Theology is about God and the ways in which humans have lived, and continue to live, with God. It is thus concerned with the most basic questions of life. The department of theological studies trains students in a variety of sources and methods to help them evaluate and appreciate the most vital aspects of religious experience and thought. Our department enters into this investigation from an academic perspective with the aim of helping students clarify their own understanding. The Catholic tradition is central to the work of the department, but Catholicism is studied in the context of the whole Christian tradition and in relationship to all of the world’s religious traditions.

Following the introductory Theological Foundations course, the department offers undergraduate courses in the 2000–4000 level in Scripture, both Hebrew and Christian; the history of Christianity from its origins through today; constructive theology which examines central themes and pressing issues in Christianity, theological ethics, which studies diverse Christian practices; world religions/comparative theology, which explores non-Christian faiths by either comparing or contrasting them with Christianity (e.g., Islam and Christianity) or by studying them individually (e.g., world religions); and spirituality, which examines the various expressions of Christian discipleship (e.g., Ignatian spirituality).

The Theology Club at Saint Louis University provides an opportunity for students and faculty to come together in an informal, social setting. The club holds regular discussions, sponsors lectures and helps plan an annual undergraduate conference. Our department publishes a monthly newsletter, the Ignatian Herald, which keeps interested students informed about campus events. We also sponsor two annual lectureships, the Bellarmine and De Lubac Lectures, in which world-class scholars share their ongoing research with faculty, students and the wider university community.

The introductory course, Theological Foundations, introduces students to the God of revelation within the Judeo-Christian tradition and to the understanding of its implications for living a human life, respecting creation and pursuing beauty and truth. This is done within an ecumenical and global context, examining other world religions and various social realities. Subsequent courses focus on an aspect of Christian or other religious traditions and address social and moral issues.

The major in theological studies consists of 30 credit hours after completion of the introductory Theological Foundations course. Students are required to take one Old Testament course, one New Testament course, at least one course in two of the sub-disciplines within theological studies listed below, four electives and two capstone seminars. Sub-disciplines within the department include:

- Theology and history
- Faith and reason
- Christian morality and society
- Non-Christian religious traditions

The minor in theological studies consists of 15 credit hours after completion of the introductory Theological Foundations course. Students must complete two 2000-level, one 3000-level, one 4000-level and an additional 3000- or 4000-level course of their choice to obtain all 15 required credit hours.

The department also offers an A.B.M., an accelerated program in which students can earn a B.A. and an M.A. within five years.

The departmental website provides more detailed information these degrees, as well as the requirements for completing a major or minor in theological studies.
ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Freshman: All applications are thoroughly and carefully reviewed. Solid academic performance in college preparatory course work is a primary criterion in reviewing a freshman applicant’s file. College admission test scores (ACT or SAT) are used as an additional indicator of the student’s ability to meet the University’s academic requirements and to qualify the student for certain University scholarship programs. To be considered for admission to any Saint Louis University undergraduate program, the applicant must be approaching graduation from an accredited high school or have an acceptable score on the General Education Development (GED) test.

Transfer: Applicants must be a graduate of an accredited high school or have an acceptable score on the GED. An official high school transcript and official test scores are required only of those students who have attempted fewer than 24 transferable semester hours (or 30 quarter hours) of college credit. Those having completed 24 hours or more of college credit need only submit a transcript from previously attended college(s). In reviewing a transfer applicant’s file, the office of admission holistically examines the student’s academic performance in college-level coursework as an indicator of the student’s ability to meet the academic rigors of Saint Louis University.

WHY CHOOSE THIS PROGRAM?

+ The SLU theology program allows students to explore major questions about life and God while studying with top scholars in the field.
+ Students explore deep, theological issues in a welcoming environment that is both rooted in the Catholic tradition and open to all viewpoints.
+ Students develop their writing, research and critical thinking skills in preparation for graduate study and careers in various disciplines such as theology, law, social work, philosophy and many others.

Benefits of this program also include several internship and career opportunities. Faculty members and academic advisors/mentors assist students in finding internships in the St. Louis area or in their hometowns that will utilize the knowledge obtained from the theology curriculum and enhance the students’ skill sets.

Those who wish to remain in the field of theology after graduation may teach on the elementary and secondary levels or serve as religious education coordinators in a parish and pastoral associates in schools or parishes. Many students see the theology major as good preparation for graduate studies. Graduate studies in theology prepare students for a variety of careers in ministry, teaching at the college or university levels and entering many other careers. Some students choose to complete a double major in order to diversify their opportunities for employment. Studies in theology enhance careers in journalism, social work, medicine, law or politics.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID

There are two principal ways to help finance a Saint Louis University education:
+ Scholarships: awarded based on academic achievement, service, leadership and financial need.
+ Financial Aid: provided in the form of grants and loans, some of which require repayment.

For priority consideration for merit-based scholarships, applicants should apply for admission by Dec. 1 and complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by March 1.

For information on other scholarships and financial aid, visit the student financial services office online at finaid.slu.edu.