

## **Graduate Bulletin: Theological Studies Graduate Course Descriptions** **Bellarmino College of Liberal Arts, Loyola Marymount University**

### **Biblical Theology - All courses are three semester hours unless otherwise noted.**

#### **THST 600 (Core) Foundations of New Testament Theology**

This course presents critical issues in current biblical interpretation of the New Testament. In particular, attention is given to the significance of historical, literary, social, and theological aspects of the New Testament writings, as well as to contemporary interpretive methodologies and the pastoral dimensions of interpretation.

#### **THST 603 (Core) Foundations of Old Testament Theology**

This course examines central issues in the interpretation of the Hebrew Bible, with attention to sociological, historical, literary, and theological dimensions of the Hebrew Bible, as well as the methodology of interpretation.

#### **THST 607 • Topics in the Gospels (This course may be repeated for credit)**

This course explores aspects of contemporary studies of the Gospels, focusing on one of the canonical Gospels and its relations to other canonical and non-canonical Gospels, with attention to the search for the historical Jesus, the investigation of the Evangelist's communities and traditions, and later theological appropriations of the Gospels.

#### **THST 609 • Paul the Apostle**

This course explores the life and letters of Paul in their historical, literary, social, and theological contexts, as well as issues in contemporary interpretation of Pauline theology.

### **Historical Theology**

#### **THST 620 (Core) • Foundations of Historical Theology**

A study of the specific role which historical investigation plays in constructive and critical theology; this study uses, as its major case study, the development of the Christian doctrine of God and Christ as articulated in the classical period and developed up to the scholastic period.

#### **THST 621 • Patristic Theology**

The emergence of theology in pastoral and liturgical reflection on the biblical tradition in the first six centuries of the church's life: theology from the time of Ignatius of Antioch to Gregory the Great.

#### **THST 623 • History of Christian Spirituality**

This course will explore the rich and complex tradition of Christian spirituality, with a particular focus on the unfolding quest for wisdom within that tradition. Particular attention will be given to (a) developing a critical approach to the study of Christian spirituality, (b) understanding the relationship of spirituality and history, (c) cultivating the art of reading classic spiritual texts and (d) retrieving classic themes of spirituality for contemporary use.

### **Systematic Theology**

#### **THST 625 • Medieval Theology**

An introductory survey beginning with Bede's retrieval and the transformation of the patristic legacy, and ending with the dissolution of the scholastic tradition.

#### **THST 630 (Core) • Introduction to Systematic Theology**

This course investigates how theology attempts to translate the Christian message into new situations. Theological issues include revelation, faith, God and trinity, christology, the church, sin and grace, and sacramental and liturgical theology. Attention is given to their historical development as well as their contemporary significance, particularly in light of philosophical, cultural and religious pluralism.

#### **THST 631 • Christology**

An historical and systematic investigation of the Christian understanding of Jesus Christ and his significance for salvation. Topics include the historical Jesus, the Christ of faith, New Testament christology, the early christological councils, the historical development of philosophical christology, and contemporary christologies.

**THST 632 • Issues in Christian Spirituality**

This course examines some of the issues of contemporary Christian spirituality in the light of how certain exemplary Christians in earlier ages envisioned them. Questions such as the nature of spirituality, the integration of a contemplative attitude in life activity, Christian freedom, images of God and the role of culture in the formation of spirituality are addressed.

**THST 640 • Issues in the Contemporary Church**

This course explores various ecclesiological and theological issues in the contemporary church, such as theologies of the church, authority and its exercise, ordained and unordained ministry, women in the church, ecumenism and the church of tomorrow.

**THST 643 • Feminist Theology**

A study of feminist theology from its historical antecedents to its roots in the changing experience of women. It considers the essential methodologies of feminism, important feminist theologians, and the contributions of feminism to contemporary theology as a whole.

**THST 650 • Liturgical Theology: History and Interpretation**

This course examines the foundational period of the early church as the setting for the establishment of liturgy and its synthesis with culture. The methodology involves an exploration of liturgy in particular cultural contexts, including the important Christian centers of Jerusalem, Antioch, North Africa, Rome, and Constantinople, and the contemporary theological implications of these developments.

**THST 652 • The Rites**

This course will survey several of the seven official sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church in both their historical development and their liturgical practice, focusing on five in any given semester.

**THST 653 • Sacraments and Sacramentality**

An in-depth study of the theology of Christian sacraments and the symbolization of divine grace.

**Moral Theology****THST 660 (Core) • Foundations of Christian Moral Life**

This course familiarizes students with the language of Christian moral discourse. By focusing on methodological issues and the sources informing Christians about their moral life, students identify the complex personal dynamics of being and becoming Christian.

**THST 661 • Catholic Social Teachings**

A study of the last one hundred years of Catholic social teachings, including papal encyclicals from Leo XIII to John Paul II, conciliar documents from Vatican II, and statements and letters issued by episcopal conferences and episcopal synods. Prerequisite: THST 660.

**THST 662 • Issues in Moral Theology Today**

This course examines the writings of rival moral theologians today and their competing perspectives. Particular practical problems to be discussed vary and may include business ethics, sexual ethics, war and peace, and social ethics. Prerequisite: THST 660

**THST 663 • Issues in Bioethics**

This course will introduce the student to the basic theological concepts, frameworks, and analyses that have been used by both Catholic and Protestant theologians in their discussions of bioethics. Topics such as assisted reproductive technologies, abortion, genetic control, care of severely handicapped neonates, death and dying, and the meaning and application of “quality of life” to contemporary issues will be discussed in both lecture and seminar formats.

**Pastoral Theology****THST 670 (PT Core) • Foundations of Pastoral Theology**

A review of the biblical, historical and theological sources for constructing a theology of pastoral ministry which is appropriate to various contemporary pastoral settings and functions. The relationship between pastoral theology and other branches of theology is considered.

**THST 671 \* Pastoral Approaches to Religious Education**

An exploration of, and reflection on, the history and theory of Christian religious education, treating the relationship between religious education and allied fields of pastoral care, liturgy, justice and service activities which serve to foster the development of faith.

**THST 672 \* Skills for Pastoral Ministry**

This course, involving both theoretical and experiential learning, focuses on personal and interpersonal dynamics and skills that foster effective pastoral ministry. Topics include the spiritual formation of ministers, collaborative ministry, facilitating prayer, and a generic helping process for spiritual direction, pastoral counseling, and formation in various pastoral settings.

**THST 673 \* Faith and Culture**

An exploration of the nature of faith and culture and their interrelationship. An analysis of inculturation and its relevance to ministry and pastoral care in church and society.

**THST 676 (PT Capstone) • Pastoral Synthesis Project**

The project is designed to elicit familiarity with scholarly sources and pastoral analysis of issues that impact the contemporary practice of ministry.

**THST 677 • Pastoral Liturgy**

This course examines the role of liturgy in the lives of Christians and their communities, exploring the tensions between liturgical norms and liturgy as practiced and experienced.

**THST 678 • The Theology of the Parish**

This course focuses on the history, theology and practice of Roman Catholic parishes in the United States. As an exercise in practical theology, students reflect on the lived practices in parishes and the theology of the church that emerges therefrom.

**THST 679 • Special Topics in Pastoral Theology****Comparative Theology****THST 680 • Comparative Theology**

This course provides a review of the historical roots of the current situation of religious pluralism. It examines and evaluates relevant methodological proposals for comparative theology and clarifies the relationship of comparative theology to inter-religious dialogue, the history of religions and the Christian theology of religions. It also offers an opportunity to engage in the practice of comparative theology through the interpretation of texts.

**THST 681 • Comparative Religious Ethics**

This course begins with a comparative survey of ethics as found in the world's religious traditions. Specific issues such as war and peace, euthanasia, and environmentalism are then examined.

**THST 682 • Comparative Mysticism**

In this course, Christian mysticism as found in the writings of Teresa of Avila and Meister Eckhart is compared and contrasted with the interior traditions of India and East Asia, including Samkhya, Yoga, Taoism, and Yogacara Buddhism.

**Spiritual Direction****THST 685 • The Theory and Practice of Spiritual Direction**

This course seeks to further the student's understanding of spiritual direction as a form of pastoral care and as a helping relationship. Among the topics to be considered are: various forms of spiritual guidance within the Christian tradition, the distinctive nature of spiritual direction, the qualities and skills required to be an effective spiritual director, and the role of spiritual direction in facilitating spiritual growth and development.

**THST 686 • Ignatian Spirituality and Discernment**

This course seeks to further the student's understanding of the spirituality of Ignatius of Loyola by a close reading of his spiritual classic, *The Spiritual Exercises*, and by a study of contemporary writing on Ignatian spirituality. Praxis, the reflection upon experience, is a central aspect of this course and reflects the hypothesis that some of the dynamics of the Spiritual Exercises can be experienced by individuals in a group learning situation when they are approached in a critical and prayerful way.

**THST 687 • Psychological Foundations of Spiritual Direction**

This course focuses on the psychological dynamics of spiritual direction as a helping relationship, as well as the cultivation of communication skills needed to be an effective spiritual director. Principal topics to be covered include the following: how spiritual direction differs from psychotherapy; the importance of self-knowledge and personal awareness on the part of helpers; the nature of empathic understanding and its relationship to psychological and spiritual growth; basic counseling skills.

**THST 688 • Practicum and Supervision in Spiritual Direction**

The art of spiritual direction is best fostered through practice and reflection on that practice in a supervisory setting. This course will give students an opportunity to grow in spiritual direction skills, self-awareness, and interior freedom under the guidance of experienced spiritual directors.

**Special Studies****THST 690 • Directed Research - 1-3 sem. hrs.**

Through selected readings and individually directed study, a student can concentrate in a specific field of research or area of ministry. This course is designed for those students whose particular needs would not be adequately met through other course offerings.

**THST 692 • Graduate Pro-Seminar - 1 sem. hr. (Core)**

The pro-seminar provides an orientation to various theological methods, tools, and modes of discourse in theological and pastoral studies (biblical, historical, systematic, moral, comparative, and pastoral theology).

**THST 693 • Thesis and Thesis Seminar**

For those Theology M.A. candidates who choose to submit a thesis to complete their requirements for the Thesis Option. The Thesis Seminar will meet regularly to facilitate the progress of the thesis. (Offered in Fall only)

**THST 694 • Thesis and Thesis Seminar**

For those Theology M.A. candidates who choose to submit a thesis to complete their requirements for the Thesis Option. The Thesis Seminar will meet regularly to facilitate the progress of the thesis. (Offered in Spring only)

**THST 697 • Comprehensive Examination - 0 sem. hrs.****THST 698 • Special Studies - 1-3 sem. hrs.****THST 699 • Independent Studies - 1-3 sem. hrs.****Department of Theological Studies**

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