



Course Tag Reflection Exemplar
Ethics, Integrity, and Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

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REL 156: Christianity

Identify the course learning objectives in the syllabus that are clearly aligned to Ethics, Integrity, and Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion and respective assignment(s).

Broaden students' understanding of Christianity's diversity, complexity, significance, and pervasiveness in the Western world.

Reflect on, analyze, and articulate Christianity's role in dynamic relationships between power, inequality, identities, and social structures.

Explain the connection between specific assignment(s) and Ethics, Integrity, and Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion. At least 30% of the course grade must engage students in the selected competency for the course to be tagged.

Guided by lecture, readings, and two documentary films, students do two exams focused on the fourth goal, which account for half of their grade (50%). Their participation in class discussion over the eight weeks of the course that cover this topic also counts towards this goal. In other words, this goal covers over half of course time. In the first exam, which focuses on biblical criticism, students are asked to establish the relationships between the ancient Jews and the peoples and cultures that they encountered. As issues of identity, culture and power are central in these lectures, students are asked to be sensitive to these issues in the exam. A subsequent class assignment and discussion on African-American Christians' readings of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament)—particularly as represented in the writings of Frances E. W. Harper and Martin Luther King, Jr.—reinforces this study and introduces the intersection of religion, politics, economics and culture in our ensuing study of Jesus and his time. In that study the religion of the Jesus movement serves, on its own terms, as the centerpiece for an argument for ethics, integrity, diversity and inclusion in a world defined by oppressive power, inequality, exclusion and injustice, namely, the occupation of ancient Palestine by the Romans and the conflict that that occupation instigated between the Jews and the Romans and the Jewish masses and their religious leaders. The second exam, a theological exercise, builds upon this study by asking students to use the meaning of the nascent Christian message of justice emerging out of Jesus' movement to read one of three works of art, representing different times, peoples, and conflicts, namely: W. Eugene Smith's photograph "Tomoko in Her Bath," representing social and environmental injustice at the hands of corporate and political power; Francisco

Goya's "The Third of May," representing the Spanish people's opposition to Napoleon's occupation of Spain at the invitation of the Spanish crown; and Sidney Carter's "A Tribute to Black History," an indictment of American politics, government, society and religion during slavery in the United States. All three works are chosen because they explicitly evoke Christian symbols yet are not in any way dogmatic.

Describe in detail the instructional strategies faculty use to intentionally teach Ethics, Integrity, and Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion in the course.

Lecture and class discussion—that is, lecture interspersed with discussion—is one of the primary modalities for facilitating this goal because this is the basic conversation that allows for an exchange of ideas, questions, and comments between the professor and the students. Small group discussions, both informal during class and formal in oral and written assignments (e.g., exam "podcasts"), is another modality. They allow students to "try on" these ideas amongst themselves without the presence of the professor, which creates an entirely different dynamic, especially if students seize the opportunity. Students' presentations and discussion of papers, such as the assignment on Harper and King mentioned above, is a third modality. Here, students get to try out their understanding of the goal in a low stakes way, because it is a fraction of the participation grade, yet it is in a context that is student-led before the professor. Students can hear each other's thoughts and the professor's immediate response to them in real time, rather than having to wait for comments. The use of documentaries and the ensuing class discussion is a fourth modality. It operates in a similar way as the third. With all of these strategies and exercises, students are given the opportunity to become aware of something they did not know, as well as to become aware of themselves, whether they self-identify as Christians or not.

Describe the feedback tool(s) faculty use to support students' competency development on Ethics, Integrity, and Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion.

Students receive written comments on their exams and papers, which they can use to improve and further discuss with the professor and/or the TA. As indicated above, they also receive immediate feedback from the professor during class discussion and after presentations, in terms of questions and/or comments, especially during summary remarks.