

*“Morality is always the aim at that union of harmony, intensity, and vividness which involves the perfection of importance for that occasion. The codifications carry us beyond our own direct immediate insights.” (p. 14)*

*“Whether we destroy, or whether we preserve, our action is moral if we have thereby safeguarded the importance of experience so far as it depends on that concrete instance in the world’s history.” (p. 15)*

***Modes of Thought*** by A. N. Whitehead  
New York: The Free Press, 1968 paperback edition

### **Syllabus**

#### **“Process Theology and Ethics”**

**TH 317/417 (CST)**

**EC 317/417 (CST)**

**REL 317TH/REL 417TH (CGU)**

**Spring Semester 2006, Claremont School of Theology**

**Instructor: John M. Sweeney, Ph.D.**

**3 or 4 units, Wednesday 6:30 p.m.-9:30 a.m., Craig 110**

**Course Description:** An introduction to Process Theology as well as to some of the ethical approaches derivable from process theology. Applications of process ethics will be explored. Readings will include, but not be limited to, works by Whitehead, Cobb, Mesle, and Schlipp.

**Expected Readings:** Assigned readings will come from the following:  
(Other readings may be assigned as appropriate.)

*Adventures of Ideas* by A. N. Whitehead

*Ethics in John Cobb’s Process Theology* by P. C. Bube

*Modes of Thought* by A. N. Whitehead

*Postmodern and Public Policy* by J. B. Cobb, Jr.

*Process Ethics* by J. R. Gray

*Process Theology: A Basic Introduction* by C. R. Mesle

*The Philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead* edited by P. A. Schlipp

*What Is Process Theology?* by M. H. Suchocki

All items are on reserve in the Claremont School of Theology library, even the hard to find ones. Some items are on e-reserve.

**Contact Information:** Center for Process Studies, Lower Mudd  
909-621-5330; e-mail: [sweeney@ctr4process.org](mailto:sweeney@ctr4process.org)  
Office hour: by appointment

**Probable Schedule:** (Changes in the following schedule will be announced in class.)

- January 18: Syllabus; Introductory material; field trip to Center for Process Studies.  
January 25: Whitehead, *Modes of Thought, Part I*; written homework due.  
February 1: Suchocki, *What Is Process Theology?*; Mesle, *Process Theology: Introduction, Overview, & Parts I & II*; written homework due.  
February 8: Mesle, *Part III*; written homework due.  
February 15: Mesle, *Part IV*; Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas, Part IV*; written homework due.  
February 22: Schlipp, "Whitehead's Theory of Value," pp. 437-459 & "The Art-Process and the Aesthetic Fact in Whitehead's Philosophy," pp. 463-486; written homework due.  
March 1: Schlipp, "Whitehead's Moral Philosophy," pp. 561-618; written homework due.  
March 8: Gray, *Process Ethics*, pp. 1-49; written homework due; distribute Mid-Term Exam.  
**March 15: Spring Recess—No class.**  
March 22: Gray, pp. 51-89; written homework due; Mid-Term Exam due.  
March 29: Bube, *Ethics in John Cobb's Process Theology*, pp. 1-70; written homework due; presentations.  
April 5: Bube, pp. 71-113; written homework due; presentations.  
April 12: Bube, pp. 115-176; written homework due; presentations.  
April 19: Cobb, *Postmodern and Public Policy*, pp. 1-79; written homework due; presentations.  
April 26: Cobb, pp. 80-146; written homework due; presentations.  
May 3: Cobb, pp. 147-191; written homework due; presentations; distribute Final Exams.  
May 10: Final Exam period (to be confirmed); presentations; Final Exams due.  
May 12: Term papers due by 5:00 p.m.; please deliver to the Center for Process Studies.

**Grading:** In this course 1000+ points will be available.

Probable distribution of available points:

1. Daily Participation	= 220 pts.
2. Written Homework	= 280 pts.
3. Mid-Term Exam	= 40 pts.
4. Term Paper(s)/Project(s)	= 200 pts.
5. Presentation	= 80 pts.
6. Final Examination	= 80 pts.
7. Extra Credit	= 100 pts.
<u>Total</u>	<u>= 1000 pts.</u>

Probable Scale for 317:	675 + = A
(3 credits)	625 - 674 = B
	575 - 624 = C
	525 - 574 = D
	0 - 524 = F

Probable Scale for 417:	760 +	= A
(4 credits)	700 – 759	= B
	650 – 699	= C
	590 – 649	= D
	0 – 589	= F

Auditors are welcome and are expected to do the readings, attend class, and participate in both class discussion and small-group exercises.

1. **Daily participation** includes participation in class discussions, presentations, and small-group exercises. Small-group exercises can take a variety of forms. Among the possible forms for small-group exercises are quizzes, writing essays, and analyzing an item or some items based upon information contained in the assigned material.
2. **Homework** assignments, both reading and written, will be given. Written homework assignments are based upon the assigned readings. Both the due date and the specific assignment will be confirmed in class. Opportunity to discuss most homework assignments will be available during class time.

Each written homework assignment is worth up to 20 points and is due at the beginning of the designated class period. Each assignment is to be typed, using an appropriate style such as MLA or APA, and 500-750 words (2-3 pages) in length. Spelling and grammar are good and are included in each assignment of points. **Late written homework may not be accepted.** (*Note: Written homework turned in by students who arrive late to class is considered late homework and may not be accepted.*)

3. The **Mid-Term Exam** will be distributed on March 8, 2006 and is due at the beginning of class on March 22, 2006. This exam will consist of one set of two essay questions, from which one question is to be selected and discussed in detail. The essay must be typed, using an appropriate form such as MLA or APA, and be 1000-1250 words in length. Up to 40 pts. possible.
4. **Term papers** are due by 5:00 p.m. on May 12, 2006. Please deliver to the Center for Process Studies. Early term papers are appreciated. Each paper is to be either 3000-4000 words in length (12-15 pages) or 6000-8000 words (24-30 pages), typed, using an appropriate style such as MLA or APA. A 12-15 page paper is worth up to 100 points. A 24-30 page paper is worth up to 200 points. Spelling and grammar count. Each term paper topic must be approved by the instructor. (Please see Paper Evaluation Form on page 5 of this syllabus.)
5. **Presentations** can be made during class, beginning on March 29, 2006. For each presentation the student must provide a one-page outline for the other students, as well as a detailed outline for the instructor. The presentation, including a question and answer session, can range from 20 to 30 minutes in length. The topic must be approved by the instructor. Up to 80 points possible. (Please see Presentation Evaluation Form on page 4 of this syllabus.)

6. **Final Examination:** The Final Examination will be a take home exam worth up to 80 pts. The exam will be distributed on May 3, 2006 at the end of the last regular class meeting and is due at the beginning of the Final Exam period, most likely May 10, 2006. This exam will consist of four essay questions each, from which two questions will be selected and discussed in detail. Each response must be typed, using an appropriate form such as MLA or APA, and be 1000-1250 words in length. Up to 40 pts. per question; 80 pts.total.
7. **Extra Credit** opportunities will be available throughout the semester. See CPS Spring 2006 events schedule for possibilities.

Please see the Claremont School of Theology Spring 2006 Semester Course Schedule, the current Claremont School of Theology Catalog, and the Academic Advising Degree Handbooks for the general policies and procedures governing this course. (to wit—no plagiarism)

*“At the heart of the nature of things, there are always the dream of youth and the harvest of tragedy. The Adventure of the Universe starts with the dream and reaps tragic beauty. This is the secret of the union of Zest with Peace:--That the suffering attains its end in a Harmony of Harmonies. The immediate experience of this Final Fact, with its union of Youth and Tragedy, is the sense of Peace. In this way the world receives its persuasion towards such perfections as are possible for its diverse individual occasions.”*

*Adventures of Ideas* by A. N. Whitehead  
New York: The Free Press, 1967 paperback edition, p. 296.

### **PRESENTATION EVALUATION FORM**

STUDENT NAME _____	COURSE _____	
	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS EARNED
I. Introduction, including outline:	15	_____
II. Content:		
A. Logic:	10	_____
B. Clarity:	10	_____
C. Content:	30	_____
III. Conclusion/Summary:	15	_____
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>80</b>	_____

**PAPER EVALUATION FORM**

STUDENT NAME \_\_\_\_\_ COURSE \_\_\_\_\_

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS EARNED
<b>I. Technical Qualities</b>		
A. Spelling, punctuation, and grammar:	10	_____
B. Sentence & paragraph construction:	10	_____
C. Consistency of verb tenses; precision of words:	10	_____
D. Consistency of Form:	10	_____
<b>II. Organization and Content</b>		
A. Introduction:	10	_____
B. Logical Argument:	10	_____
D. Clarity of writing:	10	_____
E. Content:	20	_____
F. Conclusion:	10	_____
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>100</b>	_____

## Selected Bibliography: Process Thought and Ethics

- Belaief, Lynne, *Toward a Whiteheadian Ethics*. Lanham, MD: Univ. Press of America, 1984
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- \_\_\_\_\_. *Process Ethics: A Constructive System*. New York, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1984
- Cobb, John B., Jr. *Matters of Life and Death*. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Progressive Christians Speak: A Different Voice on Faith and Politics*.  
Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2003.
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Scientific Study of Religion, 1981. Part Two: Process Thought and Social Ethics, pp. 114-180.
- Dombroski, Daniel. *The Philosophy of Vegetarianism*. Amherst, MA: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1984.
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Postmodern Thought, ed. David Ray Griffin. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2004.
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A Process Philosophy of Religion*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001, pp. 285-319.
- Henning, Brian G. *The Ethics of Creativity: Beauty, Morality, and Nature in a Processive Cosmos*.  
Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005.
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*Process Studies* Vol. 31, no.2 (Fall-Winter 2002): 97-114.
- Lambert, Jean C. *The Human Action of Forgiving*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985.
- Palmer, Clare. *Environmental Ethics and Process Thinking*. Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1998.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Special Forum on Clare Palmer's *Environmental Ethics and Process Thinking*.  
*Process Studies*, Vol. 33 no. 1 (Spring-Summer 2004): 3-70; includes articles  
by John B. Cobb, Jr.; Timothy Menta; and Clare Palmer.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Another Response to Clare Palmer" by John B. Cobb, Jr.  
*Process Studies* Vol. 34 no. 1 (Spring Summer 2005)
- "Special Focus: Human Rights in a Process Perspective." *Process Studies* Vol. 33 no. 2  
(Fall-Winter 2004) 195-261; includes articles by Randall C. Morris, Lois Gehr Livezey, Warren  
Copeland, Douglas Sturm, and Franklin I. Gamwell.