Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology (DSPT)
Syllabus for STHS-4375 – Nouvelle Théologie
Spring Semester 2015 • Fridays, 12:40 pm to 3:30 pm • DSPT room 2

Fr. Bryan Kromholtz, OP (DSPT), available at office, DSPT East room 120, during office hours (posted on door), or by appointment • 510-883-7151 • bkromholtz@dspt.edu

DESCRIPTION: This course is an overview of an influential family of 20th-century theological views that came to be called the “nouvelle théologie,” with its re-thinking of the nature/grace relation, ecclesiology, and theology itself. Figures to be studied include Marie-Dominique Chenu, Yves Congar, Henri de Lubac, and Hans Urs von Balthasar.

COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES: The historical contexts of the debates over these issues will be an integral part of the course; nevertheless, the focus will be on the systematic conceptions of these issues and their relevance for today and for the future. Thus, the course will provide students with a means of evaluating their theological implications. Upon successful completion of this course, students will attain a deeper understanding of certain central issues related to the nouvelle théologie; they will be able to discuss these issues in oral and written form, to engage in dialogue about them, and to begin independent academic research on them. Specifically, students will be better able: (1) to characterize the positions of the theologians studied in this course; (2) to show how these theologians’ opinions not only affected theology in its historic development, but may continue to have consequences for theology, and (3) to conduct their own research on these issues.

FORMAT: Lecture and seminar; students will take turns presenting an evaluation of readings for each class, as well as leading discussions on their own work to other students in the class.

INTENDED AUDIENCE: Advanced MA Theology and doctoral students; advanced MDiv or other graduate students admitted with instructor’s permission. Doctoral students may upgrade the course to the 5000-level with SRC form.

REQUIREMENTS: (1) Attendance, (2) one to three Seminar Presentations/Discussions, and (3) a Research Proposal, Presentation, and Paper, as follows:

1. Attendance and active participation in class lecture and discussion. Any student who misses three or more classes cannot receive a grade for the course. (10% of grade)

2. Seminar Presentation(s) with Discussion. Each student, on one to three occasions, will offer a Seminar Presentation on a relevant topic and will lead a discussion about it with the class. (See “Guidelines for Participating in a Seminar,” pages 12-13, below). The topic and the material concerning that topic are to be agreed upon by each presenter with me. The number of students taking the class will affect (a) how many times each student must prepare such a presentation, and (b) perhaps the assigned duration of the presentation and discussion (unless otherwise instructed, each presentation is to last 10 to 20 minutes, with discussion lasting an additional 10 to 20 minutes). The student may exercise considerable creativity in presenting material and leading discussions. If circumstances permit, a presenter may assign the other students brief texts in advance, either from class reading material or from other sources, in order to prepare the other students for his/her presentation. Each presentation is to be accompanied by a half-page written outline handed in to me (with a maximum length of 200 words, on one side of one page). (20% of grade)

3. A research Paper: This paper must be on a topic agreed upon by the professor and each student. The paper must be rather specific in what it demonstrates; however, it must also explain the
relevance of the topic to broader themes in nouvelle théologie and/or in theology in general. The paper is to be completed according to the following sequence of tasks:

a. Possible **Topics**: The student proposes one or more topics to pursue. Each should be practicable and should advance the student’s own learning goals. They are to be discussed with me and with the class.

b. **The Proposal**: This is to be submitted to me via e-mail in .doc or .docx format, with 200-600 words in main text, i.e., not counting notes, bibliography, etc. The filename should begin with your last name (e.g., SmithJ-Proposal). It is to include the topic title, a very brief **explanation**, including a **hypothesis** (a thesis statement, which may be changed as research progresses), a simple description of the **method** and **procedures** to be followed, the kinds of **sources** to be used, an **outline** (which can be as simple as a few “bullet points”), and a partial **bibliography** (no more than one page). No proposal will be accepted without a thesis statement. (**10% of grade**)

c. **The Presentation**: Near the end of the course, each student will present his or her paper’s conclusions (**10% of grade**).

d. **The Paper**: This is to be e-mailed to the professor, in complete form, in .doc or .docx format, with 5000-7000 words in main text, i.e., not counting notes, bibliography, etc. Its format must correspond to the latest edition of “Turabian.”\(^1\) The filename should begin with your last name (e.g., SmithJ-Paper). It must include a **thesis statement in its introduction**, and it must be **subdivided**, with a descriptive heading for each subdivision. It must include (usually, in the conclusions) some account of the possible implications, application, or relevance of the paper’s topic or conclusions, for today and the future; normally, this includes some indication of the relevance of the results to broader themes in nouvelle théologie and/or in theology in general. The Paper must include a Bibliography of works that are cited within the Paper; an additional, broader bibliography (including works not cited) may be added, though it is not necessary. (**50% of grade**)

**INSTRUCTOR’S RESPONSIBILITIES**: As the instructor for this course, my main responsibilities are: (1) to present lectures and to lead discussions that help students better understand the issues related to the nouvelle théologie and their importance for faith and theology; (2) to communicate expectations to students clearly; (3) to provide individual help outside class, during office hours when possible and at other mutually agreeable times; (4) to provide constructive feedback to students; and (5) to evaluate students fairly (see “Explanation of Grades” and “Research Paper Grading Criteria” on pages 9-11 of the syllabus).

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**REQUIRED READING:** The four texts that students will be required to read are:


**OPTIONAL TEXTS:** The professor, in discussion with the students at the first class meeting, will evaluate the interests and language abilities of the class to determine which of the following readings will be part of the assignments for the class. The texts will then be made available in a reader or by other means. [cost per student not to exceed $60]:


Other Works of Note

A few important primary sources in English relevant to the development of the themes of the “nouvelle théologie”:


Some secondary sources in English:


Recent works by Thomistic scholars and others on de Lubac and the nature/grace relation:


## Schedule for the Semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Session topic</th>
<th>Assignments due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb 06</td>
<td><strong>Course introduction</strong> (Students should arrive at class having a copy of this syllabus available for reference.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 13</td>
<td><strong>Background: Blondel</strong>: Blondel, pp. 81-116, 211-17, 219-287 <em>(History &amp; Dogma)</em>; Flynn, 1-19 (Intro), 65-82 (Conway), 172-84 (Mettepenningen); <strong>optional</strong>: Blondel, 13-79.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 20</td>
<td>Class</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 27</td>
<td>Class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 06</td>
<td>Class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 13</td>
<td>Class</td>
<td><strong>Paper Topics</strong> discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 20</td>
<td>Class</td>
<td><strong>Proposal due</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 27</td>
<td>No Class – Reading Week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 03</td>
<td>Class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 10</td>
<td>No Class – Professor Absent</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 17</td>
<td>Class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 24</td>
<td>No Class – Professor Absent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 01</td>
<td>Class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 08</td>
<td>Student Paper Presentations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 15</td>
<td>Student Paper Presentations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 22</td>
<td>No Class – Finals Week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 29</td>
<td>No Class – Friday, 1pm, <strong>Papers due in my e-mail inbox</strong></td>
<td><strong>Papers due 1pm</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXPLANATION OF GRADES

Grades for papers are assigned according to my “Research Paper Grading Criteria” listed on the following two pages, which are based largely on DSPT’s Research Readiness Paper (RRP) Review Form, as well as DSPT’s Rubric for Life-long Learning and Rubric for Effective Leadership (see the DSPT website for these Assessment forms, found among the Student Forms). The following table describes how grades are applied to students’ papers (applying analogously to presentations and other work):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>General Description</th>
<th>R.P. Grading Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Deep understanding and insights are expressed in a clear, penetrating, and engaging manner, with virtually no errors.</td>
<td>mostly “E”s &amp; no “U”s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Content, structure, and expression are all adequate, free of significant faults.</td>
<td>no “U”s – or mostly “E”s with 1 or 2 “U”s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Significant errors or shortcomings are present, although effort is evident.</td>
<td>a few “U”s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Many serious deficiencies in content, structure, and expression are present, although at least some effort is evident.</td>
<td>several “U”s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>There is a failure to execute the most basic elements of the assignment.</td>
<td>mostly “U”s (or no work submitted)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A summary of grade composition is given in the following table:

1. Attendance: 10%
2. Seminar Presentation(s): 20%
3b. Paper Proposal: 10%
3c. Paper Presentation: 10%
3d. Paper: 50%
Total: 100%

Grading Scale: A=100, A-=97, B+=93, B=90, B-=87, C+=83, C=80, C-=77, D+=73, D=70, F=0.
No late work of any kind will be accepted (except, at my discretion, for very serious reasons).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Style</th>
<th>E – scholarly standards achieved w/ Excellence</th>
<th>S – scholarly standards achieved Satisfactorily</th>
<th>U – scholarly standards achieved Unsatisfactorily</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1. Grammar, Spelling, Capitalization &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>Student makes no errors in grammar, spelling, capitalization, or punctuation that distract the reader from the content.</td>
<td>Student makes few errors in grammar, spelling, capitalization, or punctuation that distract the reader from the content.</td>
<td>Student makes many errors in grammar, spelling, capitalization, or punctuation that distract the reader from the content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2. Sentence Structure</td>
<td>Sentences are very clear and varied in pattern, from simple to complex.</td>
<td>Sentences are adequately clear, but they may lack variation, or a few may be awkward.</td>
<td>Many sentences have awkward structure or unclear content; or there is too little variation in sentence structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3. Formatting</td>
<td>Student makes no errors in formatting in paper, footnotes, or documentation; all pertinent information is present.</td>
<td>Student makes only a few errors in formatting in paper, footnotes, or documentation; no important information is lacking.</td>
<td>Student makes many errors in formatting in paper, footnotes, or documentation, and/or important information is lacking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Use of Resources</td>
<td>E – scholarly standards achieved w/ Excellence</td>
<td>S – scholarly standards achieved Satisfactorily</td>
<td>U – scholarly standards achieved Unsatisfactorily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1. Accuracy</td>
<td>All supportive facts &amp; quotations are reported accurately.</td>
<td>Supportive facts &amp; quotations are reported accurately, with only minor exceptions.</td>
<td>Important facts or quotations, or a significant number of them, are inaccurately reported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2. Quality of Sources</td>
<td>All sources cited are relevant &amp; credible.</td>
<td>Sources cited are relevant &amp; credible, with only minor exceptions.</td>
<td>Important sources, or a significant number of them, are either irrelevant or not credible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3. Primary Sources</td>
<td>Student always uses primary sources as evidence for key points &amp; others, with distinction (e.g., by extensive use).</td>
<td>Student uses primary sources adequately as evidence for key points &amp; for other argumentation.</td>
<td>Student lacks primary sources where needed as evidence for key points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4. Secondary Sources</td>
<td>Secondary sources often support student's presentation (e.g., explaining context, background, or implications), with distinction (e.g., by extensive use).</td>
<td>Secondary sources adequately support student's presentation (e.g., explaining context, background, or implications).</td>
<td>Secondary sources that support student's presentation are lacking where needed (&amp; available).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Parts &amp; Framework</td>
<td>E – scholarly standards achieved w/ Excellence</td>
<td>S - scholarly standards achieved Satisfactorily</td>
<td>U - scholarly standards achieved Unsatisfactorily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1. Introduction</td>
<td>The Introduction explains the theme of the essay &amp; outlines the main points to be discussed.</td>
<td>The Introduction presents the theme of the essay adequately.</td>
<td>The Introduction does not name the theme or does not preview what will be discussed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3. Sequencing</td>
<td>Arguments &amp; support are provided in a logical order that makes it easy &amp; interesting to follow the student's train of thought.</td>
<td>Arguments &amp; support are provided in an order that makes it possible to follow the student's train of thought.</td>
<td>Some of the arguments or support are not in an expected or logical order, making it difficult to follow the student's train of thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4. Structure</td>
<td>Headings &amp; divisions are well-chosen.</td>
<td>Headings &amp; divisions are adequate.</td>
<td>Headings &amp; divisions are absent where needed, or poorly chosen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C5. Transitions</td>
<td>A variety of thoughtful transitions are used. They clearly show how ideas are connected.</td>
<td>Transitions adequately show how ideas are connected.</td>
<td>The transitions between ideas are often unclear or nonexistent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C6. Conclusion</td>
<td>The conclusion clearly restates the student’s position &amp; important implications of that position; areas for further exploration are also noted.</td>
<td>Student’s position is restated, with some consideration either of implications or areas for further exploration.</td>
<td>There is no true conclusion; the conclusion is either non-existent or contains mere generalities or irrelevant content.</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Content</td>
<td>E – scholarly standards achieved w/ Excellence</td>
<td>S - scholarly standards achieved Satisfactorily</td>
<td>U - scholarly standards achieved Unsatisfactorily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1. Relevance</td>
<td>Student explains direct relations between the paper’s ideas &amp; the issues or concerns of contemporary Church, society, or academy; or offers creative proposals showing such relations.</td>
<td>Student briefly refers to some direct relations between the paper’s ideas &amp; the issues or concerns of contemporary Church, society, or academy.</td>
<td>Student fails to point out the relevance of the paper’s ideas to the issues or concerns of contemporary Church, society, or academy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2. Audience</td>
<td>Content is suited to potential readers’ background, using vocabulary &amp; arguments appropriate for that audience, anticipating readers’ questions and providing thorough answers appropriate for that audience.</td>
<td>Content is suited to potential readers’ background, using vocabulary &amp; arguments appropriate for that audience.</td>
<td>It is not clear for whom the student is writing (or the student aims at an audience inappropriate for the assignment).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D3. Analysis</td>
<td>Student explains well the important concepts, principles, or elements underlying the matter studied.</td>
<td>Student adequately shows concepts, principles, or elements underlying the matter studied.</td>
<td>Student does not adequately show concepts, principles, or elements underlying the matter studied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D4. Synthesis</td>
<td>Student finds concepts or explanations that unify or categorize seemingly disparate elements in a creative or particularly incisive way.</td>
<td>Student adequately finds concepts or explanations that unify or categorize seemingly disparate elements.</td>
<td>Student does not adequately unify or categorize the subject matter at hand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D5. Reasoning</td>
<td>Student’s reasoning is logical &amp; penetrating, yielding important insights.</td>
<td>Student’s reasoning is free of major errors.</td>
<td>Student’s reasoning is flawed in at least one essential point, or contains several errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D6. Fairness</td>
<td>Opposing views are stated accurately, evenhandedly, &amp; thoroughly; or criticism of the student’s chosen position is significantly addressed.</td>
<td>Opposing views are stated reasonably accurately &amp; evenhandedly.</td>
<td>Views opposed to the student’s are given inadequate or dismissive treatment; or views supporting student’s position are accepted too uncritically.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATING IN A SEMINAR

Normally some specific text, or set of texts, or topic forms the basis of the discussion. The purpose of the discussion is to elicit insights, to develop a deeper understanding, to clarify the issues at stake, and to suggest areas for further exploration. Below are some guidelines, first for all Seminar Members (attendees), then for its Leader/Presenter.

For Seminar Members (non-presenters)

Preparation: Read all material, taking notes upon it, preparing questions and comments.

In Class: Listen actively to the presenter, taking notes for questions or issues for discussion. Does the presentation capture the key arguments of each text? Are there implications of the argument that the presenter is not mentioning? Be prepared to ask the presenter about these matters – in a constructive way. Bring relevant outside material to the attention of the class, when appropriate.

For the Seminar Leader/Presenter

Preparation: Your presentation need not be “slick,” but it must be organized and coherent. For any passages or quotations that you want to use in your presentation, have them marked and ready for your use. Prepare in advance any handouts that will be needed for the discussion. Please use only what will aid discussion; limit it to one side of one sheet of paper if possible. Graphs or diagrams, outlines or bullet-point lists can be helpful. Long texts usually are not helpful. If you are using any technology, prepare it, arrive early, and test it. Have a backup plan in case the technology fails (technology failure will not excuse you from presenting.) Stay within the established time limits.

The following is a suggested outline for leading a discussion. Your presentation may proceed differently. You will probably not be able to cover all the points listed.

I. Introduction: Usually, you must mention all of the following four items:

A. Tell us very briefly the outline (structure, parts) of your discussion. Announce the time limitations (for presentation and discussion), in line with those given by the instructor. State any conceptual limits, or other limits, that you may have chosen for your presentation.

B. Who wrote the piece or pieces under discussion? Give the relevant elements of their background or current status (give birth and death dates); do not repeat material if it has been included in a previous presentation.

C. What is the context for each text to be discussed? Is it part of a larger work? Are there any particular circumstances we need to know in order to interpret any of the texts? Mention any material beyond the readings that can help the discussion.

D. In a general way, what is the relevance of the issues discussed in the text(s)? How do they relate to broader issues, and to the goals of the class?
II. Contents of Texts, or Outline of the Topic: Identify the central issues at stake in the topic, and the various positions people might take on the topic. Identifying groups, people, or well-known writings that hold a particular position is also helpful.

A. If there is a single reading, give a brief overview of the argument of the reading, and the author’s main conclusions or positions. If there are multiple assigned readings, then try to connect them in addition to giving an overview of the arguments and conclusions. Do not simply summarize the reading(s)! Keep summarizing to a minimum.

B. Whether there is one text/author or many, draw together whatever variety is present, either in a synthesis (not a summary) or in a contrast of the various elements with one another. One or more of the following may help you to do this:

1. describe the theory, system, or view of reality presented by the author(s); or
2. describe a central idea, recurring theme, or “leitmotif” in a given author; or
3. offer your own explanation, suggesting an underlying unity or key differences; or
4. compare & contrast the different views that are presented, according to theories, systems, themes, or central ideas of the texts/authors.

C. Go deeper into the issues if possible. Any of the following may be pertinent:

1. What sources is a given author drawing upon? Is he or she part of a school or group with a shared outlook? Did anyone else’s work strongly influence this author?
2. What is each author’s purpose? How does the material discussed here fit within the broader goals of the author(s)?
3. Is there any particular person, group, or idea that the author is opposing (one or more)? Is there a debate that can shed light on the issues involved?
4. What has been the reception of his material in the academy, the church, or society? What effect or impact has it had?

III. Conclusions, Implications, and Remaining Difficulties

A. Recall the main points of the reading(s). Explain what is most important.

B. Give your own view on the reading(s), author(s), or topic, giving your reasons for it. If you are unable to come to an opinion, state briefly why this is difficult.

C. Indicate any important implications of the position(s) taken by the author(s), and of your own position if it is different from that of the author(s).

D. Note any areas that bear further research or thought. Refer to other material if needed.

IV. Questions or issues for discussion

Pose a few questions, or give some examples for application of the ideas you covered, that will spark discussion; or try to stimulate discussion in some other way.

These “Guidelines” were adapted from http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~janzb/courses/seminarleading.html, accessed 16 Feb 2012, and from the syllabus for HSSP-5474 by Fr. Augustine Thompson, Spring 2012, DSPT.