

THEO5951 A Special Topic on Biblical Studies II

THE THEOLOGY OF FRIENDSHIP

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A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers a unique academic space for students to delve into the theology of friendship. As part of the “Special Topics on Biblical Studies,” it presents four distinct streams of thought—scriptural, philosophical, cultural, and ecclesial—making it a comprehensive exploration of this subject. Through reading, sharing, conversation, and reflection, students will engage with the classical idea of amity or friendship as an old-but-ever-new virtue that is relevant to the social presence of Christianity in such a world of enmity.

B. LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. To understand and reflect on the philosophical and intercultural backgrounds for friendship from diverse contexts.
2. To reflect on scriptural, theological, and philosophical bases for constructing the theology of friendship.
3. To critically engage with several issues related to the idea of Christian friendship.

C. REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to finish the related readings before each session. A deep reading should be reflected in class discussions and written papers. There are four elements for grading. Each student must fulfill all requirements.

1. **Attendance.** Students are expected to attend all sessions unless they have reasonable reasons, such as illness or family emergency. Each session will count for 1,5 points towards the final grade (total: 21 points).
2. **A final paper.** Each student is required to write a deep, reflective, and constructive paper. A 150-word paper proposal could be submitted to the instructor if you want. The point for the final paper is 40.
3. **A short video.** Each student (or a group of a maximum of 3 persons) must create a short video and present it to the class corresponding to the video's topic. A short discussion follows each presentation. Weight: 15 points.
4. **Short reflections.** Each student must submit 3 (three) short reflections at her/his selection, 400-500 words each. You can select which topics/sessions you want to write on your reflection papers, but the particular paper must be submitted before the corresponding session begins. The weight of each reflection is 8 points (total: 24 points).

Summary

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| 1. Attendance | 21 points (21%) |
| 2. Final paper | 40 points (40%) |
| 3. A short video | 15 points (15%) |
| 4. Short reflections | 24 points (24%) |

Note: See the assessment rubric on the last page for the papers.

D. POLICIES

1. You will be held accountable for the Divinity School of Chung Chi College's academic honesty policy; see <https://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.
2. This course will accept no late work except for extenuating circumstances (such as serious illness). If you have schedule conflicts, you should always let me know beforehand.
3. You are allowed to use your laptop for the course purpose. Without my explicit permission, you may not use cell phones, MP3/MP4 players, iPods, or similar devices in class.

E. COURSE SCHEDULE

INTRODUCTION			
1	Mon, 13 May	Friendship: The Ancient Path?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus • Introduction to the course • Marty, "F Is for Friendship"
THE ANCIENT PATHS			
2	Thu, 16 May	Learning from the Wise: Aristotle, Cicero, and Confucius	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>, VIII-IX • Cicero, <i>Laelius de Amicitia (How to be a Good Friend)</i>, 17-32 • Hung, "Aristotle and Confucians on Friendship" • Lambert, "Friendship in the Confucian Tradition"
3	Mon, 20 May	The First Testament of Friendship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lapsley, "Friends with God?" • Olyan, <i>Friendship in the Hebrew Bible</i>, Ch. 3 & Conclusion • Tull, "Jonathan's Gift of Friendship"
4	Thu, 23 May	The Second Testament of Friendship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • O'Day, "Jesus as Friend in the Gospel of John" • Winter, "Friendship Traditions in the New Testament: An Overview" • Johnson, "Making Connections"
5	Mon, 27 May	<i>Deus Amicitia est</i> : Trinity as Friendship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adiprasetya & Sasongko. "A Compassionate Space-making" • Carmichael, <i>Friendship</i>, Ch. 6 • Pembroke, <i>Renewing Pastoral Practice</i>, Ch. 4 • Downing, "Friends in God"
6	Thu, 30 May	<i>Amicus Peccatorum</i> : The Christology of Friendship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barringer, "Jesus Is Not Just My Homeboy" • Hofheinz, "'What a Friend We Have in Jesus'" • Tinker, "Friends"

7	Mon, 3 Jun	Traditioning Friendship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aelred of Rievaulx. <i>Spiritual Friendship</i> • Augustine, "Augustine on Friendship"
8	Thu, 6 Jun	Friendship Ecclesiology and Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summers, <i>Friendship</i>, Ch. 7 & Conclusion • Edgar, "The Ministry of Friendship" • Lam, "Friendship and Synodality" • Adiprasetya, "Pastor as Friend"
x	Mon, 10 Jun	No class: Public Holiday (Tuen Ng Festival)	
LET'S GET REAL			
9	Thu, 6 Jun	Beyond Inclusion? Self, Others, Strangers, and Friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swinton, "From Inclusion to Belonging" • Anderman, "Conversation, Friendship, and Hospitality" • Adiprasetya, "The Good yet Missing Innkeeper and the Possibility of Open Ecclesiology"
10	Mon, 17 Jun	Popcorn Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD
11	Thu, 20 Jun	Does Friendship Require Abled Bodies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuddeback, "Becoming Friends" • Reinders, <i>Receiving the Gift of Friendship</i> • Hauerwas, "To Be Befriended"
12	Mon, 24 Jun	Is Friendship Gender-Specific? Feminist Theology and Friendship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lakawa, "Aftermath Friendship" • Hugo and Goh, "More than a Divine Ménage à Trois" • Kao, "My Life with Morris"
13	Thu, 27 Jun	The Promise of Interfaith Friendship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fredericks, "Inter-Religious Friendship" • Carmichael, "Friendship and Dialogue"

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- Aihiokhai, *Fostering Interreligious Encounters in Pluralist Societies*, Ch. 6
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x Thu, 4 Jul Deadline of final paper 12:00 noon HK time

F. READINGS

- Adiprasetya, Joas, and Nindyo Sasongko. "A Compassionate Space-making: Toward a Trinitarian Theology of Friendship." *The Ecumenical Review* 71, no. 1–2 (January 2019): 21–31. <https://doi.org/10.1111/erev.12416>.
- Adiprasetya, Joas. "Pastor as Friend: Reinterpreting Christian Leadership." *Dialog* 57, no. 1 (March 2018): 47–52. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dial.12377>.
- Adiprasetya, Joas. "The Good Yet Missing Innkeeper and the Possibility of Open Ecclesiology." *Ecclesiology* 14, no. 2 (May 4, 2018): 185–202.
- Aelred of Rievaulx. *Spiritual Friendship: A New Translation*. Translated by Mark F. Williams. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2002.
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- Anderman, David E. "Conversation, Friendship, and Hospitality: Thoughts Toward A 'Weak' Ecclesiology." *Prism* 24, no. 1–2 (2010): 7–27.
- Andrew, Hung Tsz Wan. "Aristotle and Confucians on Friendship." In *Love and Friendship Across Cultures*, edited by Soraj Hongladarom and Jeremiah Joven Joaquin, 3–19. Singapore: Springer Singapore, 2021. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-33-4834-9_1.
- Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by Roger Crisp. New York & Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Augustine. "2311 Augustine on Friendship," 2013. <http://www.augnet.org/en/works-of-augustine/his-ideas/2311-augustine-on-friendship/>.
- Barringer, Justin. "Jesus Is Not Just My Homeboy: A Friendship Christology." *Journal of Moral Theology* 10, no. 1 (2021): 158–75.
- Carmichael, Liz. "Friendship and Dialogue." *Journal of World Christianity* 7, no. 1 (February 1, 2017): 28–46. <https://doi.org/10.5325/jworlchri.7.1.0028>.
- Carmichael, Liz. *Friendship: Interpreting Christian Love*. New York & London: T & T Clark International, 2004.

- Cicero, Marcus Tullius. *How to Be a Friend: An Ancient Guide to True Friendship*. Translated by Philip Freeman. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018.
- Cuddeback, Lorraine. "Becoming Friends: Ethics in Friendship and in Doing Theology." *Journal of Moral Theology* 6, no. Special Issue 2 (September 1, 2017): 158–79.
- Downing, F. Gerald. "Friends in God: A Foundational Motif in Classical Reflections on the Divine Economy." *Anglican Theological Review* 97, no. 3 (June 2015): 483–94. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000332861509700307>.
- Edgar, Brian. "The Ministry of Friendship." *Pacifica: Australasian Theological Studies* 29, no. 2 (June 2016): 127–40. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1030570X17707353>.
- Fredericks, James L. "Inter-Religious Friendship: A New Theological Virtue." *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 35, no. 2 (1998): 159–74.
- Hauerwas, Stanley. "To Be Befriended: A Meditation on Friendship and the Disabled." *Church Life Journal: A Journal of the McGrath Institute for Church Life*, November 11, 2019. <https://churchlifejournal.nd.edu/articles/to-be-befriended-a-meditation-on-friendship-and-the-disabled/>.
- Hofheinz, Marco. "'What a Friend We Have in Jesus': Friendship as a Theological Approach Toward the Teaching of the Threefold Office of Christ." *Journal of Disability & Religion* 20, no. 3 (July 2, 2016): 119–39. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23312521.2016.1202168>.
- Hugo, Córdova Quero, and Joseph N. Goh. "More than a Divine Ménage à Trois: Friendship, Polyamory, and the Doctrine of the Trinity." In *Contemporary Theological Approaches to Sexuality*, edited by Isherwood Lisa and von der Horst Dirk, 1st ed., 1:289–312. New York: Routledge, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315694238-25>.
- Johnson, Luke Timothy. "Making Connections: The Material Expression of Friendship in the New Testament." *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 58, no. 2 (April 2004): 158–71. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002096430405800205>.
- Kao, Grace Y. "My Life with Morris: A Feminist Account of Friendship and Conversion in a Bicultural Context." In *Encountering Earth: Thinking Theologically with a More-than-Human World*, edited by Trevor Bechtel, Matthew Eaton, and Timothy Harvie, 75–87. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2018.
- Lakawa, Septemmy E. "Aftermath Friendship: An Indonesian Feminist Theological Perspective on Trauma and Interreligious Peace." *International Journal of Asian Christianity* 4, no. 2 (August 27, 2021): 236–47. <https://doi.org/10.1163/25424246-04020006>.
- Lam, Joseph. "Friendship and Synodality: An Ecclesiological Suggestion on the Eve of the Australian Plenary Council 2020." *Australasian Catholic Record* 97, no. 2 (2020): 156–71.

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- Pembroke, Neil. *Renewing Pastoral Practice: Trinitarian Perspectives on Pastoral Care and Counselling*. Aldershot, UK & Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006.
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- Tull, Patricia K. "Jonathan's Gift of Friendship." *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 58, no. 2 (April 2004): 130–43. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002096430405800203>.
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ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

CATEGORY	Criteria	Distinction	Credit	Average	Marginal Pass	Fail
	Score	10 9	8 7	6 5	4	< 3
Content 70%	Focus (Relevance and clarity of goals)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very clear and relevant	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear and relevant	<input type="checkbox"/> Quite clear and relevant	<input type="checkbox"/> Barely clear and relevant	<input type="checkbox"/> Very vague, irrelevant
	Knowledge and application (Understanding of subject knowledge/theories/concepts and application of these to inquire/resolve problems)	<input type="checkbox"/> In-depth and accurate understanding; excellent applications	<input type="checkbox"/> Good understanding and effective applications	<input type="checkbox"/> Rather superficial understanding; satisfactory applications	<input type="checkbox"/> Misconceptions quite obvious; limited applications	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of proper understanding, applications very limited
	Methods of inquiry/problem solving (Validity and reliability of methodology for inquiry or problem-solving)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very valid and reliable, innovative	<input type="checkbox"/> Valid and reliable	<input type="checkbox"/> Reasonably valid but not quite reliable	<input type="checkbox"/> Barely valid and reliable	<input type="checkbox"/> Not valid and reliable
	Evidence and arguments (Citation of evidence from literature/empirical studies as basis of arguments for the purpose of research/analysis/problem resolution/ reflection/ evaluation; Demonstration of analytical and critical thinking)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very comprehensive and logical discussion with substantial evidence; in-depth and critical analysis	<input type="checkbox"/> Comprehensive and logical discussion with good evidence; reasonably in-depth analysis	<input type="checkbox"/> Fairly comprehensive and logical discussion with some evidence cited; analysis not in-depth enough	<input type="checkbox"/> Perspectives too narrow with only minimal evidence; a bit illogical; analysis tends to be superficial and with biases	<input type="checkbox"/> Illogical with little evidence, very superficial or biased analysis
	Format of citations and references (Format and accuracy of citations and references)	<input type="checkbox"/> Highly accurate	<input type="checkbox"/> Accurate	<input type="checkbox"/> Not quite accurate, with some omissions	<input type="checkbox"/> Inaccurate, with substantial omissions	<input type="checkbox"/> No citations or reference lists
	Discipline skills (Use of discipline skills to inquire/resolve problems /fulfill tasks)	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent mastery and creative use of a wide range of skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Effective utilization of a wide range of skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory utilization of essential skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Essential skills vaguely demonstrated; skills not well integrated	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of essential skills; skills utilized ineffectively
Organization & Presentation 30%	Organization (Coherence, orderliness)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very well-structured and highly coherent	<input type="checkbox"/> Tightly structured and coherent	<input type="checkbox"/> Systematically structured and fairly coherent	<input type="checkbox"/> Loosely structured	<input type="checkbox"/> Disorganized
	Presentation (Effectiveness of modes of presentation, articulateness, fluency)	<input type="checkbox"/> Highly effective, clear, succinct and fluent	<input type="checkbox"/> Effective, clear, precise and fluent	<input type="checkbox"/> Quite effective, clear but not precise and fluent enough	<input type="checkbox"/> Minimally effective, not clear enough; some problems with expression	<input type="checkbox"/> Ineffective, unclear, substantial problems with expression

Source: GUIDELINES ON COURSE PREPARATION, Divinity School of Chung Chi College CUHK (JULY 2023)