

THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

The Theology and Religious Studies Department is at the heart of the College's Catholic Benedictine identity. The dynamic of Anselm's axiom that theology is "faith seeking understanding" is loosed to stimulate and broaden students' critical thinking skills, to contribute to their moral, ethical, and spiritual development, and to shape their attitudes, values, and interests in ways that will enable them to become valuable contributors to society and to provide leadership for society's transformation.

Theology and Religious Studies represents an ideal liberal arts major that is attractive to graduate schools and employers alike because of the insights that students gain into the most profound questions of human existence and the skills that they acquire in critical analysis and problem solving. Although shaped by the Benedictine Catholic tradition, the department engages and reflects on that heritage in dialogue with other religious traditions. To meet the needs of a diverse student body, the department offers a broad curriculum that includes courses in theology, biblical studies, ethics/moral theology, religion and culture, spirituality, and world religions. The department offers a major and minor in Theology and Religious Studies and a major and minor in Catholic Studies.

Programs

The Theology and Religious Studies Department offers these programs:

- Braegelmann Catholic Studies, B.A. (<http://catalog.css.edu/programs-az/arts-letters/theology-religious-studies/catholic-studies-ba/>)
- Theology and Religious Studies, B.A. (<http://catalog.css.edu/programs-az/arts-letters/theology-religious-studies/theology-religious-studies-ba/>)
- Braegelmann Catholic Studies Minor (<http://catalog.css.edu/programs-az/arts-letters/theology-religious-studies/catholic-studies-minor/>)
- Theology and Religious Studies Minor (<http://catalog.css.edu/programs-az/arts-letters/theology-religious-studies/theology-religious-studies-minor/>)

Contact Information

trs@css.edu

Theology and Religious Studies Courses

TRS 1101 - Introduction to Christian Theology (Conceptions : VCRS - Religious Studies) - 4 cr.

Introduces students to the academic study of Christian theology (both Catholic and Protestant). Students are encouraged to discover the historical, theological, spiritual and ethical foundations of theology. Students will explore the religious dimension of human experience, God, salvation, evil, ritual, scriptures and community. Special emphasis is placed on issues affecting 21st century Christianity.

TRS 1102 - Sin, Suffering and Salvation - 4 cr.

Introduces students to the diverse ways that sin, suffering and salvation have been understood throughout the two millennia of Christianity. Specific focus is paid to current understandings and debates regarding the meaning and/or purposes of sin, suffering and salvation. Students gain knowledge of the intersections between Christianity and selected contemporary issues, including ethics, social, political, economic, or cultural issues.

TRS 1103 - Introduction to the Bible (Conceptions : VCRS - Religious Studies) - 4 cr.

An introduction to the academic study of the Bible and survey of major portions of its writings. Designed to acquaint students with the historical, literary, and theological character of the Bible as well as the contents of the individual texts that comprise the Christian Scriptures. Students will acquire familiarity with the literature of the Bible, become self-conscious and critical readers and interpreters, and reflect on the role of readers in the construction of textual meaning and interpretation.

TRS 1104 - Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures (Conceptions : VCRS - Religious Studies) - 4 cr.

An introduction to the academic study of the Hebrew Scriptures and a survey of major portions of its writings designed to acquaint students with the literary, historical, and theological character and contents of the individual texts comprising this collection. This course investigates the political, social, religious and philosophical, and literary environments in which the Hebrew Scriptures originated in order to contextualize adequately the reading and study of the documents. It introduces the methodologies employed in the investigation of the texts of the Hebrew Scripture during the modern period and the major scholarly issues that this research has addressed.

TRS 1105 - Introduction to the New Testament (Conceptions : VCRS - Religious Studies) - 4 cr.

An introduction to and survey of the New Testament designed to acquaint students with the literary, historical, and theological character and contents of the individual writings comprising this collection. It investigates the political, social, religious and philosophical, and literary environment in which the New Testament originated in order to contextualize adequately the reading and study of the documents. It introduces the methodologies employed in the investigation of New Testament texts during the modern period and the major scholarly issues that this research has addressed.

TRS 1110 - Introduction to Catholicism (Conceptions : VCRS - Religious Studies) - 4 cr.

An introduction to Roman Catholicism from the perspective of the American Catholic experience. The course reviews the history of Catholicism from the emergence of Christianity to the present, with special attention to the reforms of the Second Vatican Council. It surveys the Church's beliefs and practices, the exercise of authority, its sacramental life and liturgical traditions, moral norms, and relations with Protestant denominations and other major religious communities. The course also encounters the Church in its local setting and explores issues that U. S. Catholics find most challenging.

TRS 1420 - Introduction to Spirituality (Conceptions : VCRS - Religious Studies) - 4 cr.

An examination of spirituality and spiritual practice in the Christian tradition and other faith traditions. The course explores the history of Christian spirituality, classical texts of those who are recognized as models of spiritual practice, and the question of the personal development of contemporary spiritualities. Beyond the reading and critical analysis of texts, participants also choose one or several spiritual disciplines to practice gently throughout the course as a way of exploring their application to spiritual life today.

TRS 1777 - Independent Study - 0-4 cr.

Topics.

TRS 2101 - Contemporary Moral Issues (Conceptions : VCRS - Religious Studies) - 4 cr.

Provides an introduction to religious ethics, its sources, principles and impact upon global contemporary issues. Students are encouraged to develop analytical and critical thinking skills, as well as reflect on their own processes of moral decision-making. We will test our ideas about ethics by examining a broad array of issues in the twenty-first century and considering common ethical principles found in various religions and cultures of the world.

TRS 2110 - Introduction to Ministry - 4 cr.

Introduces theologies and spiritualities of ministry and reflects on skills for lay ministers. Ministries that will be studied include religious education, youth ministry, social justice ministry, administrative ministry, and ministry to the sick and dying. This course is for anyone who intends to participate in some form of church ministry.

Prerequisite Courses: 1000 level TRS course or consent of the instructor.

TRS 2120 - The Christian Faith in Art: The College of St. Scholastica in Rome - 4 cr.

Explores ways in which religious faith and belief are expressed through the arts, including the visual and performing arts. The theatres, museums, concert halls, and churches of Rome and its environs will be used as resources for the class. Students will explore art and architecture as they express the Christian faith in the ancient city of Rome and its environs. As a theology course, it will look to art and art history, seeing there the expression of theological ideas or doctrines. The class will include consideration of the idea of pilgrimage, some experience of the church at prayer, discussion of the concepts of *lex orandi*, *lex credendi* and the idea of development of doctrine. This course will be offered as an accelerated travel course.

Prerequisite Courses: 1000 level TRS course or consent of instructor.

TRS 2222 - A History of Christian Thought (Conceptions : VCRS - Religious Studies) - 4 cr.

Considers the intellectual history of Christian theology, examining people and their ideas from the birth of Jesus to the modern era. This course is designed to enhance the student's appreciation for the disciplines of theology and history, inviting reflection on tradition and ideas. Students will be encouraged to reflect on their own experience of faith, and to recognize the need for a critical examination of faith's foundations.

Equivalent Course: HIS 2222

TRS 2243 - Women and Religion (Conceptions : VCRS - Religious Studies) - 4 cr.

Examines the historical and cultural understandings of women in religions of the world. The course emphasizes the work of contemporary women thinkers who are exploring various dimensions of the question of women's presence, exclusion and contribution to religion. Through historical and comparative study the course will provide both a critical and a constructive understanding of the contributions that women make to religions, as well as the influence of religions on the situation of women in the world. This course will acknowledge the heritage of women's strength, resistance and celebration in responding to exclusion and oppression and look at some of the ways in which women today are seeking full and authentic participation in the life of their religious traditions and their communities.

Equivalent Course: WGS 2243

TRS 2401 - Benedictine Tradition (Conceptions : VCRS - Religious Studies) - 4 cr.

Explores with students the essential elements and core values of the Catholic Benedictine tradition. Students are encouraged to discover the historical, cultural, theological, spiritual, and ethical foundations of the Benedictine tradition. The course examines tools in the Rule of Benedict that assist students in reflecting on the fundamental questions of life. Students explore ways of developing a Benedictine spirituality that focuses on discovering the presence of God in the ordinary events of life.

TRS 2403 - The Way of the Pilgrim: CSS on the Road to Santiago or Canterbury - 4 cr.

Explores the history and theology of pilgrimage and may include a 100 kilometer hiking pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago Compostela in Spain, or a 100 kilometer pilgrimage from London to Canterbury; pilgrimages to Rome or Jerusalem are also possible. Beginning with the scriptural accounts of pilgrimage, students will explore the theology and history of pilgrimage. As a cross-listed history and theology course, it will also look to art and art history, and to literature, seeing there the expression of theological ideals, ideas or doctrines. Students of the Spanish language will have daily opportunity to enter into conversation in Spanish and the Galician dialect. Further, the title of Santiago Matamoros, St. James the Moor Killer, will be considered in historical context, with attention to new efforts at understanding between Christianity and Islam.

TRS 2501 - Theologies of Peace and Justice (Conceptions : VCRS - Religious Studies) - 4 cr.

An exploration of the interpretation of issues of justice and peace, with special attention to Catholic and Christian teachings on such issues as war and peace, violence, economic justice, and racial and gender justice. Consideration of ways in which fundamental presuppositions and principles of each group studied affect their views on justice and peace, and promote or detract from dialogue and peaceful interaction with other groups. In addition to Christianity, students are invited to study the world-views of a Far Eastern religion, a tribal religion, Islam, and one secular worldview.

TRS 2601 - Religions of the World (Conceptions : VCRS - Religious Studies) - 4 cr.

Surveys the major religious traditions of the world, focusing on an understanding of the religious world views and practices that shape culture across the globe. Explores basic teachings, rituals, ethics and conceptions of the transcendent and afterlife. Selected readings from these traditions include indigenous and oral religions, Hinduism, Buddhism as well as the religions of the West including Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

TRS 2777 - Topics in Religion - 0-4 cr.

Topics in Theology and Religious Studies.

TRS 3110 - Gospel of John - 4 cr.

A study of the Gospel of John is designed to acquaint students with the Gospel's narrative as well as its literary, historical, and theological dimensions and important themes. This course investigates the principal issues in Johannine research, literary features, attitude toward and role of women, world view and social setting, authorship, destination and purpose, composition, Christology and eschatology. The course examines significant passages used to support various scholarly views and develops exegetical skills.

Prerequisite Courses: 1000 level TRS course or consent of instructor.

TRS 3120 - Paul's Letters - 4 cr.

Examines the letters in the New Testament whose authorship by Paul is undisputed (Romans, 1-2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon) within the context of ancient letter writing and the socio-historical situations to which they were addressed. It considers in detail the political, social, religious and philosophical, and cultural environments in which Paul lived and wrote as well as the specific issues and themes addressed in the letters. The course explores the interpretations of Paul's views from ancient times to the present.

TRS 3130 - Prophets - 4 cr.

Examines the phenomenon of prophecy as it emerged in the religion of Israel before, during, and after the Assyrian and Babylonian exiles. The course traces the development of the prophetic movement and its relationship to religious, social and political institutions as recorded in the Tanakh's prophetic corpus. The course takes a socio-historical, redactional and comparative and phenomenological approach to the prophetic material. It explores the material's literary and theological dimensions as well as feminist concerns lifted up by careful study of its images and characters.

Prerequisite Courses: 1000 level TRS course or consent of instructor.

TRS 3240 - Sacraments and Liturgy - 4 cr.

Enhances the student's appreciation for sacraments and worship. Students will reflect on how the Catholic sacramental system shapes the life of the Church and individual Catholics; seek to understand how the Church's liturgy is the source and summit of life; and reflect on Vatican II's understanding of the Church as People of God.

Prerequisite Courses: 1000 level TRS course or consent of instructor.

TRS 3310 - Religious Perspectives on Living, Dying and Grieving (Integrations : VIRS - Religious Studies) - 4 cr.

Consideration of questions related to suffering, dying, prolonging and manipulating life. Study examines topics related to the meaning and end of human life according to various religious and cultural viewpoints. Topics include the quality and sacredness of life, end of life moral issues, funeral rites, grief and mourning, suicide, and perspectives on life after death.

TRS 3311 - Religious Perspectives on Healthcare Ethics (Integrations : VIRS - Religious Studies) - 4 cr.

Explores a variety of concrete biomedical ethical problems within our society and the healthcare system from a diversity of religious and ethical perspectives. This course examines a number of current issues in healthcare. Attention is given to key principles relevant to healthcare ethics, including autonomy, nonmaleficence, beneficence, and justice.

Equivalent Course: HSC 3311

TRS 3312 - Spirituality Resilience Recover - 4 cr.

An interdisciplinary exploration into the spiritual, emotional, and physical integration required to attain emotional sobriety, life balance, and healing from emotional trauma and addiction. Evidence-based research in the role of spirituality in healing as well as key concerns of caregivers and counselors is considered.

TRS 3315 - The Church Today - 4 cr.

A study of the origin, growth and development of the church from apostolic times to the present. Special emphasis is given to the theology of the church emerging at the Second Vatican Council and its meaning for today.

Prerequisite Courses: 1000 level TRS course or consent of instructor.

TRS 3318 - Spirituality and Aging - 4 cr.

Examines the ongoing, dynamic, creative process of spiritual growth and physical development in the older adult. Foci include: the normal aging process as it deals with meaning in life; ageism; death and dying issues; various forms of ministry for and with the aging population and transitions of life which can facilitate the continued search for spiritual fulfillment.

TRS 3320 - Religion and Politics of Compassion (Integrations : VIRS - Religious Studies) - 4 cr.

Although compassion is a cardinal virtue in nearly all religious and ethical traditions as well as the value systems of many individuals, its translation into politics is selective, inconsistent, and sometimes controversial. We are told to love our neighbor, but who do we recognize as our neighbor? What do we owe our neighbors? This course explores religious, political, and social perspectives of how we understand and care for - or don't - strangers. We examine recent political and social developments to understand the elements of a compassionate politics that keeps faith with our values, and analyze the complexities of how public policies affect vulnerable groups, such as refugees, persons of color, the economically disadvantaged, and victims of human rights abuses.

TRS 3325 - Faith, Values and Film - 4 cr.

Explores ways in which religion, values and art find expression in the cinema, exploring theological and cultural themes, symbols, motifs, and images in foreign and domestic films. As a Catholic Studies course, Faith, Values and Film will seek to explore the connection between faith and modern culture. The interdisciplinary nature of the study will highlight for students the complementary interaction of the Catholic faith with reason, seeking to engage students with the transformative realities of art.

TRS 3330 - Catholic Benedictine Perspectives - 4 cr.

Provides students an opportunity to encounter the resources and heritage of the Catholic Benedictine tradition. The course deepens student understanding of the mission of The College of St. Scholastica and invites students to reflect upon their own vocations as they enter the profession of nursing. [Post-Baccalaureate Nursing students only.]

TRS 3340 - Spiritual Living: 21st Century (Integrations : VIRS - Religious Studies) - 4 cr.

The course examines spiritual living with a holistic view of what it means to be fully human. It seeks to foster spiritual growth by exploring universal themes of spiritual living as they relate to the search for God in the ordinary happenings of daily life. Christian spirituality and the spirituality of other faith traditions will be studied.

TRS 3350 - The Person and Mission of Jesus (Integrations : VIRS - Religious Studies) - 4 cr.

This course provides a study of the person, mission and teachings of Jesus Christ in scripture, doctrine and contemporary theology. Particular attention is paid to historical Jesus studies. Course is designed to deepen understanding of the central figure of Christianity and provide a basis for Christian life.

TRS 3380 - Women's Spirituality and Literature - 4 cr.

Involves students in the process of their own spiritual journey as well as examines the spirituality of female characters in literature. In addition, poetry, theology and spirituality texts are studied to provide the students with guides for reflection. This course incorporates journals, papers, presentations and final integration paper.

TRS 3777 - Topics in Religion - 2-4 cr.

Topics in TRS.

TRS 3999 - Independent Study - 0-4 cr.

Independent Study.

TRS 4220 - Catholic Studies Seminar - 4 cr.

A capstone, interdisciplinary class in which students demonstrate their own perception of the depth and breadth of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition as it is evident in their various fields of study. This course will operate as a seminar. Students will read, research, write and present their work, reflecting on tradition and ideas. Students will be encouraged to reflect on their own experience of faith, and to recognize the need for a critical examination of faith's foundations.

TRS 4440 - Women Mystics - 4 cr.

Examines the mystical tradition through the examination of the lives and writings of selected women mystics. A typical reading list might include works of Julian of Norwich, Catherine of Siena, Teresa of Avila, Therese of Lisieux, Simone Weil, Edith Stein and Hildegard of Bingen.

TRS 4555 - Internship - 0-4 cr.

Internship.

TRS 4777 - Catholic Studies Seminar - 0-4 cr.

Prerequisite Courses: 1000 level TRS course or consent of instructor.

TRS 4999 - Independent Study - 1-16 cr.

Independent Study.