In this course we will analyze diversities and transformations of early Christianity and its surrounding world from the birth of apocalyptic thinking in 4th-3rd Centuries BCE Judaism to the explosion of apocalyptic literature after the fall of Jerusalem (70 CE) and until the Bar Kokhba revolt (132-135 CE). There will be particular focus on the analysis of texts from the earlier phases of Enochic literature through the flourishing of apocalyptic literature in later Enochic texts, Daniel, 2-3Isaiah, 4Ezra, 2Baruch, Revelation, the Coptic Apocalypse of Elijah, the Apocalypse of Abraham, and some Christian Gnostic apocalypses (e.g. the Apocalypse of Peter). We will study the interaction of the social and political situation and the production of apocalyptic texts on the one side, while also studying the implications of the development of an apocalyptic worldview for future Christian theology (the need for a superhuman savior figure, the origins of the notion of purgatory, the anticipation of the end of the physical world, etc.). In the final part of the seminar, we will analyze a new wave of Christian apocalypses and their profound diversity with earlier works.
This course is a continuation of Biblical Hebrew I/Basic Hebrew Grammar, which together present the fundamentals of classical Hebrew, i.e., the language of the Christian Old Testament and the Jewish Scriptures. The goal is to enable students with an interest in the Bible to read the biblical text in the language in which it is written and to employ for this purpose the standard scholarly editions. This ability is indispensable not only for a full appreciation of the meaning of the biblical text but also for an understanding of the interpretations which underlie any and all modern translations of the Bible into English. Even a rudimentary knowledge of biblical Hebrew gives one access to an enormous body of secondary literature, 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 basic syntax and the basic grammatical forms of the language, concentrating in this course especially 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 but “unaltered” selections from the Bible, taken directly from the Biblica Hebraica Stuttgartensia (BHS). These readings further 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.
The biblical books of Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, and 1 & 2 Kings likely derive from a single large narrative that modern biblical scholars call the Deuteronomistic History. It is a story that begins as Israel prepares to enter the Promised Land for the first time, and it ends with Israel sent off into the Babylonian Exile. This story is a theological history, a tale told of how to get to the Promised Land and, more importantly, how to get back home after failing to live in covenant with the LORD. In this course, we will explore how this story was formed, how to understand its historical and narrative development, and how to read it for theological insight today. (pre-req: THEO 111/231 or with consent of the instructor).
This doctoral seminar will be focused on making a sustained comparison between the dynamics and philosophies that undergird various perspectives on both historical apophatic/negative theologies and modern forms of nihilism, searching for resonances and differences between such trends. We will pay attention in this course to the ways in which various trends within Christian mysticism, the continental philosophy of religion and western theology, broadly-speaking, both converge and diverge. In particular, we will be attentive to the varied methods of apophatic and nihilistic thought alike, the linguistic and moral dimensions of negative thought, how certain forces of negativity affect the construction of the self and its possible dissolution, as well as the tensions that arise within the field of theology today between so-called ‘orthodox’ and ‘heretical’ positions in relation to the dynamics under study in this course.

**Course texts**


In this course, we will explore some of the assumptions, modes of reasoning, and literary styles of ancient and medieval Christian theology. This is neither a primer in Christian doctrine nor a historical survey of the church, but an engaged attempt to enter into the thought world of ancient and medieval Christianity. Our study will focus on three questions fundamental to Christian thought: Who is God? Who am I? How can I be united to God? These deceptively simple questions organize a number of problematics that run through Christian theological reflection: the order of the universe and the knowability of that order; the relationship between the body and the mind; the dynamics of human desire and its role in the spiritual life, and the ways in which women and men write about their experiences of the divine. We will trace these themes through hagiographies and writings of women (Thecla, Perpetua, Macrina, Mary of Egypt, Teresa of Avila, and Hildegard of Bingen) and of men (Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine of Hippo, Psuedo-Dionysius, Boethius, Bonaventure, Anselm of Canterbury, Thomas Aquinas, and John of the Cross).
Christian faith hinges on the credibility of the claim that Jesus of Nazareth, a Galilean Jew who lived 2,000 years ago and who was crucified as an insurrectionist by the Romans, is the universal Savior. This course will investigate the origins of belief in Jesus Christ, the Christological controversies that led to the conciliar creeds and definitions in the patristic period, and the methodological issues entailed by the “quests” for the “historical” Jesus in the modern era. The second half of the course will focus on diverse theologies of Christ’s saving death and resurrection (see First Letter to the Corinthians 15:3-5) through the study of “classics” of the Christian tradition (including works by Athanasius, Anselm, Abelard, Aquinas, and Luther) as well as contemporary liberationist works (e.g., by Sobrino) and the seminal insights of René Girard.
This course will explore the ways religion in general and Christianity in particular is often pulled into helping to push human conflict and aggression and how religion in general and Christianity in particular often can play a significant role in promoting human understanding, compassion, and peace. We will examine the psychology of aggression and show how leaders often use religious appeals as a component of nationalist or ethnic propaganda. We will examine the history of Christianity and explore the pacifist, just war theory, and crusader traditions as offering three distinctive understandings of war and peace. We will examine a range of concrete moral problems in modern warfare—such as air attacks on cities, nuclear weapons, embargo, guerrilla tactics—to see how the just war theory attempts to set strict restrictions on the practice of war. Similarly we will see how contemporary thinking about “just peacemaking” efforts calls for positive efforts to sustain peace, justice and ecological responsibility.

Required texts (tentative)
Lester Brown, *Plan B 4.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization* (W. W. Norton; 2009).
National Conf. of Catholic Bishops, *The Challenge of Peace* (on-line)
Gandhi, *All Men Are Brothers* (Continuum 2005)
Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in terris* (Peace on Earth) (on-line)
Samantha Power, *“A Problem From Hell”: America in the Age of Genocide* (Harper Collins, 2002)

Requirements (tentative)
1/ Reading, attendance, and active participation.
2/ Take home midterm
3/ In-class presentation paper
4/ Final paper
5/ Final Exam
This course will address methods, themes and controversies of Roman Catholic moral theology. We will study some of the theories and categories that shape Catholic approaches to the moral life, including the nature of the human person, virtue, sin, natural law, conscience, moral norms, the role of Church teaching authority, and the use of scripture in ethics. Attention will be given to the historical development of moral theology, and to varied perspectives and current debates within moral theology. These methodological issues will be illustrated with respect to concrete questions in sexual ethics, family ethics, biomedical ethics, and political participation.

_Books to purchase will likely include:_

James Bretzke, _A Morally Complex World_

John Mahoney, _The Making of Moral Theology_

Jean Porter, _The Recovery of Virtue_

We will read several encyclical letters in full or in part (_Veritatis Splendor_, _Humanae Vitae_, and others), which will be available online.

Other readings will be available on the web or on Sakai.
**Courses**

**THEO 600 - 001 (7056): Dissertation Supervision**
**Dr. Sandra Sullivan-Dunbar**

Students who have filed the dissertation paperwork and are currently writing should be enrolled in this course. You must be enrolled in some course every semester.

**THEO 605 – 001 (7058): Master’s Study**
**Dr. Sandra Sullivan Dunbar**

Master’s students should enroll in this course during the semester in which they plan to take their comprehensive exams.

**THEO 610 – 001 (7059): Doctoral Study**
**Dr. Sandra Sullivan Dunbar**

Students who have completed their doctoral level course work and are studying for the written and oral comprehensive exams should be enrolled in this course. You must be enrolled in some course every semester.