Purpose of course:
The Other and otherness are central dimensions of the contemporary debate regarding diversity, identity and revelation. They are, therefore, core features of our reflection on Christian life: ethics (neighbor love), psychology (the construction of self and not-self), and fundamental theology (the transcendence, difference, and unknowableness of God). This course is a critical analysis of the ways that the concept of the Other operates in theology, ministry, psychotherapy and spiritual disciplines. Whether the alien is the illegal immigrant, the crazy woman next door, a presence within our own spirit or the scary outer-space variety, the Other functions in the formation and maintenance of our individual and social identities. Questions that we will explore include: How should this concept function and how should we treat that which is “other” in others, in, society, and in ourselves? Who is considered the other? Is this right? Is the other something/someone to be avoided? Embraced? Studied? Changed (converted)? Held in Awe? Destroyed? Assimilated? Blamed (scapegoated)? Etc. The way that otherness plays out in terms of gender, race, and other differences will also be discussed. In short, the purpose of this class is to examine the concept of the Other and how it functions in Christian belief and practice from theological, ethical and psychodynamic perspectives, seeking an integrative interdisciplinary conversation.

Required Texts:
1. Martin Buber, I and Thou
2. Richard Kearney, Strangers, Gods and Monsters
3. Jessica Benjamin, The Shadow of the Other
4. Boesel and Keller, Apophatic Bodies
5. John Caputo, The Weakness of God

There will also be several readings photocopied and on reserve at the library and on line.

Course Requirements:
1. Completion of assigned reading: Insightful and instructive conversation requires an ample number of us to have completed and reflected on the assigned reading. Ideally of course, everyone will stay caught up with the reading. On days when you can't get all the reading done, you should at least try to look it over enough to allow you to sound informed when we start conversing. Consider yourself honor-bound to have completed all assigned readings by the end of the course.
2. **Informed and regular participation in classroom discussions:** Regular participation obviously requires regular attendance. Unavoidable absences will be treated on a case-by-case basis. Besides showing up, you are expected to speak up and to pay respectful attention when others do the same. You should be ready and willing to explain why you’re inclined to say whatever you do and should hold others (including your professors) to the same standard. This will count 20% of your course grade.

3. **Two “discussion starters”:** These are typed, single-spaced, 1-2 page papers responding to the reading assigned during the four sessions where you will take an active part and responsibility in our discussion. They should include 1) a summation of the major ideas discussed in the reading along with 2) your critical response to those ideas. Each discussion starter is due at the beginning of class for which it is scheduled. Sufficient copies should be made for distribution to the rest of the class. The appropriate sessions are designated with a DS notation. Each discussion starter will count 10% of your course grade (20% total).

4. **A final paper:** This is a typed, double-spaced, 15-20 page paper that attempts to address some of the crucial issues covered in this course instructively. There is a wide range of possibilities here, as long as the paper shows careful interaction with the texts we've read (along with whatever other resources you want to use). The final draft is due by 2 May and will count for 60% of your course grade. A summary of your paper will be presented at the end of the semester. Interdisciplinary approaches are encouraged.

Grades will be based on the student’s accurate and insightful grasp of the material and on their critical engagement with that material. Students are asked for analysis as well as understanding.

**Grade Components:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion starters (2)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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**Inclusive Language:**

Students are expected to use inclusive, nonsexist language in both written and oral communication in this course. In other words, if you mean to refer to humanity in general, use “humankind,” “she/he,” or similar expressions. Use "he," "him," "man," only when you are referring to male persons. If you have questions concerning how to express yourself in nonsexist ways, please consult your instructors.

**Welcoming behavior:**

Students are expected to treat each other and the professor with attention and respect. This is especially important when disagreements and misunderstandings occur. At times this course will address topics that are both near and dear to our hearts as well as some that are quite contested amongst Christians. Students are encouraged to be open to listen to each other’s perspectives and to speak about one’s own beliefs and experiences with care and awareness of how such claims may be heard. All participants in the conversation and course are responsible for maintaining this inclusive and safe environment. In particular students will refrain from racist, sexist and homophobic language.

While everyone harbors unconscious embedded assumptions, all students who are open to uncovering these claims and examining them in an open and welcoming environment are welcome to the conversation. However bigoted language and behavior will not be tolerated. This includes issues concerning ethnic-racial, class, gender, religious affiliation, disability and sexual orientation.
**Weekly Schedule:**

**Week 1:**
Introduction.
W 18 Jan Introduction to the course and to each other. A cross and inter-field approach.

**Week 2**
W 25 Jan Definitions and conceptualizations, questions. Lyon and Russell lecturing
*Read:* Treacher and Foster, “Regarding Difference, Respecting Others,” pp. 311-323.
*Read:* Kearney and Semonovitch, “At the Threshold,” pp. 3-29.
*Read:* Taylor (selections inside CTS)

**Week 3**
W 1 Feb Intimate Others Russell lecturing
Cast Away Scene
*Read:* Buber, *I and Thou*

**Week 4**
W 8 Feb Gender and Ethnicity Russell lecturing
*Read:* Irigaray, selections on Inside CTS;
*Read:* Catherine Keller, *From a Broken Web*, pp.7-22, 247-252;
*Read:* bell hooks, “Eating the Other”;
*Read:* Arturo Madrid “Missing People”;
*Read:* Armour, “ ‘Man’ and His ‘Others’”;
*Read:* Daphne Hampson, *After Christianity, “Woman, the Other”* (all on reserve or Inside CTS).

**Week 5**
W 15 Feb Constructs of Gender and Race. Russell and Lyon lecturing
*Read:* Benjamin, *The Shadow of the Other*

**Week 6**
W 22 Feb Psychoanalysis The Other Within and Without Lyon lecturing
*Read:* Bromberg, *Awakening the Dreamer*, pp. 1-22; 51-64;
*Read:* The Shadow of the Tsunami, “Grown Up Words” (on reserve/on Inside CTS).

**Week 7**
Break

**Week 8**
7 March No Class Instructors at conferences

**Week 9**
W 14 March Demonized Others Lyon lecturing
*Read:* Kearney, pp. 1-108.

**Week 10**
W 21 March Divinized Others DS
*Read:* Kearney, pp. 111-252.

**Week 11** DS
W 28 March Embodiment DS
*Due:* 1 page proposal for final project.
Week 12
W 4 April  **Holy Week**

Week 13
W 11 April: Weakness and apophasis   Lyon Lecturing
**Read:** Caputo

Week 14
W 18 April  **DS**
**Read:** Caputo

Week 15
W 25 April W/Holy Other Ethical and Theological Subjectivity   Russell Lecturing
**Read** Kierkegaard, Lyon, TBA on Prayer

Week 16
W 2 May  Welcoming Others  **DS**
**Read:** Spellers.
**Read:** Reynolds (on reserve).

Final Paper is due 2 May @ **noon in the faculty secretary’s office.**