

Theology Tier 2 Core Course Descriptions
Fall 2025
(As of April 2, 2025)

THEO 280: RELIGION AND INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

THEO 280-001: **Religion and Technology** **WRITING INTENSIVE**
MWF 8:15 – 9:05 am
Dr. Olivia Stewart Lester

This writing intensive seminar will analyze the ways religion and technology intersect in our modern life. It will also argue that the study of religion provides distinctive tools to illuminate the ways human beings produce, interact with, and are shaped by technology, even in contexts where the future of traditional religious movements is uncertain. Drawing on foundational and cutting-edge religious studies scholarship, this course will examine the following topics: community in the digital age; AI, sentience, and the divine; tech use and ritual; founders and scriptures; technology, consumption, and celebrity; asceticism, digital fasting, and “monk mode.” The course will conclude by considering the future(s) of technology and religion, and what these intersecting themes have to say about our shared humanity.

THEO 280-002 **Faith, Science and the Common Good** **ENGAGED LEARNING**
MWF 12:35 – 1:25
Dr. Hans Svebakken

Science denial threatens the common good by undermining public confidence in the ability of science to comprehend our world and create effective solutions for urgent social problems. This course explores the threat of science denial through a series of three questions. First, what is science denial? Second, what motivates science denial? Third, what mitigates science denial? Insofar as some science denial stems from the presumption of an inevitable conflict between faith and science, this course considers the merits of models envisioning instead their peaceful co-existence.

THEO 280-003 **Religion and Interdisciplinary Studies: Topic TBD**
Tues-Thurs 1:00 – 2:15 pm
Topic and Professor TBD

THEO 280-004: **Religion, Technology and the Human Person**
Wednesday 4:15 -6:45
Teilhard de Chardin Professor [Dr. Ilia Delio](#) (Visiting from Villanova University)

assumptions about humanity and our relationship to the nonhuman world. We will examine the resources that religious traditions of the world offer for promoting ecological responsibility.

THEO 231-001 **Hebrew Bible/Old Testament**
Instructor TBA
MWF 12:35 – 1:25 pm

THEO 232 **New Testament**
Dr. Olegs Andrejevs
001: MWF 10:25 –11:15
002: MWF 11:30-12:20

THEO 232 **New Testament:**
Marginalized Perspectives
Dr. Lauren O’Connell
003: T-Th 2:30-3:45
004: T 4:15-6:45

In this course, students will be introduced to the early Christian texts that came to be known as the New Testament. During the semester, students will study these texts from an academic perspective, paying special attention to the sociohistorical contexts out of which they emerged and to their interpretation and use in the modern day. Students will be expected to engage in questions of meaning-making as it pertains to the New Testament. In the part of each week, we will focus on historical-critical and literary methods for interpreting the text, along with major themes of the texts being discussed. The second part of each week will engage a reading from a historically marginalized perspective. Examples include post-colonial, feminist, womanist, African American, disability, and queer readings. In some instances, we will also discuss the application of New Testament texts to contemporary events. The main goal of this course is for students to attain a fuller understanding of the content of the New Testament by examining literary genre, historical contexts, and theological backgrounds and to better appreciate the diverse landscape of contemporary Biblical interpretation and its application. Methods of active learning will be employed (small group work, in-class engagement with text, worksheets, etc.) Assessments will include one exam, a multi-step research project that will culminate in a research proposal, and (potentially) a final (see below). In-class engagement will make up a significant portion of the final grade.

THEO 266: **Church and Global Cultures**
Heidi Schlumpf
Th 4:15-6:45 pm

The primary sources include the literary works of indigenous African and African descended religious writers, leaders, and theologians and various texts from the writings of the ancient Egyptians and early African Christians. The course also employs a combination of secondary sources and audio-visual materials.

THEO 278-01W

Religion and Gender:

WRITING INTENSIVE

Prophecy and Gender in the Ancient Mediterranean

Dr. Olivia Stewart-Lester

MWF 11:30-12:20

This course will consider the relationship between gender and religious authority by focusing on prophets in ancient Judaism and ancient Christianity. The course will consider prophets in the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, but also beyond them, locating these texts in wide ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern contexts. It will map different models of gender in the ancient world, locating *male*, *female*, and *nonbinary* prophets alongside one another. This course will interrogate the ways that claims to prophecy are also claims to power, examining the role of the prophet as a speaker who must be taken seriously. We will also explore, however, the ways that texts present prophets as figures under control, by focusing on the ways that prophets are often subject to divine violence in inspiration. In these ways, the course will analyze the intersections of prophecy, gender, violence, and power. This course will focus on three sets of questions: (1) What is the gender of the prophet, and of the deity? Does their gender conform to categories of masculine or feminine, or does it belong to another category? (2) How does divine inspiration affect the body and mind of the prophet? Is the encounter between a prophet and a god violent? If so, is the encounter one of sexual violence? (3) To whose authority does this prophecy contribute (the god's, the prophet's, the author's)? How does gender play a role in the production of that authority through prophecy?

THEO 278-002:

Religion and Gender:

The Bible and Today

Dr. Devorah Schoenfeld

T-Th 10-11:15 (WTC)

What is God's gender? The gender of Christ? Did God make covenants with women? Why can't women be priests (or can they)? This course will look at Biblical and theological questions around gender in Judaism and Christianity and how they relate to ongoing questions about women in religious leadership.

THEO 278-003:

Religion and Gender

Dr. Teresa Calpino

003: 11:30 – 12:45

004: 1:00-2:15

Specific focus and course description TBD!

THEO 279: Roman Catholicism (Brecht)

THEO 282: Hinduism (Liston)

THEO 295: Islam (TBD)

THEO 296: Christian Marriage (Murphy)

THEO 299: Religions of Asia (TBD)