



Theology of the Family

“Family isn’t something that’s supposed to be static, or set. People marry in, divorce out. They’re born, they die. It’s always evolving, turning into something else.” [S. Dessen](#)

Time: Wednesdays 11:30 - 2:30 in rm 302

Course Director: Dr. Sheila Kappler

Office: BR 177 (fall term)

Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:30 – 11:15
(and by appointment)

e-mail: through the course site on OWL

Course Description:

This course examines various understandings of family: what it is, how it gets defined, its relationship to other institutions, how it has evolved and continues to evolve. Specifically, we will examine the theological constructs sustaining the Judeo-Christian understandings of the family, and how they have changed and developed over time. In addition to discussing the traditional and contemporary teachings of Judaism and Christianity on marriage and family, the marital and familial teachings of additional faith traditions will also be considered.

The bulk of the course will focus on contemporary developments in understandings of families and the myriad questions the 21st century poses to traditional theologies of family.

Antirequisites: for 2150: Religious Studies 2140, 2223E and 2265E.
for 2265E: Religious Studies 2140, 2150, and 2223E.

Course Requirements:

task	2150	2265 E
in-class tests	20%	20%
forums (on-line discussion)	20%	15%
beyond the texts	15%	15%
article review	10%	n/a
research seminars and essay	n/a	20%
chapter preparation and discussion	15%	10%
final exam	20%	20%

Required Texts:

1. Browning, Don S. *Equality and the Family*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007.
2. Carr, Anne, and Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, eds. *Religion, Feminism and the Family*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996.
3. Other readings are available on-line or on reserve in the Brescia library.