

Department of Theology

UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTION

Term: **Fall 2009**
Instructor: Mark A. Jennings
Course #: THEO 1001
Section: 111 and 112
Course Title: **Introduction to Theology**

Description:

As an introduction to Christian theology, this course will focus both on the story of Christianity and the essential tenets of Christian thought. In so doing, it supports Marquette's Mission to "seek the truth about God and the world" in an ecumenical environment while preparing students for more advanced theological studies. The overall posture of the course will be one of "faith seeking understanding." The major movements of the course will be the shape and message of the Christian Bible, the key theological events and figures in the history of the Church (including in American history), as well as a focus upon some current issues in Christian thought.

As the Christian Bible is the fundamental and essential text for Christianity, the first half of the course will be committed to its study. The two questions that will govern the examination of the various books of the Christian Bible are: (1) What is the historical occasion of a particular writing? and (2) What is its message for the Christian faith? The second half of the course will be divided between the study of the major moments and figures in the development of doctrine in church history and the exploration and discussion of current issues facing Christianity. The historical investigation will cover most of the second half of the course and will be divided into three sections: (1) The apostolic, patristic, and medieval periods; (2) The Reformation; and (3) Christianity in America. The final portion of the class will focus on one or two current issues in Christian thought.

Course Grades will be determined as follows:

Midterm (30%)

Final (30%)

On-going assignments (quizzes, reflection papers, individual & panel presentations, etc.) (20%)

Writing Project (20%)

The format of the course will be comprised of instructor lecture and class discussion. In addition to the scheduled assignments, students will be expected to come to each class prepared to initiate and continue discussions, field questions, and comment on the readings.

Required texts:

NOTE: Required texts are subject to change up until Aug 15, 2009.

- A modern English translation of the Bible. An annotated study Bible, such as the NRSV, is preferred, however a student may use a different English translation of his/her choice,

Department of Theology

as long as it is approved on the first day of class. Bibles that are essentially paraphrases (e.g., “The Message”) or somewhat outdated (e.g., King James Version) will not be approved.

- John Laurance ed., Introduction to Theology, Rev. 2nd Ed. (Pearson Custom Publishing)
- Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart, How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth (Paperback), 3rd Ed.
- Alister E. McGrath, Historical Theology: An Introduction to the History of Christian Thought
- Text TBD
- Various Readings on Reserve