

Theology Department 300 Level Course Offerings

Spring 2026

Seminar: Spirituality in Health and Medicine

THEO 393-001

[Dr. Hans Svebakken](#)

MWF 9:20 – 10:10 am

Why did the American Medical Association update its policies in 2024 to highlight the importance of "spiritual health"? Why does the National Wellness Institute promote "spiritual wellness" as one of its six key Dimensions of Wellness? Why do seven in ten adults describe themselves as "spiritual" in some way, including 22% who are "spiritual but not religious" (Pew Research, 2023)? This course wants answers! To explore the relevance of spirituality for health, healthcare, and medicine, we'll first tackle the challenge of defining "spirituality," particularly as it relates to concepts of religion, belief, and faith. We'll then consider the growing body of scientific literature addressing the dynamics of spiritual health, including specific topics relevant to health and medicine, such as hope, forgiveness, detachment, and the creation of meaning. Questions? Feel free to contact the instructor: Hans Svebakken (hsvebak@luc.edu).

Topics in Judaism: Sabbath in Jewish and Christian Perspective

THEO 356-001 (WRITING INTENSIVE)

[Dr. Devorah Schoenfeld](#)

MWF 1:40-2:30 pm

Jewish and Christian Scriptures describe the Sabbath day as a day of rest and of relationship with God. This course will look at both the biblical sources for the Sabbath and some of the different things it has meant to Jews and to Christians.

Theology Capstone: Being Human: Theological Anthropology and Popular Culture

THEO 373-001

THEO 353-001

(ENGAGED LEARNING: UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH)

[Dr. Lauren O'Connell](#)

Tues-Thurs 2:30-3:45 PM

In a time of growing interest and technological developments in Artificial Intelligence, the question of what it means to be human has taken on renewed significance. Religious traditions have always sought to define humanity in relationship to God and the rest of creation. In this course, we will explore these definitions. Beginning with answers from sacred texts and tracing these through later interpretation, we will examine the foundations of various theological anthropologies before moving on to engaging modern examples of what it means to be (and act) 'human' in popular culture. Through film, television, literature, and social media, we will draw comparisons between religious definitions and their contemporary expressions. Assignments will include an oral midterm exam, leading an in-class discussion, and a multi-part research assignment. This course serves as the capstone for Theology and Religious Studies majors but is open to anyone with instructor permission. The course also fulfills the Engaged Learning requirement for undergraduate research and culminates in work presented at Loyola's Weekend of Excellence.

Biblical Hebrew II

THEO 309-001

Cross listed with THEO 407, Hebrew Exegesis

T-Th 11:30 am – 12:45 pm

[Dr. Robert Divito](#)

This course will continue the study of Biblical Hebrew begun in THEO 308. Students will read selected texts from the Old Testament in Hebrew.

The Dizzying Alchemy of the Sciences, Innovation, Christian Theology, Bioethics, & Society

THEO 349-001

Cross-listed with BIET 396C (Bioethics Capstone) and CHEM 395B

Tuesday 4:15-6:45 PM

[Dr. Aana Vigen](#) and Dr. Daniel Becker

The United States has produced state-of-the-art medical and scientific breakthroughs including chemical and pharmacologic innovations that have transformed healthcare treatment, agriculture, and what Americans consume both medicinally and nutritionally. The development of effective vaccines is just one prominent example of the life and death difference that medical research can make. Yet, U.S. healthcare and nutrition are also characterized by pernicious ethical problems

including systemic racial-ethnic and socio-economic inequities, high costs, potent healthcare/pharmaceutical/food/agricultural lobbies, complex drug/treatment approval processes, and the increasing politicization of government agencies (e.g. the DHHS, CDC, NIH, EPA, FDA)

This capstone course will reflect upon human responsibilities—as scientists and researchers, healthcare providers, ethicists, people of faith, and as members of society—to confront these realities. We will discuss the evolution of several of these issues and explore strategies for constructively addressing them. To do so, the course will use the lenses of three distinct disciplines: relevant sciences, Christian ethics, and bioethics. It will strive to tease out some of the complexities of various areas of scientific research, medical practices, and ethical questions that are integral to a robust and interdisciplinary understanding of the ethics of U.S. medical innovation and practice.

Seminar: Suffering, Health, Disability, and Christian Ethics

THEO 393-002

Cross-listed with THEO 478

Attributes: Bioethics Minor

[Dr. Hille Haker](#) and [Dr. Michael McCarthy](#)

Tues-Thurs 1:00 – 2:15 pm

This seminar will examine ethical issues in bioethics, with special attention to suffering, concepts of illness and health, and disability. The course will explore narratives of suffering from medical trauma (accidents, illness), chronic illnesses, and the theological, ethical, and bioethical interpretations of suffering. Finally, guided by these foundational understandings of suffering, health, and ethics, the course will take up actual issues, among them mental health and disability ethics, which has changed considerably over the last decades. We will survey some recent publications regarding the history of disability policies, disability studies, and its intersection with theology and bioethics.

The course is designed for students with interests in Bioethics and Christian Ethics. It is a collaborative course between the Theology Department and the Neiswanger Institute for Bioethics. The group from the College of Arts and Sciences will regularly meet in person to discuss the bioethical questions, with a parallel course (BEHL 510) taught by Dr. Michael McCarthy, and offered online to students enrolled in the MA and Doctoral programs in Bioethics and Healthcare Mission Leadership at the Neiswanger Instu

