

SEMESTER: Spring 2024

COURSE TITLE: Theology After Crisis (Facing God, Facing Trauma)

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3212.01 & THST 3212.02

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

The world—in ancient and modern times—is filled with suffering. While the answers to why bad things happen have changed over time, the questions have remained the same: Why is this happening? How will I make it through this? This course examines suffering and crisis in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) to understand how ancient Israel developed a “theology of suffering” and faced God during traumatic circumstances. Students will read narrative and poetic texts (in translation) that describe deep emotions and ideological explanations for why ancient Israel suffers, and critically assess what we can learn from these accounts. Additionally, this course studies contemporary trauma theory and compares the implications of modern approaches with approaches found in biblical tradition, asking students to thoughtfully consider how trauma affects religious belief and practice.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who successfully complete this course will have demonstrated:

- (1) an understanding of ancient belief systems, questions, and approaches to suffering;
- (2) an understanding of the search for God as a culturally and historically embedded process;
- (3) a critical analysis of trauma in biblical tradition and its implications for ancient and modern faith;
- (4) a critical assessment of contemporary trauma theory and its implications for religious, ecclesial and spiritual traditions

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

Juniors & Seniors

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Bible – New Revised Standard Version
2. Bible Through the Lens of Trauma, ed. Elisabeth Boase and Christopher G. Frechette. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2010.
3. David Carr, Holy Resilience: The Bible’s Traumatic Origins. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014.
4. Kathleen M. O’Connor, Jeremiah: Pain and Promise. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011 5.
Additional readings on Brightspace

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

1. Reading – students are expected to complete all readings prior to each class session (assessed by weekly reading quizzes)
2. Participation – students are expected to lead and engage in discussion of readings and research
3. Weekly group discussion activities and collaborative projects (skits, presentations)
4. Written assignments (reflection papers, critical review paper, exams)

SEMESTER: SPRING 2024

COURSE TITLE: Eastern Christian Traditions

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: 3220

TIMES/DAYS: MW 8:00-9:40 AM

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 the 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 state and society in their respective milieux.
- The course offers a comprehensive insight to the Christian teaching about God and 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 (ecothology). A particular 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 restoration of Christian unity known as ecumenism.
- The course pays considerable attention to the spiritual practices of the 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

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

Title: Migration and the Border

Course Number: THST 3226 01 and CATH 3226 01

Section Times/Days: 9:55 am to 11:35 am, Mondays/Wednesdays

Instructor: Dr. Brett C. Hoover

Core: Faith and Reason, Engaged Learning flag

Description: In this course, students study migration and the border, coming to terms with the empirical reality of contemporary immigration while constructing their own theological or ethical response. The course begins with an interlacing of phenomenological (i.e., experiential), historical, social scientific, and cultural approaches to the study of migration, that is, the movement of peoples both across and within political borders. Students then critically examine borders as a historical and contemporary social phenomenon, tracing their political evolution alongside the nation-state as well as the psychology they shape and are shaped by. The second half of the class will be devoted to biblical and other historical texts that treat migration and movement, followed by a deep engagement with the social ethics and theology of migration in Christian tradition, with brief comparison to Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, and indigenous religious approaches to migration.

Learning Outcomes: As a result of this course, students will be able to:

- value the existential importance of ultimate questions raised by migration and/or border control;
- articulate reasons rooted in sociological and historical research as to why people migrate to the United States and what challenges they face;
- understand and value biblical and theological approaches to migration and critically evaluate them as a Christian response to the global phenomenon of migration in particular historical and cultural contexts;
- be able to compare different perspectives on migration from distinct religious and spiritual traditions;
- construct their own theology, ethics, or account of the meaning of migration as a human phenomenon, and develop a practical response to migration in terms of public speech, activism, or public theology.

Pre-requisites: None.

Required Texts:

- Brett C. Hoover, *Immigration and Faith: Cultural, Biblical, and Theological Narratives* (New York: Paulist, 2021).
- Karla Cornejo Villavicencio, *The Undocumented Americans* (New York: One World, 2020).
- Manlio Graziano, *What Is a Border?* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018).
- Tisha M. Rajendra, *Migrants and Citizens: Justice and Responsibility in the Ethics of Immigration* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2017).
- Other articles as assigned.

Course Work:

Expectations for this class include writing a book review, participating in interviews and field experiences with immigrants and refugees, offering an oral presentation to other students, and a final integrating research paper.

COURSE TITLE: Catholicism after Vatican II

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST/CATH 3231-01

TIMES/DAYS: MW 1:45-3:25pm

INSTRUCTOR: Layla Karst

CORE AREA: Integrations: Faith and Reason

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

The theologian Karl Rahner described Vatican II as the first time in history the Catholic Church met as a “world church.” This course will study Catholicism through the lens of “ecclesiology,” that is, the church’s understanding of itself and its relationship to the modern world that emerged from the Second Vatican Council. We will begin by exploring the history and texts of the Council, with special attention to the interplay between tradition and reform. Following the conciliar spirit of “dialogue” between the church and the modern world, we will consider the wisdom and limitations of the Council’s vision in the areas of scriptural interpretation, liturgical practice, authority and decision-making, ecumenical and inter-religious relations, and religious freedom. Then we will examine the Council’s interpretation and reception in the church today, especially in Pope Francis’s vision of social friendship and the “synodal church.”

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Through successfully completing this course, students will

- (1) Examine the history and theology of the Second Vatican Council, especially with regard to the church’s understanding of itself and its relationship to the modern world
- (2) Explore shifts and developments in Catholic teaching and practice before and after the Second Vatican Council
- (3) Analyze the interpretation and reception of the Second Vatican Council, especially through Pope Francis’ vision of social friendship and a synodal church
- (3) Probe the meaning of the Second Vatican Council for Catholics today
- (4) Understand religion and theology as historically and culturally embedded processes

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

Juniors and Seniors only.

REQUIRED TEXTS (subject to change)

Austin Flannery (editor), *Vatican Council II: Constitutions, Decrees, Declarations*, 1996.

Edward Hahnenberg, *A Concise Guide to the Documents of Vatican II*, 2007.

Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*. 2020.

All other readings will be posted on Brightspace.

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

Careful preparation of the course readings and regular participation in course discussions and activities is expected on a weekly basis. Assignments include regular, short reading responses, a multi-week synod simulation activity (completed in small groups), and a final oral exam.

SEMESTER: Spring 2024

COURSE TITLE: U.S. Latinx Theology

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3232.1 and CATH 3232.1

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: Mon, Wed 1:45 pm – 3:25 pm, VDA 240

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: SPRING 2024 COURSE TITLE: God and Human Experience

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3236 01 M/W 11:50AM-1:30PM

THST 3236 01 M/W 11:50AM-1:30PM

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 Christian Church, with particular attention focused on the Roman Catholic tradition of sacred music. 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: Spring 2024

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

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3245.01

TIMES/DAYS: TR 3:40 PM – 5:20 PM

INSTRUCTOR: L. Arik Greenberg, Ph.D.

CORE AREA: Faith and Reason

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) Fundamental Perspectives: Write a paper addressing why this endeavor is important. Discuss various faith traditions’ perspectives on their theological support or validation for the engagement. That is to say, what about their scriptures or doctrines permits, encourages, or supports interfaith / interreligious dialogue and collaboration? 10%
 - 2) Past Leaders & Thinkers: Paper exploring the life and writings of a major interfaith leader or thinker from the past. 10%
 - 3) Interview: Write a paper interviewing a key stake holder from current times. 10%
 - 4) Obstacles & Opportunities: Paper investigating certain problems or obstacles in interfaith engagement. How to address and navigate these. 10%
 - 5) Group project on planning or participating in an interfaith event 20%
 - 6) Term paper summarizing the findings of the group and their interfaith event. 20%
- [Class participation & Class attendance make up remaining 20% of grade]

Semester: Spring 2024

Course Title: Psychology, Spirituality & Transformation

Course Number/Section: THST 3250.01

Times/Days: Tuesday & Thursday 8:00-9:40 am

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 international leadership challenges and learn strategies to face a rapidly changing world of uncertainty. The methodology followed will be readings, lab works 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: SPRING 2023
COURSE TITLE: Psychology, Spirituality, & Transformation
COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: 3250-02.
TIMES/DAYS: M/W 6:00pm-7:40pm
INSTRUCTOR: Rachel Fox
CORE AREA: Faith and Reason
FLAGGED:

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

In this course we will be exploring the intersection of Christian spirituality & psychology through the lenses of faith development and transformation. We will do this in 3 sections. First, we will explore Christian spirituality and psychology as a spiritual journey of personal growth and transformation in the Christian spiritual tradition and Scripture. Second, we will look at psychology and spirituality in the developmental stages of human faith. Lastly, we will explore the practical side of Christian spirituality and psychology by looking at spiritual practices aimed at cultivating a knowledge of self and a knowledge of God, and thereby fostering spiritual growth and transformation.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Student will be able to understand the intersection between spirituality and psychology in the process of faith development and spiritual formation.
2. Student will be able to understand and articulate the intersection of Christian spirituality, psychology, and transformation from each of three major perspectives covered in this course: the spiritual journey, developmental stages of faith, and the practical side of formative prayer practices and spiritual disciplines.
3. Students will be able to understand and articulate contemplative prayer practices and spiritual disciplines as tools to cultivate transformation and faith development in the Christian tradition.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

Theological Inquiry

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Fowler, James W. *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*. New York: Harper-Collins Publishers, 1981. ISBN 0-06-062866-9 Paperback.
2. Edwards, Tilden. *Living in the Presence: Spiritual Exercises to Open Our Lives to the Awareness of God*. San Francisco, CA: Harper San Francisco, 1995. ISBN 0-06-062127-3.
3. St Teresa of Avila / Kavanaugh, Kieran. *Interior Castle: Study Edition*. 9780935216806
4. Sheldrake, Philip. *The Spiritual Way: Classic Traditions and Contemporary Practice*. Liturgical Press Academic. Collegeville Minnesota.

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

This is a 4 unit course: the expectation is that one will spend 12 hours a week on this class. Since we spend 3.5 hours a week in class time, the expectation is that you will spend on average 8.5 hours per week on work outside of class.

SEMESTER: SPRING 2024
COURSE TITLE: Buddhism
COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST3282 02
TIMES/DAYS: 13:45-15:25 MW
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: Express and interpret ideas through oral communication;
- SL07: Prepare, practice, and deliver an original oral presentation.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

None

REQUIRED TEXTS

All materials will be available as PDFs on Brightspace

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.

Spring 2024

Core Area: Faith and Reason
Course Title: THST 3283 Hinduism, Jainism, Yoga
Time and Days: Tuesday and Thursday 06:00 to 07:40
Instructor: Abhishek Jain, Ph.D.

Course Description:

In this course we will study the Hindu and Jaina religious traditions, with a special focus on the history, theory and practice of Yoga and the pressing topic of how these religions interface with environmental ethics. We will begin with a discussion of the geography, languages, climate, and varieties of religious expression found on the Indian subcontinent, and examine the Indus Valley Civilization, which dates from 3000 B.C.E. We will then read and discuss materials from the Rig Veda, the oldest extant literature of all Indo-European peoples. This will be followed with study of the social structure of Brahmanical India, the Upanisads, and three of Hinduism's central philosophical and religious systems: Vedanta, Samkhya, and Yoga. We will learn the story of the *Mahabharata* and read the *Bhagavad Gita*, with particular emphasis on the role of human action (karma) in relation to the maintenance of society through dharma. We will focus particularly on the Yoga traditions of Hinduism and Jainism, reading a translation of Patanjali's *Yoga Sutra* and materials on how Jainism and Hinduism have responded to contemporary ecological issues.

There will be three papers required. The first paper will be on a text of the Hindu or Jaina tradition, such as the *Upanisads*, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Yoga Sutra*, the *Acaranga Sutra*, or the *Tattvarthasutra*. The student will provide his or her own analysis and explication of key ideas in the text or one or more chapters of the text. The second paper will be on the topic chosen by each student such as religion and ecology through the prism of either Hinduism or Jainism, the role of women, a key philosophical idea, a particular style of yoga practice, and so forth. The third paper will emerge from student group projects. The class will be organized into multiple learning communities and, depending upon each group's interest, will visit a Jaina or Hindu or Yoga Center to participate in a ritual or workshop or class activity. Each group will make an oral presentation on their experience and each student will write individually on this experience. Each paper will be approximately seven pages. Students will work with both primary and secondary source materials, including field research. All papers must include a bibliography and citations. All papers must be double spaced and nicely presented.

Learning outcomes:

Students will develop critical thinking and writing skills, allowing them to articulate key features of Hinduism, Jainism, and Yoga in a historical context and in terms of these traditions' contemporary relevance. They will also gain direct experience of these traditions by practicing yoga, visiting temples, centers, and speaking with practitioners. They will improve their research writing skills, and the skills they develop in these areas will be broadly applicable for their individual career interests. By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the beliefs and practices of Hinduism and Jainism;
2. Understand the richness and complexity of theological and religious traditions of Hinduism and Jainism, including in light of contemporary issues and diverse voices;
3. Examine and evaluate critically the diverse ways in which religious beliefs and practices change across time and space;
4. Practice basic yoga practices from the Hindu and Jain yoga traditions;
5. Integrate theological and religious questions and problems through the careful study of a major research topic and write about these questions and problems in effective short- and long-form online articles;
6. Students will be able to take a vow.

Required Texts:

Joyce Burkhalter Flueckiger 2015. *Everyday Hinduism*.

Paul Dundas 2002. *The Jains*

Christopher Key Chapple 2008. *Yoga and The Luminous: Patanjali's Spiritual Path to Freedom*.

Georg Hermann Jacobi *Ācāraṅgasūtra, Jaina Sutras Part I*

Nathmal Tatia *Tattvārthasūtra: Umāsvāti / Umāsvāmī's Tattvārthasūtra: That Which Is*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited.

Schweig, Graham M. *The Bhagavad Gita: The Beloved Lord's Secret Love Song*

Course Work / Expectation:

One unit is defined by LMU as a minimum of 3 hours of work by an average student per week for a 15-week semester. Because being a college student is the equivalent of a full-time job, this 4-unit course should average a minimum of 12 hours of work a week and a total of 180 hours of work for the semester (inclusive of class contact time). This means that your time spent outside of the classroom including reading, studying, writing, discussing with friends, and visiting field sites will average 9 hours of work per week. All students are also expected to attend one-time visits to both the Sri Venkata Krishna Temple in Newbury Park and the Jain Center of Southern California, Buena Park, California.

COURSE TITLE: Sikhism: Sage Warrior

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3284

TIMES/DAYS: MW 1:40-2:50pm

INSTRUCTOR: Nirinjan Khalsa-Baker

CORE AREA: Faith and Reason

FLAGGED: Engaged Learning and Writing

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 Sikh history, theology, and philosophy and how it can inform contemporary struggles for justice through the reading of primary and secondary texts. We will explore the role of women in Sikh history, how their stories are often neglected, and the ways in which listening to their stories can inform contemporary Sikh practice. This course will provide engaged learning opportunities to attend Sikh services and perform seva (selfless service), important aspects of the Sikh tradition and practical ethics.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Identify the beliefs and practices of Sikhi
2. Understand the richness and complexity of the Sikh tradition, especially in light of contemporary issues and diverse voices, such as the stories of women, that have been historically silenced.
3. Examine and evaluate critically the diverse ways in which religious beliefs and practices change across time and space.
4. Integrate theological and religious questions and problems through the careful study of the Sikh concept of the Sage Warrior.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

No Pre-requisites required

REQUIRED TEXTS

Materials will be provided in Brightspace

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

This course is structured like a seminar with substantive discussions around key texts. With writing and engaged learning flags, we engage with the course materials both inside and outside of the classroom while demonstrating critical inquiry through oral, practical, and written assignments.

SEMESTER: Spring 2024

COURSE TITLE: Women and Religion

COURSE NUMBERS/SECTIONS: THST 3285.01 & THST 3285.02

TIMES/DAYS: MWF 9:25am – 10:35am (THST 3285.01) & MWF 10:50am-12pm (THST 3285.02)

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Christopher A. Daily

CORE AREA: Faith & Reason

FLAGGED: Information Literacy; Oral Skills

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

This course provides students with a basic understanding of the historical development and content of gender studies (broadly defined), its relationship to the academic study of religions, and the various ways in which gender and queer theory can be applied to the analysis of a variety of religious phenomena, such as ritual, asceticism, fundamentalism, sacred texts, theological discourse, and discipleship. We will take a comprehensive and comparative approach to the study of gender and religion by investigating how religious phenomena (symbols, rituals, narratives, texts, etc.) relate to 'genderedness', rather than studying women's religious roles and behavior exclusively. That is, we will examine the ways in which various religions (including Christianity, goddess spirituality, indigenous traditions, Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism) construct notions of gender and sexuality, and we will study how these constructions shape and affect religious participation and experience, especially for women. In addition, we will explore how these gender constructions impact relationships between participants. We will also consider the influence of religions' constructions of gender, sex, and sexuality on societies more broadly.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will have acquired:

1. a broad knowledge of the historical development of both women's studies and gender studies (broadly defined) in relation to the study of religions and theological studies;
2. a general understanding of the significance of some of the key issues and arguments in both feminist and queer theologies and the study of gender in relation to the study of religions;
3. an understanding of the ways in which a variety of religious traditions respond to questions of gender, sex, and sexuality;
4. and knowledge of contemporary religious beliefs and practices, analyzing these with reference to feminist and gender-critical research methods.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

Juniors and Seniors only. Otherwise, no prior study of religion or gender studies is required.

REQUIRED TEXTS

The course will make use of readings from a wide array of primary sacred texts and supporting scholarly studies. Students must obtain a copy of Wade, Lisa and Myra Marx Ferree (2023). *Gender: Ideas, Interactions, Institutions*, 3rd ed. London: W.W.Norton. All other readings will be uploaded to Brightspace.

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

- | | | |
|----|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | 50% | Two Research Papers (worth 25% each) |
| 2. | 30% | Learning Journal (reflective entries are written throughout the semester) |
| 3. | 20% | Class Preparedness and Participation |

SEMESTER: Spring 2024

COURSE TITLE: Sacred, Sinister, Strange

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3287.01

TIMES/DAYS: MWF 1:40-2:50

INSTRUCTOR: Tiemeier

CORE AREA: Faith and Reason

FLAGGED: N/A

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS: This course interrelates theology and critical theory to examine the ways in which diverse religious and speculative sources reflect on self, other, good, evil, and the divine through stories of terrifying creatures, otherworldly visitors, tricksters, and bloodthirsty deities. Portrayals of the alien, monstrous, and divine other often function to map out, define, control, engage, host and/or construct religious, racial, and gendered others. The class looks at how a number of religious traditions and speculative sources use stories of strangers and monsters to negotiate unknown territories of self, other, and divine in creative and sometimes problematic ways. It then discusses the implications of those stories for an ethics of encounter and the subversive power of (inter)religion.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

SLO1: Compare theological approaches to the sacred, sinister, and strange.

SLO2: Interrelate theology and critical theory to assess the meaning of the alien, monstrous, and divine other.

SLO3: Articulate the value of ultimate questions in their historical, cultural, and religious complexities.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND: Junior Standing

REQUIRED TEXTS

Chang, Yu-Ko. *Whisper*. Translated by Roddy Flagg. Stockport: Honford Star, 2021.

Liu, Marjorie, and Sana Takeda. *The Night Eaters: She Eats the Night*. Book 1. New York: Abrams ComicArts, 2022.

Okorafor, Nnedi. *Lagoon*. New York: Saga Press, 2016.

Vehlmann, Fabien, and Kerascoët. *Beautiful Darkness*. Translated by Helge Dascher. Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2018.

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

Course Engagement (40%)

Three Essay Assessments (30%)

Proposal and Bibliography (10%)

Audio/Visual Presentation (20%)

SEMESTER: Spring 2024

COURSE TITLE: Punishment and Mercy

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3560.1

TIMES/DAYS: Tuesdays/ Thursdays 11:50-1:30 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)

TERM: Spring 2024

COURSE TITLE: INTO THE DESERT

COURSE NUMBER: THST 3750.01

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: T 6:00-9:30

INSTRUCTOR: Douglas Christie

CORE AREA: Integrations/Interdisciplinary Connections

FLAGS: Engaged Learning

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

This interdisciplinary course aims to encourage students to reflect on the meaning of the desert as it has been conceived in the literatures of ancient Christian monasticism and contemporary contemplative practice, as well as in the art, literature and politics of the American West and Borderlands. The course fulfills the “engaged learning” flag by offering students an embodied experience of the desert through an intensive field trip to the Mojave. We will explore the varied meanings of the desert in diverse historical and cultural moments and ask what it means not just to imagine but also inhabit the desert today. These inquiries have real implications for what it means to inhabit the world with some sense of meaning and purpose—both in the profound sense of individual spiritual development as well as the pursuit of social justice. *Into the Desert* seeks to entwine these threads through close readings across genres as well as through embodied experience: a key class activity is a field trip into the desert itself.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- +Knowledge of early Christian literatures of the desert and their social-historical context.
- +Knowledge of historical and contemporary representations of the deserts of the American Southwest and Borderlands and the critical models that engage them.
- +Knowledge of spiritual and contemplative traditions specific to the desert.
- +Engaged learning: experiencing the desert through a field trip to the Mojave.
- +Integrative vision of the desert and its importance as both a material and spiritual site.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

Students should have upper-division standing.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Gary Nabhan, *The Nature of Desert Nature*

Martin Laird, *Into the Silent Land*

Mark Salzman, *Lying Awake*

Guzmán, Patricio, *Nostalgia de la luz* (film); Pawlikowski, Pavel, *Ida* (film); Curran, John, *Tracks* (film).
(There will also be selected PDF readings posted on Brightspace)

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

- +Regular class participation including leading selected class discussion.
- +Participation in class field trip to the Mojave (mandatory).
- +Regular (1 to 2 page) reading responses, in response to the course readings.
- +A mid-term essay of approximately five pages.
- +A personal essay, approximately three pages, to be presented orally in class.
- +A final paper of between 10 and 12 pages that will combine material from the short papers with additional research and critique.

SEMESTER: Spring 2024

COURSE TITLE: World Religions and Ecology

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3780

TIMES/DAYS: MW 1:45 to 3:25 p.m.

INSTRUCTOR: Christopher Key Chapple

CORE AREA: Interdisciplinary Connections

FLAGGED: Engaged Learning; Interdisciplinary Connections

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

In this four unit interdisciplinary connections engaged learning course we will explore responses to ecological degradation from a variety of the world's religious traditions. We will honor and learn about the indigenous land and lifeways that predate LMU here on the Suangna Bluff. We will also engage in service projects that help to correct and improve the state of the environment.

The course will explore how the world's meditation traditions (Hindu, Buddhist, Jain) and Christian thought and practice are responding to such issues as global climate change, rising species extinctions, issues over access to clean water, and the effects of chemicals within the environment.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will learn about the threats posed by climate change and loss of biodiversity. They will learn indigenous, Buddhist, Hindu, and Jaina attitudes and approaches to nature. They will learn about the Roman Catholic Church's response to the environmental crisis, informed by incarnational theology. They will also learn about field ecology. They will develop and implement skills of service work through an online environment. They will gain competency in two forms of writing: reflective responses and a research paper.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

Upper Division Status

REQUIRED TEXTS

Kim Stanley Robinson, *Ministry for the Future*

Christopher Chapple, *Living Landscapes*

Douglas Christie, *Blue Sapphire of the Mind*

Mary Evelyn Tucker and Brian Swimme, *Journey of the Universe*

Thomas Berry, *Evening Thoughts*

Patricia Chapple Wright, *High Moon Over the Amazon*

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

1. Service hours: 15 to 20 hours. Describe your work and document your hours in a journal to be submitted along with work completed.
2. Twice monthly responses to posted questions on the discussion board
3. A three to six page film summary and analysis paper
4. A ten to fifteen page paper at the end of the course, articulating an environmental problem and then providing a theological analysis.

SEMESTER: SPRING 2023

COURSE TITLE: On the Eighth Day, God Laughed: The Bible and Comedy

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: 3998 - 01

TIMES/DAYS: TR 9:55-11:35am

INSTRUCTOR: Sarah Emanuel

CORE AREA: Interdisciplinary Connections

FLAGGED:

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

What does the Bible have to do with comedy? Is it inappropriate to laugh at—or with—biblical texts? Considering the Bible as a collection of creative narrations, this course examines the role of humor within those narrations, particularly as it relates to the development of culture and communal identity. It also considers the role of biblical texts in comedy arts today, as well as within students' own comic creations.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Our objectives are:

1. To develop a vocabulary to talk about comedy studies in relation to biblical studies;
2. To understand and recognize comedic techniques, types, and motifs;
3. To recognize humor's role in the building of individual and communal identities;
4. To apply humor criticism to biblical texts;
5. To reflect upon the subjectivity of humor;
6. To apply our learning to our own comic constructs;
7. To discuss the relationship between art, culture, and society through biblical studies and comedy studies.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

None.

REQUIRED TEXTS

SBL Study Bible

Comic Relief: A Comprehensive Philosophy of Humor

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

"Writers' Room" Reflections

Midterm

Poster

Final Project