (See the last page of this syllabus for the course schedule.)

- (1) **Unmasking** the Powers: The Bible in Times of Dislocation
- (2) **Envisioning** Exodus Freedom: Building a Just Society and Covenant Community

(3) **Protesting** the Plight of the Poor: Let Justice Roll Down!

(4) **Acting** in Solidarity: Suffering and Hope

Required Texts: (New / Used / Rent New / Rent Used / Ebook)

Walter Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*. Second Edition. (Fortress Press, 2001). ISBN 978-0-8006-3287-8.

Stephen Mitchell, *The Book of Job* (Harper, 1987). ISBN 978-0060969592.

Recommended Texts: (New / Used / Rent New / Rent Used / Ebook)

Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures (Jewish Publication Society, 1985). ISBN 978-0827603660.

The Scripture Documents: An Anthology of Official Catholic Teachings (Liturgical Press, 2002). ISBN 978-0814625910.

Course Schedule (see the linked Camino Pages for readings and assignments)

I. Unmasking the Powers: The Bible in Times of Dislocation

April 13: Saturday #1: Ministry and the Quest for Justice

April 16: No Class Session

April 23: Exilic Realities: Social Dislocation Then and Now

II. Envisioning Exodus Freedom: Building a Just Society and Covenant Community

April 30: Oppressive Pharaohs and Exodus Freedoms: Liberation Then and Now

May 7: Preparation Session for Group Presentations

May 11: Saturday #2: Scripture Meets Catholic Social Teaching

May 14: No Class Session

III. Protesting the Plight of the Poor: Let Justice Roll Down!

May 21: Prophetic Social Criticism: From Grief to Hope

IV. Acting in Solidarity: Suffering and Hope

May 28: The Book of Job: From Protest to Action

June 4: Consultations: Final Projects/Papers

June 11: Preparation Session for Presentations

June 15: Saturday #3: Partners in Suffering and Agents of Hope

SCU GPPM Learning Outcomes

Goal 1: Theological Foundation

Knowledge of the broad intellectual foundation for ministry in the areas of **scripture**, systematic and contextual theology, and spirituality; and incorporate **theological reflection** to enrich their ministerial practices across varying contexts.

Goal 2: Pastoral Proficiency

Familiarity with ministerial practices in various manifestations of church life, expressed in **concrete pastoral applications** which include discernment, compassion, and ministries of accompaniment.

Goal 3: Servant Leadership

A commitment to **identify injustices** and developing skills to work individually and in collaboration with other ministers, in **accompanying those in need and in service to the poor, the marginalized, and the alienated**, both within and outside the Church.

Goal 4: Diversity Fluency

Awareness of and critical engagement with how **one's own culture** influences ministry, and then to engage in ministries that build the community of Christ and are **sensitive to and respectful of all cultures and traditions, and individuals** who vary by **race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and dynamics of wealth, poverty, and power**.

Preparing for Zoom Sessions: Reading and Study Prior to Class Meeting

•**Camino Overview Page:** Every class session has an overview page on Camino. This page gives session information, the readings, background information on the topic, and the assignments.

•**Reading and Assignments Before Session:** The readings listed under each day's session should be read before that class. These readings will provide the basis for written assignments and class discussions. Note that the readings are a combination of "primary" sources (e.g., biblical texts), and "secondary," those of modern scholars (e.g., Brueggemann). Try to skim each reading if time is tight and focus on segments that appear to be most useful for your writing.

Course Website & Camino Page

Using Camino: A website on Camino forms the core of the course, providing ready access from on or off campus to the course syllabus and other overview materials. Camino is the University online learning management system. See "Where to Find the Readings" above for login directions. Course enrollment automatically adds our class to your list of classes on Camino. Camino is the repository for all course readings that are not in the required textbooks. Camino is also the site where you will upload your written work for this class. Please upload all work in Microsoft Word format so that the professor can use Track Changes to provide feedback.

Access Camino: When the reading is on the Camino course page, you can access Camino using your SCU user ID and password in one of three ways: directly from the Camino login page (<https://camino.instructure.com>), from the general SCU login page (<https://www.scu.edu/login/>), or from the Camino link on our course website.

Grading Percentages

- Class Participation/Contribution (attendance, in-class work, oral comments): 10%
 - Reflection Papers and Mini-Projects: 80%
 - Final Session Project: 10%
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Grading Scale: Mastery Scale and Proportional Points

Mastery Grading Scale: Please be aware that this class uses a **quality based scale** factored against three levels of quality. Each assignment will be given a number designation (3, 2, 1, 0) and the final grade will be calculated in relation to these numerical designations (as an average of the total quality factors received). For your convenience, the numerical grade is also given here in relation to its letter grade equivalent.

- 3 = Full Mastery Attained = A
- 2 = Approaching Mastery = B
- 1 = Not Yet (Requires Revised Assignment Material) = C
- Less than 1 = Has Not Achieved Mastery = F

Proportional Grading: Keep in mind that “3” points per paper/mini-project may seem rather small. Each paper could instead be 30, 300, or 3000 as the proportional math would not matter. However, bear in mind that each paper contributes proportionally to the total course mastery level and thus the final course letter grade!

Scale Percentages Related to Grades: According to the mastery scale used here: .66 is a B and .33 is a C since this is a mastery based scale and **not** the typical 100% scale where .80 is a B, .70 is a C, etc. A mastery scale is not curved grading despite the broad range of percentages.

Class Participation/Contribution

- **Discussion Contribution:** The theological exploration in this class occurs through dialogue rather than lecture. Thus, regular contributions to class discussions are expected. Class meetings can include brief lectures but will mainly be structured with periods of silent reflection, breakout groups for small-group conversation, and large group discussions.
- **Instructor’s Role:** The instructor is a guide raising questions for class exploration (with occasional lecturing) and not a sage dispensing answers through lecture. You may wish to select a different section of this course if this approach does not suit you. In this class, all informed opinions matter as well as knowledge based on ministry experience.
- **Assignment Completion:** Students are to complete the readings and Mini-projects/Papers in advance of the class for which they are assigned. Students are also encouraged to complete revisions suggested by the instructor to improve their level of mastery.

- **Zoom Attendance:** Engaged attendance and participation (with Zoom video on) is expected (see below for attendance policy). It is not a substitute for engaged attendance to watch a recording of the class; this will still count as an absence because you are not present to interact with and learn from your colleagues.
 - **Discussion Boards:** Engaged participation also includes making comments on the submissions of other students on the discussion board. These comments are posted prior to the class session.
 - **Class Participation/Contribution:** 10% of grade. (We will practice all learning objectives in class.)
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Assignments: Two Types

There are two types of assignments during the quarter (described below).

1. **Weekly Justice Mini-Projects/Papers:** There are 4 of these assignments.
 2. **Saturday Retreat Presentations:** 2 presentations (group, individual).
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Weekly Mini-Projects/Papers and Discussion Board Posts

Note that you submit the same material in two places each week!

- **Graded Assignment:** For the weekly Zoom sessions, you are to prepare and post your assignment for grading by the deadline (Paper/Mini-Project).
 - **Discussion Board Post and Comments:** You are also post your assignment in the Discussion Board and comment on the Papers/Mini-Projects of others in the class.
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Weekly Justice Mini-Project/Paper Options: 4 Projects/Papers, 13 Format Options

- **Overview:** Below you will find 13 Format Options for the weekly Mini-Projects/Papers. These formats offer a variety of ways to experiment with different approaches for grappling with the weekly readings and related theological questions. **Limit: No more than 2 projects/papers in any one format.**

- **Aim:** These Mini-Projects/Papers are intended to invite you to deepen your knowledge of the subject and for you to develop materials/activities that will be useful to you in your ministry/work.
- **Projects/Papers with a Purpose:** The weekly Mini-Projects/Papers are not intended to be “busy work” or a waste of your time: Remember, only you can make choices that matter to you in your learning and ministry! Consult with the instructor as needed.
- **Selection Guidelines:** Each week, **indicate the format number and category** you select. You may repeat formats throughout the quarter, but no more than three times for any format. This will ensure that you produce a range of ways to engage course issues. Focus on the Hebrew Bible, **not** the New Testament.
- **Content:** Papers are to be no more than 500 words long and the Mini-Projects should represent the equivalent amount of work. When referencing sources in papers, use fragment quotes from the readings (indicating source and page numbers) rather than whole sentence to economize.

Weekly Paper/Mini-Project Format Options: Indicate the Number and Title

- Format 1: **Workshop/Retreat** (Outline, Activities, Aims, PowerPoint).
 - Format 2: **Seasonal Retreat (or Session):** Lent, Advent, Triduum, etc.
 - Format 3: **Guided Meditation:** Based on Biblical Text (PowerPoint encouraged)
 - Format 4: **Artistic Expression:** Music, Painting, Film, Sculpture, Poetry
 - Format 5: **Scripture: Passage Study:** Specific Segment from One Biblical Book.
 - Format 6: **Scripture: Book Study:** Key Texts and Overall Themes.
 - Format 7: **Scripture: Theme/Issue Study:** Across Several Books.
 - Format 8: **Scripture: Lectio Divina Reflection**
 - Format 9: **Scripture: Homily** (Based on the Lectionary)
 - Format 10: **Class Learning Activity/Unit:** K-12, University, Campus Ministry
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 - Format 11: **Research Paper:** Use External Commentaries, Articles, Books
 - Format 12: **Personal Reflection:** Put Your Own Experience and the Course Issues in Dialogue
 - Format 13: **Free Choice:** Invent a Setting or Format Not Found in Formats 1-12!
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Saturday Retreat Presentations (Goal 1, A and Goal 4, A-B).

- **Saturday #2: Scripture and Catholic Social Teaching:** For the second Saturday, students will develop a group presentation related to Catholic Social Teaching.
 - **Saturday #3: Final Presentation:** For the third Saturday, students will develop individual presentations on an aspect of the Hebrew Bible and Social Justice of their choosing developed along the lines of the course Paper/Mini-Project formats.
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Writing Assistance

It is expected that all written assignments reflect graduate level writing. Writing assistance is available for all students. Please contact The Hub, SCU's Writing Center, at www.scu.edu/hub/. Please seek appropriate writing assistance before submitting assignments. It is expected that all students use at least the free version of Grammarly to be sure that punctuation and grammar are addressed before submitting a paper to either the instructor or the writing mentor. The GPPM is happy to offer the assistance of writing mentors who work for the GPPM to be sure that your writing reflects your best possible work. They are skilled, knowledgeable, and experienced having worked with many students to help them to shine. We think you will find them easy to work with and responsive to your requests given enough time to assist you. Writing mentors can be reached by contacting Margaret Schroth at 408-813-1351 or margaretschroth@hotmail.com

The GPPM is happy to offer the assistance of Dorothy Suarez who works for our program to help to be sure that your writings reflect your best possible work. She is skilled, knowledgeable, and experienced having worked with many students to help them to shine. We think you will find her a delight to work with. Dorothy can be reached at 408-828-9204 or GPPM.Dorothy@gmail.com

Evaluation of the Course

You will have a chance to assess the course at the end of the course through an online numerical evaluation, a narrative evaluation, and a Student Assessment of Learning Gains (SALG).

Policies & Protections for Students

For All Relevant Course-Related University Policies Follow this Link:

<https://www.scu.edu/provost/faculty-affairs/other-policies-procedures/teaching-expectations/>

Attendance

If you're sick or some event prohibits participation, please notify the professor in advance by email. You are allowed one absence with no impact to your grade. If you miss three classes (30% of our meetings), it will not be possible to pass the course. The class will not be recorded for viewing unless a student gives several days' advance notice of the absence. Note that viewing a recorded class is not a substitute for your engaged presence in class and will be marked as a graded absence (except in the case of illness).

Zoom Policy

Zoom etiquette and practices are indicated on the Camino pages for each session. In general, this is a participatory class that expects video to be on during the session.

Use of Technology in & Recording of Class

The Student Handbook prohibits video- or audio-recording or streaming of private, non-public conversations and/or meetings, inclusive of the classroom setting, without the knowledge and consent of all recorded parties. If you require the recording of classroom lectures, discussions, simulations, and other course-related activity for a documented disability, please make arrangements through Disabilities Resources (see below) and discuss this need with the instructor. If for some reason other than disability you would like to record the class, please seek the permission of the instructor first, and then of the class.

Academic Integrity

Students at SCU pledge themselves to Academic Integrity, as part of the University's commitment to fostering a culture of integrity (www.scu.edu/academic-integrity). 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. You are expected to uphold the principles of this pledge for all work in this class. The standards of the University preclude any form of cheating, plagiarism, or falsification of data. A student who commits any offense against academic honesty and integrity will receive a failing grade for the course without a possibility of withdrawal. An offense may also dictate suspension or dismissal from the University, and the matter will be brought to the attention of the Graduate Program Director. It is each student's responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism and what the consequences

are. Plagiarism is the practice of claiming, or implying, original authorship by incorporating material from someone else's written or creative work, in whole or in part, without adequate acknowledgment (footnotes or citations constitute adequate acknowledgment). Unlike cases of forgery, in which the authenticity of the document is in question, plagiarism is concerned with the issue of attribution. To avoid plagiarism, you simply need to attribute all ideas that are not your own to the true source, using the citation style appropriate for our class (see the style sheet on the course website). Try to avoid heavy citation of sources in your work, especially direct quotation. If your paper is mostly other people's words and ideas, your own original thought—your digestion, paraphrase, organization and synthesis of ideas—won't be visible. If you've cited the sources adequately, this would not be plagiarism, but it would be a low-scoring paper because there's not enough of your thought to evaluate.

AI Use Statement (Artificial Intelligence)

Bearing in mind the previous statement on Academic Integrity, note that the use of AI such as ChatGPT and other generative programs is permitted in this course with limitations. AI of this sort can be useful for generating ideas and outlines when you are stuck. But the overwhelming percentage of any work you submit must be self-created and independently researched apart from an AI writing generator. Spellcheck and grammar check are certainly recommended! To be clear about AI usage in assignments, you must report in your project/paper the AI generator that you used and which elements resulted from the use of AI (much as you would cite a research source). Bear in mind that supposed sources generated by AI are often simply made up by the platform (essentially fake sources) designed to fill out the writing and may not actually exist or be quoted accurately when they do exist! It falls to the student to do actual research into the sources and to ensure that they are quoted accurately.

Copyright Statement

Materials in this course are protected by United States copyright laws. Unless otherwise noted, I [the instructor] 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.

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, <http://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 myOAE 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 an exam date to notify me of their intent to use their testing accommodations on the upcoming exam to ensure their accommodations are effectively implemented.

Title IX Protections

SCU provides reasonable accommodations to students who are pregnant, have recently experienced childbirth, and/or have medical needs related to childbirth. Pregnant and parenting students can often arrange accommodations by working directly with their instructors, supervisors, or departments. Alternatively, a pregnant or parenting student experiencing related medical conditions may request accommodations through Disability Resources. SCU has a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, domestic/dating violence or stalking, we encourage you to tell someone promptly. For more information, please consult the University's Gender-Based Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policy (<http://bit.ly/2ce1hBb>) or contact the University's EEO and Title IX Coordinator, Belinda Guthrie (408.554.3043, bguthrie@scu.edu). Reports may be submitted online through www.scu.edu/osl/report or anonymously through Ethicspoint: <https://www.scu.edu/hr/quick-links/ethicspoint/>.

Wellness Statement

(from SCU Associated Student Government to address the heightened anxiety of many of our student):

Santa Clara University is a Jesuit Institution wherein the value of cura personalis, translated to care for the whole person, holds a place of incredibly high importance. Caring for oneself in both a physical and mental sense is paramount to a student's ability to live an enjoyable life at Santa Clara University, excel in academia, and reach their full potential in all aspects of their personhood.

- Students should always strive to get an appropriate amount of sleep each night; the recommended amount of sleep for adults ages 18-25 is 7-9 hours.

- Visit the Wellness Center's (currently located at 852 Market Street) website to see what resources are available on campus to aid and promote student well-being at <https://www.scu.edu/wellness/>.
- Students are given six free counseling sessions with Counseling and Psychological Services — it is highly encouraged you utilize these sessions should you find yourself in need of someone to talk to about anything at all. The number to make an appointment with CAPS is (408) 554-4501. Visit the Counseling and Psychological Services website to learn more about these sessions and more at <https://www.scu.edu/cowell/caps/>.
- If you are sick, please check in with your professor regarding your ability to attend class or lack thereof. By continuing to attend class while feeling sick, you are not only harming your own health, but likely the health of those around you as well. If you are feeling ill, we advise you visit Cowell Health Center during the operating hours of 8:30 am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday. Visit the Cowell's center website to learn more about the various services this health center provides at <https://www.scu.edu/cowell/>.

Accommodations for Pregnant and Parenting Students

Santa Clara University does not discriminate against any student on the basis of pregnancy or related medical conditions. 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 Office. This resource page from Title IX provides information for students and faculty regarding pregnancy rights.

Student Resource Pages on GPPM website

Library Use (how to access materials)
Technology (how to use Zoom, Camino)
Writing (the Hub, a Style Sheet for Papers)
Hispanic Ministry (networks, print and online)
Career Resources (Portfolium, Handshake, LinkedIn, the Career Center)