

# **Theology Graduate Course Descriptions**

**Spring 2023**

## **THEO 407: Hebrew Exegesis**

**Dr. Robert Di Vito**

**Tuesday and Thursday 11:30-12:45 PM**

**Crown Center, Room 210**

This course is a continuation of Biblical Hebrew I/Basic Hebrew Grammar. It presents the fundamentals of classical Hebrew, i.e., the language of the Christian Old Testament and the Jewish Scriptures. Its goal is to enable students to read the biblical text in the language in which it is written. This is indispensable for a full appreciation of the Bible and for understanding the interpretations which underlie any and all modern translations of the Bible into English. Moreover, even a rudimentary knowledge of biblical Hebrew gives one access to the enormous body of secondary literature that has developed on the Bible, since most serious scholarship presumes some basic knowledge of the Hebrew alphabet and language.

Emphasis in the course continues to fall on the acquisition of the syntax and the basic grammatical forms of the language, but in this course the focus above all is on the derived verbal conjugations. Although grammatical forms and the basic concepts of Hebrew syntax are presented analytically and deductively, students are engaged throughout the course in reading simple selections from the Bible. These readings advance the acquisition of grammar and syntax, introduce students to basic exegetical techniques currently practiced by biblical scholars, and stimulate class discussion of significant biblical themes and concepts.

- Texts: C. L. Seow. *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*. (rev. ed.; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995).

## **THEO 420/THEO 523: Gnosticism**

**The "Heresy of Evil": Gnostic Gospels and Christian Faith.**

**Dr. Edmondo Lupieri**

**Monday 10:25-12:55 pm**

**Mundelein, Room 617**

The purpose of this course/seminar is twofold: (a) to analyze the complexity and transformations of early Christian reflections from around the end of the first century through the third and (b) to study the most common features of the "Gnostic worldview" and possibly understand the reasons for the ancient success of the so-called "Heresy of Evil."

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To accomplish this purpose, we will discuss the content of some key passages from Irenaeus and other heresiologists, but especially that of original Gnostic texts (in English translation). We will focus particularly on the so-called Gnostic Gospels (The Gospel of Thomas, The Gospel of Philip, The Gospel of Mary [Magdalene], and The Gospel of Judas) and, if time will allow it, on some apocalyptic Gnostic texts. In the final part of our course, we will approach the contemporary revival of Gnostic Churches and ideologies, while some elements of the Mandaean literature and lore will be analyzed for their Gnostic elements, which are still vital in the religious landscape of the xxi century.

### THEO 449: Phenomenology of Religion

Dr. Colby Dickinson

Friday 10:25-12:55 PM

Mundelein, Room 617

This course will study a series of texts on the borders of phenomenology and theology. We will examine the boundaries between the two fields, said by some to be porous and by others to be unyielding. Starting with Martin Heidegger's interpretations of phenomenological methods, we will move into appropriations, interpretations and critiques of his thought delivered by various French thinkers of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, including Emmanuel Levinas, Jean-Luc Marion, Michel Henry, Jean-Yves Lacoste and Emmanuel Falque.

#### Required course texts

- Falque, Emmanuel. *The Wedding Feast of the Lamb: Eros, the Body, and the Eucharist*. Translated by George Hughes. New York: Fordham University Press, 2016. ISBN 9780823270415
- Heidegger, Martin. *An Introduction to Metaphysics*. Translated by Ralph Manheim. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959. ISBN 9780300017405
- Henry, Michel. *I Am the Truth: Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Translated by Susan Emanuel. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2003. ISBN 9780804737800
- Lacoste, Jean-Yves. *Experience and the Absolute: Disputed Questions on the Humanity of Man*. Translated by Mark Raftery-Skehan. First edition. New York: Fordham University Press, 2004. ISBN 9780823223760
- Levinas, Emmanuel. *Otherwise Than Being, Or Beyond Essence*. Pittsburgh, Pa.: Duquesne University Press, 1998. ISBN 9780820702994
- Marion, Jean-Luc. *God Without Being: Hors-Texte*. Translated by Thomas A. Carlson. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991. ISBN 9780226505405
- Marion, Jean-Luc. *Being Given: Toward a Phenomenology of Givenness*. Translated by Jeffrey L. Kosky. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2002. ISBN 9780804734100 **Continued on the next page.**

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## Recommended secondary sources

- Benson, Bruce Ellis and Wirzba, Norman. *Words of Life: New Theological Turns in French Phenomenology*. Edited by Bruce Ellis Benson and Norman Wirzba. First Edition. New York: Fordham University Press, 2010. ISBN 9780823230730
- Falque, Emmanuel. *The Loving Struggle: Phenomenological and Theological Debates*. Translated by Bradley B. Onishi and Lucas McCracken. London, New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018. ISBN 9781786605313
- Gschwandtner, Christina. *Postmodern Apologetics? Arguments for God in Contemporary Philosophy*. First edition. New York: Fordham University Press, 2013. ISBN 9780823242757
- Janicaud, Dominique (et al.), *Phenomenology and the Theological Turn: The French Debate*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2000. ISBN 0823220532

## **THEO 475/THEO575: Christian Social Ethics in Conversation with Social Theories**

Dr. Hille Haker

Wednesday 4:15-6:45 PM

Mundelein, Room 609

This course brings social theories and Christian social ethics into a conversation. The starting point is the Western tradition that has historically determined the development of the global economic, epistemic, political, and social order and is dominant in the United States. The claim is, however, that the concept of social freedom and liberation towards justice provides a lens to address the conceptual questions of any social ethics, including but not restricted to Christian ethics, and is important for the urgent current questions of social ethics, namely exploitation of people and the earth, global injustice and violations of human rights, and “illiberalism” as a political concept.

In the course, we will explore the transition from the medieval natural law tradition to the early modern concept of natural rights, resulting in the development of the competing concepts of liberty in the liberal tradition and social freedom in the continental tradition. Both center on freedom, but the relationship of the individual and society/state is different in both traditions, with multiple ramifications for ethics.

From the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the “social question” accompanied the industrial revolution, and Catholic/Christian social ethics emerged together (and often in conflict) with the emerging social theories. In the conflict with Marx and Marxism, freedom was interpreted not as a given but as a goal yet to be achieved, and it was pursued as liberation from unjust social and political conditions.

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This thought was taken up in liberationist theologies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century that focus on social justice, and further developed in the (feminist and decolonial) theories of class, race, and sex. Today, intersectionality as well as cultural diversity provide the lens for the analysis of social orders, and we will explore together how they may shape the further development of social ethics. We will use different liberationist approaches, including feminist and womanist ethics, and we will map the ethics of social freedom through an ethics of remembrance, recognition, and responsibilities.

Throughout the course, we will engage with exemplary questions debated in contemporary social and political ethics, according to students' interests. Examples may be: the ecological threat and the challenge it raises for international politics; the reemergence of autocratic regimes, Christian Nationalism, and the threat to democracy, global injustice and the specter of the "end of the human rights era" as a guiding framework of international policies, international law, and global ethics. Questions of Power, dystopias and utopias, and the LGBTQIA movement's struggle for justice.

*Literature will be selected from the following traditions (bibliography will be shared on Sakai):*

- The liberal tradition Th. Hobbes, J. Locke, J.S. Mill, and J. Rawls;
- The continental tradition G.W.F. Hegel, S. Beauvoir, E. Fromm, E. Dussel, A. Honneth;
- The contemporary discussion S. Moller-Okin, I.M. Young, N. Fraser, A. Mbembe, J. Butler;
- The theological tradition the Compendium of Catholic Social teaching and current encyclicals, black (womanist) theology (E. Townes, S. Copeland), Latin American/Caribbean liberation theology (A. M. Diaz, I. Gebara, M. Rivera); human rights, global justice, and feminist theological ethics: L. Cahill, L. Hogan, D. Hollenbach, G. Dorrian.

### **Introductory Books to Catholic Social Ethics:**

Curran, Charles E. *Catholic Social Teaching, 1891-Present : A Historical, Theological, and Ethical Analysis*. Moral Traditions Series. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002.

Junker-Kenny, Maureen. *Approaches to Theological Ethics: Sources, Traditions, Visions*. London, UK ; New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2019.

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## THEO 515: Gospel of John

Dr. Christopher W. Skinner

Tuesday 4:15-6:45 PM

Mundelein, Room 609

This course will consist of a comprehensive examination of the text of the Fourth Gospel along with major concerns in gospel scholarship in general and Johannine research in particular. One major goal in any graduate course on a biblical text or corpora is developing a strong familiarity with the primary text(s) under consideration as well as the most important secondary literature on the subject. To that end, we will (1) attend to the historical, literary, and theological dynamics of the text with specific emphasis on the text in its final form, and (2) explore major, longstanding questions such as the relationship of John to the Synoptics, anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic concerns in the reception of John, and the distinctive shape of Johannine Christology (among others).

## THEO 580: ISET seminar

**Sovereignty: Political, theological and ethical implications**

Dr. Colby Dickinson

Thursday 4:15-6:45 PM

This course is focused on the concept of sovereignty, specifically in its political, religious and ethical forms. We will consider theological and political-theological responses to each of these field's depictions of sovereignty as we work through a variety of texts on the subject. Because the history of western monotheism, especially in forms of colonial Christianity, has emphasized the sovereignty of God in relation to the sovereignty of the state, humanity is more in need than ever of reconsidering how its depictions and embodiments of sovereign power still bear their theological signature in profound and consequential ways.

### Course texts

- Elshtain, Jean Bethke. *Sovereignty: God, State, and Self*. New York: Basic Books, 2008. ISBN 9780465037599
- Kahn, Paul W.. *Putting Liberalism in Its Place*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008. ISBN 9780691136981
- Lara, Ana-Maurine. *Queer Freedom: Black Sovereignty*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2020. ISBN 9781438481104
- Moreton-Robinson, Aileen. *The White Possessive: Property, Power, and Indigenous Sovereignty*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2015. ISBN 9780816692149
- Vardoulakis, Dimitris. *Sovereignty and Its Other: Toward the Dejustification of Violence*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2013. ISBN 9780823251360
- Yelle, Robert. A.. *Sovereignty and the Sacred: Secularism and the Political Economy of Religion*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2019. ISBN 9780226585598