

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

### TH5/733 - Theologies of the InBetween: Race, Mixed-Race, and Reimagining Discipleship Vancouver School of Theology SUMMER 2020

Instructor: Dr. Brian Bantum  
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#### **PURPOSE:**

Questions of race, ethnicity, and nationality are becoming increasingly complex, layered, and overlapping. Words like “interracial,” “mixed-race,” “hapa,” “mujerista” are just a few of the words that have been used to describe the children of these encounters. What do these children of the inbetween begin to teach us about race and Christian life? In this class will explore the question of race and identity in our contemporary world through the lens of “theologies of the in-between,” theologies that begin from spaces of overlap and encounter. We will ask why these theologies matter for all Christians and help us to imagine what a life of following Christ might look like in a world that is becoming increasingly complex.

Some of the readings will include *short* pdf selections from Ada-Maria Isasí-Díaz, Stuart Hall, Anne Joh, Cyril of Alexandria, and Irenaeus of Lyon among others.

#### **EXPECTATIONS AND COMPETENCE OBJECTIVES:**

- Describe theoretical and theological formations of race.
- Identify how racial descriptions create categories of “inbetweenness.”
- Examine various theological and social negotiations of inbetween spaces.
- Reflect on possible ways inbetween spaces might offer insights into Christian discipleship.

**FORMAT** All courses offered in VST 2020 Summer School will only be available through distance learning, using Zoom for class sessions and Canvas, VST’s online course platform, for course resources. All classes will be recorded on Zoom for password protected viewing by class participants only.

Zoom software requires minimum computer system requirements such as an internet connection – broadband wired or wireless, a camera and a microphone. For details please refer to <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362023-System-Requirements-for-PC-Mac-and-Linux>. Students unfamiliar with Zoom will be provided basic support by VST. For reference see <https://vst.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Zoom-Manual-for-Students.pdf>. Students will also be provided with basic support for accessing Canvas.

Work in the course consists of daily 3-hour Zoom classes that may include lectures and various in-class online discussions and small group exercises that will be accomplished through Zoom. All courses also include required readings to be completed before the course starts. As well various assignments may include papers or exercises during the week, and one or more final papers due by August 31 for Certificate and Basic Degree students. All papers will be submitted to the instructor via email or as the instructor specifies.

**REQUIRED READINGS:** (In order of preferred reading sequence)

Books

Nella Larsen, *Passing*. Penguin Classics. New York: Penguin Books, 2003. (read all)

Brian Bantum, *Redeeming Mulatto: A Theology of Christian Hybridity*. Waco: Baylor UP, 2010 (read all)

Required Articles/Chapters – will be posted to Canvas

Werner Sollors, “Calculus of Color” in *Neither Black nor White: Thematic Explorations of Interracial Literature*. 23 pgs.

Stuart Hall, “Who Needs Identity?” 10 pgs.

Christina Sharpe, “The Wake” in *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*, 20 pgs.

Michele Elam, “The Ethno-Ambiguo Hostility Syndrome: Mixed Race, Identity, and Popular Culture.” 13 pgs.

Brian Bantum, *Redeeming Mulatto*. 25 pgs.

Gloria Anzaldua, “La Conciencia de la Mestiza/Towards a New Consciousness” in *La Frontera/Borderlands*. 21 pgs.

Ana-Maria Isasi-Diaz, *Mujerista Theology*. 10 pages

Laura Kina and Wei Ming. “Miscegenating Discourses: Critical Contexts for Mixed Race Asian American Art and Identity” in *War Baby/love Child: Mixed Race Asian American Art*.

Anne Joh, “Postcolonial Theory and Korean American Theology” in *Heart of the Cross: A Postcolonial Christology*. (24 pgs.

\*a few shorter readings, art pieces, poems, videos will be provided during the course

**ASSIGNMENTS**

1. **Attendance:** All students taking the course for Certificate or Degree credit must participate synchronously in all class sessions via Zoom. Auditors are encouraged to participate synchronously, but may request to watch class recordings asynchronously. 100% attendance is required of Certificate and Degree students.
2. **Readings:** All students including auditors are expected to do all the required readings.
3. **Class participation:** All synchronously participating students are expected to participate in all class discussions and activities. These will be set up via the Zoom technology.
4. **Certificate students:** Certificate students are required to hand in 5-6 pages of writing that demonstrates the ability to thoughtfully engage the material and reading for the class and gives a personal reflection on the reading and material covered.
5. **Basic degree students** (Diploma; MA; M.Div): are required to do any required oral assignments during the course itself and submit any combination of written assignments totaling approximately 1500-1875 words/6-8 pages.
6. **Advanced degree students** (Th.M): are required to do any required oral assignments during the course itself and submit any combination of written assignments totaling approximately 3750-4250 words/15-17 pages.

*Further details about assignments will be provided on the course syllabus.*

**SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

*Will be provided on full syllabus*