

Time: Thursdays, 7-9:30 p.m.

Location: Water Tower Campus, Corboy Law Center, L09

Instructor: Brett C Hoover, CSP, Ph.D. (Visiting Professor, IPS)

Office: Lewis Tower, 630B

Email: bhoover1@luc.edu (response in 24-36 hours)

Office phone: 312.915.7513 (best response weekdays)

Mobile: 510.847.8085 (off hours or for faster response, text or call)

Description: An introduction for ministry students, this course sets the tone for the interplay between tradition and ministry, theology and practice. Students focus on method and skills, learning to think critically about the Christian tradition and relate it effectively to ministry contexts today. The course has three elements: 1) understanding that theology is an activity—something we do rather than something we learn about; 2) practicing how we do this activity (theological method), and 3) exploring the relationship of ministry and theology. Students learn about the building blocks of theology, discuss how social and cultural context inform the making of theology (using practical theology as a model), and examine other theological methods, always aware of the interplay between experience and tradition. The major theological shifts introduced by the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) lead into the course focus on ministry. How do we understand the task of ministry today? Connecting our own gifts for service (charisms) with the needs of the faith community on the way to God's Reign, ministry is both universal (given to all the baptized) and a profession some people practice. The course includes work on theological reflection and "strategic" practical theology. In other words, how we think on our feet as pastoral theologians and ministry professionals, relating the tradition to our own experience and to our ministry contexts?

Required texts:

----Ford, David F. *Theology: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. ISBN10: 0-19285-384-8.

----Osborne, Kenan. *Orders and Ministry*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2001. ISBN10: 1-57075-628-7.

----Osmer, Richard. *Practical Theology: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008. ISBN10: 0-80281-765-3.

----Short articles provided electronically by the instructor. There may be a modest charge to cover copyright expenses.

Goals and learning outcomes:

Goals: Course participants learn a structured approach to theology in order to become better ministers. They develop competency in the basic categories of theology, frameworks for organizing theological thought, and methods of doing theology, especially the practical theology method. They develop habits of mind and communication that support successful ministry, as we all struggle to see ministry as a vocation grounded in an admittedly imperfect but critically important study of God's ways among us.

Learning Outcomes: As a result of this course, students will:

1. be able to say what theology is;
2. be able to define key theological terms and understand the gist of a theological argument;

3. be able to interpret and critically analyze both their own socio-cultural context and theological texts;
4. define their own ministry and/or ministerial identity in theological terms;
5. practice applying Christian theology in ministerial contexts;

Course requirements:

Student participants promise:

1. In groups of two according to a schedule, to lead the class in prayer each Thursday evening.
2. To attend and participate in every class. If for any reason, students need to miss class, they will do their very best to contact the instructor ahead of time by email or phone. Participation requirements help us in a variety of ways: 1) interpretation and critical analysis of one's context and theological texts are skills which require practice to master; 2) weekly feedback from the instructor and from peers is more effective at evoking improvement than occasional feedback on assignments; and 3) hearing and reading the way other people put theological concepts into language better prepares us all to communicate with the variety of people in a diverse church.
3. In groups of two, to offer a short presentation explaining two to three theological terms, including an explanation of each term's etymology, its basic meaning in theology, and why it is important in theology. We will discuss the terms in class. The most important thing is not being perfectly right but making use of reliable sources (see below). Creative presentation is encouraged (visually, verbally, dramatically even) but please don't spend hours and hours on this.
4. To hand in a two-page (double-spaced, 12 point type, around 500 words) summary analysis of the theological argument for each of three reading assignments. At least two of these must be from the readings for Oct. 7-21. The purpose of this assignment is to ensure that every student can identify and follow a theological argument (which is a very specific kind of writing that may be new to many students). Each summary analysis should include a brief explanation of the author's purpose in writing the article, his/her thesis (or main point), and a summary of the argument that establishes this point. Try to refrain from evaluating the argument or offering your own opinion of it.
5. Three reflection papers (one page, 12 point type, double spaced, around 250 words) connecting the topic and readings of the day to your own experience of life, community, or ministry. Feel free to raise questions about or comment on aspects of the reading/topic that puzzle or disturb you.
6. A short report (3-4 pages, double spaced) on your own Christian community's socio-cultural context, as described on Blackboard. **Due Oct. 28.**
7. A longer paper (8-10 pages, double spaced) describing how you would approach a ministry of your choice, as described on Blackboard. **Due Dec. 13.**

Course Format (tentative)

- 7:00 Prayer and announcements
- 7:05 Discussion groups or other processing of reading
- 7:20 Class input/discussion/activities
- 8:20 Break
- 9:30 Class ends

Theological Terms Project Sources:

Not all sources are created equal. Evangelical Christian sources, while often good (and abundant), are often not appropriate for defining terms in Catholic theology, due to the substantial differences in theology (mainline Protestant sources work much better). **Wikipedia may be correct but it also may contain errors, depending on the sources it cites.** These are among the reliable sources for the initial assignment; all are available in the reference section of the Lewis library. You may use others if you feel confident in them.

1. Komonchak, Joseph, Mary Collins, and Dermot A. Lane. *New Dictionary of Theology*. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1987.
2. McGrath, Alister E. "Glossary of Theological Terms." In *Christian Theology: An Introduction*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.
http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/mcgrath/Glossary_of_Theological_Terms.pdf.
3. McKim, Donald K. *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996.
4. Musser, Donald W., and Joseph L. Price, eds. *A New Handbook of Christian Theology*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992.
5. O'Collins, Gerald, and Edward G. Farrugia. *A Concise Dictionary of Theology*. New York: Paulist, 2000.
6. Rahner, Karl, et al., eds. *Sacramentum Mundi: An Encyclopedia of Theology*, vols. 1-6. New York: Herder and Herder, 1968.

IPS Guidelines for Coursework:

Attendance and Timeliness of Assignments: Students and faculty promise to attend all class sessions, having done the reading. Students will turn assignments in by the listed due date. The faculty member will respond to student assignments within a week of their being turned in.

Late Work: Students who turn in an assignment after one week has passed since the due date will receive a grade of 0 for the assignment. Work turned in after the due date but before one week has passed will result in docking of points of not more than ½ of the points available for the assignment. If the faculty member is more than a week late returning grades and comments to the students, he will declare a moratorium on further student work until he has returned the work to the students.

Openness to Diversity: Loyola students come from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds. Even within one religious tradition there are diverse perspectives on which aspects of the tradition are the most important. This theological and spiritual diversity is a rich resource to a minister preparing for service to a global church. Please listen actively to your colleagues and pause for reflection before rushing to judgment.

Services for Students with Disabilities: Please let the faculty member know of any disabilities relevant to your ability to do any of the assigned coursework. For overall support, please see the Loyola Services for Students with Disabilities office at, <http://www.luc.edu/sswd/>.

Style Guidelines for Written Work: Students in this course will be judged according to the guidelines set forth in the Chicago Manual of Style. A quick free guideline is available at:

http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html. If it is all Greek to you, a good description of how this works is at <http://library.osu.edu/sites/guides/chicagogd.php>.

General IPS Standards: The Academic Standards for the Institute of Pastoral Studies at Loyola are itemized in the “handbook” at http://www.luc.edu/ips/Academics_Standards.shtml.

Academic Integrity: In the United States, academic work is original work, especially for graduate students. Plagiarism and cheating are not allowed. The general IPS policy is found at http://www.luc.edu/ips/Academics_Standards.shtml#academic_integrity. Academic dishonesty will be reported to the IPS Director; penalties range from failure of the assignment to expulsion from the university. It bears noting that plagiarism is the failure to cite someone else’s words or ideas in your own work. All quotations—full or partial--of another person’s work (including the professor’s or another student’s work) must be immediately cited. All reference to another person’s unique ideas (not commonly held ideas) or use of the structure of their work must also be cited. Failure to do so will be considered plagiarism. Please, if you have any questions or doubts about what plagiarism is, do not hesitate to ask a faculty member. Many people are confused. For an in-depth discussion of plagiarism, along with examples, see this website: <http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/plagiar.html>.

Dialogue and Discussion:

A safe space for dialogue: Students promise to treat one another with generosity, equity, and respect. Faculty and students promise to do the same. Each person will be permitted the right to safely assert her/his identity. Since theology is a discipline of the common good, we struggle together, knowing there are norms we must follow but they are often not 100% clear. Part of the learning process is accepting gentle challenges from others. We cannot observe “political” or “theological correctness,” being afraid to speak up lest our thoughts and opinions be seen as wrong or offensive. We promise to deal with disagreements, cultural misunderstandings, and real errors with generosity and kindness.

Confidentiality: Out of respect for students and faculty in the class, we promise to maintain confidentiality regarding what is discussed in class, especially when it comes to sensitive information such as family stories, life mistakes and errors, trauma or grief, immigration status, personal background details, etc.

Grading: The number of points available for each type of assignment is posted below. Rubrics for each type of assignment will be posted in the Course Documents section of the Blackboard course. Since clear communication is crucial to theology and ministry, improper grammar, spelling, punctuation, or word choice will result in a reduction in grade.

Points	Grade
94-100	A
91-93	A-
87-90	B+

83-86	B
80-85	B-
76-79	C+
73-75	C
69-72	C-
0-68	F

Assignment Points:

Attendance/participation:	20
Terms project	5
Summary analysis papers	15
Reflection papers	15
Context report	15
Final paper	30
TOTAL:	100

Course Schedule:

Sept. 2: “What in the heck is theology?” Class introductions, syllabus, intro to theology
 Reading (optional): “Theology,” in Wikipedia. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theology>.

Sept. 9: The Terms and Elements of Theology: Class exercise on terminology.
 Reading: Preparation for presentations on terminology.
Terms project due.

Sept. 16: How do we do theology? Practical Theology as an approach.
 Reading: Richard Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 1-78.

Sept. 23: Christian tradition and theology: Practical theology’s approach to tradition
 Reading: Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 129-173.

Oct. 7: Who are human beings? An introduction to Christian (theological) anthropology
 Reading: Terry A. Velting, *Practical Theology: On Earth as It Is in Heaven* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis), 98-114. (Blackboard)

Oct. 14: Who is Jesus? An introduction to Christology
 Reading: David F. Ford, *Theology: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press), 83-102. Aloysius Pieris, “Does Christ Have a Place in Asia?” in Aloysius Pieris, *Fire and Water: Basic Issues in Asian Buddhism and Christianity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997), 65-78. (Blackboard)

Oct. 21: What is salvation? An introduction to soteriology

Reading: Ford, *Theology: A Very Short Introduction*, 103-122. Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Beads and Strands: Reflections of an African Woman on Christianity in Africa* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2004), 3-11. (Blackboard)

Oct. 28: Theology in action, locally and globally: Practical theology goes to work

Reading: Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 175-218; Kenan Osborne, *Orders and Ministry*, 11-39.

Context report due.

Nov. 4: Other approaches to theological methodology

Reading: Ford, *Theology: A Very Short Introduction*, 125-166.

Nov. 11: Introducing ministry

Reading: Osborne, *Orders and Ministry*, 40-103.

Nov. 18: Order and ministry, laity and clergy

Reading: Osborne, *Orders and Ministry*, 104-158.

Nov. 25: Thanksgiving Break

Dec. 2: Lay Ministry

Reading: Osborne, *Orders and Ministry*, 159-208.

Dec. 9: Student Choice

Reading: To be decided by class.

Dec. 13: *Final paper due in instructor's mailbox at IPS or via email.*