I. Course Description
This course investigates the nature of religious signs and symbols as related to the notions of sacramentality and the liturgical rites/sacramental practices of the Catholic faith community. It will pursue a theological and historical exploration of Christian sacraments as worshipful actions (liturgical rituals). Specifically, it will explore how Jesus Christ is the primordial sacrament of God, how the Church is the fundamental sacrament of Christ, and how the seven sacraments open to the Mystery of God at work in Jesus’ life, death and resurrection. The study will also survey the seven sacraments, looking at their biblical, historical, theological and ritual development, as well as the contemporary reforms and issues that shape how the Catholic community now celebrates the sacraments of initiation (baptism, confirmation, eucharist), the sacraments of healing (penance, anointing the sick/dying), and the sacraments of vocation (marriage, orders). Likewise, attention will be given to the relationship between liturgy and justice as we consider the emerging sacramental issues/challenges that still remain to be addressed/resolved.

II. Relationship of this Course with the Core Curriculum
Since this course credits toward the fulfillment of the CAS core curriculum, which promotes “the development of the whole person,” we will explore answers to three questions in regard to the Sacraments:

- Why become a whole person?
- What is a whole person?
- How does one become a whole person?

The CAS focus on “the development of the whole person” articulates the Jesuit vision of education: “The real measure of our Jesuit universities lies in who our students become. Tomorrow’s ‘whole person’ cannot be whole without a well-educated solidarity. We must therefore raise our Jesuit educational standard to educate the whole person of solidarity for the real world. Solidarity is learned through ‘contact’ rather than through ‘concepts.’ When the heart is touched by direct experience, the mind may be challenged to change” (Peter-Hans Kolvenbach).

III. Course Structure
Part 1: Signs/Symbols and Sacraments/Sacramentality (first exam, paper, and 2 group presentations). We will:
  1) investigate how sacraments are symbolic signs that manifest the reality/presence to which they point; 2) study how signs and symbols are integral to the human endeavor of communicating and creating meaning; and 3) interpret the seven sacraments as expressions of the two basic sacraments: Christ and Church.

Part 2: The Sacraments of Initiation (second exam, paper, and 2 group presentations). We will: 1) examine the process of initiation via baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist; 2) study the specific signs, symbols and liturgical praxis of each; and 3) discuss the issues facing these sacraments.

Part 3: The Sacraments of Healing (third exam, paper, and 2 group presentations). We will: 1) examine the two healing sacraments: Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick/Dying; 2) study the signs, symbols, and liturgical praxis of both; and 3) discuss the issues facing these sacraments.

Part 4: The Sacraments of Vocation (fourth exam, paper, and 2 group presentations). We will: 1) examine the two vocation sacraments: Marriage and Orders; 2) study the signs, symbols, and liturgical praxis of both; and 3) discuss the issues facing these sacraments.
IV. Goals/Objectives of the Course (What to Learn):
By the end of this course, students will be able to. . .
1. Identify the key scriptural roots and historical developments of Catholic sacramental theology.
2. Explain the place, character and function of signs/symbols for mediating God’s mystery.
3. Interpret the theological meaning of the seven sacraments according to the two basic sacraments (symbols) of Jesus and Church.
4. Synthesize the seven sacraments within the sacramentality of creation and human experience.
5. Relate how participation in the Church’s sacramental life calls people to work for peace, justice and the transformation of the world.
6. Demonstrate that the sacraments are historical phenomena, which change with the passage of time.
7. Appreciate the sacraments as experienced, personal relationships with God.

V. Required Skill-Set Acquisition (What to Do)
1. Ability to Read Critically: individual students demonstrate the ability to comprehend the course material via informed comment papers and/or answering the review/discussion questions. There are four exams that will assess your reading comprehension.
2. Ability to Write Clearly: individual students demonstrate the ability to scrutinize and integrate the course material via three written projects throughout the semester. Guidelines for the three Synthesis Papers are provided on Blackboard CE.
3. Ability to Work Collaboratively: groups demonstrate the ability to work together via a presentation in one of the class’s four parts.
4. Ability to Think Creatively: individuals and groups demonstrate the ability to engage Michael Lawler’s book in the synthesis papers and group presentations.
5. Ability to Synthesize Carefully: individual students demonstrate the ability to articulate succinctly one’s own informed viewpoint concerning the sacraments via the final exam.

VI. Methodology (How to Learn)
To learn how to learn is essential to the ongoing process of education and a sure way to access this process is to ask questions! Thus, within a lecture and discussion format, this class will proceed by way of questioning, associating, and integrating information into a synthetic understanding of the Christian sacraments. Mere memorization of facts will not suffice (not to mention boring). To this end, I intend to lecture approximately ½ of the time, and even these lectures should entail a lively discussion. You are expected to participate in and direct the educational process by asking questions. Let us avoid boredom by questioning.

Without asking questions, it is doubtful you will understand the material, which in turn, deprives you the opportunity to integrate the learning with your ongoing educational process outside this class: both spiritual and academic. Hopefully, your questioning will lead to a healthy confusion where fresh ideas emerge and new conceptual horizons form. Let us learn about sacramental theology by asking questions.

Accordingly, this course presupposes a collaborative and active learning community. As such it is structured around discussions based on the daily readings. Since discussion forms the nucleus of this class, it is imperative that the students complete the assigned readings prior to each class session. To facilitate such participation, a one page, typed, single spaced response to the questions for review/discussion is due almost every day (the questions are listed on the calendar). These papers will also aid you in formulating your own questions concerning the course material. The outcome of the daily work will be evaluated by the four exams because ~80-90% of the exams are derived directly from the questions.

VII. Requirements and Grading
A. Books:

B. Assignments: for the dates they are due see the calendar.

5% = Participation
3% = Attendance (see attendance policy below; recorded via an in-class attendance sheet)
2% = Teaching Evaluation (taken online at semester’s end; full credit for taking the evaluation)

5%: Final Exam: “So What? Who Cares?” (1 page, single spaced, typed; qualitative peer grading); as part of the final exam, you must complete the pre/post assessment questionnaire.

10%: Weekly Questions for Review/Discussion/ICP’s (1 page, single spaced, typed; quantitative peer grading; do the work, get the credit; papers overdue by 1 week not accepted).

10%: Group Presentation (guidelines on Blackboard CE)

30%: Three Synthesis Papers (2 page, single spaced, typed; qualitative peer grading; guidelines on Blackboard CE). *If your group is presenting, then a synthesis paper is not due.*

40%: Four Semester Exams

C. Grade Scale and Standards:

A range: Superior, excellent, outstanding

A = 100-94
A- = 93-90

The assignment demonstrates critical, informed, and creative theological inquiry that reflects a synthetic understanding of essential theological/historical concepts. The assignment demonstrates insight *beyond what is normally expected*. This grade presupposes carefully nuanced reasoning and writing that is free from material, structural and grammatical errors. The differentiation between an A and A- largely depends on the assignment’s astute reasoning and engaging writing style in relation to peer work for the same assignment.

B range: Very Good, Good

B+ = 89-87
B = 86-84
B- = 83-80

The assignment demonstrates ready command of full range of concepts and shows some critical, informed, and creative inquiry that reflects *above average* understanding of essential theological/historical concepts. This means the student has produced an assignment that is free from material, structural and grammatical errors. The differentiation between a B+ and B largely depends on the assignment’s creativity in relation to peer work for the same assignment.

C range: Okay, Acceptable

C+ = 79-77
C = 76-74
C- = 73-70

The assignment demonstrates satisfactory ability to describe the overall picture and essential concepts in a summary manner. This means the student has completed the assignment in a manner involving no significant errors. Material may not be free from structural and grammatical errors. Nuanced reasoning is not demonstrated. The differentiation between a C+ and C largely depends on the assignment’s organization in relation to peer work for the same assignment.

D range: Below average

D = 69-60

The assignment demonstrates reasoning that is neither carefully reasoned nor coherently presented; writing
is insufficient in depth of insight and/or use of texts; presentation is not free from material error in structure, spelling and grammar. This means that the student failed to respond adequately to the assignment and its intentions.

**F range: Unsatisfactory**

F = 59-0

In one or more of the following ways the student: 1) failed to turn in the assignment; 2) did not respond to the assignment as given; 3) submitted work so thoroughly flawed as to indicate that the student did not make a serious effort; 4) involved plagiarism or cheating.

**D. Peer Grading:** I have a general expectation for the quality of work expected in this class as represented by the contents of the exams or written assignments. However, I determine specific grades by comparing the contents of each exam and paper to the work of your peers, which means the bar for the class is set by the class. Thus, the best tests/papers earn an A and set the grade scale for that assignment.

**E. Attendance:** This class has the following attendance policy. *Excused absences are not penalized.*

- 0 absences earn all 3 attendance points
- 1 absence earns 2 points
- 2 absences earn 1 point
- 3 absences earn no points (1 week of class missed)

*After this, the penalty is substantial.* Each additional unexcused absence after the third lowers your overall grade –1 percentage point. Twelve unexcused absences earns a failing grade (AF). I keep record of your attendance via an attendance sheet you sign at the beginning of class. It is your responsibility to sign the sheet. *Do not come late to class.* If missing a class is inevitable, it is your responsibility to bring it to my attention on the missed day of class, if possible. Again, *excused absences are not penalized.*

**F. Academic Assistance:** Any student who feels that he/she may need academic accommodations in order to meet the requirements of this course, as outlined in the syllabus, due to presence of a disability, should contact the Office of Disabilities Services. Please telephone the office at 314-977-2930, or visit Room 131 in the Academic Resources Center, 3840 Lindell Blvd. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries.

**G. Writing Center:** I encourage you to take advantage of the Writing Center’s services; getting feedback benefits all writers. The Center helps with writing projects, multimedia projects, and oral presentations. They offer one-on-one consultations that address everything from generating and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documentation. Call 977-2930 to schedule an appointment. They also accept drop-ins when consultants are available. For locations and hours, visit [www.slu.edu/departments/sesc/acadresources/writing/index.html](http://www.slu.edu/departments/sesc/acadresources/writing/index.html).

**H. Academic Integrity and Honesty:** Students are expected to be honest in their academic work. The University reserves the right to penalize any student whose academic conduct is, in its judgment, detrimental to the University. Such conduct shall include cases of plagiarism, collusion, cheating, giving or receiving or offering or soliciting information on examinations, or the use of previously prepared material in examinations or quizzes. Violations should be reported to your course instructor, who will investigate and adjudicate them according to the Policy on Academic Honesty of the College of Arts and Sciences. If the charges are found to be true, the student may be liable for academic or disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion from the University.
VIII. Course Calendar

A. Due Dates of the Semester Assignments

Due almost every day: one page, single-spaced and typed Questions for Review/Discussion or analysis/reflection due on the day listed; come to class prepared to discuss the readings.

- **Friday February 1:** Select Groups (4 members per group).
- **Monday February 18:** First Exam
- **Wednesday February 20:** First Synthesis Paper
- **Wednesday February 20:** First Presentation (2 Groups)
- **Friday March 14:** Second Exam
- **Wednesday March 26:** Second Synthesis Paper
- **Friday March 26:** Second Presentation (2 Groups)
- **Monday April 14:** Third Exam
- **Wednesday April 16:** Third Synthesis Paper
- **Wednesday April 16:** Third Presentation (2 Groups)
- **Friday May 2:** Fourth Exam
- **Monday May 5:** Fourth Synthesis Paper
- **Monday May 5:** Fourth Presentation (2 Groups)
- **Wednesday May 7:** Final Exam: Due by 2:00 in my mailbox, HU #124 (you can turn in the final before this date)

B. Weekly Calendar

Cooke = Sacraments and Sacramentality
Noll = Sacraments: A New Understanding for a New Generation
Lawler = Symbol and Sacrament
Smolarski = Sacred Mysteries: Sacramental Principles and Liturgical Practice
Hammond = “Sacraments: The Mystery of the Divine-Human Encounter” Essay posted on Web CT

The readings and discussion questions are due on the day listed.

January

*First Week: Introduction to the Sacraments*

M 21: Martin Luther King Day: No Class


F 25: READ Hammond (pp. 1-51); STUDY all bolded sub-headings for key concepts, especially diagram on p. 18; WRITE one page, single spaced reaction/reflection AND complete the first part of the pre/post assessment questionnaire which will be used for the final exam. Complete the assessment questionnaire before you read the essay and before you write the reflection paper. Both the assessment questionnaire and writing assignment due today or Monday along with Monday’s reading from Noll. Both the questionnaire and the writing assignment will be part of the final exam.

**Part I**

*Signs, Symbols, Sacraments, Sacramentality*

*Second Week: Sacramental Principles: Signs/Symbols, Change, Liturgical Practice, and Mystery*

M 28: READ Noll. Introduction (pp. 1-3) and Chapter 1 (pp. 5-16); STUDY Lecture 1 and Glossary Terms (p. 17); WRITE Questions for Review 1-6 (p. 16).
W 30: **READ Smolarski**, Preface (pp. 1-5) and Chapter 1 (pp. 7-11); **STUDY Lecture 2** and the two notions of “Mystery” and “Liturgia Semper Reformanda”; **WRITE** analysis/reflection on each concept.

February

F  1: **READ Smolarski**, Chapter 2 (pp. 12-16) and Chapter 3 (pp. 17-32); **STUDY Lecture 3** and the two concepts of “Practice” and “Ritual Celebration”; **WRITE** analysis/reflection on each concept. **Select Groups and Presentation Dates** (4 students per group). **Last day to drop w/o a “W”**

*Third Week: The Sacramentality of Human Experience and the Role of Signs/Symbols*

M  4: **READ Cooke**, Introduction (pp. 1-3) and Chapter 1 (pp. 6-14) and Chapter 2 (pp. 15-28); **STUDY Lectures 4 and 5** and Summaries (p. 14) and (pp. 27-28); **WRITE** Questions for Reflection 1-5 (p. 14) and 1-5 (p. 28).

W  6: **READ Cooke**, Chapter 3 (pp. 29-43); **STUDY Lecture 6** and Summary (p. 43); **WRITE** Questions for Reflection 1-5 (p. 43).

F  8: **READ Cooke**, Chapter 4 (pp. 44-55); **STUDY Lecture 7** and Summary (p. 54-55); **WRITE** Questions for Reflection 1-5 (pp. 43).

*Fourth Week: Symbolism and the Two Basic Sacraments: Christ and Church*

M 11: **READ Noll**, Chapter 2 (pp. 19-30); **STUDY Lecture 8** and Glossary Terms (pp. 45-46); **WRITE** Questions for Review 1-6 (p. 30).

W 13: **READ Cooke**, Chapter 5 (pp. 57-67); **STUDY Lecture 9** and Summary (pp. 66-67); **WRITE** Questions for Reflection 1-5 (p. 67).

F 15: **READ Noll**, Chapter 3 (pp. 35-43) **STUDY Lecture 10** and Glossary Terms (pp. 31-33); **WRITE** Questions for Review 1-6 (pp. 43-44); **AND READ Cooke**, Chapter 6 (pp. 68-77); **STUDY Lecture 11** and Summary (p. 76); **WRITE** Questions for Reflection 1-5 (p. 77).

*Fifth Week: The Two Basic Sacraments – Christ and Church*

M 18: **First Exam: Signs, Symbols, Sacraments, Sacramentality**

W 20: **First Synthesis Paper (Individual): Must Incorporate Lawler**

First Presentations (2 Groups): Must Incorporate Lawler

**Part II**

*The Sacraments of Initiation:*

*Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist*

F 22: **READ Noll**, Chapter 5 (pp. 59-78); **STUDY Lecture 12** and Glossary Terms (pp. 76-77); **WRITE** Questions for Review 1-8 (p. 75-76).

*Sixth Week: Initiation – Baptism and Confirmation*

M 25: **READ Cooke**, Chapter 10 (pp. 115-22) and Chapter 11 (pp. 123-33); **STUDY Lecture 13** and Summary (p. 122) and (p. 133); **WRITE** Questions for Reflection 1-5 (p. 122) and (p. 133).

W 27: **READ Cooke**, Chapter 12 (pp. 134-49); **STUDY Lecture 14** and Summary (p. 148); **WRITE** Questions for Reflection 1-5 (p. 148-49).
F 29: READ Smolarski, Chapter 4 (pp. 33-51); STUDY Lecture 15 and the notion of “Baptismal Celebration”; WRITE analysis/reflection on this concept.

March
Seventh Week: Initiation – Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist

M 3: READ Smolarski, Chapter 5 (pp. 52-63); STUDY Lecture 16 and the notions of “Confirmation as Initiation/Commitment”; WRITE analysis comparing/contrasting these two concepts.

W 5: READ Noll, Chapter 4 (pp.47-58); STUDY Lecture 17 and Glossary Terms (pp. 57-58); WRITE Questions for Review 1-9 (pp. 56-57).

F 7: READ Cooke, Chapter 13 (pp. 150-59) and Chapter 14 (pp.160-66); STUDY Lecture 18 and Summaries (p. 158) and Summary (p.166); WRITE Questions for Reflection 1-5 (p. 159) and (p. 166).

Eight Week: Initiation – Eucharist (Mid-Term Week)

M 10: READ Cooke, Chapter 8 (pp. 94-107) and Chapter 9 (pp. 108-13); STUDY Lectures 19 and 20 and Summaries (p. 107) and (pp. 112-13); WRITE Questions for Reflection 1-5 (p. 107) and (p. 113).

W 12: READ Smolarski, Chapter 6 (pp. 64-84); STUDY Lecture 21 and the notion of “Eucharist as the Central Mystery”; WRITE analysis/reflection on this concept.

F 14: Second Exam: Sacraments of Initiation

Ninth Week Spring Break Week: M 17 – F 21: No Class

Tenth Week: Healing – Reconciliation

M 24: Easter Monday: No Class

Second Presentations (2 Groups): Must Incorporate Lawler

Part III
The Sacraments of Healing:
Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick/Dying

F 28: READ Noll, Chapter 8 (pp. 111-23); STUDY Lecture 22 and Glossary Terms (pp. 122-23); WRITE Questions for Review 1-8 (p. 121).

Eleventh Week: Healing – Reconciliation

M 31: READ Cooke, Chapter 15 (pp. 168-78) and Chapter 17 (pp. 187-94); STUDY Lectures 23 and 24 and Summaries (p. 178) and (p. 194); WRITE Questions for Reflection 1-5 (p. 178) and 1-5 (p. 194).

April

W 2: READ Cooke, Chapters Chapter 18 (pp. 195-207) and Chapter 19 (pp. 208-14); STUDY Lectures 25 and 26 and Summaries (p. 206) and (p. 213); WRITE Questions for Reflection 1-6 (p. 207) and 1-5 (p. 214).

F 4: READ Smolarski, Chapter 7 (pp. 85-95); STUDY Lecture 27 and the notion of “Communal Dimension of Sin”; WRITE analysis/reflection on this concept.
Twelfth Week: Healing – Anointing

M 7: READ Noll, Chapter 9 (pp. 125-34); STUDY Lecture 28 and Glossary Terms (p. 133); WRITE Questions for Review 1-7 (p. 132).

W 9: READ Cooke, Chapter 16 (pp. 179-86); STUDY Lecture 29 and Summary (p. 186); WRITE Questions for Reflection 1-5 (p. 186).

F 11: READ Smolarski, Chapter 8 (pp. 96-104); STUDY Lecture 30 and the notion of “The Paschal Mystery”; WRITE analysis/reflection on this concept.

Thirteenth Week:

M 14: Third Exam: Sacraments of Healing

W 16: Third Synthesis Paper (Individual): Must Incorporate Lawler
Third Presentations (2 Groups): Must Incorporate Lawler

Part IV
Sacraments of Vocation:
Marriage and Orders

F 18: READ Noll, Chapter 6 (pp. 79-96); STUDY Lecture 31 and Glossary Terms (p. 95); WRITE Questions for Review 1-8 (p. 93-94).

Fourteenth Week: Vocation – Marriage

M 21: READ Cooke, Chapter 7 (pp. 78-92); STUDY Lecture 32 and Summary (p. 91); WRITE Questions for Reflection 1-6 (p. 92).

W 23: READ Smolarski, Chapter 9 (pp. 105-25); STUDY Lecture 33 and the notion of “Marriage as Intimacy”; WRITE analysis/reflection on this concept.

F 25: READ Noll, Chapter 7 (pp. 97-110); STUDY Lecture 34 and Glossary Terms (pp. 108-10); WRITE Questions for Review 1-8 (p. 107-08).

Fifteenth Week: Vocation – Orders

M 28: READ Cooke, Chapter 20 (pp. 215-23); STUDY Lecture 35 and Summary (p. 222); WRITE Questions for Reflection 1-5 (p. 223).

W 30: READ Smolarski, Chapter 10 (pp. 126-137); STUDY Lecture 36 and the notions of “Servant and Shepard”; WRITE analysis/reflection on these concepts as they relate to ordination.

F 2: Fourth Exam: Sacraments of Vocation

May

Sixteenth Week: Final Exam Week

Fourth Presentations (2 Groups): Must Incorporate Lawler
Final Exam: READ your reaction/reflection paper from the beginning of the semester; STUDY your comments and perspectives in that reaction/reflection paper; WRITE one-page, single-spaced Final Exam, “So What? Who Cares?” As you reflect on this paper, you may want to READ Noll, Chapter 11 (pp. 159-72) and Cooke Chapter 21 (pp. 224-31); STUDY Questions for Discussion (Noll, p. 170; Cooke, pp. 231-32), which may help formulate some ideas.

Final Exam is Due by 2:00 in my MAILBOX (Hammond); Department of Theological Studies, Humanities Building, Room #124.

For the final be sure to turn in:
(1) Your original reflection paper form the beginning of the semester;
(2) Your pre and post assessment questionnaire;
(3) Your reflection paper at the end of the semester. You will only be graded on this third part, but to receive full credit, you must turn in all three parts.