

THEOLOGY 250
 God in Human Experience
 MW 15:30-16:45 / PRH 08

Professor: James O'Leary, S.J.
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 Office: Padre Rubio Hall, top floor
 Office Hours: M-F, 12:15-13:45, 17:00-18:00 and by appointment

Course description: Departing from human experience, this course explores the history of the concept of God in the three Abrahamic religions through a variety of means, including archeology, history, theology, and evolutionary psychology. The patterns which link Judaism, Christianity, and Islam and the ways in which they have changed their concepts over time are explored as one of the central themes.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will demonstrate critical thinking by analyzing themes, concepts and presuppositions presented in the course material.
- Students will analyze and critique the coherence and argumentation of the course contents within their historical and/or contemporary contexts.
- Students will formulate a thesis and develop a written argument on a specific question in relationship to the course content.
- Students will analyze specific theological topics within the course and the relationship between them.

Required work:

- Regular, punctual class attendance and preparation for class by doing the assigned readings and participating in class discussions.
- Lead class discussion (sign-up sheet to be circulated) on the chapter that is being covered that week and then propose a question or two to generate class discussion.

Grading policy: The final grade is intended to reflect the student's fulfillment of the course requirements, engagement with and comprehension of material studied, and ability to reflect this comprehension and engagement in the class assignments. The final grade will be determined in the following manner:

Quizzes (4 at 10 points)	40 %	Class presentation/summary	10 %
Midterm examination	20 %	Participation	10%
Final examination	20 %		

Grading Scale

93-100	A	73-76	C+
89-92	A-	69-72	C
85-88	B+	65-68	C-
81-84	B	60-64	D
77-80	B-	0-59	F

Attendance policy: Attendance is expected.

Policy on late-work:

- If you are scheduled to lead the class discussion and are unable to do so, you are responsible for switching dates with a classmate and informing the professor of the change.
- Quizzes and exams must be taken on the dates assigned. No make-up evaluations are allowed.

Required texts:

- The Evolution of God
- Selected readings

Email:

Both Banner and SLU-Global accounts are linked to a student's slu.edu address. Hence you should check your slu.edu account on a regular basis or have the mail from this address forwarded to a preferred account.

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."

Accommodation Statement

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.

University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Academic Dean's Office (San Ignacio Hall) or by going to http://spain.slu.edu/academics/learning_resources.html.

Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at +34 915 54 58 58, ext. 204, send an e-mail to counselingcenter-madrid@slu.edu, or to visit the Counseling Office (San Ignacio Hall). Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Course instructors support student accommodation requests when an approved letter from Disability Services has been received and when students discuss these accommodations with the instructor after receipt of the approved letter.

Academic Integrity

Because the university is a community of learning, an environment of mutual trust and integrity is vital. Students, faculty, and staff members share the responsibility for maintaining this environment. The university's Academic Honesty Policy strictly forbids cheating, falsification, and plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the intentional representation of someone else's thoughts or words as if they were one's own.) Any violation of this policy will result in an F for the pertinent academic exercise. A detailed statement of the policy may be found at

http://spain.slu.edu/academics/academic_advising/docs/Academic_integrity.pdf

Student Assessment

Saint Louis University - Madrid Campus is committed to excellent and innovative educational practices. In order to maintain quality academic offerings and to conform to relevant accreditation requirements, we regularly assess our teaching, services, and programs for evidence of student learning outcomes achievement. For this purpose we keep on file anonymized representative examples of student work from all courses and programs such as: assignments, papers, exams, portfolios, and results from student surveys, focus groups, and reflective exercises. Thus, copies of your work for this course, including exams, oral

presentations, assignments, submitted papers and/or portfolios may be kept on file for institutional research, assessment and accreditation purposes. If you prefer that Saint Louis University-Madrid Campus does not keep your work on file, you will need to communicate your decision in writing to your professor.

Course Calendar

September

- 03 First Day of Class; Introduction to class and participants.
Read Chapter 1, *The Primordial Faith*
- 08 Sign up to lead class discussion.
- 15 Read Chapter 2, *The Shaman*
Last Day to Drop a Class without a Grade of W and/or Add a Class
- 22 Read Chapter 3, *Religion in the Age of Chiefdoms*
- 25 Read Chapter 4, *Gods of the Ancient States*
- 29 Read Chapter 5, *Polytheism, the Religion of Ancient Israel*

October

- 06 Read Chapter 6, *From Polytheism to Monolatry*
- 13 Read Chapter 7, *From Monolatry to Monotheism*
- 08 Midterm exam**
- 20 Read Chapter 8, *Philo Story*
- 27 Read Chapter 9, *Logos: The Divine Algorithm*
- 30 Last Day to Drop a Class and Receive a Grade of W

November

- 03 Read Chapter 10, *What Did Jesus Do?*
- 05 Read Chapter 11, *The Apostle of Love*
- 10 Nuestra Señora de la Almudena Holiday (University Closed)
- 12 Read Chapter 12, *Survival of the Fittest - Christianity*
- 17 Read Chapter 13, *How Jesus Became Savior*
- 19 Read Chapter 14, *The Koran*
- 24 Read Chapter 15, *Mecca*
- 26 Read Chapter 16, *Medina*

December

- 01 Read Chapter 17, *Jihad*
- 03 Read Chapter 18, *Muhammad*
- 08 Inmaculada Concepción Holiday (University Closed)
- 10 Read Chapter 19, *The Moral Imagination*
Read Chapter 20, *Well, Aren't We Special?*
- 10 Final Day of Class
- 19 Final Exam 15:30**