



## **Theo 100: Christian Theology**

**John Felice Rome Center**

Fall 2019

Wednesdays | 09.00 – 11.30

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Office Hours: Wed. 16.30 – 17.30 or by appointment

### **Course Description**

Christianity has shaped our world more than any other religious or secular phenomenon. Today with approximately 2.4 billion adherents, it has the highest population of any world religion. To begin to understand this world we live in, we need to understand Christianity's theology, its beliefs and practices, which have had, and continue to have, such a profound global impact.

A central feature of this course is the project. Each of you, with consultation, will select a Christian site in Rome, which could be a particular church or Christian institution, such as a religious house, school or college. You will research your chosen subject's history, faith foundation, activities, and its future outlook and development. Your project can include copies of archival material, photographs, interviews and other appropriate empirical data.

In the classes running concurrently with the projects you will be introduced to theology and sacred literature by examining Christianity's historical landmarks. In part one of the course you'll trace Christian origins as they evolve from Judaism of the 1<sup>st</sup> century c.e., to becoming the dominant religion of the Roman Empire during from the reign of Emperor Constantine in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. You will discover how the Christian faith began and grew in the early centuries by studying the writings of S. Paul, the four Gospels, and extracts from Patristic writings. Together these have formed the foundation of the Christian faith down the centuries.

In part two as we continue through Christianity's history we'll study key moments of theological revelation and contestation together with key individuals. These include the lives of S. Francis and S. Clare and the beginnings of the mendicant orders; the impact of Martin Luther and the spread of the Protestant Reformation; S. Ignatius of Loyola and S. Teresa of Avila and the Catholic Reformation. We then cross over the centuries to arrive at the theological and ecclesial impact of Vatican II, and discussion of contemporary challenges facing believers and institutions today, including interfaith dialogue, gender and sexuality, and other social and political issues.

The third part of the course brings together the project and classroom work. You will each present and discuss your research, raising theological, historical and contemporary subjects which we can investigate and integrate with the theological ideas we have been addressing during the classes, as well as through the occasional on-site visits, where you will experience visible examples of faith in practice.

### Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will have the ability to:

- Identify and explain key aspects of the Christian faith from a theological, historical and global perspective
- Apply their research skills to construct a detailed and well-informed project on the history, faith and practices of a particular Christian site in Rome
- Research and evaluate secondary sources in relation to primary texts
- Synthesize information from a variety of academic disciplines as it relates to the history and development of Christianity

### Required Texts/Materials

All required readings are posted on SAKAI, to be read by all students in preparation for each class.

### Assessment Components

Worksheets, participation and presentation	25%
Midterm	20%
Project	30% (annotated plan 5%)
Final Exam	25%

### Worksheets, participation and presentation

Each week you will be given a **worksheet** to complete. This will include questions based on the reading/s for that week posted on SAKAI. These worksheets will form the basis for the group discussions. You can revise your answers/comments on your sheet in the light of the lecture and discussion. By doing this exercise for the duration of the course you will be compiling your learning journal. **Worksheets for weeks 1-6 will be submitted in Week 7, and worksheets for weeks 8-12 in week 13.**

**Midterm and Final Exams** comprise questions requiring short answers, and an essay question

### **The Project**

Your project is submitted in **Week 13**. Early in the semester you will begin work on your project after consultation on the selection of a religious site, and participation in a workshop where we discuss developing a plan and schedule for its completion. Later in the course there'll be further consultations to discuss your progress and to ensure the project is underway.

For your **presentation** you will be part of a group of students researching and designing a 15 minute talk/PowerPoint on a specific subject. You will be assessed on the quality of research and preparation, the class' reception of the presentation, and your individual contribution to the exercise. Groups are invited to liaise with me prior to presenting.



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### **Grading**

94-100: A      90-93: A-      87-89: B+      84-86: B      80-83: B-  
77-79: C+      74-76: C      70-73: C-      67-69: D+      60-66: D      59 or lower: F

**Grading criteria for Exams, Coursework and Participation: A (90-100)** Outstanding, excellent: original articulation of student's understanding of major concepts/ideas; displaying in-depth reading of class material and complex critical insight; few, if any, problems with organization. Present and alert in class. Good listening, taking notes. Frequent, thoughtful contributions to discussion.

**B (80-89)** Very good: good articulation of student's understanding of major concepts/ideas; displays very good grasp of the reading; perhaps some problems with organization. Present and alert in class. Good listening, taking notes. Contributes often to discussion.

**C (70-79)** Satisfactory: meets requirements/expectations; displays a basic grasp of the reading; some problems with organization. Present and alert in class. Listens, takes notes. Contributes occasionally to discussion.

**D (60-69)** Unsatisfactory: does not meet minimal expectations, does not display a clear understanding of the reading and basic concepts; writing may be incoherent or unintelligible. Several absences from class and discussion. Inattentive or disruptive.

**F (59 and below)** Very unsatisfactory: does not approach minimal expectations. Incomplete or missing work. Does not meet minimal expectations. Numerous absences from class and discussion.

### **Academic Honesty**

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable at the JFRC and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago's guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola's standards here: [http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg\\_academicintegrity.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml). You are responsible to comply with the LUC Student Handbook.

### **Late or Missed Assignments**

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization.

### **Attendance Policy**

In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy:

- For all classes meeting once a week, students cannot incur more than one unexcused absence.

**Unexcused absences beyond this will result in 1% lowering of the final course grade for every absence after the "approved limit".**

### **Accessibility Accommodations**

Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center requiring academic accommodations should contact the Office of the Dean at the John Felice Rome Center, the first week of classes.

**Email Communication** I will do my best to reply to emails sent during business hours (**Monday to Friday, 9.00 – 18.00**). Emails sent after 18.00 will be considered received the next day. The best way to communicate is directly, during my office hour or by making an appointment.



**Computer, Phone & Internet Use in the Classroom** Use of phones is always prohibited. Please turn your phones off when in class. Use of laptop computers during class time for note taking is permitted. There may be times when you will be asked to put your laptop away for various exercises/lessons. Use of the internet is not permitted unless specifically directed by the instructor. This includes checking of email and use of instant messengers.

### **Course Schedule**

**Week One: 09/04** Introduction to studying Christian Theology  
Choosing your project – first stages: selection, producing a schedule for research and visits

#### **Part 1: Christian Origins – From Jerusalem to Rome**

**Week Two: 09/11** Judaism at the time of Jesus and Paul

**Week Three: 09/20 (FRIDAY CLASS)** The life and writings of Paul of Tarsus

**Week Four: 09/25** The Four Gospels: genre, historical contexts and theology  
(Annotated plan of project due)

#### **Part 2: Christianity through the centuries**

**Week Five: 10/02** The Mendicant Orders: SS. Francis and Clare

**Week Six: 10/09** Project workshop  
Midterm Review (submit Worksheets for Weeks 1-6)  
Midterm Exam

**Fall Break**

**Week Seven: 10/23** Protestant Reformation: Martin Luther

**Week Eight: 10/30** On-site visit to Jesuit church

**Week Nine: 11/06** Catholic Reformation: SS. Ignatius of Loyola and Teresa of Avila

#### **Part 3 Beliefs and Practice: the Church today**

**Week Ten: 11/13** Vatican II and Beyond: the Church in the Twenty-first Century

**Week Eleven: 11/20** On-site visit: The Lay Centre – interfaith dialogue

**Week Twelve: 11/27** Project Presentations and class feedback

**Week Thirteen: 12/04** Project Presentations and class feedback  
Course Review (Projects Due)