



## THEO 5140: FEMINIST THEOLOGY IN THE AGE OF GLOBAL MIGRATION

### Draft Syllabus

Advanced Seminar in Theology (3 Credits) Prerequisite THEO 5110

Cultural Diversity Elective Course (CDE)

Summer 2025 (May 19-July 11)

June 2-6, 2025: Summer Campus Intensive Meetings (9:00 am – 5 pm)

### COURSE INSTRUCTOR

Lama Htoi San Lu, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: By Appointment

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

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THEO 5140 – Seminar in Theology (from Catalogue)

The advanced seminar builds on skills and content learned in Christian Theology through in-depth study of either (1) a single doctrinal locus (Christology, Trinity, Sacraments, etc.) from multiple methodologies or (2) multiple doctrines through a single methodology (e.g., liberation theology). Course is run seminar style.

Theologies from liberationist traditions turn to the *experience* of the poor, marginalized, and despised. Centering on *lived experience* and taking serious consideration of the importance of *place*, in this course we will examine experiences of displacement, migration, and diaspora with these questions: How have religious beliefs and practices been shaped by changing *places*? What happens to religious communities when people move from place to place? What theological and ethical insights and nuances have emerged from and contributed to stories of migrant diasporic people and their children? Deploying the concept of diaspora as a theoretical framework, this course explores how identity and community boundaries are contested, constructed, and negotiated in the context and experiences of global (im)migration and diaspora. We will explore topics such as religion and identity formation, identity and belonging, difference and otherness, home and nation, and Christian history and tradition from diasporic feminist perspectives, especially the Christian practice of “remembrance.” We will engage texts from interdisciplinary scholarship such as literary and gender studies, biblical studies, philosophy, theology, and ethics. Through immersive experiences of site visits to refugees and immigrant communities in Chicago areas, students will gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of diasporic religious systems and the importance of rituals and the meaning-making process in diasporic religious communities.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

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By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify key themes and developments of Christian feminist theology.
- Distinguish different approaches in feminist thoughts within Christian tradition (from both ecumenical and evangelical) by engaging Christianity in diaspora or diasporic feminist thought and practice.
- Analyze and articulate how religion plays a role in formation of identities in changing *place*.
- Identify how identity is contested, constructed, negotiated, and debated in changing geopolitical contexts.
- Demonstrate familiarity with multiplicity and heterogeneity in diasporic experiences.
- Recognize theological and religious insights and implications from immersive learning experiences from Chicago Refugees' communities.

This course contributes toward the following MACS, MACM, M.DIV., & MATS learning outcomes:

- Interpret the Christian historical and theological tradition for appropriation in the life and mission of the Church.
- Demonstrate a theologically grounded ministerial identity and growing capacity to integrate it with the ministry of Christian formation.
- Engage diversity and exhibit growth towards inter-cultural competence for ministry reflective of God's global redemptive work.

## **Required Textbooks**

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- Kevin Kenny, *Diaspora: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press: 2013) 144 pages
- Gil Loesch, *Refugees: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press: 2021)
- Dionne Brand, *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging* (Vintage Canada: 2001)
- Kwok Pui-Lan, *Postcolonial Imagination & Feminist Theology* (Louisville, KY: WJK Press, 2005),
- Emilie M. Townes, *Womanist Ethics and the Cultural Production of Evil* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2006)

Novels: Choose **ONE** of the following three novels:

- Fatima Farheen Mirza, *A Place for Us: A Novel* (SJP for Hogarth: 2018)
- Min Jin Lee, *Pachinko* (Grand Central Publishing: New York, 2017)
- Yaa Gyasi, *Homegoing* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2016)

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

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### **1. Attendance and Active Participation (20%)**

Active participation and punctual attendance for the class session are expected. Active participation includes the completion of required readings and assignments prior to the class meeting.

Because this is an intensive course your attendance is expected at all sessions including site visits. Your enrollment in the course signals that you have reserved the course intensive days for your full participation in the course and do not have conflicting commitments. Missing class sessions will negatively impact your participation grade, and you cannot pass the class if you miss more than one A.M. or P.M. session.

### **2. Reading Response (20%)**

Each student will post interactive notes on the readings assigned twenty-four hours in advance of the meeting time prior to and during the intensive week on the course's Canvas page. Interactive notes will be formatted accordingly:

- no more than one-page single spaced
- Describe the major argument(s) or thesis/purpose of the readings.
- 3 insights or new learnings
- 2 questions
- 1 application

### **3. A Story of Place (15%) due June 2**

Prerequisite reading: Dionne Brand's *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging* (specifically Map sections)

In this short essay (1200-1500 words), you will write about a place that is important and meaningful to you, illustrating your reflection of the history and memory of the place. It could be the place where you were born or you currently live. The goal of this assignment is to reflect on this particular memory of the *place*. How does it inform, shape, and deepen your understanding of Christian belief and practice?

You will also create a short presentation and bring it to share with your classmates during the first day of intensive week.

### **4. Oral Analysis of Novel (15%) due June 3**

Choose **ONE** of the following three novels from the required readings. You will prepare to present it to the class. Your analysis should cover a discussion of plots, characters, messages, issues, theological and religious themes.

- Fatima Farheen Mirza, *A Place for Us: A Novel* (SJP for Hogarth: 2018)
- Min Jin Lee, *Pachinko* (Grand Central Publishing: New York, 2017)
- Yaa Gyasi, *Homegoing* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2016)

**5. Reflection Essay: Immersion in Chicago Refugee's Communities (15 %) due June 20 @ 11:59 (CST)**

Based on their immersive experiences from the site visits, students will write a short reflection essay (1200-1500 words). In the first part of reflection, paying attention to your body, describe what you see, feel, and experience of being in *that place*. Things that surprise you. and things that you want to know and learn more for your future ministry. In the second part of your essay, you will also integrate at least five reading materials.

**6. Final Integrative Project (15 %) due July 10 @ 11:59 pm (CST)**

In this assignment, you will do a creative theological piece integrating all the course materials including experiences from campus immersive week. Your project could be a sermon, poem, song, art form, short story, podcast, video presentation, and a case study: how has studying feminist theology in the age of global migration informed and transformed your understanding and practice of your own pastoral ministry and beyond.

**GRADING**

Assignment	Weight
Attendance & Participation	20%
Reading Response	20 %
A Story of Place & Presentation	15%
Oral Analysis of Novel	15 %
Reflection Essay: Immersion in Chicago refugee's communities	15 %
Final Integrative Project	15 %

**INCOMPLETE GRADES**

If, due to extenuating circumstances (specifically, pregnancy, illness, personal and family issues, military assignment, etc.), a student anticipates they will be unable to complete course work within the allotted time, that student may request a grade of incomplete from the course instructor before the last week of class clearly stating the reason(s) for this request. Overscheduling and/or lack of self-discipline are not considered extenuating circumstances. If the request is timely and meets the criteria, student and instructor will submit the incomplete grade form and the grade for that class will be listed as "I" until the last day of the following semester. If coursework is not submitted by the last day of the following semester the listing of "I" will automatically be changed to "F." For the full policy, see page 15 of the [Seminary Academic Catalog](#).

## **ADDITIONAL COURSE GUIDELINES**

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### **Inclusive Language**

In keeping with NPTS policy and language guideline (see NPTS Student Handbook pg. 15-16), inclusive language is expected in public discourse, classroom discussion including canvas discussion boards, and written words. I encourage you to use inclusive language especially when you refer to God and humanity. <https://www.northpark.edu/wp-content/uploads/Student-Handbook-final-2017-18.pdf>

### **Academic Honesty**

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park University is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating will receive a failing grade on the assignment and are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion. Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

1. Plagiarism – the use of another’s work as one’s own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet.
2. Copying another’s answers on an examination.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one’s answers or work.
4. Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present.
5. Use of ChatGPT or other AI composition software to impersonate individual assignments.

For additional information, see the [Seminary Academic Catalog](#), pp. 25–26.

### **Accommodations**

Your experience in this class is important to me. North Park is committed to creating inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have already established your accommodations, please share your accommodation letter with me so we can discuss how your accommodations will be implemented in this course. If you have not yet established services and have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations, please email the Disability Access Specialist or contact by phone (773-244-5737). Student Engagement facilitates the interactive process that establishes reasonable accommodations.

### **TITLE IX**

Students who believe they may have experienced sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking should contact the Title IX Coordinator (773)

244-5664 or [TitleIX@northpark.edu](mailto:TitleIX@northpark.edu) to learn more about reporting options, resources, and support services.

As members of the North Park faculty, we are concerned about the well-being and development of our students and are available to discuss any concerns. Faculty members are private resources meaning we are legally obligated to share information about the behavior reported above with the University's Title IX coordinator. If you are unsure whether you want your concerns disclosed to the Title IX Coordinator, we encourage you to contact Counseling Support Services at (773) 244-4897 or [counseling@northpark.edu](mailto:counseling@northpark.edu).

Please refer to North Park's [Safe Community](#) site for reporting, contact information, and further details.

## **SCHEDULE**

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### **May 19-June 2: Online Introduction**

- 1) Review Course Materials and Requirements posted on Canvas
- 2) Complete reading requirements below.
- 3) Prepare for the course requirements **3 & 4** (A Story of Place & Oral Analysis of Novel)

#### **Pre-reading:**

- Kevin Kenny, *Diaspora: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press: 2013) (whole book: 144 pages) **Ch. 1 & 2**
- Gil Loescher, *Refugees: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press: 2021) (whole book: 160 pages) **Ch. 1, 2 & 5**
- Dionne Brand, *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging* (Vintage Canada: 2001) (**whole book**)
- Kwok Pui-Lan, *Postcolonial Imagination & Feminist Theology* (Louisville, KY: WJK Press, 2005). **Intro, Ch. 1 & 2.**

Novels: Choose **ONE** of the following three novels:

- Fatima Farheen Mirza, *A Place for Us: A Novel* (SJP for Hogarth: 2018)
- Min Jin Lee, *Pachinko* (Grand Central Publishing: New York, 2017)
- Yaa Gyasi, *Homegoing* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2016)

### **June 2-6: Campus Intensive Week**

#### **Day 1: Introduction & Sources of Theology**

##### **Themes:**

- *Scripture, Tradition, Reason, & Experience (Recap)*
- *Students' Presentation on A Story of the Place*

Readings:

Kwok Pui-Lan, "Searching for Wisdom," in *Postcolonial Imagination & Feminist Theology* (Louisville, KY: WJK Press, 2005),

Avtar Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (Routledge: 1996) **Ch. 8**

## **Day 2: A Turn to *Experience*: Whose *Experience*?**

Themes: Can a Christian be a feminist?

- *The Historical Development of Feminist/Womanist Theology*
- *Sameness vs Difference*
- *Universalism vs Essentialism*
- *Students' Oral Analysis of Novel*

Readings:

- Rosemary Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk* (Ch. 1)
- Delores Williams, *Sisters in the Wilderness* (Ch.7)
- Pamela Cochran, *Evangelical Feminism: A History* (Ch. 1 & 7)
- Kwok Pui-Lan, *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology* (Ch. 5)

## **Day 3: Diaspora as a Hermeneutical Optic**

Themes: Finding a Home for Eve

- *Biblical Stories and Narratives of Migration and Diaspora*
- *Refugees' Farm Visit* <https://www.globalgardenschicago.org/press-1>

Readings:

Kwok Pui-Lan, "Finding Ruth a Home: Gender, Sexuality, and the Politics of Otherness," in *Postcolonial Imagination & Feminist Theology* (Louisville, KY: WJK Press, 2005), 100-121.

Margaret Aymer, "Rootlessness and Community in Contexts of Diaspora," in *The Letters and Legacy of Paul: Fortress Commentary on the Bible Study Edition*, eds., Margaret Aymer, Cynthia Briggs Kittredge, David A Sanchez (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016), 47-61.

Nicola Hoggard Creegan & Christine D. Pohl, *Living On the Boundaries: Evangelical Women, Feminism, and The Theological Academy* (**Ch. 7**)

#### **Day 4: Christian Tradition & Traditioning**

Themes:

- Feminist Understanding of Tradition
- Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition
- *Site Visit at Center for Burma Studies at Northern Illinois University*  
<https://www.niu.edu/burma/index.shtml>

Required readings

- Letty Russell, *Church in the Round* (WJK Press, 1993), **Ch. 1**
- Christine D. Pohl, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: 1999). **Ch 1, 3, 6, 8**

#### **Day 5: Diasporic Feminist Theology & Ethics**

Themes:

- *Identity, Difference, Alterity*
- *Diasporic Consciousness*
- *Christian Ethics: Embodied Solidarity of Togetherness*
- *Site Visit at Rohingya Culture Center Visit* <https://rccchicago.org>

Readings:

Namsoon Kang, *Diasporic Feminist Theology: Asia and Theopolitical Imagination* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014). **Ch. 1 & 2**

Emilie M. Townes, *Womanist Ethics and the Culture Production of Evil* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) **Ch. 3, 7 & 8**

#### **June 6-July 11: Post-Week Online Learning**

- 1) Immersion in Chicago Refugee's Communities Reflection (15 %) due June 20 @ 11:59 (CT)
- 2) Final Integrative Project (15 %) due July 10 @ 11:59 pm (CT)



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**Bibliography (In Progress)**

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- Gil Loescher, *Refugees: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press: 2021)
- Avtar Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (Routledge: 1996)
- Peter C. Phan, *Christian Theology in the Age of Migration: Implications for World Christianities* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2020)
- Namsoon Kang, *Diasporic Feminist Theology: Asia and Theopolitical Imagination* (Fortress Press: 2014)
- Nguyen, vanThanh and John M. Prior, eds., *God's People on the Move: Biblical and Global Perspectives on Migration and Mission*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2014.
- Fernando Segovia, *Reading From This Place* (Fortress Press, 1995)
- Gloria Anzaldua, *Borderlands/ La Frontera: the New Mestiza*
- Grace Ji-Sun Kim, *Invisible: Theology and Experience of Asian American Women* (Fortress Press: 2021)
- Willie James Jennings, *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origin of Race* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010)
- Walter Brueggeman, *Journey to the Common Good* (WJK Press: 2021)
- Pamela Cochran, *Evangelical Feminism: A History* (NYU Press, 2005)
- Christine D. Pohl, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: 1999).
- Nicola Hoggard Creegan & Christine D. Pohl, *Living on the Boundaries: Evangelical Women, Feminism and the Theological Academy* (InterVarsity Press: 2005)