

Course Syllabus

TRP2172 – The Human Person in Orthodox Tradition

Trinity College
Toronto School of Theology
May/June (Summer) 2021

May 4, 2021

Instructor Information

Instructors:	Dr Paul Ladouceur Kate McCray, MDiv (Princeton) and ThM (St Vladimir's Seminary)
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Course Identification

Course Number:	TRP2172
Course Name:	The Human Person in Orthodox Tradition
Course Location:	Online only
Course Schedule:	Mainly asynchronous, with optional live sessions Mondays and Thursdays, 7-9pm, beginning Monday 10 May 2021 at 7pm EDT.
Prerequisites:	None

Course Description

Pastoral care in the Orthodox Christian tradition begins with a thorough understanding of the human person in the Scriptures and in Holy Tradition. Only with an understanding of how we are created by God and what He has called us to become can we identify and diagnose the sicknesses and disorders of the fallen state and apply the appropriate spiritual cure.

This course provides theological foundations for the practice of pastoral ministry in the Orthodox tradition by introducing students to the most significant teachings in applied Orthodox theological anthropology, beginning with the Cappadocian fathers, Maximus the Confessor and others. The course will also explore some contributions by modern scholars such as Yannaras, Zizioulas, Nellas, Mantzaridis, Behr, Vlachos, and Breck who have enriched the study of the human person in Orthodox tradition and informed applied pastoral care. This course will also compare and contrast practical anthropological ideas developed by western, modern era philosophers such as Nietzsche, Freud and Sartre. The course will also explore some modern bioethical, technological and social issues that pose new questions regarding the human person and have direct implications for the practice of pastoral ministry.

Students will be evaluated on their class participation and two short papers (8-10 pages).

Course Resources

Required Course Readings

All required readings –patristic texts, articles and book extracts – will be provided via the course portal, which students can choose to view online or download and print.

Course Website

- Quercus: <https://q.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701>.

Course Learning Objectives

Students successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following outcomes.

(A) IN RESPECT OF GENERAL ACADEMIC SKILLS

- to work with both primary and secondary sources and to gather, analyse and prepare materials for reflection and engaged class discussion
- to improve their reading and critical thinking skills
- to write essays integrating analysis and reflection on primary and secondary sources

(B) IN RESPECT OF THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTENT OF ONE OR MORE THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINES

- to identify major patristic teachings in applied Orthodox anthropology as the basis for the practice of pastoral ministry
- to identify major anthropological ideas of modern era philosophers which have an implication for pastoral care, and compare and contrast modern anthropological models to those of the patristic era
- to identify and critically discuss potential problems/benefits of applying within the practice of pastoral care the patristic anthropological model to the modern day understanding of “the self” in light of pressing sociological, bioethical and even political issues

(C) IN RESPECT OF PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

- to manage his or her own learning
- to demonstrate behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility

(D) IN RESPECT OF MINISTERIAL AND PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

- to demonstrate qualities and skills necessary for ministry, further study, and community involvement
- to exercise initiative, personal responsibility, and accountability in both personal and group contexts
- to work effectively with others

Evaluation

Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on the following areas:

- **Class participation (30%):** regular and vigorous participation in weekly online discussion forums, based on readings, will be expected every week
- **Mid-course assignment (15%)**
- **Final paper OR take-home exam (30%)**
- **Applied project (25%)**

All written assignments must be completed and returned by email by the dates scheduled for individual assignments or at the latest by 15 August 2021.

Grading System

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalents	Grade Point	Grasp of Subject Matter	Other qualities expected of students
A RANGE: Excellent: Student shows original thinking, analytic and synthetic ability, critical evaluations, and broad knowledge base.				
A+	90-100	4.0	Profound and Creative	Strong evidence of original thought, of analytic and synthetic ability; sound and penetrating critical evaluations which identify assumptions of those they study as well as their own; mastery of an extensive knowledge base
A	85-89	4.0	Outstanding	
A-	80-84	3.7	Excellent	Clear evidence of original thinking, of analytic and synthetic ability; sound critical evaluations; broad knowledge base
B RANGE: Good: Student shows critical capacity and analytic ability, understanding of relevant issues, familiarity with the literature.				
B+	77-79	3.3	Very Good	Good critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; good familiarity with the literature
B	73-76	3.0	Good	
B-	70-72	2.7	Satisfactory at a post-baccalaureate level.	Adequate critical capacity and analytic ability; some understanding of relevant issues; some familiarity with the literature
FZ	0-69	0	Failure	Failure to meet the above criteria

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

Late work. Arrangements must be made in advance for work submitted after the deadline for individual assignments. If circumstances (such as medical or compassionate difficulties) require that work be turned in late, contact the instructor at the earliest possible juncture to agree on a new timeline and other details.

Students who for exceptional reasons (for instance, a death in the family or a serious illness) are unable to complete work by this date may request an extension (SDF = 'standing deferred') beyond the term. An SDF must be requested from the registrar's office in the student's college of registration no later than the last day of classes in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/grading.htm>) or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871>). A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm.

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>.

Back-up copies. Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

Obligation to check email. At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. *Students should check utoronto email regularly* for messages about the course. The instructor may send messages to all students via the e-mail facility in Quercus, which uses student utoronto e-mail addresses. The utoronto e-mail mailbox may be configured

to forward incoming correspondence to an external e-mail address if wanted. Students should ensure that forwarding works properly so that they do not miss e-mail sent to the utoronto e-mail address.

Anti-harassment policy. As we all adjust to online classes and lectures, and increasingly participate in virtual learning environments, students are reminded of the expectation that we all demonstrate respect for one another. As outlined in the Student Code of Conduct, the University of Toronto does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities especially when based on grounds protected under the Ontario Human Rights Code. The University of Toronto recognizes its commitment to human rights, equity and inclusion and acknowledges the disproportionate impact COVID-19 has on various parts of our community. COVID-19 is not isolated to people of any particular ethnic origin, place of origin or race. Equity, diversity and respect must remain integral as we continue to transition during these challenging times. The institution will monitor and address discriminatory comments or behaviour including on U of T's online platforms and classrooms.

In accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, no person shall engage in a course of vexatious conduct that is directed at one or more specific individuals, and that is based on the race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age marital status, family status or disability. This includes:

- Racial slurs or “jokes”
- Insults due to racial identity
- Online posts of cartoons or pictures, in a workplace or school that degrade persons of a particular racial group
- Name-calling due to race, colour, citizenship, place of origin, ancestry, ethnic background or creed
- Pseudonyms or handles that are inappropriate about ancestry, colour, citizenship, ethnicity, place of origin, race, or religion.

The University of Toronto's Equity Offices remain available to students to provide support on equity issues that arise as a result of COVID-19. Students are encouraged to support one another and the University's commitment to human rights and our values of diversity, inclusion, and respect in managing any inappropriate comments or disruptive behaviours. If you experience or witness inappropriate comments or behaviours in your classes, you are encouraged to contact your instructor. If you can, take and share a screenshot of the inappropriate content with your instructor so they can follow-up with you and address the conduct.

Course Schedule

The first live session will be held on Monday 10 May 2021, beginning at 7pm EDT via Zoom. The Zoom link will be sent to registered students a few days prior to the first live session.

I – THE HUMAN PERSON IN THE BIBLE AND THE FATHERS

Unit 1 (Monday 10 May) – The Human Person in Scripture / Patristic Anthropology 1

Topics

- Personhood in the Bible (selected texts)
- Irenaeus of Lyons
- Origen

Unit 2 (Thursday 13 May) – Patristic Anthropology 2

Topics

- Basil the Great
- Gregory of Nyssa

Unit 3 (Monday 17 May) – Patristic Anthropology 3

Topics

- John of Damascus
- Maximus the Confessor

II – CHALLENGES TO CHRISTIAN ANTHROPOLOGY

Unit 4 (Friday 21 May) – Modern Challenges 1

Topics

- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels
- Charles Darwin

Unit 5 (Tuesday 25 May) – Modern Challenges 2

Topics

- Friedrich Nietzsche
- Sigmund Freud

III – MODERN ORTHODOX THEOLOGY OF THE PERSON

Unit 6 (27 May) – Modern Orthodox Theology of the Person 1

Topics

- Nicolas Berdyaev
- Pavel Florensky
- Sergius Bulgakov
- Vladimir Lossky

Unit 7 (31 May) – Modern Orthodox Theology of the Person 2

Topics

- Christos Yannaras
- John Zizioulas
- Olivier Clément
- Kallistos Ware

Unit 8 (3 June) – Modern Orthodox Theology of the Person 3

Topics

- Contemporary Orthodox debates on the human person: Person-Nature and Person-Individual
- Jean-Claude Larchet, Nikolaos Loudovikos, Hierotheos Vlachos, Aristotle Papanikolaou, Norman Russell, Alexis Torrance, Stelios Ramfos

IV – ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND HUMAN WELLBEING

Unit 9 (7 June) – Mental Illness and Wellness

Topics

- Orthodox moral subject – isolation and individualism vs integrated models of personhood: group therapies and community supports
- Dependency as morally neutral
- Orthodox psychotherapy in North America
- Orthodox Episcopal Assembly video series

Unit 10 (10 June) – Congenital and Acquired Disabilities

Topics

- Dependency and genetic uncertainty
- Identity essentialism and becoming human

Unit 11 (14 June) – Trauma and Moral Injury

Topics

- War, conscription, institutionalized conflict, Orthodoxy on just war, aftermath for soldiers, implications for chaplaincy care
- Duress in the Orthodox moral tradition; Orthodox psychotherapy with victims of sex-trafficking; rebuilding as icons

Unit 12 (17 June) – End of Life Care

Topics

- Suicide, ethic of a good death, critiques of euthanasia, mourning death of children
- Social supports (critiques of single parent family structures), monastic culture and obligations of care; history of the hospice movement
- Funeral rites, memory, dementia (meaning of being held in God's memory)

Please note that this syllabus is subject to change in accordance with the regulations in the TST *Basic Degree Handbook*.