SEMESTER: Fall 2021  
COURSE TITLE: Medieval Religious Thought and Practice  
COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: 45546, THST 3023.01 & 45547, THST 3023.02  
TIMES/DAYS: MW 4:00-5:30 PM & MW 6:30-8:00 PM  
INSTRUCTOR: Anna Harrison  
CORE AREA: Faith and Reason  
FLAGGED: No  

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS  
This is a history of medieval western European Christian thought and practice. We proceed through a careful study of the life and works of the medieval monk, Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153). Our study is comprised of six units: monasticism; God; Mary and the Saints; the Afterlife; Art and Architecture; withdrawal and engagement.  

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES  
Students who complete this course successfully will gain an understanding of the complexity of medieval western European Christian thought and practice. They will come to value learning about the religious ideas and experiences of people who lived in a world very different from our own. They will learn about the process of reading complicated texts from the distant past and writing responsibly and creatively about them.  

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND  
Completion of Theological Inquiry and a willingness to work hard!  

REQUIRED TEXTS  
You will access readings as well as videos and images through BRIGHTSPACE. I may add additional readings to the syllabus and make other changes to it.  

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS  
This is a demanding course. Careful reading and writing will require a significant amount of time. Be aware that you will probably need to read assignments several times. This is as expected. Much of the material we are reading is complicated and treats of topics and concerns about which you may not be accustomed to thinking in a sustained way. To help you prepare for class and to provide me with a sense of how you are reading the texts, you may have quizzes almost every class. There may be, furthermore, several short papers as well as midterm and final examinations. I expect you to be consistently active participants during class. Participation requires attendance and preparation. I will always assume you have done the reading and thought about it before coming to class.
SEMESTER: Fall 2021

COURSE TITLE: Judaism: Religion, History, and Culture

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3100.01 / JWST 3750.01

TIMES/DAYS: R 6:30 – 9:30 PM

INSTRUCTOR: Gil Klein

CORE AREA: EXP: Historical Analysis & Perspective

FLAGGED: n/a

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS
This course will explore Judaism as a lens through which to think about the multiple and complex forces that shaped the past. It will do so by investigating central aspects of Jewish history from ancient to modern times. The course will focus on select texts and works of art, which mark significant moments in Jewish thought and practice. By examining Jewish text and art, students will learn how Judaism developed through negotiations with the traditions of the past as well as with the changing conditions of the present. Through a critical analysis of sources such as Biblical passages, rabbinic dialogues, Kabbalistic teachings, philosophical writings, synagogue paintings and sacred architecture, students will also learn to identify different media and genres of Jewish creativity. As the course will demonstrate, each of these modes of expression evolved in correspondence with non-Jewish cultures and inspired different understandings of Judaism. Finally, by exploring notions such as origins, law, worship and nationhood, students will come to see Judaism as an ongoing response to fundamental historical, religious and cultural questions.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
Students will: 1. Know the chronological sequence and geographical framework appropriate to Jewish religion, history and culture. 2. Be able to analyze primary sources of multiple varieties and distinguish them from scholarship (secondary sources). 3. Understand that historical knowledge emerges from debates over the interpretation of evidence. 4. Learn to construct arguments about the past based on evidence and utilizing critical language appropriate to the subject matter and discipline of history. 5. Value the complex process by which the present emerged out of the past. 6. Develop writing skills and the rhetorical ability to present critical work in class.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND
None.

REQUIRED TEXTS
*Additional sources on Brightspace.

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS
Assignments in this course include: exams and quizzes; reading reports; oral presentations; and a research paper.
SEMESTER: Fall 2021

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

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3212.01

TIMES/DAYS: TR 6:30-8:00PM

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) as a way to understand how ancient Israel developed a “theology of suffering” and faced God in the midst of traumatic circumstances. In particular, 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
5. 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 presentations
5. Reading quizzes, exams
COURSE TITLE: The Truth is Out There: Tales From the Margins of Religion

COURSE NUMBER: 3225.01

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: Tuesday/Thursday 12:00-1:30 PM

INSTRUCTOR: Charlotte Radler, Ph.D.

CORE AREA: Integrations: Faith & Reason

FLAGGED: Writing Flag

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS:
This course explores North American thinkers, ideas, and phenomena on the cultural margins from the 1950s until our 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 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 anthropology, gender and sex, exile, death, feminism, eco-theology, mysticism, witchcraft 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., Heaven’s Gate, 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 Christianity 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 immanent logic of a system of thought.
5. Develop written and oral communication.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND: one 1000-level theology course

REQUISITED TEXTS:
Mary Pride, The Way Home (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform; 25 Anv


Additional assigned texts can be accessed on BrightSpace

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS:

Active class participation: 10%

1 Presentation: 10%

Analysis Paper 1: 10%

Analysis Paper 2: 15%

Analysis Paper 3: 20%

1 Final Research Paper (including a proposal): 35%
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

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 an asynchronous discussion board, written work and presentations.

Comprehensive field research about a local community (modality to be determined).

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 2021
COURSE TITLE: God and the Human Experience
COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3236.1 / THST 3236.7 / THST 3236.8
TIMES/DAYS: MWF 12:30-1:30pm (sec 1) / MWF 8-9am (sec 7) / MWF 9:30-10:30am (sec 8)
INSTRUCTOR: Grace Y. Kao
CORE AREA: Faith and Reason
FLAGGED: N/A

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS:
Courses that fulfill your Faith and Reason integration requirement are designed to “institute dialogue between theology and other fields that inform and enrich the pursuit of questions of ultimate concern.” In this section of God and the Human Experience, we will approach the burgeoning field of animal studies theologically. We will explore how our theologies (e.g., about creation, incarnation, eschatology) prompt us to interact with and use nonhuman animals in particular ways just as our varied experiences of them—as food, as pets, as wild creatures to be admired or feared, and so forth—can inform our views about God if we but “ask the beasts” to teach us (Job 12:7). We will accordingly engage “the question of the animal” in a systematic, theological fashion by first considering what animals are principally for and thereafter, what are our obligations to them. Students will read diverse, even mutually incompatible, perspectives on these issues and will be encouraged to keep an open mind as they ponder matters they may never have seriously entertained before (e.g., can animals themselves be sources of revelation? Do they have rights? Will they be redeemed? Should animal suffering lead us to question the goodness or omnipotence of God?)

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:
By the end of the course, students should be able to:
1. comprehend the meaning of key philosophical and theological concepts (e.g., anthropocentrism, speciesism, stewardship)
2. know why the Christian tradition has both incorporated and excluded non-human animals from the sphere of theo-moral concern
3. acknowledge the diversity of Christian responses to systematic theological issues (e.g., theodicy, animal sacrifice, soteriology) as they affect animals
4. reach and defend normative judgments about the theological and moral status of nonhuman animals, including how humans ought to treat them

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND: junior or senior status; completion of requisite Foundations and Explorations core curriculum courses

REQUIRED TEXTS*:
2. Richard Bauckham, Living with Other Creatures: Green Exegesis & Theology (Waco, TX: Baylor UP, 2011)

*All required are available as e-books through Hannon library; other required readings will be made available on Brightspace

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS:
Regular attendance & participation (class modality TBD, but we will NOT meet synchronously 3X per week) | weekly reading & “open book” quizzes (unlimited attempts) | weekly asynchronous discussion on Teams | untimed midterm exam (short essay responses) | final group project | 1 class field trip if pandemic conditions allow for it
COURSE TITLE: God and the Human Experience

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3236 02 and THST 3236 03

TIMES/DAYS: TR 12:00-01:30 PM (02) and TR 02:00-03:30 PM (03)

INSTRUCTOR: Peters, J.

CORE AREA: Faith & Reason

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.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Application of academic theories on religious and spiritual practices
- Knowledge of significant individuals, elements, and practices of the Christian spiritual tradition
- Understanding of the impact that beliefs and practices of Christian spirituality have on identity and the formation of a new identity in Christ as seen in Scripture and in Christian spiritual teachings
- Appreciation of the ecumenical and interfaith overlaps of several Christian spiritual practices and topics
- Understanding of Christian spirituality in terms of a lifelong journey in pursuit of the following questions: Who Am I? Who is God? Who am I in relationship to God? What are some practical applications of this spiritual path?
- Skills in reading, writing, critical thinking, academic research, and engaging in respectful dialogue

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

None

REQUIRED TEXTS

These will be available on Brightspace. Readings will come from the Bible, ancient papyri (e.g., Guodian strips, Dead Sea Scrolls, Oxyrhynchus), early apostolic authors (e.g., 1 Clement), the Talmud, and Chinese and Japanese Buddhist texts on nature.

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

Students will articulate the meaning and significance of spiritual practice within Christian and other traditions by class discussion, three essays, and a final exam.
This course examines the modes of discourse, levels of reflection, and diverse experiences of individuals and communities in the search for God. [from LMU Bulletin]

Professor’s Addendum: As this course is taught in uniquely diverse ways by individual instructors, we will critically engage the works of numerous religious thinkers and writers whose thought has focused on redirection and correction within their traditions—specifically in the face of oppression and failure of the tradition to respond to human rights violations. We will be focusing primarily on the works of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, M.K. Gandhi, Julian of Norwich, Harold Kushner, Rumi, St. Teresa of Avila, Elie Wiesel, and Paramahansa Yogananda. Various notable writers and theologians will be discussed in the excerpted literature, including M.L. King, and others. Prepare for deep conversations about how our conceptions of the Divine shape our interactions with the world and our intentions for change.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will 1) be able to identify the major beliefs, practices and lives of several major religious thinkers from selected traditions; 2) examine how these individuals attempted to address the problem of human suffering and the assertion of human rights and social justice; 3) illustrate how they encountered and engaged with mystical union and interaction with the Divine; and 4) comprehend how they attempted to substantially change their traditions in some way or meld them with other global traditions. 5) Lastly, one goal of this course is to encourage students to view these thinkers as inviting them to be leaders and to shape the world in positive ways, taking up the mantle of altruistic and even sacrificial service to humanity and the world.

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

Some textbooks will be available through the bookstore, while others will be available for free online at the websites linked below. You will be responsible to obtain all of them, so let me know if you have any trouble in doing so.

The individual listings are as follows:

2) Mohandas K. Gandhi, Truth is God and My God https://www.mkgandhi.org/ebks/gandhiiebooks.htm [online]
30% Class Attendance & Participation
30% Three Essay Assignments (approximately 5 pages each)
10% Threaded online discussion forums
30% Term paper (10-12 pages)
SEMESTER: Fall 2021

COURSE TITLE: God and the Human Experience

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3236.5

TIMES/DAYS: Mondays 6:30-9:30PM

INSTRUCTOR: Rev. William D. Roozeboom, Ph.D.

CORE AREA:

FLAGGED:

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

Human beings are meaning seekers and meaning makers. One of the most profound dimensions of meaning in life is one’s journey with the Divine, or the Sacred.

This course will explore the human experience of God, or the Sacred, from a variety of perspectives including key theologians and thinkers in the study of religion, the Abrahamic Traditions (Judaism, Islam, and Christianity), and various contemporary understandings faith in light of lived experience. It will do so from an interdisciplinary perspective, acknowledging that “religious” and “non-religious” dimensions of experience are not neatly, mutually exclusive categories. Rather, there are important overlaps that need further study.

Additionally, we will explore the complexities and diversity within the Christian tradition, noting particular expressions from underrepresented theological approaches. Finally, we examine selected special topics to discern how to embody one’s faith in relationally just ways.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

As a result of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Understand the role of experience in meaning making and the search for the Sacred.
2. View the search for God as a culturally and historically embedded process.
3. Articulate and understand the richness and complexity of theological and religious traditions, especially in light of contemporary issues and diverse voices.
4. Reflect critically on their own experiences and observe the impact of multiple contexts on their own questions, reflections, and discourses on God and the human experience.
5. Increase empathy and skill to engage human diversity and religious difference in the context of difficult matters such as prejudice and oppression.
PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

This course is an upper division course

REQUIRED TEXTS

Required Texts


Optional Texts


COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

**Reading, Attendance, and Participation.** Wide reading of theory and cases. Participation in course activities weekly, including online class sessions, small group discussions, viewing lectures and other course materials (videos, cases, etc.), forum posts, responses, and individual reflection processes.

**Forum posts.** Forum posts and responses are due periodically throughout the course (500 word reflections and 250 word responses).

**Presentation.** Each student will choose one topic from the course content and research it and present an overview and didactic of the topic for the class. You can use whatever means you'd like to present (PowerPoint/Google Slides, Video, Audio, TED talk, etc.).

**A Site Visit and Reflection.** Students will a sacred site (Church, Mosque, Synagogue, Temple, etc.). During your visit, you will note: (1) what feelings, thoughts, and questions arise as you reflect on and theologically; (2) what imagery, rituals, and practices are evident; (3) how you sense culture and ritual shapes the process of connecting with the Divine; and (4) how this experience impacts your developing sense of spirituality or faith in your own life.

**An integrative, critically reflective paper or project.** Students will present a paper or project that demonstrates their ability to integrate and contextualize the theoretical, theological, and sociological material we have discussed in the class.
SEMESTER: Fall 2021

COURSE TITLE: God and the Human Experience

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3236-09

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

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
- the meaning of "imaginative traditioning" for ancient Israel, for early Christianity, and for modern "people of the book"
- major themes in the Hebrew and Christians scriptures that serve to articulate the quest for ultimate meaning.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND
None

REQUIRED TEXTS

Hussain, Amir. Oil and Water: Two Faiths: One God, ISBN 1-896836-82-8


A Bible: New Revised Standard Version

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS
1. Attendance of all class sessions
2. Participation in class discussions
3. Completion of shorter assignments on assigned dates
4. Research project
5. Completion of a final exam
SEMESTER: Fall 2021

COURSE TITLE: The Practice of Everyday Life

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3251:01

TIMES/DAYS: TR 10:00 to 11:30 AM

INSTRUCTOR: Christie, Douglas

CORE AREA: Integrations: Faith and Reason

FLAGGED: Engaged Learning

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS
This course is focused on the question of what it means to learn how to pay attention—become aware, to stand in open-hearted relationship to others, oneself, the world, God. And what it means to integrate such deep seeing into a simple, encompassing spiritual practice—the practice of everyday life. This question has long occupied the thought of artists, philosophers, poets and contemplative practitioners. In their work one encounters a continuous effort to truly see and form a relationship with those things that matter most. In this course, we will consider the question of what it means pay attention—to pay such careful attention that one becomes a person (as novelist Henry James described it) “on whom nothing is lost.” And to ask how the cultivation of this capacity can transform the way we think about personal and spiritual identity, social engagement and shared cultural reality.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
+To develop a capacity for reflecting critically on what it means to see—one self, the other, God, and the living world—drawing on the art, literature, philosophy and spirituality to interpret these elements of experience.
+To learn to reflect critically on what it means to integrate intentionality or awareness into ordinary activities—as part of the work of learning what a practice is and can be and how it can come to have meaning.
+To learn how to form critical judgments about the relative meaning and value of disciplined practice (whether spiritual, artistic, social or political), undertaken repeatedly, over time. What kind of transformation does such practice make possible? What is the significance of shared practice? How does such practice reshape the identity of a community?
+To deepen one’s capacity to see both the surface and the undercurrent of charged contemporary social and political realities, and to consider the kind of tactics that might enable one to respond meaningfully to them.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

REQUIRED TEXTS
+Sally Rooney, Normal People (Hogarth, 2019).
+Thi Bui, The Best We Could Do: An Illustrated Memoir (Harry N. Abrams)
+Ta-Nehisi Coates, Between the World and Me (Spiegel and Grau).
+Lauret Savoy, Trace: Memory, History, Race, and the American Landscape (Counterpoint)

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS
+Participation: Be prepared during every class session to enter in a thoughtful and informed way into class discussions (responding to both the common reading material and to the work and thought of your fellow students).
+Experiments with Practice: You will be asked to engage in certain practices aimed at helping you develop your capacity for paying attention and being aware. You will also be asked to keep a journal of your experience (see detailed instructions at the end of the syllabus). (20%)
+Short Essays: These essays (four to five pages double-spaced) will be tied directly to the reading material and will invite you to offer your own critical, interpretive response to what you have read.
+Final Synthesis Paper: The final paper for the course will be a ten to twelve-page essay representing your best attempt to integrate your understanding of the central questions we have engaged it throughout the course.
FALL 2021
COURSE TITLE: ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY
COURSE NUMBER: THST 3252 / MDGK 3352 (4 units)
SECTION TIMES/DAYS: TH 6:30-9:30 pm
INSTRUCTOR: Fr. John Bakas
CORE AREA: INT: FAITH AND REASON (IFTR)
Office: UH 3731     Mailbox: UH 3785
Phone: (323) 737 2424     Email: frbakas@stsophia.org

COURSE DESCRIPTION / PRINCIPAL TOPICS:
This course is intended as an introduction to the rich spiritual tradition of Eastern Orthodox Christianity. We will examine principles of spiritual direction, as well as various dimensions of spirituality of the desert fathers and monastic traditions. Readings and discussions will focus on the hesychastic tradition, prayer, liturgical piety, Iconography, and the Sacramental life. The use of the icon in corporate and personal devotional prayer, and the Jesus prayer in lay spirituality will be highlighted.

The fundamental principles of Orthodox Christian Spirituality are often very similar to those in the whole of Christendom. The methods and practices may differ in the Orthodox and catholic worlds. The differences do not bear on the chief points. On the whole, there is one Christian spirituality of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, with variations of stress and emphasis. The spiritual life we will study, review, and discuss will be the light of the doctrines of the Eastern Orthodox Church. This name applies to the “sister churches” whose faith is expressed by the decisions of the Seven Ecumenical Councils, and who maintain communion with the Patriarchates of Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:
Students will:
- Demonstrate familiarity with the beginnings and historical development of the Orthodox Christian dogma and spirituality; the historical beginnings of Asceticism and Mysticism.
- Understand the intellectual underpinning of Orthodox spirituality and the liturgical and contemplative elements of Orthodox spirituality.
- Understand the role of the icon in the spiritual journey of the Orthodox Christian and the meaning of the Holy Mysteries of Orthodox Christianity.
- Recognize and value the various symbolisms of the Orthodox faith.
- Examine and evaluate critically the diverse ways in which religious beliefs and practices change across time and space; how they relate to contemporary issues and diverse voices.
- Reflect critically on what s/he has learned to demonstrate reasoned judgment and respect for human dignity in working as ethical, compassionate leaders with and for others.
- Acquire the knowledge and experiences that can bring about a life changing (and life-long) pattern of spiritual growth.
- Acquire and demonstrate understanding of analytical and critical language in formulating reasoned arguments.

PREREQUISITES / RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND: None
REQUIRED TEXTS / READING LIST:
Ware, Kallistos. The Orthodox Way. St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1979.
COURSE WORK / EXPECTATIONS:
Attendance of the class meetings and participation in discussion; attendance at one Orthodox Liturgical service; mid-term and final exam; an 8-10 research paper
SEMESTER: Fall 2021

COURSE TITLE: Buddhism

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3282 - 02

TIMES/DAYS: M 6:30-9:30 pm

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.
SEMESTER: Fall 2021
COURSE TITLE: Hinduism, Jainism, and Yoga
COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: 3283 01
TIMES/DAYS: Thursdays 6:30-9:30PM
INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Christopher Miller
CORE AREA: Faith and Reason
FLAGGED: Engaged Learning, Writing

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

In this course students will study the Hindu, Jain and Yogic traditions, with a special focus on the history, theory, and practice of Jainism and its relationship with Hinduism and Yoga. Students will become comfortable reading and discussing key concepts found in Hindu, Jain, and Yoga traditions. Particular emphasis will be placed on the roles of meditative, yogic, and ascetic practices in Jainism and how they affect human action (karma) and lead towards an ethic of non-violence (ahimsa) aimed toward the goal of liberation (moksa/kevala).

STUDENT 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 (if pandemic permits), and hearing from practitioners. They will improve their online social media 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:

**SLO 1.** Identify the basic beliefs and practices of Hinduism and Jainism.
**SLO 2.** Understand the richness and complexity of the theological and religious traditions of Hinduism and Jainism, including in light of contemporary issues and diverse voices.
**SLO 3.** Examine and evaluate critically the diverse ways in which religious beliefs and practices change across time and space.
**SLO 4.** Practice basic yoga practices from the Hindu and Jain yoga traditions.
**SLO 5.** Use social media and blogging platforms responsibly to produce effective and informative posts pertaining to their specific areas of interest in Hinduism and Jainism.
**SLO 6.** 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 long-form online articles.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

Upper Division Theology course recommended for juniors and seniors

REQUIRED TEXTS

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

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 a one-time visit to the Jain Temple in Buena Park, California, if pandemic conditions permit.
SEMESTER: Fall 2021

COURSE TITLE: Women & Religion

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST3285.01 / CATH3285 / WGST 3702

TIMES/DAYS: Tues / Thurs 12:00-1:30pm

INSTRUCTOR: Nancy Pineda-Madrid, PhD

CORE AREA: Faith and Reason; Oral Skills; Information Literacy

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS
Symbols are important to the study of religion. This course examines one towering symbol of the female sacred in the Christian tradition, namely Our Lady of Guadalupe. This course begins by asking the question, what does it mean to interpret a theological symbol and how & why do theological symbols function pre-thematic & pre-critical ways. It then addresses the origin and early history of devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe. Next, using feminist method and theory, it critically interrogates limiting interpretations of Guadalupe, it identifies resources for life giving interpretations of Guadalupe, and it concludes with various theologically fecund interpretations of Guadalupe, mindful of the polyvalent nature of living theological symbols like Guadalupe. During the semester, students will be introduced to the history of Guadalupe’s contrasting theological interpretations, the connections that scholars have developed between Guadalupe and the Bible, and the various ways Guadalupe is being interpreted today. Throughout students will consider how various Guadalupe interpretations have had an impact on women’s lives, some interpretations being life giving and others less so. Social and political questions will be considered throughout the semester.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
As a successfully engaged student in this course, you will . . .
(1) be able to recognize the ways in which a theological symbol like Guadalupe can break open ultimate life questions
(2) be able to identify and discuss the ways symbols give rise to thought and require interpretation difference that gender makes in understandings of the sacred
(3) be able to identify how theological interpretations of Guadalupe can function for good or not in women’s lives

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND
One course in Christian Theology

REQUIRED TEXTS
- Several readings will be posted on LMU’s Brightspace

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS
- Active Participation
- Annotated Bibliography
- Reflection Papers
- Special Project
- Oral Presentation
- Exams
SEMESTER: FALL 2021

COURSE TITLE: WOMEN AND RELIGION

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3285.01-02/CATH 3285-02. 46702

TIMES/DAYS: MWF 8-9 a.m.

INSTRUCTOR: Leah Marie Buturain, Ph.D.

CORE AREA: Faith and Reason

FLAGGED: Oral Skill and Information Literacy

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS
Women and Religion examines women’s religious experience as it is embedded in cultural, social, political, and economic realities. This course explores the paradoxes inherent in faith fueling women’s sense of meaning and purpose even as religious beliefs often perpetuate androcentrism and bar women from leadership roles and, in some cases, basic human rights. In what ways are women of faith disrupting sexism, racism, and ageism? Critical tools from religious and theological studies including Black and Womanist theologies, feminist theory and gender studies, and spirituality, mysticism and wisdom traditions will be employed to investigate women in their religious contexts. Women and Religion offers students opportunities to investigate how women who identify as religiously observant interpret their agency, ethical responsibilities and mortality as defined by and resistant to religious traditions. Reckoning with the violence perpetuated against women in the name of religion, this course will also investigate women’s tenacity and resourcefulness in building networks within five religious traditions. Women and Religion requires students to articulate their own values, meaning and purpose in relationship to spirituality, prayer, mystery, social justice, and religious traditions.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

SLO1 Students will design their own mission statements by discerning and identifying ultimate questions that help them clarify the meaning of life, the role of faith, religion, and spiritual praxis in civic life, and the impact of these insights on women. SLO2 Students will demonstrate, by working collaboratively in small cohort clusters, their ability to employ feminist and theological critical tools for interpreting texts, rituals, and material culture within an assigned religious tradition. SLO3 Students will investigate a selected issue on the same assigned religious tradition by generating an annotated bibliography and PowerPoint presentation that demonstrates their ability to analyze research and interpret cultural praxis. SLO4 Students will identify their own family’s intergenerational linkages regarding attitudes toward religious and spiritual praxis by interviewing two women elders and evaluating these experiences in the context of course readings. SLO5 Students will practice expressing gratitude through applied reflection by writing in a gratitude journal each week to develop a mindful awareness of their experiences and responses. Students will consciously contribute to the cybercafe, discussion boards, video chats, and group cohorts with the intention to nurture a safe and collaborative space.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND. Juniors and Seniors Only

REQUIRED TEXTS.
3. Mary and the Catholic Imagination: Le Point Vierge by Wendy Wright (eReader provided)

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS
This course requires students to work on assignments simultaneously in order to accrue the content needed for the three major assignments and to work collaboratively both in their cohort and in the seminar process.
SEMESTER: Fall 2021

COURSE TITLE: World Religions and Ecology

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 3780

TIMES/DAYS: MW 2 to 3:30 p.m.

INSTRUCTOR: Christopher Key Chapple

CORE AREA: Theological Inquiry

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
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, drawing from one of the religious / cosmological / ethical systems we have studied: the New Story / Journey of the Universe; Christian theology; Hindu, Buddhist, Jain Yogas; indigenous perspective/s; or a tradition chosen by the student with the professor’s permission.
COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

In 2015, Pope Francis addressed an Encyclical to the world titled *Laudato Si: On Care for our Common Home*. This document, the fruit of lengthy consultation with climatologists, economists, scientists and theologians from the world’s major religions begins by expressing praise as the result of human gratitude when encountering wonder. A substantial document of over 80 pages, *Laudato Si* repeatedly speaks about beauty and wonderment, pointing theologians to its best interpretive tool: an engaged and liberative theological cosmology based on the unity of aesthetics and ethics. Spurred by the encyclical we explore the questions posed by the climate crisis in light of the Christian tradition. Using a five-step methodology developed from theological aesthetics, Liberation and Feminist theologies and Ignatian spirituality, we journey through the course by studying, experiencing, and dreaming up, creative ways to extend the encyclical’s vision of Creation to our context so it may ably serve our communities of accountability.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students successfully engaged in this course will: a) Know the central contours of theological methodology incorporating multiple strands into a five-step process. b) Know and develop proficiency in engaging complex texts in environmentalism, ecological harm, theological cosmology and eco-theology. c) Be able to write well and present their findings orally. d) Be able to actively engage and reflect upon the complex work of wrestling with an ancient religious tradition as it engages robustly with urgent current issues. e) Extend their critical engagement with theological questions through the production of original theological thought in academic writing, participant observation and multimedia presentations.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

This is a seminar reserved for Theology Majors and Minors and cross listed with Catholic Studies.

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Pope Francis, *On Care for our Common Home, Laudato Si*. Available online from the Vatican. Those who have Spanish proficiency are encouraged to read the Spanish text.
6. Other readings and materials will be made available through BRIGHTSPACE.

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

1. Reading: All assigned readings are due prior to the class meeting.
2. Participation: In class discussions, presentations and processes, engaged field work outside of class with a non-profit organization involved in ecological justice (modality to be determined).
3. Writing and presentations: Participation in discussion board, several short papers, oral presentations, field work and midterm multimedia report and a final research paper/project/presentation.
FALL 2021

COURSE TITLE: The Cross and The Lynching Tree; BLACK LIBERATION AND WOMANIST THEOLOGY

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: 46703 THST- 3998- 05 and 47073 CATH – 3998- 02

TIMES/DAYS: Monday/Wednesday 4:00-5:30pm

INSTRUCTOR: Kim Harris PhD

CORE AREA: Faith and Reason

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

Historically and contemporarily, the cross, a foundational image of Christian faith, has also been associated with political terror. In this course, beginning with the landmark theological work of Black liberation theologian Dr. James Cone, we will explore the meaning of the cross during the Roman Empire and in the post Reconstruction American South. We will ask who are crucified, and the affect of Black and Brown people being framed as crucifiable. We will reflect on what the cross and the lynching tree mean to Christians and to followers of other traditions, and examine what role we play as the narrative of crucifixion and empire is played and replayed.

This course examines questions of faith, God, religious practice, humanity, spirituality, and liberation in light of diverse African American experiences, ideas, and practices. By an analysis of diverse sources in both Black and Womanist theology, the class explores the complex dynamics between race and religion and highlights how Black voices contribute to the human search for God.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to compare different perspectives on religious, ecclesial, and spiritual traditions. Students will understand and interrelate theology and critical race theory. Students will examine diverse Black and Womanist theological sources and assess the significance of Black and Womanist contributions to religious thought and practice.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND: This course is open to Juniors and Seniors.

REQUIRED TEXTS

James Cone, A Black Theology of Liberation
James Cone, The Cross and the Lynching Tree
James Cone, The Spirituals and the Blues
Amir Hussain, Muslims in the Making in America
Bryan Massingale, Racial Justice and the Catholic Church
Delores Williams, Sisters in the Wilderness

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

CLASS DISCUSSION and PARTICIPATION (20%)
READING ANALYSES and WRITTEN WORK (20%)
QUIZZES and FINAL EXAM (20%)
SITE VISIT (online) AND ANALYSIS PAPER (20%)
FINAL PROJECT and PRESENTATION (20%)