

**HOWARD
UNIVERSITY**

School of Divinity

Course Descriptions Spring 2021

Course Subject:

BSNT Biblical Studies New Testament

BSOT Biblical Studies Old Testament

ETRL Ethics and Religion

FDSM Core Curriculum

HISU Historical Studies

STMI Studies in Ministry

THEO Theological Studies

THES Thesis

Course Format:

HY Hybrid

L Lecture

WI Week Intensive

OL Online

P Practicum

S Seminary

BSNT 412 *Sacred Texts & Hermeneutics* Dr. Byron OL

This course is unique in its nature and structure. This is the team-taught course about Sacred Texts and Hermeneutics offered at the School of Divinity, which will be led by two professors in Biblical and Qur'ānic Studies. The course will introduce different hermeneutical theories, exegetical methods, and theological perspectives. Each class session will include a lecture on particular sacred texts and methods, to provide an opportunity for students to engage the professors and each other on the hermeneutical insights and other implications of the material. This provides a context for recognition of interconnections between texts that might not be immediately identifiable. The course surveys the development of theories of interpretation and exegesis from classical to contemporary time and shows the relation between the theory of interpretation and the understanding of theology. The course will especially attend to the influence of nineteenth- and twentieth-century theories of interpretation upon sacred texts, with an explicit focus on engaging twenty-first century approaches and debates about the importance of interpretation for religious and theological studies. This course fulfills the M.Div. New Testament exegesis requirement and is also required for the M.A. concentrations in Biblical and Islamic Studies.

BSNT 306 *Womanist Biblical Interpretation* Dr. Byron OL

Since the early 1990s womanist biblical scholars have opened a new trajectory for reading biblical texts that foregrounds the experiences and reading strategies of African American women. This course will discuss the historical, cultural, and academic genesis of this area of biblical scholarship, highlight the distinctive attributes of womanist readings of Scripture; and analyze a wide range of intersectional exegetical projects (both Hebrew Bible and New Testament) that showcase the impact and rich diversity of womanist hermeneutics. By the end of the course, students will have a solid understanding of the different presuppositions, challenges, and possibilities womanist biblical critics add to contemporary biblical scholarship. Students will also write an exegetical paper that engages womanist hermeneutics. **PREREQUISITES:** New Testament Critical Introduction and at least one introductory course in Hebrew Bible.

BSOT 312 *Book of Ecclesiastes* Dr. Ahn OL

This course is a seminar on the Book of Ecclesiastes (Qohelet). Qohelet is one of the last books of the Hebrew Bible (HB) canon. The book is famous for words like “Everything is vanity (hbl) or meaningless,” or as found in chapter 3: “A time to be born, a time to die...” The exegetically centered course allows participants to create and make-meaning(s) of the most progressive thought in the HB. Background information from Persian/Hellenistic socio-economic, and historical contexts shed light. Participants carefully examine chapter by chapter, in Hebrew and/or English, to offer new insights and resolutions to textual, thematic, and interpretive problems. Emphasis on the appropriation of the text in academic and/or church (or other) settings by critically examining, teaching, and/or preaching is underscored.

BSOT 202 *Intro to Old Testament II* Dr. Ahn OL

This is the second half of a two-semester course intended to introduce students to a critical (that is, analytical) way of reading, thinking, writing, and speaking about the contents of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and the history and religion of Israel. The second semester course focuses on the historical period beginning with the divided kingdom and the prophetic and wisdom literature of the HB/OT. The purpose is to understand the material in its original cultural setting insofar as this is possible (historical-critical method). In addition, newer approaches to biblical interpretation will be considered. Special attention will be paid to African American and feminist/womanist biblical interpretation.

BSOT 222 *Intro to Hebrew and Grammar II* Dr. Bellis OL

This is the second half of a full year introduction I to Biblical Hebrew Language and Grammar. Using Logos Software, students will read the books of Jonah, Ruth, and as much of the firsts twelve chapters of Genesis as we can get through. They fill out Excel spreadsheets, one worksheet each for verbs, nouns, and other parts of speech, to consolidate their knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, then in class pronounce and translate the material, answering questions about unusual forms. **Prereq:BSOT-221**

ETRL 305 *Christian Social Ethics* Dr. Sanders OL

This course is an introduction to Christian social ethics as a field of theological inquiry, with an emphasis upon Christian approaches to social justice. It fulfills the ethics requirement for students in the Master of Divinity degree program.

ETRL 410 *Pastoral Ethics* Dr. Sanders OL

Explores the ethical decision-making processing relation to the profession of pastoral ministry. The approach is to combine lecture-discussion with actual case studies each week, in order to equip students with practical and theoretical insights into ethical dilemmas faced by ministers in today's church and society. Special attention will be given to issues of sex, money, and power in the practice ministry.

FDSM 213 *Spiritual Formation & Ministry Leadership* Dr. Fears OL

This course invites Master of Divinity students into an intentional process of spiritual discipline and introspection, personal faith development, and vocational discernment. Students explore the rich tradition of spiritual exercises, including prayer, Bible study, and meditation, in order to develop a program which best suits his or her individual needs, calling and personality. Students will explore various ministry models, share their generational and vocational perspectives, and

critically engage in dialogue about re-inventing and reforming models of ministry and leadership.

Weekly sessions will be comprised of lectures, guest presentations, discussion, audiovisual presentations, and workgroup presentations.

FDSM 220 *Intro to Theological Writing* Dr. Fears OL

This course introduces incoming Divinity School students to research and writing skills on graduate-level. The course distinguishes between personal voice writing, sermonic writing, and academic writing. The course gives primacy to academic writing with specific attention to hermeneutics and theological/religions-related research; proper use and citation of sources; plagiarism and inclusive writing guidelines; grammar and syntax; and, the Turbian style manual for graduate courses in religion.

HISU 205 *History of Christianity Survey* Dr. Harrison OL

This course surveys the history of Christianity from the Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation and consists of five periods: The Early Church; The Imperial Church; Medieval Christianity; the Beginnings of Colonial Christianity; and The Reformation. Students will identify dominant voices in the Christian narrative, and track how and why specific views, issues, or questions predominate in that story. Some concerns and questions for consideration include the transition from Judaism to the idea of the new Gentile Church. What constitutes Christianity, and who sets its parameters/definition? When was Church established, and why? When did the Early Church become anti-Jewish? When was the decision made that Jesus would become the Christ? Who decided, and why? How many other messianic figures existed during, before, and immediately after Jesus' death? Who decided, and when and why was the biblical canon closed? How were women a threat to the Church, especially during the Middle Ages? What gifts did Julian of Norwich, Catherine of Siena, and Hildegard of Bingen bring to Christianity and spiritual practice? How did their positions shift theological discourse? What is the significance of Calvin and Luther's theologies during The Reformation? How did their theologies shape/influence Christianity then, and now? As we study these and other central issues and questions, we also will consider if and how issues of gender, ethnicity, class, educational background, and indigenous or ancient religious traditions affected the development of the Christian story.

This course concludes moving from a survey of Christianity from the Early Church to the Reformation to a comparative analysis of the Church today, and your role and assessment of the future of the US Protestant Church today. This course is hybrid (40% online), which consists of collaborative Blackboard discussions and quizzes. Course correspondences and information are accessible only via Blackboard. Students must update their email addresses on Blackboard to receive pertinent information and course requirements.

HISU 220 *History of Black Church* Dr. Harrison OL

This course explores a wide variety of data related principally to the history of black denominational bodies from the period of enslavement to present. The purpose is to enrich personal faith and prepare persons for informed and competent leadership in behalf of God's mission of liberation for all peoples.

HISU 317 *Ethics & Prophetic Tradition in Islami* Dr. Alwani OL

The subject of ethics essentially comprises a twofold objective, it evaluates human practices by calling upon moral standards, and also it gives prescriptive guidance on how to act morally in a given situation. Islamic ethical values and moral concepts are both universal and specific. This course will explore the great emphasis in Islam on ethical aspects of human conduct derived from the Quranic and Prophetic tradition/sunna, hadith and sīra. This course will examine the Islamic moral and ethical system where the principles of Islamic law is linked to the exemplary conduct of all the prophets, especially Prophet Muhammad, in a manner that is appropriate to an actual ethical case. Students will analyze issues from Islamic perspective, such as wealth and poverty, war and peace, race, gender and sexuality, medical and environmental ethics, family and social justice. Universal Ethics will be explored and analyzed. At the end of this course, students will work together to develop a declaration of Universal Ethics in a diverse yet unified for faith communities and institutions. A research component is also added to this course where the students read thoroughly and critically in order to arrive to a comprehensive conclusion. The instructional method combines lecture-discussion with actual case studies, guest speaker, attending events, multimedia instruction and interactive student presentations.

SCRL 220 *World Religions* Dr. Kwakye-Nuako OL

The beginning of the twenty-first century has unleashed into the world the wonders of human creativity and the endless possibilities of the human spirit. In an age of technological advancement unparalleled in human history with ever expanding knowledge to overcome diseases, ignorance and superstition, the dark side of civilization remains a scar to the glowing results of human achievements. The age of globalization, which has shrunk common frontiers of states due to the communication explosion presents many opportunities and challenges for doing ministry in the global village.

This course is to introduce students to some of the major religions of the world, examining the ideals, ethics, rituals, and worldview to gain insights into some of the beliefs which have contributed to shape human institutions. Put differently, this course seeks to provide an entrée into the hearts, minds, and behavior of most people in this world. In addition, the course seeks to facilitate a sympathetic understanding of these religious traditions and their relevance for our contemporary world as students prepare for ministry. Studying the religions of the world is an important journey in the preparation for ministry in a pluralistic world, where globalization has brought people closer together than any period in human history. The course also seeks equip

students to develop a deeper appreciation for their own faith traditions as well as those that millions of the world's populations subscribe. This is to enable students to create healthy relationship with peoples of other faiths as they minister in a pluralistic world by engaging in meaningful dialogue in humanity's search for meaning.

STMI 210 *Church Administration & Leadership* Dr. Bellis OL

Explores the duties of the pastor, the nature of the church administration, roles of leadership within the organizational patterns of the church, voluntary associations, community relations, and community college.

STMI 350 *Field Education II* Dr. Gilbert/ Dr. Kwakye-Nuako OL

This is the required continuation of Theological Field Education I. Further emphasis is placed on progressive praxis and theological identity in ministry. Fieldwork requirements and coursework expectations remain the same. **Prereq: STMI 345 (exceptions considered).**

STMI 370 *Intro to Church Music & Worship* OL

Examines the theology, terminology, development, organization and practice of church music and worship.

STMI 230 *Minister as Educator* Dr. Fears OL

This course explores the role and responsibilities of the minister in teaching religious beliefs and enabling faith-based practices. Attention is given to ministerial identity, select teaching methodologies, and socio-political contexts upon faith formation and praxis

STMI 222 *Pastoral Care: Practicum* Dr. Fears/ Dr.Hopson OL

This course enhances pastoral formation, pastoral competence and pastoral reflection via pastoral-care encounters in clinical settings. Introduction to pastoral care is a prerequisite for this course and ministerial site placement must be arranged in the fall for the spring course offering.

THEO 221 *Philosophy of Religion* Dr. Davis OL

This course is an introduction to the discipline and method of philosophy and the relationship of philosophy to the study of religion. Through a reading of classical and contemporary sources, the course examines definitions of religion and issues such as God's existence, attributes, and

relationship to and action in the physical world, the nature and significance of religious experience and its potential as a medium for truth and knowledge, the problem of evil, humans as persons having minds and souls, life after death, the relation of religion to morality, and the relationship of religion to science.

THEO 310 *Systematic Theology II* Dr. Ware OL

This Course will pursue further the basic objectives outlined in Systematic Theology I which will normally serve as a prerequisite. The various theological perspectives on the doctrines of the Christian faith will be treated critically and systematically. Major doctrines (or themes) will include God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit, Theological Anthropology, Sin and Salvation, Church, Sacraments, Mission, Ministry, Eschatology, Religious Belief and the Natural Sciences. Students will also be required to write a Credo Paper, based on their presumed mastery of the theological sources and methodology.

THEO 340 *Theology of M.L. King Jr* Dr. Ware OL

This course treats Martin Luther King, Jr., as a theologian, evaluating his understanding of Christian doctrines and contribution to systematic theology and theological ethics. Prerequisite: one course in Systematic Theology, Black Theology, or Black Church History.

THES 375 *MA Colloquy* Dr. Sanders OL

The MARS Colloquy includes contemporary readings in religious and theological studies. Research and writing methodologies will be emphasized to enable students to develop their MARS thesis research proposals. Students will prepare and present seminar papers in class based upon these proposals. In consultation with students and potential faculty supervisors, the MARS colloquy leader will assign an appropriate thesis advisor to each student.

THES 510 *DMin Seminar* Dr. Kwakye-Nuako OL

This Seminar is primarily intended for students pursuing the Doctor of Ministry degree. It is designed to cultivate and foster an in-depth analysis of modern theological expressions of the traditional Christian doctrines, with special attention to the contextual framework out of which such expressions emerge. It seeks to further the theological task of doctoral candidates in the quest for their own tools in the theological enterprise, as well as their search for an appropriate identity in the global community of contemporary theologians and other professional practitioners of religion. Intensive reading, extensive research, and comprehensive reflection and dialogue will be the major process in this Seminar.