SLU Inquiry
Theological Foundations
THEO 100-34
MWF 11:00-11:50
Fall 2006

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This syllabus is open to amendment.

SLU Mission Statement

The Mission of Saint Louis University is the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity. The University seeks excellence in the fulfillment of its corporate purposes of teaching, research and community service. It is dedicated to leadership in the continuing quest for understanding of God’s creation, and for the discovery, dissemination and integration of the values, knowledge and skills required to transform society in the spirit of the Gospels. As a Catholic, Jesuit university, the pursuit is motivated by the inspiration and values of the Judaeo-Christian tradition and is guided by the spiritual and intellectual ideals of the Society of Jesus.

I. Course Description
In response to SLU’s mission as a Catholic, Jesuit University, this Theological Foundations course seeks to educate students in a critical discourse about human religious experience, biblical origins, historical foundations, and historical developments of the Western Christian tradition. The course provides a critical and creative exploration of Christianity, its various cultural/religious contexts, and its place within our global heritage. Thus, the focus is on broad exposure to the contexts and contents that form the theologies, institutions, and societies of Christianity. Although the focus is on the Western tradition, other traditions (Byzantine, Asian, Global/Mission Christianity) and influences (Jewish, Islamic) will also be included.

Our goal is to develop a clear understanding of theology as a discipline, and to acquire an awareness of the resources needed to think theologically. While an in-depth investigation of all the relevant issues we will survey this semester is not feasible, it is reasonable to expect that students will learn a methodological framework for studying theology, which includes a broad range of theological terms and ideas, especially: God, revelation, faith, creation, covenant, and salvation history. Moreover, as part of the core curriculum, this course assumes that students come from a wide variety of backgrounds and possess different or no formal religious beliefs. Thus, no previous knowledge of Christianity is expected, and all points of view will be welcome and respected.

This class also cross-lists with the Manresa Program in Catholic and Jesuit Studies and serves as the prerequisite to the certificate. The goal of the Catholic Studies Certificate is to integrate the ideas and resources of the Catholic and Jesuit visions into contemporary life by means of an interdisciplinary study of these two traditions. If you are interested in the certificate program, or in pursuing a minor/major in theological studies please talk with me.

II. Course Structure
Parts 1 and 2: Scripture (first and second exam). Since Christianity is rooted in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, our exploration begins by examining the texts of the Bible, their various contexts and genres, and their theological themes/issues. We will pay careful attention to how historical and literary criticism help in understanding fundamental theological concepts such as God, creation, revelation, theological anthropology,
covenant, good/evil, the person/work of Jesus, salvation, and the church. Our readings include selections from: Genesis, Exodus, Amos, Psalm 104, Mark, John, and Galatians.

Part 3: Christian History from 100 to 1400 (third exam). Christianity has been in existence for 2,000 years, and its current manifestations are the product of many complex historical developments. Thus, beginning with the post-biblical developments of the Christian tradition we will study the experience of Christians as they: emerged from Judaism, integrated philosophy into its theology, became an imperial church, developed the creeds, started the Christian monastic tradition, separated into the Eastern and Western churches, met the rise of Islam, and defined theology as a science with scholasticism. During this survey, we will especially look at how the early Christians learned to articulate their faith in Christ and the Trinity, and we will acquaint ourselves with the lives, times and works of Augustine of Hippo and Thomas Aquinas.

Part 4: Christian History from 1500 to 2000 (fourth exam). The survey continues with the further division of Christianity during the Reformation, the global expansion of Christianity, and the challenges posed to Christianity by: the Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution, modern science, and the postmodern milieu of today’s culture. Here we will consider the related questions of church structure and reform, social justice, pluralism, and inter-religious dialogue. During this overview, we will especially look at Martin Luther’s role in the Protestant Reformation, the Catholic response, the history of Christianity in the United States, and the impact of Vatican II.

III. Goals/Objectives of the Course (What to Learn)

Scripture
1. To demonstrate a working familiarity with the books of the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament.
2. To examine the Bible’s major literary forms, and the methods of biblical criticism.
3. To recognize the general development and makeup of the scriptural canon.

History
4. To investigate the broad history of Western Christianity: its various denominations, major turning points (positive and negative), personalities, and teachings.
5. To identify the vast diversity of traditions, in belief and practice, of Western Christianity, both between various Christian denominations and within Catholicism itself.
6. To illustrate the common ancestry, similarities, differences, and interrelated histories among the Western monotheistic faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Theological Method
7. To understand the importance of historical contexts (social, political, economic and religious thought/ actions) on the formation of church teachings, practices, and worship. Why a tradition developed.
8. To learn about the contents of Christian theology: its language, doctrines, metaphors, symbols, and practices. What a tradition believes.
9. To know how theology as a discipline, and its major sub-disciplines, maps the continuity and changes within the tradition. How a faith tradition seeks understanding.

Values
10. To encourage critical, careful and creative theological questioning that results in a greater respect for other traditions, a deeper reverence for one’s own, and a better understanding of the human condition.

IV. Required Skill-Set Acquisition (What to Do)
1. Ability to Read Critically: students demonstrate the ability to comprehend the course material via the daily submission of the questions from the readings, and the four exams.
2. Ability to Write Clearly: students demonstrate the ability to scrutinize and to integrate the course material via three assignments: daily reflections, eleven analysis/review papers (guidelines posted on WebCT), and final exam.
3. Ability to Work Collaboratively and to Present Carefully: groups demonstrate the ability for cooperative learning via the four group presentations (guidelines posted on WebCT), and by offering constructive questions/comments during class lectures/discussions.

4. Ability to Think Creatively: students demonstrate the ability to reflect/analyze/synthesize the contexts/reason and contents/fait of Christianity via the four group presentations and the final exam.

5. Ability to Synthesize/Analyze Carefully: students demonstrate the ability to articulate succinctly the integration of the history of Christian theology via the four exams and the eleven analysis/review papers.

V. Course Methodology (How to Learn)

All theology is mediated and this mediation involves at least two components: contexts/reason and contents/fait (doctrines/texts/images/practices/metaphors/symbols/language, etc.). On the one hand, to understand an individual or a communal experience/interpretation of God, which is what theology does, it is essential to understand the historical framework within which the interpretation unfolds. Thus, the what of a theology is inextricably intertwined with the why of a particular context. On the other hand, to understand the various historical and contemporary interpretations of God, it is essential to understand the symbols and language employed to depict God. Thus, the what of a theology is expressed by how specific metaphors are utilized. In effect, context/reason and content/fait, created in and experienced through lived reality, mediate God’s self-communication (revelation). As such, theology receives and shares God’s presence amid a lived reality that always manifests itself at particular places, at particular times, and with particular metaphors/symbols. Hence, in the study of theology, a good place to start is the traditions’ contexts/reason and contents/fait.

Moreover, a clear learning methodology will be helpful. 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 tradition. Mere memorization of historical facts will not suffice (not to mention boring). To this end, I intend only 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.

This class is geared toward the importance of asking questions: the who, what, when, where, why and how of the Christian tradition. 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 secular. Hopefully, your questioning will lead to a healthy confusion where fresh ideas emerge and new conceptual horizons form. Let us learn the historical contexts/reason and theological contents/fait of the Western Christian tradition by asking questions.

Accordingly, this course presupposes a collaborative and active learning community. As such it is structured around lectures, questions and discussions derived from the daily readings. Since questions and discussion form the nucleus of this class, it is imperative that students are prepared to discuss the readings prior to each class session. To facilitate such preparation, the questions for readings, listed in the calendar, are due almost every class meeting. The outcome of the daily work will be evaluated by the four exams because ~80-90% of the exams are directly taken from the questions.

VI. Requirements and Grading

A. Books:


For reading assignments not included in Cory 1 or Cory 2, please bring hard copies printed from the internet to class.


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

- 5% = Reading Analysis on the Primary Texts from *Cory 2* and elsewhere (1 page, single-spaced; quantitative grading; do the work, get the credit; *papers overdue by 1 week not accepted*)
- 10% = Daily Reading Questions from *Cory 1* (1 page, single-spaced; quantitative grading; do the work, get the credit; *papers overdue by 1 week not accepted*)
- 20% = Group Presentation
- 20% = Ten Analysis/Review Papers (2 pages, single-spaced; qualitative peer grading)
- 40% = Four Exams (qualitative peer grading; the exams have a curve; explained in class)
- 5% = Final Exam: *So What? Who Cares?* (1 page, single-spaced; qualitative peer grading)

**C. Assessment and Evaluation:**

- (2%) = Pre and Post Assessment (completed via web survey; if not taken, -2% points off your final grade; you will need to know your Banner username and password; full credit for taking both the pre-test (1%) and post test (1%))
- (3%) = Course Evaluation (taken via web survey; you will need to know your Banner username and password; if not taken, -3% points off your final grade; *full credit for taking the evaluation*

**D. Grade Scale and Standards:**

- **A range:** *Superior, excellent, outstanding*
  - A = 100-96
  - A- = 95-93
  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+ = 92-90
  - B = 89-85
  - B- = 84-82
  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+ = 81-79
  - C = 78-73
  - C- = 72-70
  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 = 69-65

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 = 64-0

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) was involved in plagiarism or cheating.

**E. Peer Grading:** I have a *general* expectation for the quality of work expected for 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 exams/papers earn an A and set the grade scale for that assignment.

**F. 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 –2 percentage points. 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.*

**G. Extra Credit:** During the semester there will be two opportunities for extra credit by attending university lectures that relate to theology: Jon Sobrino (Monday, September 25, 7:00pm) will present “Liberation Theology and Current World Conflicts” and the Francis Clooney (Thursday, October 5, 8:00pm) will present “Christian Commentary on Hindu Prayer.” To earn the extra credit you must write a 1 page, single spaced analysis/response to the major points of the lecture. Each lecture is worth up to +1 percentage point.

**VII. Academic Assistance and Honesty**

**A. 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.

**B. 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
   - Friday September 8: Select Groups
   - Monday September 25: First Exam
   - Wednesday October 11: Second Group Presentation
   - Monday December 11: Fourth Group Presentation

B. Weekly Calendar
   - Cory 1 = *The Christian Theological Tradition*
   - Cory 2 = *The Christian Theological Tradition Reader*
   - Mueller = *An Introduction to Theology*
   - http = Web links are posted on WebCT

*The readings and assignments are due on the day listed.*

August

First Week: Introduction to Theological Foundations
M  28: Course Syllabus and Structure
W  30: Introduction to Course Methodology; READ Mueller (Introduction, pp. 3-26); STUDY chapter divisions; WRITE First Analysis/Review Paper (2 page, single-spaced).
F  1: READ Cory 1 (Chapter 1, pp. 1-10); STUDY chapter divisions and key terms (p. 11); WRITE answers to Questions 1-7 (p. 11).

September

Second Week: The Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament)
M  4: Labor Day
W  6: READ Cory 1 (Chapter 2, pp. 13-28); STUDY chapter divisions and key terms (p. 28); WRITE answers to Questions 1-6 (p. 28).
F  8: READ 1) Genesis 1-11, 2) in conjunction with Genesis 1-2 also read Psalm 104, and 3) Cory 2 (pp. 1-2); STUDY Questions for Genesis 1-11 (pp. 2-3); WRITE 1 page analysis/reflection that describes the “theology” of creation as found in Genesis 1-2 and Psalm 104.
   - Select Groups. Last day to drop w/o a “W”

Third Week: The Hebrew Scriptures
M 11: READ Cory 1 (Chapter 3, pp. 29-42); STUDY timeline (p. 29), chapter divisions, and key terms (p. 43); WRITE answers to Questions 1-5 (p. 43).
W 13: READ Genesis 12-22 and Cory 2 (pp. 1-2); STUDY Questions for Genesis 12-22 (p. 3); WRITE 1
page analysis/reflection that dialogues with the Reading Questions.
Genesis:  http://bible.oremus.org/browser.cgi?passage=Genesis

F  15: READ Exodus 1-24 and Cory 2 (p. 4); STUDY Questions for Exodus 1-24 (p. 5); WRITE 1 page analysis/reflection that dialogues with the Reading Questions.
Exodus:  http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=exodus&vnum=yes&version=nrsvae

Fourth Week: The Hebrew Scriptures
M  18: READ Cory 1 (Chapter 4, pp. 45-55); STUDY timeline (p. 44), chapter divisions, and key terms (p. 55); WRITE answers to Questions 1-7 (pp. 55-56).

W  20: READ all of Amos; STUDY notes on Amos posted on WebCT; WRITE 1 page analysis/reflection that dialogues with the questions on Amos from WebCT.
Amos:  http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=amos&vnum=yes&version=nrsvae

F  22: READ Cory 1 (Chapter 5, pp. 58-68); STUDY timeline (p. 57), chapter divisions and key terms (p. 68); WRITE answers to Questions 1-6 (p. 69).

Fifth Week: From the Hebrew Scriptures into the Christian Scriptures
M  25: First Exam

W  27: Second Analysis/Review Paper and First Group Presentation: READ Mueller (Chapter 1, pp. 28-48; STUDY chapter divisions, key terms, and Question about the Text/for Conversation (pp. 44-45); WRITE 2 page, single-spaced analysis/review paper.

F  29: READ Cory 1 (Chapter 6, pp. 71-88); STUDY timeline (p. 75), chapter divisions, and key terms (p. 88); WRITE answers to Questions 1-5 (p. 88).

October
Sixth Week: The Christian Scriptures (The New Testament)
M  2: READ all of Mark, John 1-4, and Cory 2 (pp. 9, 13); STUDY Questions for the Gospel of Mark (pp. 9-10) and John (pp.13-14); WRITE 1 page analysis that dialogues with Reading Questions.
Mark: http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=mark&vnum=yes&version=nrsvae

W  4: READ Cory 1 (Chapter 7, pp. 90-101); STUDY timeline (p. 89), chapter divisions, and key terms (p. 102); WRITE answers to Questions 1-6 (p. 102).

F  6: READ all of Galatians and Cory 2 (p. 15); STUDY Questions for the Letter to the Galatians (pp. 15-16); WRITE 1 page analysis that dialogues with the Questions.
Galatians: http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=galatians&vnum=yes&version=nrsvae

Seventh Week: From the Christian Scriptures into Early Christianity
M  9: Second Exam

W 11: Third Analysis/Review Paper and Second Group Presentation: READ Mueller (Chapter 2, pp. 49-73); STUDY chapter divisions, key terms, and Questions about the Text/for Conversation (pp. 67-68); WRITE 2 page, single-spaced analysis/review paper.

F 13: READ Cory 1 (Chapter 8, pp. 103-120); STUDY timeline (p. 89), graph (p.107) chapter divisions, and key terms (p. 120); WRITE answers to Questions 1-10 (p. 121).
Eighth Week: Early Christianity (Mid-Term)

M 16: READ Cory 1 (Chapter 9, pp. 124-139); STUDY timeline (p. 123), chapter divisions, and key terms (p. 139); WRITE answers to Questions 1-10 (pp. 139-140).

W 18: READ Nicene Creed at www.creeds.net/ancient/nicene.htm AND Mueller (Chapter 3, pp. 75-100); STUDY chapter divisions, key terms, and Questions about the Text/for Conversation (pp. 94-95); WRITE Fourth Analysis/Review Paper (2 page, single-spaced).

F 20: READ Cory 1 (Chapter 10, pp. 142-151); STUDY timeline (p. 141), chapter divisions, and key terms (p. 151); WRITE answers to Questions 1-9 (pp. 151-152).

Ninth Week: Eastern Christianity and Islam

M 23: Fall Break

W 25: READ Cory 1 (Chapter 11, pp. 154-165); STUDY timeline (p. 153), chapter divisions, and key terms (p. 165); WRITE answers to Questions 1-6 (pp. 165-166).

F 27: READ Cory 1 (Chapter 12, pp. 168-179) AND Mueller (Chapter 9, pp. 234-56); STUDY chapter divisions, key terms, and Questions about the Text/for Conversation (pp. 251-52); WRITE Fifth Analysis/Review Paper (2 page, single-spaced).

November

Tenth Week: Medieval Christianity

M 30: READ Cory 1 (Chapter 13, pp. 183-194); STUDY timeline (p. 182), chapter divisions, and key terms (p. 194); WRITE answers to Questions 1-8 (pp. 194-195).

W 1: READ Cory 1 (Chapter 14, pp. 197-213) AND Mueller (Chapter 4, pp. 101-23); STUDY chapter divisions, key terms, and Questions about the Text/for Conversation (p. 117); WRITE Sixth Analysis/Review Paper (2 page, single-spaced).

F 3: READ Cory 1 (Chapter 15, pp. 216-228); STUDY timeline (p. 215), chapter divisions, and key terms (p. 229); WRITE answers to Questions 1-7 (p. 229).

Last Day to Withdraw

Eleventh Week: Medieval Christianity

M 6: READ Cory 1 (Chapter 16, pp. 231-242); STUDY timeline (p. 230), chapter divisions, and key terms (p. 242); WRITE answers to Questions 1-7 (p. 242).

W 8: Third Exam

F 10: Seventh Analysis/Review Paper and Group Presentation: READ Mueller (Chapter 5, pp. 124-52); STUDY chapter divisions, key terms, and Questions about the Text/for Conversation (p. 148); WRITE 2 page, single-spaced analysis/review paper.

Twelfth Week: From Medieval to Modern Christianity after the Renaissance

M 13: READ Cory 1 (Chapter 17, pp. 245-257); STUDY timeline (p. 249), chapter divisions, and key terms (p. 257); WRITE answers to Questions 1-8 (p. 257).

W 15: READ Cory 1 (Chapter 18, pp. 260-273); STUDY timeline (p. 259), chapter divisions, and key terms (p. 273); WRITE answers to Questions 1-11 (pp. 273-274).
**F 17:** READ Cory 1 (Chapter 19, pp. 276-293); STUDY timeline (p. 275), chapter divisions, and key terms (p. 294); WRITE answers to Questions 1-13 (p. 294).

*Thirteenth Week: The Catholic Reformation and Global Expansion*

**M 20:** READ Cory 1 (Chapter 20, pp. 297-306) AND Mueller (Chapter 6, pp. 154-81); STUDY chapter divisions, key terms, and Questions about the Text/for Conversation (pp. 177-75); WRITE Eighth Analysis/Review Paper (2 page, single-spaced).

**W 22:** READ Cory 1 (Chapter 21, pp. 310-322); STUDY timeline (p. 309), chapter divisions, and key terms (p. 322); WRITE answers to Questions 1-6 (pp. 322-323).

**F 24:** Thanksgiving Holiday

**December**

*Fourteenth Week: Modern Christianity*

**M 27:** READ Cory 1 (Chapter 22, pp. 325-342); STUDY timeline (p. 324), chapter divisions, and key terms (p. 342); WRITE answers to Questions 1-13 (p. 343).

**W 29:** READ Cory 1 (Chapter 23, pp. 346-363); STUDY timeline (pp. 345-346), chapter divisions, and key terms (p. 363); WRITE answers to Questions 1-10 (pp. 363-364).

**F 1:** READ Cory 1 (Chapter 24, pp. 365-385) AND Mueller (Chapter 7, pp. 182-208); STUDY chapter divisions, key terms, and Questions about the Text/for Conversation (p. 201); WRITE Ninth Analysis/Review Paper (2 page, single-spaced).

*Fifteenth Week: Christianity and Other Religions*

**M 4:** READ Cory 1 (Chapter 25, pp. 387-396); STUDY chapter divisions, and key terms (p. 396); WRITE answers to Questions 1-8 (p. 396).

**W 6:** READ Nostra Aetate (Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html) AND Mueller (Chapter 8, pp. 210-33); STUDY chapter divisions, key terms, and Questions about the Text/for Conversation (pp. 229-30); WRITE Tenth Analysis/Review Paper (2 page, single-spaced).

**F 8:** Fourth Exam

*Sixteenth Week: Exams*

**M 11:** Eleventh Analysis/Review Paper and Group Presentation; READ Mueller (Chapter 10, pp. 258-7852); STUDY chapter divisions, key terms, and Questions about the Text/for Conversation (pp. 271-72); WRITE 2 page, single-spaced analysis/review paper.

**M 19:** Final Exam, So What? Who Cares? Due in my box (HU 124) class by 10:00 am.

  You can turn in the exam anytime before this.