

RELIGION AND THEOLOGY (THL)

THL 125 Introduction to the Bible 3 credits

An investigation of the sacred literature of the Christian tradition. The course emphasizes essential skills in reading the Bible. It explores the covenant dealings of God with His people and the fulfillment of the covenant in Jesus Christ. Students read selected portions from the Old and New Testaments and explore Christian theological themes. For Oregon students, this course meets the writing-intensive requirement for the State of Oregon.

THL 201 Old Testament 3 credits

An introduction to the historical context and literature of the Old Testament. Special attention is paid to the concepts of promise, law, covenant, grace, and the presence of God in the narratives of the Pentateuch and the Former Prophets. The course also examines the nature of prophecy and the psalm and wisdom resources in the Prophets and Writings.

THL 206 New Testament 3 credits

An introduction to the historical context and literature of the New Testament. Students master the stories and teachings of early Christianity and grow in their ability to read texts of the Bible in their historical and literary contexts.

THL 218 The Land of the Bible 1 credit

This course is a study tour that combines travel with lectures and readings to provide students with a rich, on-site learning experience. Students will spend at least ten days in Israel visiting sites throughout the country that formed the stage on which so many biblical events were played out. The travel portion will move region-by-region, spending time in Galilee, the Dead Sea area, and Jerusalem. In each area students will learn about its geography and archaeology, exploring how the features of each area shaped the history of its people. Attention will also be given to the imagery and symbolism connected with each region in both the Old and New Testaments. [Please be aware that this course is physically demanding. It will involve significant amounts of walking/hiking at times in quite rugged environments.] (Prerequisite: THL 125, THL 200 or THL 206)

THL 225 Worship for Lutherans 3 credits

This course provides an in-depth exploration of Lutheran worship practices, traditions, and theology. Students will examine the historical development of Lutheran liturgy, the role of music and sacraments, and the theological underpinnings of worship within the Lutheran tradition. Key topics will include the structure and elements of the Lutheran Divine Service, the significance of the church year, and various Lutheran rites and ceremonies.

THL 241 Church History 3 credits

A panoramic survey of Christian history and thought from the apostolic age to the present. As such, the course traces the church's institutional history, its theology, its worship life, and the history of its missionary expansion against the larger political, intellectual, and socio-cultural backdrop.

THL 300 Christianity and Sport 3 credits

This course examines the interplay between sports and Christian theology. Specific attention is given to the history of religion and sport, key Christian themes related to sports, and spiritual care for athletes to help students discover how Christian theology informs our understanding of sports—and life beyond the “playing field.” (Prerequisite: THL 125 or THL 206)

THL 320 Global Christianity 3 credits

This course will trace the global expansion of Christianity from its beginnings to the present era. Emphasis will be paid to the theological and cultural dimensions of the worldwide Christian movement as it developed and spread throughout history. The course will also investigate varieties of Lutheran traditions in Africa, which are currently the fastest-growing Lutheran churches in the world. (Prerequisite THL 100 or THL 125 or THL 200 or THL 206)

THL 326 Christian Ethics 3 credits

In this course, students will examine the ways in which both philosophical and theological frameworks change how we live our individual lives and shape the future of our families, friendships, sports teams, businesses, and political societies. In particular, the course invites students to relate these frameworks to their own thinking about sex and family, war and peace, work and the use of its financial fruits—and more generally, to the moral and political action to which they believe they are called in this life. This course fulfills the intermediate general education requirement for Theology. (Prerequisite: THL 125 or THL 200 or THL 206)

THL 343 Athens and Jerusalem: Philosophy and Christianity 3 credits

A selective historical survey of the principal areas of inquiry, key figures, major issues, and central themes commonly addressed by western philosophy and Christian theology during the ancient, medieval, modern and contemporary periods. Among the topics that may be considered are the relationship of faith and reason; truth; nature and grace; the classical arguments for the existence of God; evil; the philosophical and theological virtues; and religious language. The course is based on extensive readings from primary sources and is supplemented by lectures and discussions. This course fulfills the intermediate general education requirement for Theology. (Prerequisite: THL 125, THL 200 or THL 206)

THL 345 Callings: Christianity and Vocation 3 credits

Challenges students to explore their purpose and/or baptismal call through elements of Christian theology and exemplars from the history of Christianity. Students will explore the concept of Christian vocation from historical and theological perspectives with special emphasis given to Martin Luther's doctrine of vocation in relation to service of one's neighbor. Students are challenged to think in new and creative ways about pursuing their passions and dreams for the good of others. This course fulfills the intermediate general education requirement. (Prerequisites: THL 125 or THL 200 or THL 206).

THL 346 Martin Luther: Saint & Sinner 3 credits

This course examines the life and theology of the Martin Luther, instigator of the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century. A prolific writer and bold thinker, Luther appears today on many top ten lists of most influential people in the last millennium. By studying Luther in his medieval context and by reviewing the influence of his thought since the 16th century, the course will explore the relevance of his theology for the 21st century. This course fulfills the intermediate general education requirement for Theology. (Prerequisite: THL 125 or THL 200 or THL 206)

THL 355 Understanding World Religions for Healthcare Professionals 1 credit

This course will examine the interconnectedness of religion, spirituality, and population health. Students will learn a variety of religious perspectives associated with the major religions in the U.S. and the world and will discuss ways for implementing quality care for religiously diverse patients. For Oregon students, this course meets the writing-intensive requirement for the State of Oregon. (Prerequisites: THL 125 or THL 200 and NUR 380).

THL 358 Christianity and World Religions 3 credits

From a Christian perspective, this course explores the varieties of human religious beliefs. Major religions are surveyed in terms of artifacts, behaviors, emotions, beliefs, values, world views, and histories. The course will cover Animism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity, with special attention in the latter case devoted to the Christian denominations of North America. This course fulfills the intermediate general education requirement for Theology. (Prerequisites: THL 125 or THL 200 or THL 206).

THL 360 Christianity and the Media in Contemporary Culture 3 credits

Christianity has an unmistakable interplay with various forms of the media. This course explores subtle and overt Christian themes in movies, music, magazines/newspapers, theater, the World Wide Web, and television. Students locate, watch, and critically analyze numerous media resources and discuss them in correlation to Christian themes in the Bible. This course fulfills the intermediate general education requirement for Theology. (Prerequisite: THL 125 or THL 200 or THL 206)

THL 372 Mission of God 3 credits

This course traces the mission of God through the Old and New Testaments. It explores God's intent for his mission people in the past, present and future and discloses that intent in biblical narratives and texts and in Lutheran theology and Lutheran confessions. This course fulfills the intermediate general education requirement for Theology. (Prerequisite: THL 200 or THL 125 or THL 206)

THL 378 Christian Vocation and Ethics for Healthcare Professionals 1 credit

This course will examine Christian perspectives on vocation, service, and ethics. Throughout the course, students will apply critical thinking skills to their evaluation and application of religious and ethical perspectives within the context of population health. In providing opportunities for students to closely study the Christian scriptures and theology, this course will empower students in their life, career, and service to the world. For Oregon students, this course meets the writing-intensive requirement for the State of Oregon. (Prerequisites: THL 125 or THL 200 and NUR 380).

THL 379 Faith and Justice in the City 3 credits

Students will apply the Christian scriptures and Lutheran theology to today's multicultural, global, urban context with close attention to the Christian concepts of vocation, justice, and service toward one's neighbor. Through thoughtful evaluation of theology, philosophy, and the humanities, students will evaluate Christian ethics and habits for living in today's global society as thoughtful men and women of faith and conviction. This course fulfills the intermediate general education requirement for Theology. (Prerequisite: THL 125 or THL 200 or THL 206).

THL 400 Law and Gospel Theology 3 credits

Students learn to distinguish and effectively apply Law and Gospel theology in personal, ministry, and missional contexts. Students will explore the practical application of the Christian Gospel through the development of skills in nurturing relationships, recognizing barriers to and opportunities for effectively applying Law and Gospel to the needs of the hearer. Particular attention will be given to the contributions of C.F.W. Walther to the Lutheran understanding of Law and the Gospel (Prerequisites: CHM 130, or CHM 140, or junior/senior status).

THL 410 Principles of Biblical Interpretation 3 credits

As an introduction to principles and methods of Biblical interpretation as employed by Lutherans with a high view of the Scriptures, students will focus on learning and practicing methodological models for studying and interpreting Biblical literature. Special attention will be given to the study of the historical/cultural context and literary nature of the inspired text. Prerequisites: THL 201 and THL 206.

THL 425 Advanced Biblical Studies 3 credits

This course provides an advanced, academic study of the Bible, focusing on its historical, literary, and theological dimensions. Students will explore the development of the biblical texts, their cultural contexts, and their enduring significance. Topics include the formation of the Old and New Testament, methods of biblical interpretation, and key themes such as covenant, prophecy, wisdom, and redemption, Law and Gospel, and Christology.

THL 431 Lutheran Doctrine I 3 credits

A study of the content and effective application of the Christian understanding of doctrine itself, God, creation, theological anthropology, and the person and work of Christ, with an exploration of the biblical basis, conceptual framework, and the contemporary significance of the historic doctrine of the Lutheran church. Particular attention will be given to The Book of Concord, notably, The Three Ecumenical Creeds, The Augsburg Confession, The Apology of the Augsburg Confession, The Smalcald Articles and The Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope (Prerequisites: THL 201 and THL 206)

THL 432 Lutheran Doctrine II 3 credits

A study of the content and effective application of the Christian understanding of the person and work of the Holy Spirit, sanctification, the means of grace, the Christian church, public ministry, and eschatology with an exploration of the biblical basis, conceptual framework, and the contemporary significance of the historic doctrine of the Lutheran church. Particular attention will be given to The Book of Concord, notably, The Small Catechism, The Large Catechism, and The Formula of Concord, and the contributions of C.F.W. Walther to the Lutheran understanding of church and ministry. (Prerequisite: THL 431)

THL 488 Independent Study 1-4 credits

Independent study offers students an opportunity to do research and complete a major project in an area of theology of their own choosing.

THL 496 Senior Thesis 2 credits

The Senior Thesis is the culminating work of a student majoring in Theology. The purpose of the thesis is to utilize the perspective, understanding, research skills, and writing abilities students have developed in their studies to investigate a substantial topic. The goal is for students to produce a paper of high quality and distinction. The work is normally done in one semester in the senior year under the guidance of a faculty mentor. The paper will be read by a second faculty member and proposed to the annual undergraduate Research Symposium. This course is required for the major in theology. It does not fulfill the general education requirement for Theology.

THL 497 Theological Writings (Early Church to the Present) 3 credits

This course offers an in-depth exploration of selected theological texts and thinkers from various historical periods and traditions. Through close readings and critical analysis, students will engage with primary texts that have shaped theological discourse and contributed to the development of Christian thought. Emphasis is placed on understanding the intellectual and cultural contexts in which these texts emerged, as well as their ongoing relevance for contemporary theological inquiry. Topics may include theological themes such as God and creation, Christology, soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology, among others.