

SEMESTER: Fall 2024

COURSE TITLE: Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: Theology, History, and Interpretation

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 1000.01

TIMES/DAYS: TR 3:40-5:20PM

INSTRUCTOR: Rosanna Lu

CORE AREA: Theological Inquiry

FLAGGED: None

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

This course is an introductory course to the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) which will focus on the development of ancient Israelite traditions as well as development of interpretations of the biblical text. Students will critically engage with selected biblical texts representing issues of social, societal, political and theological concerns. Students are encouraged to critically engage with the biblical text in comparative consideration of contemporary conceptualizations of social justice, power dynamics and spirituality.

#### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who successfully complete this course will: (1) acquire basic familiarity with the content, context, and history of interpretation of the Hebrew Bible, (2) examine and critically evaluate the development of religious traditions throughout the span of ancient Israelite history, (3) develop basic skills in critical and creative analysis of the Hebrew Bible, and (4) develop practice in integrating theological inquiry and related meaningful action.

#### PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

None

#### REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Bible – New Revised Standard Version
2. David Carr, *An Introduction to the Old Testament: Sacred Texts and Imperial Contexts of the Hebrew Bible*
3. Additional readings 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

Course Title: Introduction to the Old Testament  
Course Number: THST 1000.02  
Sections Times/Days: MWF 12:15-1:25  
Instructor: Dr. Daniel L. Smith-Christopher

#### Course Description

This course is intended to be a challenging introduction to the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament). The emphases of this course are historical and literary familiarity with the Hebrew Bible, although questions about the Hebrew Bible as a religious text will not be out of place. This is a “historical-critical” approach to Textual analysis. No particular religious orientation is assumed, and students are invited to probe, question, and explore new ideas about the Bible. Students need not have a strong religious background in order to do well in this class – but it is good to have an interest in history, reading, and an interest in challenging questions!

Student Learning Outcomes: Students will:

- (1) Have a basic orientation to all the books of the Old Testament.
- (2) Have a basic grasp of essential dates of Old Testament History, and the importance of those events for the study of the Bible.
- (3) Have a basic understanding of the different genres of Old Testament Literature, such as Poetry, Wisdom, Prophetic Texts, Law, Story.
- (4) Have a basic understanding of critical approaches to the study of the Bible.

#### Prerequisites/Recommended Background

There are no prerequisites to this course. It is a basic course intended for the first or second year of University.

#### Required Texts:

1) Bible - New Revised Standard Version (New American Bible Revised is OK.)

2) Introduction to the Hebrew Bible: Third Edition, JOHN J. COLLINS

<https://doi-org.electra.lmu.edu/10.2307/j.ctt1w6tbx5>

<https://www-jstor-org.electra.lmu.edu/stable/j.ctt1w6tbx5>

#### Course Work / Expectations

- 1) Class attendance is required.
- 2) I grade on a point system. There will be 6 quiz-type short tests, spaced every 2-3 weeks, covering BOTH reading and lecture material. Each test is worth 10 points. There is no mid-Term or Final in addition to these tests. Only the tests.
- 3) All students will write the final paper (10-15 pages), an analysis of a selected Bible passage, which is worth up to 40 points. Full Research Paper expectations – citations, bibliography, etc. There will be detailed instructions.

SEMESTER: Fall 2024

COURSE TITLE: THST 1010-02 New Testament Contexts: History, Theology, and Interpretation

COURSE NUMBER: 42486

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: Tuesday/Thursday 1:45-3:25

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. William J. Shaules

CORE AREA: Theological Inquiry

### COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

In this course students study the literature of the New Testament with an emphasis on three contexts:

The world *behind* the text (e.g., When were the NT books written? What specific historical contexts are the NT authors addressing? Who are the authors and what are their unique emphases?)

The world *of* the text (e.g., What are the literary dynamics of the texts? What theological claims do these writings make? How do they relate to one another as canonical literature?)

The world *in front* of the text (e.g., How do modern readers interpret the NT writings? How do contemporary readers participate in meaning-making? What are the implications of the NT texts in the world today?).

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Throughout the course students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the following:

The basic content of required New Testament readings

The historical circumstances of the communities addressed by New Testament writers

Major New Testament theological themes

Major New Testament literary techniques

Non canonical Jewish and Christian literature

The relationship between the New Testament and the Old Testament

The basic geography of first century Palestine, Asia Minor, and Greece

The diversity of scholarly interpretations of the NT, from the Patristic era to today

The diversity of religious beliefs and practices in first century C.E. Greco-Roman and Jewish traditions

The diversity of practices and beliefs within Christianity today

Skills in reading, writing, critical thinking, research, and engaging in respectful dialogue.

### PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

None

### REQUIRED TEXTS

The New Revised Standard Version or the New American Bible

Boyle, Gregory. *Tattoos On the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion*, 2010. ISBN 978-1-4391-5315-4 (pbk), 978-1-4391-7177-6 (ebook)

Denari-Duffner, Jordan. *Finding Jesus Among Muslims: How Loving Islam Makes Me a Better Catholic*, ISBN 9780814645925

Ehrman, Bart D. *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition. ISBNs 9780197754047, USAC0027180, 9780197754023, 0197754031, 9780197754030

Neusner, Jacob. *A Rabbi Talks with Jesus*. ISBN: 0-385-47306-0

### 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: Fall 2024

COURSE TITLE: New Testament Contexts

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: 1010

TIMES/DAYS: 6:00-7:40 PM, MW

INSTRUCTOR: Peters, Janelle

CORE AREA: Theological Inquiry

FLAGGED:

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

This course introduces students to the New Testament writings in their historical, literary, social/political, and religious contexts. Students will learn various methodological approaches to the study of the New Testament, as well as consider the history of interpretation and the role of modern social location in the interpretive process.

#### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will gain familiarity in texts and practices in Roman period Jewish, Greek, Roman, Egyptian, and Christian religious cultures, including the New Testament. Students will learn to write exegetical essays and engage in academic discourse.

#### PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

None

#### REQUIRED TEXTS

Bible  
Brightspace readings

#### COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

Participation, quizzes, essays, and final exam

COURSE TITLE: American Catholicism

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 1020 / CATH 1020

TIMES/DAYS: MWF 12:15-1:25pm

INSTRUCTOR: Layla A. Karst

CORE AREA: Foundations: Theological Inquiry

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

What does it mean to be American and Catholic...and who gets to decide?

This course will critically examine the American Catholic religious experience in the United States from its Spanish, French, and English origins to today's culturally and theologically diverse contexts. Through the study of both primary and secondary texts and site visits to Catholic communities, students will examine different markers of Catholic identity including beliefs and teachings, community and belonging, religious practices, and participation in public life, and explore the ways Catholics have negotiated their religious identity and faith within the American experience.

#### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Through successfully completing this course, students will be able to (1) identify and explain key theological beliefs and religious practices within the Roman Catholic tradition, (2) summarize key narratives, themes, and experiences of American Catholics of different eras and contexts, (3) describe and analyze the *plurality* and *particularity* of American Catholicism within its historical, theological, and social contexts, (4) read and critically interpret both primary and secondary scholarly sources, (5) offer an evidence-based answer to the question: What does it mean to be American and Catholic?

#### PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

This course *does not* presume any prior knowledge or experience of Catholicism. All are welcome.

#### REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS (subject to change)

Chester Gillis. *Roman Catholicism in America (Second Edition)*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2020.

Additional readings available on Brightspace.

Students are also asked to arrange their own transportation to two off-site class visits.

#### COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

Evaluation in this course is designed to reflect a student's ongoing engagement with course texts, independent research, and class discussion throughout the semester. Students should expect to complete a reading assignment as well as a short quiz or writing assignment for most class periods and come to class ready to discuss course readings and topics with their peers. Students will select an American Catholic to research over the course of the semester and tell their story through a series of written and digital assignments. The class also includes two half-day weekend visits to local Catholic sites. Two short exams will test student understanding of key course ideas, vocabulary, and concepts.

SEMESTER: Fall 2024

COURSE TITLE: Exploring Catholic Theological Tradition

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST/CATH 1030-01/02

TIMES/DAYS: T/TH 6:00pm-7:40pm/7:55pm-9:35pm

INSTRUCTOR: Rachel Fox

CORE AREA: Foundations: Theological Inquiry.

FLAGGED:

**COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS:** This course will introduce the structure, teachings, and practices of the Catholic tradition, including key historical, theological, and practical contours in dialogue with contemporary questions. In this course we will particularly look at contemplative ideas and thinkers in the Catholic tradition from a historical perspective, both historical and modern. In doing so we will discuss their important writings, teachings, and practices focusing on prayer, the spiritual journey, and transformation.

#### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Student will be able to identify theological elements, practices, and theories of transformation in Catholic contemplative traditions both historical and modern.
2. Student will be able to identify and discuss key groups, thinkers, and theologians in Catholic contemplative traditions.
3. Student will be able to discuss key definitions, terminology, and components of contemplative prayer practices in the Catholic tradition.
4. Student will be able to discuss the active component of the contemplative way in the Catholic tradition.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND:

#### REQUIRED TEXTS

*50 Ways to Pray.* Blythe, Teresa. Abingdon Press. 2006.

*Light From Light: An Anthology of Christian Mysticism.* Editors Dupre, Louis / Wiseman, James A. Paulist Press. 2001.

*Living Compassion, Loving Like Jesus:* Dreitcer, Andrew. Upper Room Publishing, 2017.

**COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS:** As this is a 4unit course the expectation is that one will spend 12 hours a week on this class. Since we spend 3 hours a week in class time, the expectation is that you will spend on average 9 hours per week on work outside of class.

**LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY**  
**Fall 2024**  
**Eastern Orthodox Tradition**

**THST 1031 01**

**MDGK 1998 01**

**Tuesday/Thursday 6:00-7:40 PM Classroom: St. Robert's Hall 353**

**4 Semester Hours**

**Instructor:** Fr. Michael K. Courey, D.Min.

Phone: 310-749-2810 Email: [michael.courey@lmu.edu](mailto:michael.courey@lmu.edu)

Office Location: UH 3731 (Enter at 3700: Huffington Ecumenical Institute)

Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 5:00-6:00 PM

**University Core** fulfilled: Foundations: Theological Inquiry

**Course Description:** This course introduces students to the primary theological teachings of the Eastern Orthodox Church. The student will explore theology through written sources and the living tradition of Orthodox communities. The readings cover the history, religious identity, tradition, human sexuality, and the meaning of community from the Eastern Orthodox perspective.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** Over the course of the semester, students will have the following opportunities for intellectual growth: 1) to gain and express their knowledge of the history, theology, and challenges of Eastern Orthodox Christianity; 2) to enhance their listening and communication skills through attentive participation in class discussions on aspects presented in a lecture format with an emphasis on a systematic theological approach to the field; 3) to be exposed to the writings of contemporary Orthodox Christian theologians; 4) to experience and reflect on an Eastern Orthodox worship service and various media presentations.

**Prerequisites: None**

**Required Texts:**

Thomas Arentzen, *Orthodox Tradition and Human Sexuality* (Fordham University Press, 2022)

Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (Penguin Books, 2015)

Kallistos Ware, *The Orthodox Way* (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2019)

**Coursework/Expectations: 4-CREDIT HOUR POLICY**

At LMU, **one credit hour** is defined as a minimum of 3 hours of work by an average student per week for a 15-week semester. That means that a 4-unit class must average a minimum of 12 hours of work a week and a **minimum total of 180 hours of work for the semester (inclusive of class contact time)**. Typically, this will mean one hour of classroom instruction and two hours of out-of-class student work each week for each unit of a course. This course meets for three hours per week and **expects a minimum of 12 hours per week on class-related assignments**.

SEMESTER: **Fall 2024**

COURSE TITLE: **In Search of a Way: Ecological Spirituality**

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: **THST 1050 / 04**

TIMES/DAYS: **1:45-03:25 PM / Monday & Wednesday**

INSTRUCTOR: **Professor Roy Fisher**

CORE AREA: **Theological Inquiry**

FLAGGED: **none**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS**

To be a follower of a 'way' often implies the adherence to certain teachings, certain ethical imperatives that help determine how one will live. This course will introduce students to the meaning and significance of *spiritual practice* primarily in its distinctively Christian expressions, but also in expressions associated with other traditions. Central to *spiritual practice* is the question of *awareness*. In this course we will explore the significance of *spiritual practice* within human experience, giving particular attention to the role that cultivating an *awareness* of our common home, the earth, can play in shaping our understanding of this reality.

### **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. Be able to define Christian spirituality, particularly the meaning and significance of *spiritual practice* in its distinctively Christian expressions.
2. Undertake a broad systematic and historical survey of the relationships between religion/spirituality and nature/environmentalism.
3. Explore and experiment with various spiritual practices that engage and deepen our relationship with the natural world as well as helping us grow in awareness, acceptance, and appreciation of others, our earthly home, all who belong in our shared earthly community, and ultimately, the sacred.
4. Consider how culture, race, gender, sexual-orientation, class, and ethnicity impact theological reflection; and the social implications and/or ramifications for constructed interpretive practices.
5. To engage seriously with the ethical and spiritual meaning of following a way of life--for oneself and for the sake of the larger community.

### **PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND**

None.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

Wheeler, Rachel. *Ecospirituality: An Introduction*. Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2022. (NOTE: you must buy a physical copy of the book to annotate and bring with you to class)

### **COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS**

This course has been approved for in-person modality only. At LMU, one credit hour is defined as a minimum of 3 hours of work by an average student per week for a 15-week semester. That means that a 4-unit class must average a minimum of 12 hours of work a week (inclusive of class contact time). **This course meets twice a week for one hour and forty minutes for each class. You should also expect to spend a minimum of 8 hours outside of class per week on class-related assignments.** This includes, but is not limited to: assigned reading, preparation for class, collaborative work/discussions, projects, and exams.

SEMESTER: FALL 2024  
COURSE TITLE: In Search of a Way  
COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 1050/01 and 02  
TIMES/DAYS: Mon/Weds/Fri - 8:00-9:05am OR 9:25am-10:35am  
INSTRUCTOR: Rev. Dr. Scott Geminn, Ph.D.  
CORE AREA: Theological Inquiry  
FLAGGED:

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

This course will introduce students to the meaning and significance of spiritual practice in its distinctively Christian expressions. The focus of the course is on “lived religion”—the embodied, eclectic and often improvisational character of spiritual experience, both collective and individual. It also seeks to understand the critical role of practice in shaping spiritual meaning and identity.

#### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Through successfully completing the course students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the following:

- The Way of Jesus offers them a way of being human and of making meaning living in a challenging world.
- The spiritual wisdom found in ancient texts like the Gospel of Mark and the Sermon on the Mount and also in the lives of those who sought to embody their Christian spirituality in their daily lives and how it might guide them today.
- Important concepts and definitions, individuals, and practices in the Christian spiritual tradition.
- Develop skills in reading, writing, critical thinking, and dialogue in response to readings, assignments, and exams.
- Incorporate aspects of Christian spirituality into their own lifelong spiritual journey.

#### PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

Willingness to learn.

#### REQUIRED TEXTS

All readings will be available on Brightspace.

#### COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

Weekly Readings and Quizzes  
Centering Prayer Essay  
Finding God In All Things Essay  
Final Paper

SEMESTER: FALL 2024  
COURSE TITLE: In Search of a Way  
COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 1050  
TIMES/DAYS: MW, 340-520 pm  
INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Owens-Jofré  
CORE AREA: Theological Inquiry  
FLAGGED: n/a

### COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

This course will introduce students to the meaning and significance of spiritual practice in its distinctively Christian expressions and expressions associated with other traditions. The focus of the course is on “lived religion”—the embodied, eclectic, and often improvisational character of spiritual experience, both collective and individual. It also seeks to understand the critical role of practice in shaping spiritual meaning and identity.

With a few exceptions, this course will approach the study of lived religion from a sociological perspective. A sociological perspective on religion focuses on religious practices, customs, beliefs, and rituals in the context of social structures such as religious institutions, politics, education, community, and family. In this class, students will learn about the dialectical processes by which religion affects societies and societies affect religion by addressing the following three questions: (1) How do social scientists approach the study of religion? (2) What can religion as it is lived tell us about a particular group or society? (3) Why is it important to study religion within the socio-historical context in which it is produced, reproduced, and reconfigured?

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Critically read and evaluate various theories and methodologies within the study of religion.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the diversity of religious traditions with special attention to Catholic Christianity.
- Identify and apply key terms within the study of religion
- Analyze and discuss interpretive issues within the study of religion and identify limits to knowledge and how such limits influence scholarly analyses and interpretations of religious phenomena.
- Formulate and express arguments and analyses with clarity both verbally and in writing.

### PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

None.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

A course reader available for purchase through the Bookstore and on reserve at the library.

### COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

Syllabus and Course Policies Quiz, Campus Event, Goal Setting and Self-Assessment , Religious Autobiography Assignment, Class Attendance and Participation, Exam, Analytical Essay and Presentation

COURSE TITLE: God & Good: Introduction to Christian Ethics

COURSE NUMBER: THST 1060 01

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: 3:40 – 5:20 PM TR

INSTRUCTOR: Professor Nicholas R. Brown

CORE AREA: Theological Inquiry

FLAGGED:

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

What is Christian Ethics? What resources underpin and inform its moral vision? What makes this vision similar and distinctive from other ethical traditions? Is it possible to reconcile this vision with a secular, modern and pluralistic society? And what kind of practical moral guidance does it provide in addressing contemporary moral debates? These are the fundamental questions we will explore to enhance our understanding of Christian Ethics and to examine its application in a 21<sup>st</sup> century society. In doing so we will consult a variety of sources including biblical texts and the writings of various Christian ethicists and theologians to help us flesh out a Christian normative framework which we will then use to critically evaluate issues of war/violence, economics and bioscience.

#### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Acquire a basic fluency in Christian Ethics including some of its primary sources, methods of moral analysis as well as some of the strategies it employs in ethical reflection.

Practically apply Christian ethical reflection to concrete cases of contemporary moral debate.

Develop critical reading and thinking skills.

Develop the ability to craft persuasive oral and written argumentation which articulates one's own ethical perspectives in respectful conversation with others.

#### PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

None

#### REQUIRED TEXTS

Wells, Samuel and Ben Quash. *Introducing Christian Ethics*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

Wells, Samuel. *Introducing Christian Ethics: An Introductory Reader*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

#### COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

Two Exams

Fourteen one-page analysis papers

In Class Quizzes

Class Participation

SEMESTER: Fall 2024

COURSE TITLE: God and the Good: An Introduction to Christian Ethics

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 1060.2

TIMES/DAYS: Monday/ Wednesday/ Friday 9:25-10:35 am

INSTRUCTOR: Jonathan Rothchild, Ph.D.

CORE AREA: Theological Inquiry

FLAGGED: N/A

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

This course introduces central thinkers, methods, themes, and concepts of Christian Ethics. Students will critically analyze the moral arguments in relation to fundamental questions about theological anthropology (e.g., freedom, agency, responsibility, sin), basic goods and values (e.g., teleology, deontology, virtue theory), theological frameworks (e.g., liberation, feminist, natural law, revisionist) and wider cultural, political, and legal contexts and developments. The course addresses theoretical and practical dimensions of ethics as well as current case studies in the areas of violence and criminal justice, digital technology, anti-blackness, comparative religious ethics, and sexual ethics. Students will consider and comparatively evaluate contested moral arguments pertaining to these case studies.

#### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Identify and analyze foundational theological questions (SLO #1);
- Interpret religious texts critically and creatively (SLO # 2);
- Connect ultimate questions to Christian faith and practice (SLO # 3);
- Assess diverse religious approaches and contexts (SLO # 4);
- Appreciate the intrinsic value of theological inquiry and its relation to meaningful action (SLO #5);
- Appreciate the contributions of theological ethics to contemporary moral debates (SLO # 6).

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND: None

#### REQUIRED TEXTS

- Lloyd, Vincent and Andrew Prevot, eds. *Anti-Blackness and Christian Ethics*. Orbis, 2017.
- Mathewes, Charles. *Understanding Religious Ethics*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.
- Ott, Kate, *Christian Ethics for a Digital Society*. Roman and Littlefield, 2018.
- Peterson-Iver, Karen. *Reenvisioning Sexual Ethics: A Feminist Christian Account*. Georgetown University Press, 2022.
- Other readings will be made available on Brightspace.

#### COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

- Reading summaries
- Exams
- Group Presentation
- Final Research Paper

SEMESTER: Fall 2024

COURSE TITLE: **Comparative Theology**

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: 1080

TIMES/DAYS: TR 3:40-5:20

INSTRUCTOR: Nirinjan Khalsa

CORE AREA: Theological Inquiry

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

This course will take a comparative approach to theological inquiry, probing fundamental questions as they relate to religious diversity and interreligious understanding. The main focus of the course will be to highlight central Sikh and Christian ideas, practices, and perspectives to explore how they contribute to contemporary worldviews and ethics. Sikhism began in Northern India in 1469 with its founder Guru Nanak and continued with a succession of *Gurus* (enlightened teachers) who promoted equality, selfless service, and religious freedom. Sikhism continues to thrive today and is considered the 5th largest religion with Sikhs (lit. students) now living throughout the world. Sikhs are most notable by their turbans representing their brotherhood as warrior-saints who defend religious freedom and justice. This course will give students tools to think critically about religious diversity, engage in interreligious dialogue and incorporate a comparative perspective into one's worldview.

#### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Identify and analyze foundational theological questions.
- Identify and examine major beliefs and practices of Sikh in dialogue with Christianity.
- Interpret sources critically and creatively.
- Connect ultimate questions to Sikh and Christian faith and practice.
- Compare Sikh and Christian approaches to ultimate questions.
- Assess Sikh and Christian approaches and contexts.
- Appreciate the intrinsic value of theological inquiry and its relation to meaningful action.
- Integrate a comparative perspective into one's worldview.
- Value religious diversity.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND: N/A

REQUIRED TEXTS: Anthony de Mello, *The Way to Love*

(References: The following texts will be made available via e-books and as .pdf copies on Brightspace:

Christie, Douglas *The Blue Sapphire of the Mind*

Eck, Diana *Encountering God*

Fredericks, James *Faith Among Faiths*

Mandair, Arvind-pal Singh *Sikhism: A Guide for the Perplexed*

Martin SJ, James *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything*

Massaro SJ, Thomas *Living Justice*

Shackle and Arvind Mandair, Christopher *Teachings of the Sikh Gurus*)

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

SEMESTER: Fall 2024

COURSE TITLE: Comparative Theology (Course Theme: 'Death & the Meaning of Life')

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 1080.01, THST 1080.02, & THST 1080.03

TIMES/DAYS: MWF 9:25-10:35am (1080.01); MWF 10:50am-12pm (1080.02); MWF 12:15-1:25pm (1080.03)

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Christopher A. Daily

CORE AREA: FND: Theological Inquiry

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

In this course, we will explore diverse notions of the meaningful life and the good death through the analysis of different global religious beliefs and practices of living, dying, and death (including voluntary death, martyrdom, and sacrifice), as well as rites of mourning and commemoration. In studying a religion's theology of death, students will also come to understand a religious system's theory about the meaning and purpose of life and how to live a good life. At the end of the course students will have gained a comprehensive understanding of the complex variety of death practices and of the symbolism of death and the meaning and purpose of life in many major religious traditions. Religions covered in the course include Hinduism, Buddhism, Daoism, Christianities, and Islam.

#### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will come to understand:

- a) many religious ways of explaining life, death, dying, and the afterlife (particular religions covered include Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Daoism);
- b) the influence a culture's theory of death has upon its living people and institutions;
- c) how the rise of science has failed to displace core religious understandings of life and death;
- d) the basic tools and approaches used in the academic study of theology and religions;
- e) the many ways of living (and dying) in this world other than our own;
- f) and, given that all of the religious systems covered in the course can be found in southern California, you will also grow to appreciate how these core ideas lead to alternate living and dying experiences amongst LMU's neighbors. This insight will provide you with a new vision of the multicultural landscape of Los Angeles.

#### PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

No prior study of theology or religion is necessary.

#### REQUIRED TEXTS

The course will make use of readings from a wide array of primary sacred texts, as well as excerpts from supporting secondary scholarly studies. All course readings are uploaded to Brightspace.

#### COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

1. 40% Examinations (one Midterm Exam and one Final Exam, worth 20% each)
2. 30% Learning Journal (reflective entries are written throughout the semester)
3. 20% Final Fieldwork Paper
4. 10% Class Preparedness and Participation

**SEMESTER:** FALL 2024

**COURSE TITLE:** Introduction to the Qur'an

**COURSE NUMBER/SECTION:** THST 1081 01

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

**INSTRUCTOR:** Prof. Saqib Hussain

**CORE AREA:** Theological inquiry

**FLAGGED:** N/A

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS**

This course introduces students to the vital role of religion in human experience by exploring literary, historical, and cultural dimensions of religious texts, patterns of belief, and related ritual and ethical practices. It does this through the life of Muhammad and the scripture he proclaimed, the Qur'an.

We start with an historical background to the Qur'an, which includes an overview of life of the Prophet Muhammad, and an introduction to the religious traditions (especially Judaism and Christianity) that were present in Arabia at the time of the Qur'an's proclamation. We proceed chronologically by examining several early short surahs (= chapters) of the Qur'an, and paying close attention to the emergence of the Qur'an's theology. We move on to chronologically later, longer surahs, in which the Qur'an is more actively engaged with the Jews and Christians, and we consider how the Qur'an addresses their beliefs and their stories. In the second half of the course, we look at various themes in the Qur'an, and their relevance to the world today, including gender, violence, Shariah law, salvation, and the relationship between human beings and God. Along the way, we consider near-death experiences, magic and demons, and heaven and hell!

### **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

At the end of this course students will: 1) demonstrate knowledge of the historical background of the Qur'an; 2) develop their ability to analyze (historically, theologically, and literarily) the different types of genres in the Qur'an; 3) demonstrate an understanding of the Qur'an's theology, legal content, and narrative content; 4) gain an appreciation of major Qur'anic themes and their relevance to the world today, 5) through class participation and written assignments improve verbal and written skills.

### **PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND**

None

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

M. A. S. Abdel Haleem, trans., *The Qur'an* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

John Kaltner, *Introducing the Qur'an: For Today's Reader* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011).

### **COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS**

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

SEMESTER: Fall 2024

COURSE TITLE: World Religions in Los Angeles

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 1500.01 & THST 1500.02 (Crosslisted as JWST 1136.01 & .02)

TIMES/DAYS: Section .01 T/R 9:55 – 11:35 AM; Section .02 T/R 11:50 AM—1:30 PM

INSTRUCTOR: L. Arik Greenberg, Ph.D.

CORE AREA: Studies in American Diversity

**COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS:**

This course is an introduction to the academic study of religion and of world religions, and to the religious traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and other current religious trends. Special emphasis is placed upon how these religious traditions have emerged within the context of Los Angeles, how they have changed, grown, and adapted to their new surroundings.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

At the end of this course students will 1) be able to identify the major beliefs, practices and history of several major religious traditions; 2) examine the complex historical, political, economic, and social context of religion in Los Angeles; 3) illustrate how religious communities negotiate internal and external systems of religious, racial, ethnic, and gendered power; 4) appreciate diverse perspectives and approaches to religion; and 5) demonstrate that they can think both empathetically and critically about conflicting religious claims. 6) Additionally, through class participation and written assignments students will have improved their verbal and written skills.

**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** [textbooks will be available through the bookstore at a discounted bundle-pricing from the publisher]

Roy C. Amore, Amir Hussain, and Willard G. Oxtoby, editors. *A Concise Introduction to World Religions, Fourth Edition*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2019. ISBN13: 9780190919023

*The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha, New Revised Standard Version, Fourth Edition*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2010. ISBN13: 9780195289558 ISBN10: 0195289552 ISBN 9780195289602

*The Bhagavad Gita*. Translated by W. J. Johnson. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2009. ISBN13: 9780199538126 ISBN10: 0199538123

*The Qur'an*, Translated by M. A. S. Abdel Haleem. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2008. ISBN13: 9780199535958 ISBN10: 0199535957

**COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS:**

**10%** Class Attendance & Participation

**10%** Group Presentations

**40%** Written Assignments (four reflection papers on house of worship site visits)

**20%** Mid-Term Exam (On Western Traditions, Indigenous traditions, and introductory topics)

**20%** Final Exam (On Eastern Traditions and New Religious Movements)