Introduction to OLD TESTAMENT / HEBREW BIBLE  
[Fulfills “Theological Inquiry” CORE Requirement]

An ONLINE Course Accessible from ANYWHERE in the WORLD

INSTRUCTOR: Prof. Daniel L. Smith-Christopher
THST 1000.01 & THST 1000.02

All Lectures are RECORD and can be viewed ANY TIME, according to each Student’s schedule, but there is a Weekly Short Question/Discussion “Check In” session. All Quizzes are “Take home”. I will arrange different ZOOM CHECK IN times for Students in Different International Areas so your check-in will be at a comfortable time.

Introduction to the Old Testament Theology is a survey of the Old Testament with particular attention to becoming familiar with, and enjoying, the various “books” of the Old Testament, and the history of their composition. This course presumes that the students a rigorous reading schedule so that students are prepared for weekly quizzes – although all quizzes are “take home” and “open notes”.

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.
5. Have a basic introduction to contemporary theological issues in relation to OT thought.

NO PREREQUISITES for this course.

Required Texts:

2. YOU MUST OWN OR HAVE ACCESS A BIBLE: “New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]”, OR “New American Bible REVISED [NAB]”, OR “New International Bible” [NIB]. No other versions will be accepted
COURSE TITLE: American Catholicism, Summer 2021 Session I

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION:   THST 1020 / CATH 1020

TIMES/DAYS: Tuesday and Thursday 12:15-4:00pm

INSTRUCTOR: Layla Karst

CORE AREA: FTHI

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

What do Stephen Colbert, Joe Biden, Lady Gaga, and Lin Manuel Miranda, and Amanda Gorman all have in common? They are all American Catholics!

What does it mean to be an American Catholic and who gets to decide? This course will explore the American Catholic experience in the United States from its Spanish, French, and English origins to today’s culturally and theologically diverse contexts. We will examine different markers of religious identity: voluntary association; religious beliefs; liturgy and popular practices; theological perspectives on vocation, identity, and belonging; the historical experience of Catholicism and anti-Catholicism; the intersection of Catholic identity and national/racial/sexual identity; and Catholic participation in American public life. Over the semester, we will engage these questions through the study of primary documents and data; and through secondary historical, theological, and social scholarship.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Through successfully completing this course, students will (1) begin to understand the diversity of American Catholicism within its historical, theological, and social contexts, (2) critically and creatively interpret primary and secondary sources, (3) analyze the relationship between belief, practice, and personal/social identities; and (4) explore perennial questions of faith and culture in light of the American Catholic experience.

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)


Additional readings available on Brightspace.

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

This course will utilize both synchronous and asynchronous modes of instruction. Students will be expected to read texts, watch lectures and films, listen to podcast, and complete short quizzes and writing assignments daily. The course will meet synchronously for at least one hour during each of our regularly scheduled class times. Attendance is required at all synchronous sessions. Students will also select an American Catholic to research over the course of the term and tell their story through a series of written and digital assignments.

*Because of the intensive nature of summer courses, students should plan to commit 15-20 hours per week in addition to our regularly scheduled course times to complete their work for this course.*
COURSE TITLE: Islam in America

COURSE NUMBER: THST 3281

TIMES/DAYS: SUMMER 2021 SESSION I, Online course

   Section 01: Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:15 to 4:00 pm (PST)
   Synchronous meetings on Zoom, Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:15 to 2:00 pm (PST)

   Section 02: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:15 to 4:00 pm (PST)
   Synchronous meetings on Zoom, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:15 to 2:00 pm (PST)

INSTRUCTOR: Amir Hussain, PhD

CORE AREA: Faith and Reason

FLAGGED: Oral Skills, Writing

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

This course provides an introduction to Islam, and a detailed understanding of Islam in the American context. It examines the history of American Islam that goes back at least to the transatlantic slave trade, and discusses how American Muslims have helped in the construction of “America”.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The course will discuss how American Muslims have lived out their religion in a society in which they are: 1) a minority community, 2) have internal differences in terms of degree of observance, sectarianism (Sunni and Shi’a), ethnicity (25% are African American, 35% are South Asian, 33% are Middle Eastern), political affiliation, socio-economic status, etc., and 3) have to deal with issues of western modernity (e.g., same-sex marriage). As a result, students will learn about the internal diversity among American Muslim communities. They will contrast immigrant and indigenous American Muslim experiences, and will learn about the history of Muslims in America.

Students will:

1) demonstrate through their research paper and discussion posts that they will think both empathetically and critically about Islam and Muslims in America;

2) demonstrate through their reflections and oral presentations knowledge of the histories and cultures of American Muslims;

3) show that they have the ability to interpret texts and other cultural phenomena (such as rituals, myths, architecture, songs, films) that have religious presuppositions or implications; and

4) through class participation, oral presentations and written assignments have improved their verbal and written skills.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

None

REQUIRED TEXTS


Supplementary readings and videos posted on Brightspace.

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

10% A review of 5 pages on the Postman book

40% A research paper of about 12 to 15 pages
  - Outline and bibliography (5%)
  - First draft (15%)
  - Finished Research Paper (20%)

5% Research paper initial short presentation

10% Research paper final presentation

10% 5 posts (each worth 2%) to the discussion boards on Brightspace
  - Discussion on Errol Morris text
  - Discussion on *American Muslims: Fact vs. Fiction*
  - Discussion on Omar ibn Said collection
  - Discussion on *What’s My Name: Muhammad Ali* videos
  - Discussion on *By the Dawn’s Early Light: Chris Jackson’s Journey to Islam*

15% 3 reflection papers of about 2 pages each (each worth 5%)
  - Reflection on “The God of Abraham”
  - Reflection on *Prince Among Slaves* video
  - Reflection on the class as a whole

10% Class participation (which is more than simple attendance)
COURSE TITLE: Buddhism, Summer 2021 Session I

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST3282 / 10927

TIMES/DAYS: MW 12:15-4:00PM

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: Summer 2021, Session II

COURSE TITLE: New Testament Contexts

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 1010 – 01/JWST 2998 - 01

TIMES/DAYS: TR 12:15-4:00pm

INSTRUCTOR: Sarah Emanuel

CORE AREA: Theological Inquiry

FLAGGED:

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS
This cross-listed Theological Studies and Jewish Studies course, taught online synchronously, introduces students to New Testament texts and contexts. While a primary focus is situating New Testament writings in their own historical settings—a traditional starting point within the field of New Testament Studies—the course also examines how New Testament sources have been analyzed in contexts beyond their own times. Throughout the class, students will learn about the early Jesus movement; the construction of the New Testament canon; the development of New Testament Studies as an academic field; and the relationship among text, context, and interpretation. No prior knowledge is needed.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
1. To gain familiarity with the textual complexities of New Testament and ancient Jewish/early Christ-centered texts;
2. To become familiar with the social and historical contexts of New Testament and ancient Jewish/Christian texts in order to explore what they might have meant to those who lived at the time in which they were written;
3. To recognize the relationship among text, context, interpretation, and interpretive histories;
4. To think ethically about the ways in which the New Testament might have been significant to its communities of origin;
5. To think ethically about the ways in which the New Testament continues to influence contemporary culture;
6. To become familiar with the methods and vocabulary scholars use to discuss the Bible and New Testament writings;
7. To learn to read texts closely, attending to multi-vocality and multiplicity of meaning;
8. To develop a vocabulary to talk about the relationship between ancient Judaism and Christian origins.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND
None

REQUIRED TEXTS

### COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Four Reading Responses</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>One Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>One Essay</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>One Podcast Assignment</td>
<td>20%</td>
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TERM: Summer 2021 - SESSION II  
COURSE TITLE: God and the Good: An Introduction to Christian Ethics  
COURSE NUMBER: THST 1060  
SECTION TIME/DAYS: Asynchronous  
INSTRUCTOR: Matthew Petrusek, Ph.D.  

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS:  

This course provides a broad survey of foundational texts and ideas that have contributed—and continue to contribute—to the vast, diverse, and living body of moral thinking that constitutes “Christian Ethics.” The survey follows three interrelated strands of inquiry. The first is descriptive and historical: starting with Scripture, we will move in a roughly chronological line through some of the major theological and philosophical moments in the history of Christian Ethics and see how they eventually culminate in contemporary Christian ethical thinking. The goal from this standpoint is to see how patterns of moral thinking and the conclusions they form about the nature and content of Christian ethics change, transform, and, even, remain consistent through time. The second strand is interpretive and conceptual: throughout the course we will identify and scrutinize the fundamental theological, ontological, anthropological, epistemological, and ethical conceptions and presuppositions in each text in order to understand not only what a particular author thinks but also why she or he thinks in that way. Finally, the course will also have a normative component. We will not only ask what each author thinks individually and in relation to other others; we will ask whether any of them are right. Asking that question—in effect, starting to do Christian ethics on one’s own—will require us to determine normative standards of judgment and ask why and how they are justifiable.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: Students who take this course will:

- Identify, understand, compare, and evaluate the fundamental theological and ethical differences and similarities among the alternative views the course will examine.
- Understand and articulate the fundamental similarities and differences between “Protestant” and “Catholic” forms of theological-ethical thinking.
- Understand and articulate how “Christian ethics” can be conceived of as a unified field of inquiry while, at the same time, encompassing deeply divergent conceptions of the nature of God and the human good.
- Understand and articulate how differing conceptions of God and the human good apply to and inform contemporary, concrete moral issues.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND: None

REQUIRED TEXTS: TBA

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS:

Preparation of all assigned readings  
Informed and consistent contributions to assigned group discussions  
Two five-six page papers  
Essay-format midterm and final exams
TERM: Summer 2021 - SESSION II  
COURSE TITLE: God and the Political Order  
COURSE NUMBER: THST 3562  
SECTION TIME/DAYS: Asynchronous  
INSTRUCTOR: Matthew Petrusek  
CORE AREA: Ethics and Justice  
FLAGGED: Writing  

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS:

This course will examine the relationship between beliefs about the nature of God and the human good and the justifications for, and character of, different kinds of political orders. The class will have three interrelated components. First, from a historical and interpretive perspective, it will examine some of the most influential texts in the history of Western political thought with the aim of isolating and analyzing how the texts’ conceptions of the divine (or absence of the divine) in relation to the human good shape and warrant each author’s conception of the ideal state. These texts are located primarily, though not exclusively, within the Christian theological-ethical tradition. Second, from a normative perspective, the course will ask and seek to answer the question, “What constitutes the nature of the ideal state/form of government?” Third, from the perspective of applied ethics, the course will also examine how the authors and the theo-political theories it analyzes help illuminate and address contemporary political issues, broadly defined.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: Students who take this course will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of how theology influences politics and how politics influences theology.
- Demonstrate an understanding of, and be able to formulate responses to, the following fundamental questions:
  - The relationship between temporal and spiritual authority.
  - The relationship between the state and the individual.
  - The state’s role in assisting (or thwarting) the individual’s attainment of the highest good.
  - The justification of the use of state violence.
  - The relationship between religious pluralism and civic unity.
- Be able to apply competing theo-political theories to contemporary political issues.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND: None

REQUIRED TEXTS: TBA

COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS:

Preparation of all assigned readings  
Informed and consistent contributions to assigned group discussions  
Writing three five-six page papers and one final research paper.