

SEMESTER: Fall Semester, 2024

COURSE TITLE: Women In Christian History

COURSE NUMBER: 3022.01

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: Tuesday/Thursday 11:50 AM-1:30 PM

INSTRUCTOR: Charlotte Radler, Ph.D.

CORE AREA: Explorations: Historical Analysis and Perspectives

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS:

This course examines the changing roles and perceptions of women in Christian history from its incipience to the 21st century. It highlights the impact of women's voices on the development of Christian theology. This course will put into dialogue historical sources about and by women with contemporary readings and critiques. This conversation will help us gain a greater understanding of the theological, philosophical, social, cultural, and political presuppositions that shape the view of women as well as women's self-understanding.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

In virtue of taking the Women in Christian History course, the student will:

1. Understand theological perspectives on personhood (anthropology), body, and sexuality within Christianity.
2. Gain knowledge of the changing roles and perceptions of women in Christian history.
3. Analyze the complex cultural, political, and historical processes and theological assumptions that underlie diverse Christian views on women across different time periods and cultures.
4. Develop written and oral communication.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND: one 1000-level theology course

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Elizabeth A. Clark, ed. *Women in the Early Church* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990)

Elizabeth Spearing, ed. *Medieval Writings on Female Spirituality* (London: Penguin Books, 2002)

Additional assigned texts can be accessed on BrightSpace

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS:

Active Class Participation:		10%
1 Presentation:	20%	
1 Analysis Paper:		30%
1 Final Research Paper (including a proposal):	40%	

SEMESTER: FALL 2024
COURSE TITLE: Eastern Christian Traditions
COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: 3220
TIMES/DAYS: TR 8:00-9:40 AM (hybrid)
INSTRUCTOR: Cyril Hovorun
CORE AREA: Faith & Reason
FLAGGED: Engaged Learning

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

- The course explores various eastern editions of Christianity: Byzantine (Chalcedonian), Oriental (non-Chalcedonian), Eastern Syriac (Nestorian), and Eastern Catholic (Uniate), as they have developed in countries like Greece, Ukraine, Russia, Romania, Syria, Iraq, China, Ethiopia, Armenia, etc. It opens a door to sometimes closed eastern Christian communities in the United States and Los Angeles.
- These traditions are presented through their historical developments from Late Antiquity up to our days. The course offers a piece of contextual theology: it dwells on the cultural contexts of the Eastern churches and their relations with the state and society in their respective milieux.
- The course offers a comprehensive insight into the Christian teaching about God and the Incarnation, as they are seen from the Eastern perspective. It also explores the Eastern Christian tenets about the visible world (cosmology) and what the Eastern churches have to say about modern environmental problems (ecotheology). Special attention is paid to who, what, and how are human beings (anthropology), in the view of Eastern theologians.
- The course analyzes Eastern concepts of the church (ecclesiology). It critically assesses the identity policies of the Eastern churches, including nationalism. It explains some theological and ideological underpinnings of the war in Ukraine and other recent military conflicts. A particular focus of the course is on the movement towards the restoration of Christian unity known as ecumenism.
- The course pays considerable attention to the spiritual practices of Eastern Christianity, such as monasticism, Jesus prayer, holiness, *theosis* etc. It exemplifies these practices with stories about Eastern Saints.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Group 1: Remembering, understanding, and applying:

- to sketch the structures of the Eastern churches and summarize their doctrines;
- to understand, and possibly to speak the theological language of the Eastern Christian traditions, including its basic terms, such as theosis, synergy, symphony, etc.

Group 2: Analyzing and evaluating:

- to participate in debates on theological issues;
- to recognize styles in iconography, architecture, and church music.

Group 3: Creating:

- to render concepts of the Eastern Christian traditions in modern vocabulary;
- to integrate concepts from the Eastern Christian traditions to the Western theological and cultural frameworks.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

No

REQUIRED TEXTS

Cyril Hovorun, *Eastern Christianity in Its Texts* (Bloomsbury, 2022: <https://www.bloomsbury.com/us/eastern-christianity-in-its-texts-9780567682901/>).

Cyril Hovorun, *Political Orthodoxies: The Unorthodoxies of the Church Coerced* (Fortress, 2018: <https://www.fortresspress.com/store/product/9781506431604/Political-Orthodoxies>).

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

SEMESTER: Fall, 2024

COURSE TITLE: The Truth is Out There: Tales From the Margins of Religion

COURSE NUMBER: 3225.01

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: Tuesday/Thursday 12:00-3:45 PM

COURSE FORMAT: Online Course

INSTRUCTOR: Charlotte Radler, Ph.D.

CORE AREA: Integrations: Faith & Reason

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS:

This course explores North American thinkers, ideas, and phenomena on the cultural margins from the 1950s until our present historical moment. In doing so, this course hopes to demonstrate that although the phenomena of study may be located on the margins of the meta-narrative (frequently viewed as so-called epiphenomena), they still wrestle with similar essential religious and existential questions as the “center” does, such as “Who am I?,” “Who am I in relationship to God, fellow human beings, and the rest of creation?,” “What is authentic love?,” “How do I live life to the fullest?,” “How do I experience a Reality greater than myself?,” “Is there more to life than what I perceive?,” “Is there anything beyond death,” “How am I saved?” etc. The course, adopting an interdisciplinary and intersectional methodology, will cover a broad variety of issues, such as Neo-paganism and Wicca, universalism, the psychedelic “movement” (e.g., Aldous Huxley and Timothy Leary), apocalyptic ideas and movements (e.g., the *Left Behind* series), and so-called Christian fringe movement (e.g., Peoples Temple, Branch Davidians, Quiverfull). By highlighting these essential religious and existential questions, the course traces the continuities and discontinuities between the putative margins and center of religion in terms of questions and concerns.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

In virtue of taking the The Truth Is Out There course, the student will:

1. Know the search for God/Ultimate Reality/Truth within religious thought systems to be culturally and historically embedded and developing processes.
2. Identify the ultimate questions and concerns of the thinkers and movements.
3. Understand the existential importance of ultimate questions and concerns.
4. Analyze the premises, logic, and sources of a system of thought and argument.
5. Develop written and oral communication.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND: one 1000-level theology course

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Lisa Chamberlain, *Wicca for Beginners* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform (September 10, 2014) ISBN-10: 1503008223; ISBN-13: 978-1503008229)

Aldous Huxley, *The Doors of Perception* (Harper Perennial Modern Classics (July 28, 2009) (ISBN-10: 0061729078; ISBN-13: 978-0061729072))

Timothy Leary, *Your Brain is God* (Ronin Publishing (June 9, 2001) ISBN-10: 1579510523; ISBN-13: 978-1579510527)

Carlton Pearson, *The Gospel of Inclusion* (Atria Books (March 10, 2009) ISBN-10: 1416547932; ISBN-13: 978-1416547938)

James Tabor & Eugene Gallagher, *Why Waco?* (University of California Press; 49995th edition (April 19, 1997) ISBN-10: 0520208994; ISBN-13: 978-0520208995)

Benjamin Zeller, *Heaven's Gate* (NYU Press (October 31, 2014) ISBN-10: 1479881066; ISBN-13: 978-1479881062)

Additional assigned texts can be accessed on BrightSpace

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS:

Active Class Participation:	10%
1 Presentation:	20%
1 Analysis Paper:	30%
1 Final Research Paper (including a proposal):	40%

SEMESTER: Fall 2024

COURSE TITLE: U.S. Latinx Theology

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3232.1 and .2 CATH 3232.1 and .2

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: Section 1 MW 11:50-1:30 PM, Section 2 MW 1:45-3:25 PM

INSTRUCTOR: Cecilia González-Andrieu, Ph.D.

CORE AREA: INT: Faith & Reason

FLAGGED: Engaged Learning

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

This course examines the diverse origins and theological expressions of Latinx Christian communities in the U.S. with a special emphasis on the Catholic tradition. The course develops and employs a Latinx theological methodology to travel from the question of “why do this?” (*por qué?*) to the final question of “toward what goal?” (*hacia qué?*). Meant to problematize and contextualize the situation of Latinx Christianity in what today is the United States, the course aims to expose students to foundational theological developments in tandem with urgent contemporary questions. Students are invited to inhabit the challenges posed by a Latinx focus by engaging in researching a local Latinx community in all its particularity and the complex communities that it represents and to develop original theological approaches to the challenges presented to the church and the nation by the many communities grouped under the terms Latinx, Latino/a or Hispanic.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student will analyze and interpret primary foundational texts to contextualize the origins of U.S. Latinx theological reflection.

The student will critically examine a range of theological concepts arising out of Latinx religious practices and experiences and assess their contribution to Christian Theology.

The student will analyze and judge pertinent contemporary issues and socio-economic data.

The student will formulate and articulate strategies to meet the challenge posed to the church by the needs and gifts of the community through their own particular area of interest (pastoral ministry, ecumenism, ethics, liturgical practices, immigration, education, ecology, anti-racism, etc.)

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

This is an upper division theology course which assumes lower division courses in theology have been completed.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Elizondo, Virgil, *The Future is Mestizo: Life Where Cultures Meet*, University Press of Colorado, 2000.

González, Justo L. *Mañana: Christian Theology from a Hispanic Perspective*. Nashville : Abingdon Press, 1990.

Pope Francis, *Let us Dream: The Path to A Better Future*, Simon & Schuster, 2020.

Select texts, demographic and socio-economic data, creative works and public theology articles along with other sources will be provided on Brightspace.

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

Engagement with all course readings evidenced in active participation in discussion board, written work and presentations.

Comprehensive field research about a local community.

Reading: All readings are to be done prior to the class meeting.

Writing and presentations: Several short papers, discussion questions prepared every week, several class presentations and a final research article.

SEMESTER: Fall 2024

COURSE TITLE: The Last Things

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3234.01 & 3234.02

TIMES/DAYS: TR 11:50-1:30PM (01), TR 1:45-3:25PM (02)

INSTRUCTOR: Rosanna Lu

CORE AREA: Faith and Reason

FLAGGED: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

This course engages a variety of perspectives on “The Last Things” or Eschatology. Beginning with “end times” conceptions in ancient Near Eastern texts and in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, this course will examine how cultural contexts influence beliefs about death, judgment, the afterlife, and the end of the world. Students will read selected apocalyptic literature of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Rabbinic Judaism, and Christian New Testament, and consider how Jewish and Christian interpretations of “the end of days” translate into our modern context. Students will also develop comparative perspectives of how eschatological interpretations influence and shape modern beliefs and practices.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who successfully complete this course will have demonstrated:

- (1) an understanding of eschatological questions and how they are framed by historical and cultural contexts;
- (2) an understanding of the search for God as a culturally and historically embedded process;
- (3) a critical analysis of eschatology in biblical tradition and its implications for ancient and modern faith;
- (4) a critical assessment of varying eschatological perspectives to show their implications for religious, ecclesial, and spiritual traditions

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

Junior standing

REQUIRED TEXTS

- *New Revised Standard Version* of the Bible with Apocrypha (electronic or print)
- *Apocalyptic Literature: A Reader*, ed. Mitchell G. Reddish. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990.
- Frederick J. Murphy, *Apocalypticism in the Bible and its World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012.
- Articles, chapters, and readings posted on Brightspace

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

1. Attendance and participation in class meetings
2. Weekly group discussion activities
3. Written assignments
4. Group projects and skit presentations
5. Reading quizzes, exams

SEMESTER: Fall 2024

COURSE TITLE: THST 3236-01 God and the Human Experience

COURSE NUMBER 42522

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: Tuesday/Thursday 3:40-5:20

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. William J. Shaules

CORE AREA: Faith and Reason

FLAGGED: N/A

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

Using the Hebrew and Christian scriptures as a point of reference, this course examines experiences of individuals and communities in the search for God. It involves two related questions that seek deeper understanding of the human experience of the Divine. First, building on the foundational questions broached in Theological Inquiry courses, this course asks: How do communities articulate their experiences of divine absence, divine presence, life and death in their search for God? Second, the course asks: How have different interpretive methodologies informed, enriched, and even problematized the theological language and religious symbols used to depict the Divine?

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Throughout the course students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the following through outside research and critical engagement of the materials presented:

- the question of ultimate meaning within human existence as linked to human expressions of the Divine
- symbols used to express the Divine governed by ideologies which reveal culturally and historically embedded factors within the development of religious expressions
- various interpretive methodologies governed by disciplines both within and outside of Theology
- different expressions of the Divine seen through different religious perspectives within the biblical text and seen within a variety of ecclesial and spiritual traditions embraced by communities reading the text
- major themes in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures that serve to articulate the quest for ultimate meaning.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND: None

REQUIRED TEXTS

Boyle, Gregory. *Tattoos On the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion*. ISBN 978-1-4391-5315-4 (pbk), 978-1-4391-7177-6 (ebook).

Knight, Douglas and Levine, Amy-Jill. *The Meaning of the Bible: What the Jewish Scriptures and Christian Old Testament Can Teach Us*. ISBN 978-0-06-112175-3

Kushner, Harold. *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*. ISBN 0805237739.

Sacks, Jonathan. *The Great Partnership: Science, Religion and the Search for Meaning*, ISBN 9780805212501

Warren, Kathleen. *Daring to Cross the Threshold: Francis of Assisi Encounters Sultan Malek Al Kamil*, ISBN 13: 98-1-62032-421-9

Bible: *New Revised Standard Version*

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

- Attendance of every class session
- Assigned reading prepared before every class
- Completions of VoiceThread assignments and Discussions assignments
- Completion of three shorter tests during the semester
- A 10–12-page research paper or research presentation to the class
- Completion of a final exam

SEMESTER: SPRING 2024 COURSE TITLE: God and Human Experience

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3236 01 MWF 9:25 - 10:35AM

THST 3236 01 MWF 9:25 - 10:35AM

INSTRUCTOR: Fr. Charles Jurgensmeier, SJ

CORE AREA: Faith and Reason

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The majority of the world's religions incorporate music as an integral part of the experience of worship. Most Christian denominations agree that music is essential to worship. In his letter to the Ephesian community Paul wrote that they should be filled with the Holy Spirit, "addressing one another in psalms, hymn and spiritual songs." (Eph. 5:19 RSV). In the subsequent centuries, the Christian communities gathered in houses, and dedicated holy spaces, in cities and monasteries to celebrate their union with Christ and one another. Singing was a major part of their religious experience. Music has a distinct purpose when used with prayer; it has medicinal as well as social benefits. This course is designed to be a study of the meaning of the use of music in worship in the various Christian Churches, with some particular attention focused on the Roman Catholic tradition. The historical background, theology, purpose, function, and application of music in worship will also be incorporated. The course will assist in the ongoing development of the role of music in worship in contemporary culture, Sunday worship, and Christian spirituality in the life of the individual and the faith community.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: Students will:(1) demonstrate through their research paper and discussion posts how a critical study of Catholic theology sheds light on the contemporary human condition; (2) demonstrate through their reflections and oral presentations knowledge of the central themes in contemporary theology; 3) show that they can interpret texts and other cultural phenomena (such as rituals, myths, architecture, sacred music) that have religious presuppositions or implications; and (4) through class participation, oral presentations and written assignments have shown development of their written and verbal skills.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDATIONS: This course is intended for any Loyola student; one does not have to have a background in music whatsoever to take the course.

SEMESTER: Fall 2024

COURSE TITLE: **Sikhism**

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: 3242

TIMES/DAYS: TR 9:55-11:35 & 11:50-1:30

INSTRUCTOR: Nirinjan Khalsa

CORE AREA: Faith and Reason

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

Sikhism began in Northern India in 1469 with its founder Guru Nanak, a poet-saint who expressed his mystical experiences through song. He sang of the same divine light shining in every being regardless of caste, creed or gender. His revolutionary teachings promoting equality and social justice were continued by a succession of *Gurus* (enlightened teachers) who seamlessly integrated saintly practices such as meditation and selfless service with those of a warrior to defend against social and religious persecution, creating a community of Sant-Sipahi or Sage-Warriors. The main focus of the course will be to highlight central Sikh ideas through the reading of primary and secondary texts to ask how these concepts have historically been devoid of women's voices and how they contribute to the Sikh worldview and ethical outlook. This course will provide engaged learning opportunities to attend Sikh services and perform *seva* (selfless service), an important aspect of the Sikh tradition.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Identify the beliefs and practices of Sikhi and what it means to be a Sage Warrior.
2. Understand the richness and complexity of the Sikh tradition, especially in light of contemporary issues and diverse voices.
3. Consider the stories of women that have been historically silenced.
4. Examine and evaluate critically the diverse ways in which religious beliefs and practices change across time and space.
5. Integrate theological and religious questions and problems through the careful study of Sikh concepts, practices, and ethics.

REQUIRED TEXT: Kaur, Valarie. *Sage Warrior*.

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS: Be prepared to critically engage with the course materials both inside and outside of the classroom through discussion, weekly practices, journal reflections, exam, and a final paper.

SEMESTER: Fall 2024

COURSE TITLE: Interreligious Dialogue and Engagement: Pluralism, Peacemaking, and Practice

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3245.01 (Crosslisted as JWST 3998.01)

TIMES/DAYS: MW 11:50 AM – 1:30 PM

INSTRUCTOR: L. Arik Greenberg, Ph.D.

CORE AREA: Faith and Reason

FLAG: Engaged Learning

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

This course is a wide-ranging exploration of interreligious dialogue, both in theory and in practice. Students will investigate, analyze, and compare various theories of interreligious dialogue and engagement, and explore the purpose of interreligious dialogue and engagement, considering questions such as “Why do we do this? What purpose does it serve faith and society?” Students will familiarize themselves with and analyze specific case studies where interreligious engagement has been successful as well as those which have been less successful, standing as opportunities for growth and reflection. Students will complete a group project in which they will either plan an interfaith event or become part of an existing program or event. Students will interview faith and interfaith leaders of significance and influence to obtain diverse perspectives of interreligious experience. The course will employ readings, videos, in-class discussions, reflection papers, interviews, group projects and a term paper. This course serves the university’s larger initiative toward interreligious dialogue and engagement.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

In this course, students will:

- 1) Investigate theory and praxis behind interreligious dialogue, citing multiple models and rationales from diverse faith traditions as to why interreligious dialogue is beneficial.
- 2) Analyze the writings of various theorists, leaders, and key stake holders in interreligious dialogue.
- 3) Explore various case studies of both successful and unsuccessful interfaith engagements and interactions.
- 4) Comprehend firsthand the ins and outs of producing a successful interfaith event or engagement.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

None, other than an open mind and a willingness to see the commonalities and cherish the diversities between people’s faith traditions.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- James L. Fredericks, Tracy Sayuki Tiemeier, editors. *Interreligious Friendship After Nostra Aetate*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. ISBN 9781137472113 (electronic bk.)
- Patel, Eboo. *Sacred Ground: Pluralism, Prejudice, and the Promise of America*. Boston : Beacon Press, 2013. ISBN 9780807077498 (electronic book)
- Eboo Patel, Jennifer Howe Peace, Noah J. Silverman, editors. *Interreligious-interfaith studies : Defining a New Field*. Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 2018. ISBN 9780807019979 (paperback)
- Leonard Swidler. *Dialogue for Interreligious Understanding: Strategies for the Transformation of Culture-Shaping Institutions*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. ISBN 978-1-137-47069-0 (eBook)
- Leonard Swidler, Khalid Duran, Reuven Firestone. *Triologue: Jews, Christians, and Muslims in Dialogue*. Twenty-Third Publications, 2007, ISBN 978-1-58595-587-9.
- Pim Valkenberg (editor). *World Religions in Dialogue, A Comparative Theological Approach, Enhanced Edition*, published by Anselm Academic, 2016, ISBN 978-1-59982-799-5.

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

- 1) Attendance & Participation: 20%
- 2) Papers: 3 site visits. Each focusing on the basics of each tradition as well as special questions to address regarding their interfaith endeavors. 30%
- 3) Group presentation on one of the major world religions we are covering. 10%
- 4) Group presentation on one of the major authors we are reading and discussing. 10%
- 5) Group project: engaging with an interfaith organization, interviewing their leadership, and participating in an interfaith or interreligious event or activity with them. 10%
- 6) Term paper summarizing findings of group project and commenting on these concepts about obstacles and opportunities in their work. 20%

Semester: Fall 2024

Course Title: Psychology, Spirituality & Transformation

Course Number/Section: THST 3250.01 (CRN: 42526)

Times/Days: Wednesday 6:00-9:20 pm

Instructor: Roy Pereira, S.J., Ph.D.

Core Area: Faith & Reason

Flagged: None

Course Description:

Psychology, Spirituality & Transformation is aimed at producing LMU's Global Leaders. The course helps uncover blocks to student success helping them to become the best version of themselves. They will be introduced to function as leaders in a global world and learn strategies to face a rapidly changing world of uncertainty through the latest research from neuroscience, psychology & spirituality. The methodology followed will be readings, lab-work and out-of-classroom experiences.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. To begin the process of producing global citizens who have a deep understanding of themselves and a world at large.
2. To understand the interconnection among neuroscience, psychology and spirituality and how it can be used to obtain behavioral outcomes.
3. To study the brain & human chemistry to get the best out of this complex machinery for success at work and in life.
4. Reflecting on life experiences to obtain the tools to reach ones best potential.
5. To engage seriously with the ethical and spiritual meaning of life—for oneself and for the betterment of the larger community and the cosmos.

Prerequisites/Recommended background: None. However, in order to make this course accessible to a wider range of students during their time at LMU this course is not available for those who have attended *In Search of a Way* by Roy Pereira, S.J., Ph.D.

Required Text:

Pereira, Roy. *Uncertain Times: Wellness Strategies from the Neuroscience & Ignatius*, 2022. ISBN: 978-1-95-785200-3 (available at LMU Bookstore)

Course Work/Expectations:

Active Participation & Attendance	15%
Weekly Posting on Bright Space	30%
Midterm Presentation	25%
Final Paper	30%

SEMESTER: FALL 2024
COURSE TITLE: BUDDHISM
COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3282
TIMES/DAYS: MWF/ 12:15 – 1:25PM
INSTRUCTOR: ZOË SLATOFF
CORE AREA: FAITH AND REASON
FLAGGED: ENGAGED LEARNING, WRITING

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

This class introduces the fundamental elements of Buddhist thought and practice, by exploring the Three Jewels of Buddhism—the awakened one (the *buddha*), his teachings (the *dharma*), and their diverse manifestations in communities around the world (the *sangha*). In this course, we will trace the historical and geographical development of Theravāda, Mahāyāna, Vajrayāna, and Zen Buddhism, as well as look at the Modernization and Globalization of Buddhism in Asia and the West. We will investigate key concepts, such as the three defining marks of existence: not-self (*anattā / anātman*), impermanence (*aniccā / anitya*), and suffering (*dukkha / duḥkha*), and the Four Noble Truths that consist of recognizing this suffering and its causes, and the path to extinguishing it (*nirvāṇa*).

Through reading and discussing translations of primary texts and secondary sources, as well as engaging with artwork, chanting, and documentaries, we will pay attention to how historical, social, and cultural circumstances have influenced the interpretation and development of sacred scriptures, beliefs, and practices, over time and place. We will conclude by looking at the implications of this for ethical action, reflected in contemporary issues such as gender, race, and environmentalism, through the lens of Buddhism. Students will also be introduced to various practices throughout the semester, and undertake their own individual practice project, to have a direct, lived experience of the tradition and a more mindful engagement with the world.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- learn to identify, elaborate, and discuss various Buddhist traditions, historical figures, texts, and fundamental principles in different geographical and cultural contexts.
- read and critically engage with primary and secondary sources through weekly response papers and class discussion.
- acquire a working vocabulary of Sanskrit and Pāli theological terms.
- enrich their written and oral skills through the preparation of a final paper and a class presentation.
- understand the richness and complexity of theological and religious traditions, and contextualize Buddhism in relation to other traditions, both historically and in relation to contemporary issues.
- consider the relationship between theory and practice and how intellectual inquiry can be a tool for creating empathy and understanding for oneself and others.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

None

REQUIRED TEXTS

Mitchell, Donald W. and Sarah H. Jacoby. *Buddhism: Introducing the Buddhist Experience Third Edition*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Other required readings will be posted on Brightspace as PDF documents.

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

The workload is consistent with a four-unit writing intensive engaged learning course. One unit is defined by LMU as a minimum of three hours of work by an average student per week for a fifteen-week semester. That means that this four-unit course should average twelve hours of work per week and total at least 180 hours of work for the semester (inclusive of class contact time). Course assignments consist of a short weekly response paper, midterm exam, practice project, final paper, and presentation. Regular attendance is essential.

SEMESTER: FALL 2024
COURSE TITLE: Buddhism
COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST3282 01
TIMES/DAYS: 8:00-9:45 T/TH
INSTRUCTOR: Eric Haruki Swanson
CORE AREA: Faith & Reason
FLAGGED: Engaged Learning

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

This class introduces the basic elements of Buddhist thought, practice, and historical communities and will explore various case studies that will illustrate how the foundational tenets of the Buddhist tradition were re-conceptualized as it spread throughout Asia, and recently to the rest of the world. With a focus on exploring the diversity of Buddhism as a lived religion, this course will follow the thread of three foundational aspects of the tradition as expressed through the “Three Jewels” of Buddhism: its religious figures and their visual representations (*buddha*), its teachings and practices (*dharma*), and its religious communities (*sangha*). Key themes that will be discussed are the relationship between self and other, the various methods prescribed to attain awakening, the social and cultural roles of Buddhist temples, the visual and material culture of the Buddhist tradition, and guidelines on how to live ethically as a member of the Buddhist faith.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- SL01: Identify, elaborate, and discuss various Buddhist traditions, historical figures, and texts in different geographical areas and assess the key issues addressed in their specific historical and cultural contexts;
- SL02: Be able to critically analyze how various cultures and traditions across time and place articulated their own understanding of the Buddhist tradition;
- SL03: Learn to appreciate and engage with ideas of the Buddhist tradition without exoticizing its teachings and cultures;
- SL04: To familiarize oneself with the Buddhist communities in the greater Los Angeles area;
- SL05: Identify Buddhist figures and motifs in visual art and literature;
- SL06: Construct a coherent argument concerning the Buddhist tradition based on consultation and engagement with scholarly sources;
- SL07: Produce an annotated bibliography on a topic related to the course;
- SL08: Express and interpret ideas through oral communication;
- SL09: Prepare, practice, and deliver an original oral presentation.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

None

REQUIRED TEXTS

Salguero, C. Pierce. *Buddhish: A Guide to the 20 Most Important Buddhist Ideas for the Curious and Skeptical* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2022)

All other required readings will be posted on Brightspace as PDF documents.

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

The workload is consistent with a four-unit writing intensive engaged learning course. One unit is defined by LMU as a minimum of three hours of work by an average student per week for a fifteen-week semester. The course consists of interactive lectures and in-class discussion and exercises. Students should be prepared to actively contribute to conversations on the assigned readings and class discussions.

SEMESTER: FALL 2024

COURSE TITLE: Hinduism, Jainism, Yoga

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3283.01

TIMES/DAYS: TR 11:50-1:30pm

INSTRUCTOR: Tiemeier

CORE AREA: Faith and Reason

Flagged: Engaged Learning

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

This course examines Hindu, Jain, and Yoga traditions in their wider historical, cultural, and religious contexts. It interrelates philosophy and theology in order to understand the enduring value of ultimate questions, even as it also considers the complexities of religious traditions in their lived realities as well as the legacy of colonialism in Hindu, Jain, and Yoga Studies. Course topics include Vedic religion and the Upanishads; Hindu thought and yogic practices; Jain karma theory, ethics, and yoga; and the foundations of Yoga. As an Engaged Learning course, students will complete at least 15 hours of engaged learning experiences (site visits, events, yoga classes, etc.) and integrate their learning through a comparative social justice project.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

SLO1: Interrelate theology and philosophy in the analysis of Hindu, Jain, and Yogic traditions.

SLO2: Articulate the value of ultimate questions in their historical, cultural, and religious complexities.

SLO3: Interrogate Hindu, Jain, and Yoga Studies through postcolonial theory and engaged learning.

SLO4: Draw on Hindu, Jain, and Yoga traditions in order to address a social justice problem comparatively.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

Junior Standing

REQUIRED TEXTS

All Readings Posted on Brightspace

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

Course Engagement (40%)

Reading Analysis Essays (40%)

Engaged Learning Social Justice Project (20%)

SEMESTER: FALL 2024

COURSE TITLE: Islam

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3289

TIMES/DAYS: TR 11:50am-1:30pm

INSTRUCTOR: Prof. Saqib Hussain

CORE AREA: Faith and Reason

FLAGGED: N/A

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

This course will introduce students to the Islamic religious tradition. Beginning with the historical developments of Islam, including the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad, the course will examine Islamic religious practices and traditions up to the modern period.

We will look at the scripture, theology, religious practices, and history of Islam. After an overview of Islam and its global reality, we begin by looking at the history of Arabia and the Near East on the verge of Islam. We move on to the life of Muhammad and the sacred texts that he left behind, the Qur'an (sacred scripture) and the hadith (orally reported sayings about Muhammad). We look at the early spread of Islam, including the establishment of a new political system (the caliphate), the conquests of neighboring empires, and the civil wars within the community that would eventually lead to the split between the Sunnis and the Shi'a, the two main sects of Islam. We proceed to study the various disciplines that Muslims developed, including Islamic Law, Islamic theology and philosophy, and Sufism. Finally, we look at Islam in the modern world, including the colonization of Muslim lands, the beginning of Muslim revivalist and militant movements, and establishment of Muslim communities in the West.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this course students will: 1) demonstrate an understanding of the formative period of Islamic history and some of the key texts that were produced at the time; 2) demonstrate an understanding of various Islamic sciences; 3) demonstrate an understanding of Islamic history and the major events that shaped Muslim societies, from the formative period up to the modern period; 4) demonstrate an understanding of Islam broadly, its beliefs, practices, and global presence; 5) through class participation and written assignments improve their verbal and written skills.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

None

REQUIRED TEXTS

Daniel W. Brown, *A New Introduction to Islam*, 3rd ed. (Wiley-Blackwell: Oxford, 2017).

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

- Weekly readings
- Weekly quizzes
- Written midterm essays
- Written final exam

SEMESTER: Fall 2024

COURSE TITLE: Punishment and Mercy

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3560.1 and 3560.2

TIMES/DAYS: Section 1: Monday/ Wednesday/ Friday 10:50-12:00 pm
Section 2: Monday/ Wednesday/ Friday 12:15-1:25 pm

INSTRUCTOR: Jonathan Rothchild, Ph.D.

CORE AREA: Ethics and Justice

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

This course will explore the many theoretical and practical difficulties that arise in attempting to reconcile an effective and just system of social punishment with the virtue of mercy. The relationship between mercy and punishment is frequently viewed as mutually exclusive or contradictory. Can a system forego punishment (through mercy) for some and still have equality? Can a system punish offenders and still uphold the dignity of the individual? How does one mediate between impunity and vengeance? Utilizing the lenses of thinkers within political theory, philosophy, law, and theology as well as current case studies, this course analyzes this relationship in terms of competing strategies of punishment, social sins and institutional racism, and theological visions of forgiveness and mercy.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Understand one or more of the major ethical theories: virtue ethics, utilitarianism, deontology, natural law, various theories of justice (SLO # 1)
- Understand the difference among ethical theories, by investigating ultimate grounds of their validity (SLO # 2)
- Value the importance of striving to be virtuous, ethical, and just, as well as the importance of rational reflection and engaged discourse with a diverse perspectives in such striving (SLO # 3)
- Develop ethical strategies for the analysis of complex situations (SLO # 4)
- Differentiate and analyze critically the major approaches to mercy and punishment through the lenses of seminal and contemporary voices within theology, philosophy, and political theory (SLO # 5)

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND: Junior standing

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in an Age of Colorblindness*, 2020
- Hernandez, Kelly Lytle. *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles 1771-1865*, 2020.
- Taylor, Mark Lewis. *The Executed God: The Way of the Cross in Lockdown America*, 2015
- Other readings will be made available via Brightspace

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

- Critical Response Papers
- Group Presentation
- Midterm Exam
- Final Research Paper (including annotated bibliography)

SEMESTER: FALL 2024

COURSE TITLE: Religion and Film: "The Blacklisted Bible"

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3741.01

TIMES/DAYS: MONDAY NIGHTS: 6:00-9:00

INSTRUCTOR: Daniel L. Smith-Christopher

CORE AREA: INT: Interdisciplinary Connect

FLAGGED: No flags

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

One of the most serious challenges to the Film industry in the 20th Century was the "Hollywood Blacklist". The forces of the Political Right-Wing accused Hollywood writers, actors, and producers of being "communists" and "dangerous" to America. Anyone with progressive political ideas was targeted. Many films were condemned as "subversive" and "anti-American". Lives were ruined, careers ended, and the legacy of these years remains a dark stain on American history.

However, looking at many of the films themselves, it is arguably the case that an argument can be made that many of these films presented a perspective that is deeply Biblical in tone and orientation! That will be the point of this course - to show that "blacklisting" films about minority issues, labor issues, and race issues are not "subversive", but amount to also "blacklisting" Biblical ethics themselves! We will view 10 such films, and students will make their own decisions.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES. STUDENTS WILL:

- (1) Learn about the Hollywood "Blacklist" in American History.
- (2) Learn about some of the films that were "blacklisted" and why.
- (3) Learn to think about Biblical ethics in relation to contemporary issues.
- (4) Learn about Film genres where applicable (e.g. "Film Noir", etc.)

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

It would be GOOD to have had an Intro to OT or NT course, but it is NOT required.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- 1) Bible - New Revised Standard Version (New American Bible Revised is OK.)
- 2) The Blacklisted Bible, Daniel Smith-Christopher
- 3) The Hollywood Motion Picture Blacklist: Seventy-Five Years Later, by Larry Ceplair