

Learning Outcome	Assessment Procedure(s)	Results of Assessment	Action Plans	Observations
<p>Students will be able to understand their own spirituality and recognize how religion, theology, and spirituality underlie and correlate with a broad range of human experience.</p>	<p>Tests and essays</p>	<p>Students are interested in an historical approach to the material.</p>	<p>Use more history but simplify it with Power Point</p>	
<p>Students will be able to understand, differentiate, and appreciate various religious traditions, as encouraged by Vatican II's stance on the Catholic Church's relationship with other faiths. This understanding will entail the creedal vision, moral teachings, historical context, social expression, and key rites and symbols of these faith traditions.</p>	<p>Tests and Essays</p>	<p>Frequently enough students have no or very little personal experience from which to make judgments</p>	<p>Undergraduates lack much experience and theory. I hope to give them an approach that they can use later (historical-critical) rather than pure information</p>	

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Students will investigate and discuss how religious and theological traditions can work effectively for social justice and for the good of the entire human family and the environment that sustains it.	Tests	In Scripture it is easy to see how this outcome has or has not been achieved. This is an area that concerns everyone.	Make more connections between Scripture and everyday life.	

**ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE THAT THE GENERAL CORE LEARNING OUTCOMES ARE BEING MET:**

**EVIDENCE THAT COURSE SUPPORTED THE MISSION OF THE UNIVERSITY** (Offer the “...knowledge and skills needed to succeed as persons and professionals, and the values and sensitivity necessary to be men and women for others”):

**Core Assessment Matrix (CAM)  
TEMPLATE**

**UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO**

**Core Area: Theology & Religious Studies - 'Religion in Latin America' (0128-363-01 / 0190-301-01)**

**Spring 2007**

<b>(1) Student Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>(2) Measurement of Evidence</b>	<b>(3) Summary Results</b>	<b>(4) Assessment Informed Improvements</b>
<p>Students will be able to understand their own spirituality and recognize how religion, theology, and spirituality underlie and correlate with a broad range of human experience.</p>	<p>The course included four major writing assignments — including two essays of 5-7 pages, as well as take-home midterm and final examinations. Students were also required to file (and share with peers), more-or-less weekly reading-response papers. Subject areas treated in those essays covered the following areas designated in the core matrix.</p> <p><u>Spirituality</u> The major engagement with spirituality comes in the material on the Virgin of Guadalupe, Afro-Cuban Santería, and the Brazilian religious movements of inculturated mass (Christian) and Candomblé. Study of these important forms of popular Latin American and Latin@ religiosity, serve as touchstones for student inquiry on the nature of spirituality, and on the</p>	<p>38% of my students earned an “A” for the course;</p> <p>Another 24% earned an “A-”;</p> <p>About 27% earned a “B+” “B” or “B-”</p> <p>The remainder earned grades of “C” (1 student), “D” (1), and “Incomplete” (1)</p> <hr/> <p>The foregoing comments should be read in context of the material I present in the “additional evidence” section below.</p> <p>My basic impression is that the quality of thinking and writing in the course is substantially improved over my last offering (Spr. 06). In part, I attribute this to improvements in my approach to lectures, and to my new requirement that students present regular short responses to their weekly readings.</p> <p>I also found that this group, which consisted of many reluctant or resistant learners, took to the course</p>	<p>See the commentary below (“Additional Evidence” section) for more on this.</p>

**Core Assessment Matrix (CAM)**

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	<p>social contexts in which certain forms of spiritual practice emerge.</p> <p><u>Broad human experience</u> A strong orientation of the course is its engagement with religion in the context of cultural, racial, and economic formations. Thus, students were instructed on the religious contribution to the early American indigenous conquest and enslavement (16<sup>th</sup> century), as well as on the ways that race, gender, sexuality, and social class participate in the unfolding of religious experience and denominational affiliation.</p>	<p>most powerfully where the theological material was presented in context with the historical or social situation of the church (or some other relevant religious history).</p> <p>I particularly found the students practically on fire during two weeks of discussions on the subject of liberation theology. The fact is that liberation theology presents the profoundest questions of the fidelity of church praxis on the Gospel — and that the profundity of issues such as poverty, social invisibility, gender and racial oppression, when considered theologically, engages student interest more powerfully than anything else I am able to teach on in the course.</p>	
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<p>Students will investigate and discuss how religious and theological traditions can work effectively for social justice and for the good of the entire human</p>	<p>Questions of social justice pervade this course. The first segment of the course involves a historical survey of 16<sup>th</sup> century practices of</p>		

**Core Assessment Matrix (CAM)  
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<p>family and the environment that sustains it.</p>	<p>colonization in Latin America, with special attention to the role played by Christian religious discourses. Of equal interest throughout the course was the question of the role religious consciousness plays in the formations of race, class and gender. This issue was plumbed through sections on Caribbean and Brazilian religion, and liberation theology.</p>		
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**Additional evidence that the general core learning outcomes are being met:**

This is the fourth time I have taught a core A&S course in theology & religious studies. It is my consistent impression that these courses are deeply challenged in their mission of covering Catholicism, and appurtenant traditions, in an epoch of deep pathology in the life of the Church.

**Learning Curve.** Many students come to these courses with some Catholic background, but hardly any have formal training, even minimal catechetical understanding in the tradition. Although theology core courses list in the upper-division register, students are not at all required to have prerequisite learning. So where upper-division core courses might aspire to frame more advanced theological issues — and often interdisciplinary themes — the instructor must still spend substantial energy introducing fundamental issues and concepts.

**Cultural Challenges.** Beyond that, there are substantial challenges for even a culturally savvy professor in dissolving student misunderstanding, or embedded cultural biases, concerning the history, shape, and diversity — of Catholic tradition. I don't mean to speak of "bias" solely in its negative sense (bias as illusion). Rather I would like to think of student bias as partly a problem of cultural (*mis*)representation of Catholicism, and partly a problem of the pervasive *personal experience* Catholics (and non-Catholics) have of the more dysfunctional theological, political, and cultural dimensions of today's Catholic order.

**Measurement?** As a footnote, I would say that the quality of the organic classroom relationship between students as peers, and *vis a vis* an instructor, is exceedingly difficult to measure — in particular: How do I distinguish challenges to classroom learning as a challenge of *teaching*, as opposed to a challenge of *ecclesial culture* or *politics*? How does success or shortcoming in the theology classroom mirror the depth and quality of student identification with (or against) Catholicism (or religion in general)?

These are recurring challenges that I try to overcome by translating more abstract themes of theology, spirituality or sociology, in very everyday terms. I also rely on visual media (power points, film, online newsreels) to help seal student attention to key issues and concepts.

**Core Assessment Matrix (CAM)**  
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As a result of my last core assessment of this course, I have also addressed the propensity to slackness in student participation by implementing weekly reading response papers. That has helped considerably in breaking down some of the aforementioned resistances and misunderstandings. Students are more likely to participate in class after they have written even a couple of paragraphs about the week's readings. This approach promotes long-term cumulative learning, since students are writing repeatedly and recursively about common themes throughout the course.

These have all been successful strategies, without necessarily delivering me as an instructor from the larger cultural situation of the Catholicism about which I teach.

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**UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO**  
**Core Area: Theology & Religious Studies**  
**Spring 2007**

(1) <b>Student Learning Outcomes</b>	(2) <b>Measurement of Evidence</b>	(3) <b>Summary Results</b>	(4) <b>Assessment Informed Improvements</b>
Students will be able to understand their own spirituality and recognize how religion, theology, and spirituality underlie and correlate with a broad range of human experience.	Weekly Reflection papers. Reading of Church documents.	Based on student writing. They are beginning to articulate what their religious motivations are and how they want to develop those beliefs further.	Students presented in class what they have discovered about religious thought and their personal understanding of their beliefs.
Students will be able to understand, differentiate, and appreciate various religious traditions, as encouraged by Vatican II's stance on the Catholic Church's relationship with other faiths. This understanding will entail the creedal vision, moral teachings, historical context, social expression, and key rites and symbols of these faith traditions.	Historical documents. Applying through written work, discussion, social issues of contemporary society.	Student discussions and writing point to a new found awareness that the church has historically been actively involved in social issues and contemporary society.	Make concrete connections with organizations and individuals engaged in this application of faith to social issues/concerns.
Students will investigate and discuss how religious and theological traditions can work effectively for social justice and for the good of the entire human family and the environment that sustains it.	Applications of social doctrine. Written analysis through final research paper of what needs to be met.	From the assigned texts students have drawn a knowledge of the theological foundations of social justice from the Catholic perspective.	Continue to apply learned knowledge to contemporary situations and social issues.

**Additional evidence that the general core learning outcomes are being met:**