

Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

Course Profile

Course # and Title RHTH/CC 421: Theology of James Cone

Instructor: Marvin Wickware

Semester/Year: J-term 2021

Short Description (1-2 Sentences):

Through a survey of Cone's major texts, as well as consideration of key influences on his work and scholars who have carried on his theological legacy, this course offers students an opportunity to develop and express their own contextually sensitive theological insights.

Delivery Mode:

Online (synchronous class sessions, synchronous small group sessions, asynchronous lecture videos)

Synchronous sessions will take place between 9am and 1pm (Central time) on the following Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays: 1/4, 1/6, 1/8, 1/11, 1/13, 1/15, 1/20, and 1/22. Whole group sessions will take place at the beginning and end of that time (60-75 mins each). In between the whole group sessions, students will have small group meetings with the instructor, with the remainder of that time available for individual asynchronous work.

Course **Rationale** and Description

(Why do we offer this course? Which of LSTC's degree program learning outcomes does it address?):

James Cone was one of the most influential US American Christian theologians of the past century. His work is both important in its theological insight and an invaluable model for those ministers and scholars who would witness to divine justice in the midst of systems of exploitation and violence, particularly in relation to antiblack racism. Through a survey of Cone's major texts, as well as consideration of key influences on his work and scholars who have carried on his theological legacy, this course offers students an opportunity to develop and express their own contextually sensitive theological insights.

This course addresses the following learning outcomes for each degree program.

MDiv learning competencies:

1) Personal and Spiritual Formation: Conveys a developed sense of being a person created and called to live ethically in community; (ELCA) Conveys a developed sense of being created and called to give witness to Jesus Christ, Trinitarian faith, care for creation, and community with human neighbors.

- Connects personal faith and public witness
- Reflects upon God's grace, justice, and mercy in one's own life and the life of the world

3) History & Theology: Draws the wisdom of our forebears in the faith in history and theology into active engagement with emerging challenges.

- Connects Christian tradition with contemporary knowledge and experience
- Creates and presents oral and written presentations that interpret particular religious heritages in their diverse expressions in ways responsible to their central texts

- Identifies criteria /norms used in own analysis and assessment
- Connects past texts and contexts to present ones
- Imparts results of historical and theological analysis

5) Cultural Context: Manifests the ability to know, interpret, and affect particular situations, values, and meanings through methodologically grounded historical, socio-cultural, ethical readings/analysis of one's own denomination and broadly cultural-historical traditions within and around each of these competencies.

- Speaks theologically and pastorally about structural inequalities present in society

MAM learning competencies:

1) Personal and Spiritual Formation: Conveys a developed sense of being a person created and called to live ethically in community; (ELCA) Conveys a developed sense of being created and called to give witness to Jesus Christ, Trinitarian faith, care for creation, and community with human neighbors.

- Connects personal faith and public witness
- Reflects upon God's grace, justice, and mercy in one's own life and the life of the world

3) History & Theology: Draws the wisdom of our forebears in the faith in history and theology into active engagement with emerging challenges.

- Connects Christianity, or other religious traditions, with contemporary knowledge and experience
- Creates and presents oral and written presentations that interpret particular religious heritages in their diverse expressions in ways responsible to their central texts
- Identifies criteria /norms used in own analysis and assessment
- Imparts results of historical and theological analysis

5) Cultural Context: Manifests the ability to know, interpret, and affect particular situations, values, and meanings through methodologically grounded historical, socio-cultural, ethical readings/analysis of one's own denomination and broadly cultural-historical traditions within and around each of these competencies.

- Speaks theologically and empathically about structural inequalities present in society

MA learning competencies:

1) Personal and Spiritual Formation: Conveys a developed sense of being a person created and called to live ethically in community.

- Connects religious commitments, public witness, and academic pursuits

3) History & Theology: Draws the wisdom of our forebears in the faith in history and theology into active engagement with emerging challenges.

- Connects religious traditions with contemporary knowledge and experience
- Creates and presents oral and written presentations that interpret particular religious heritages in their diverse expressions in ways responsible to their central texts
- Identifies criteria /norms used in own analysis and assessment
- Connects past texts and contexts to present ones
- Imparts results of historical and theological analysis

4) Cultural Context: Manifests the ability to know, interpret, and affect particular situations, values, and meanings through methodologically grounded historical, socio-cultural, ethical readings/analysis of one's own denomination and broadly cultural-historical traditions within and around each of these competencies.

Speaks theologically about structural inequalities present in society

Course Learning **Outcomes** (Learners will be able to):

(What *difference* will this course make to students' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and practices?)

Learners will be able to:

- 1) identify systematic theological loci and key questions pertaining to them
- 2) evaluate the relevance of James Cone's theological insights to their community
- 3) compare and contrast their key theological commitments with James Cone's theological insights
- 4) respond to a contemporary situation by drawing on both their own theological commitments and James Cone's theological insights

Strategies for Learning):

(How shall we go about achieving these outcomes?)

- Course readings
- Lecture videos
- Small group discussions
- Large group discussions
- Presentations: Each student will make a brief presentation on a course reading. These presentations will open our large group discussions, as their goal is to provide a foundation for the discussion of the readings. Presenters should aim to inspire discussion and highlight key themes in the course readings, rather than to provide a comprehensive treatment of those readings.
- Final project: Students will write a paper, sermon series, or other project that similarly engages with course ideas and content.

Assessment :

(How shall we know if we—students and instructors—have been successful in achieving the outcomes?)

- Written feedback on students' presentations and final project
- Class discussions
- Feedback sessions: At the end of the first week of the course, the instructor will take a small amount of class time to solicit feedback.

Bibliography:

Text Title	Author	ISBN# (Required)
<i>Black Theology and Black Power</i>	Cone, James H.	1570751579
<i>A Black Theology of Liberation</i>	Cone, James H.	1570758956
<i>The Cross and the Lynching Tree</i>	Cone, James H.	1626980055
<i>God of the Oppressed</i>	Cone, James H.	1570751587

Additional information: