THEO116201 | The Religious Quest: Comparative Perspectives II | 3 credits
Boston College Summer Session 2017
Summer 2, June 27th-August 3rd
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6:00-9:15pm

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 5:00-5:45pm (and by appointment)

Boston College Mission Statement
Strengthened by more than a century and a half of dedication to academic excellence, Boston College commits itself to the highest standards of teaching and research in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs and to the pursuit of a just society through its own accomplishments, the work of its faculty and staff, and the achievements of its graduates. It seeks both to advance its place among the nation's finest universities and to bring to the company of its distinguished peers and to contemporary society the richness of the Catholic intellectual ideal of a mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry.

Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, it is rooted in a world view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In this spirit, the University regards the contribution of different religious traditions and value systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life and to the continuous development of its distinctive intellectual heritage.

Course Description
This is the second session of a two-part course exploring the individual and communal search for wisdom about human nature, the world, ultimate realities and God, secrets of love and death, as well as enduring values to live by and paths to spiritual maturity. Likely themes include symbols, myths, doctrines, rituals, holy texts, saints, comparisons and contrasts between traditions, relevance of classical religious traditions to issues in today's world, interreligious dialogue today, and religious diversity in the Boston area. Brings the Biblical and Christian tradition into conversation with at least one other religious tradition.
Textbooks & Readings (Required)


Textbooks & Readings (Recommended)


Canvas

Canvas is the Learning Management System (LMS) at Boston College, designed to help faculty and students share ideas, collaborate on assignments, discuss course readings and materials, submit assignments, and much more—all online. As a Boston College student, you should familiarize yourself with this important tool. For more information and training resources for using Canvas, click here.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze primary Jewish and Christian concepts and practices that give meaning and coherence to individuals and communities through each major phase of life;
2. Understand ways in which orthodoxy and orthopraxy inform and shape each other in Judaism and Christianity;
3. Analyze Jewish and Christian approaches to theology, practice, and exegesis;
4. Apply a deep sensitivity for how each tradition can engage a person intimately and shape his/her society fundamentally.
5. Demonstrate knowledge across cultural settings of the impact of culture, gender, and age in Judaism and Christianity, as demonstrated in each tradition’s lifecycle practices and theologies.
6. Demonstrate ethical knowledge pertaining to Judaism and Christianity as demonstrated by each tradition’s approach to contemporary issues like the economy and in vitro fertilization.

Grading

Class participation: 20% of final grade, a composite of:

- Quiz Grades, administered as open book in class quizzes on the readings. A quiz that reflects that you did the reading and thought about it receives a “1,” one that excels above all others receives a “2,” and one that reflects a lack of comprehension or preparation receives a “0.” These quizzes cannot be made up. The final quiz grades are curved so that the class average is a B+.
- Actual Regular Participation in class discussions will add to your participation grade.
- Students are expected to prepare for class: i.e. read and apprehend—as best as possible—the assigned material; remember where we left off the previous class; and bring to class the relevant texts when asked. Please always bring a Bible with you to class.
- “Multi-tasking” during class detracts from your participation in it, distracts your neighbors, and is obvious to your professor. Phones must be away and off.
- You may use your computer but only to take notes or to access class materials. Use of a laptop for other purposes will detract from the class participation grade.
- Extra Credit opportunities are each worth one point. These will be on Canvas. You are also encouraged to search for opportunities related to our course; send me an email for permission. Credit is received with submission to me of a brief reflection. See Canvas for more information.
Hevruta project: 5% of grade:
- You will be paired with one study partner for the session. On two occasions, you will study midrash and halakhah together. (You’re encouraged to meet more as extra credit.) After reading and discussing various assigned texts for about 45 minutes, spend 15 writing a reflection on the experience.

Essays: 40% of grade:
- One 1500-word essay on one phase of the lifecycle, and a 500-word Religious Identity Part II essay. See the Assignments page on Canvas for specifics.

Final exam: 35% of grade:
- Scheduled in-class final exam, closed book, on the last day of class.

Final curve: B+ curve for final grades:
- For each assignment, the average grade for the class will likely range between a B and a B+. All grades at the end of the course will be curved so that the class average is a B+. This means that your final grade may be higher (but will never be lower) than the grades you receive on each assignment.

The undergraduate grading system for Summer Session is as follows:

A (4.00), A- (3.67)
B+ (3.33), B (3.00), B- (2.67)
C+ (2.33), C (2.00), C- (1.67)
D+ (1.33), D (1.00), D- (.67)
F (.00)

All students can access final grades through Agora after the grading deadline each semester. Transcripts are available through the Office of Student Services.

Deadlines and Late Work
Please be sure to turn in all assignment on time. Take special note of the due dates of each.
- There are no makeups for quizzes.
- Extra credit assignments turned in after the due date will not be accepted.
- Papers received later than the due date and time will be considered late. Your grade will drop by a third of a letter grade for each calendar day that it is late, unless you receive permission from me for an extension at least one day in advance.
- The final exam cannot be made up.

Course Assignments
This course will require a serious investment of time. The majority of the assignments are readings. It is expected that you will spend 13 hours per week on out-of-class assignments and exercises. These are listed below. Please note that some weeks will require more time and some weeks less time, but the average is approximately 13 hours per week over the semester.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading/Assignments</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7/6</td>
<td>Coming of Age in Judaism: Bar Mitzvah, Rabbinic Interpretation, &amp; Yetzer Ha-Ra and Yetzer Ha-Tov</td>
<td>-Marcus, 82-105&lt;br&gt;-Yaakov Elman, 1859-1878&lt;br&gt;-<em>Book of Legends</em>, pp. 537-543, nos. 1, 7, 23, and 56</td>
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<td>Hevruta Project reflection 1</td>
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<td>7/11</td>
<td>Coming of Age in Christianity: Pneumatology and Christology &amp; Confirmation</td>
<td>-Plantinga, Thompson, and Lundberg, 284-312&lt;br&gt;-Martos, 211-236</td>
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<td>Hevruta Project reflection 2</td>
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<td>7/19</td>
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<td>7/20</td>
<td>Working Together in this World: Ethical Issue 1: TBD by class</td>
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<td>7/25</td>
<td>Working Together in this World: Ethical Issue 2: TBD by class</td>
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<td>Comparative paper</td>
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<td>7/27</td>
<td>(Re)Starting in Judaism: Death, Funeral, and Memory &amp; Ha-Olam Ha-Ba</td>
<td>-Marcus, 198-224, 244-247&lt;br&gt;-Louis Jacobs, 301-322</td>
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<td>8/1</td>
<td>(Re)Starting in Christianity: Eschatology &amp; Anointing and Funeral</td>
<td>-Bradley Hanson, 339-372&lt;br&gt;-Martos, 375-401</td>
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<td>8/3</td>
<td>Religion and American Culture &amp; FINAL EXAM</td>
<td>Prepare for final exam</td>
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Written Work
Summer Session students are expected to prepare professional, polished written work. Written materials must be typed and submitted in the format required by your instructor. Strive for a thorough yet concise style. Cite literature appropriately, using Chicago Manual of Style. Develop your thoughts fully, clearly, logically and specifically. Proofread all materials to ensure the use of proper grammar, punctuation and spelling. See Canvas for specific directions on writing assignments. For writing support, please contact the Connors Family Learning Center.

Attendance
Attending class is an important component of learning. Students are expected to attend all class sessions. Attendance is required and will be recorded every class promptly at 6:00pm, and promptly at the end of each break. More than one unexcused absence or habitual tardiness will drop your grade. If you return from break late, this will count as a tardy. If you leave before a class session officially ends, this will count as an unexcused absence. If you must miss class for any reason, contact me by email no later than class time that afternoon. Illness and family emergencies count as excused absences, so long as you contact me in before class.

- A set of two tardies will count as one unexcused absence.
- An unexcused absence will lower the class participation grade by 1/2. If this grade reaches zero, all further absences will be deducted from your final course grade in a like manner (i.e. by 1/2). Yes, this means that if you habitually miss class, you will fail.

If circumstances necessitate excessive absence from class, the student should consider withdrawing from the class.

Consistent with BC’s commitment to creating a learning environment that is respectful of persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing their academic status. Students are responsible for reviewing course syllabi as soon as possible, and for communicating with the instructor promptly regarding any possible conflicts with observed religious holidays. Students are responsible for completing all class requirements for days missed due to conflicts with religious holidays.

Accommodation and Accessibility
Boston College is committed to providing accommodations to students, faculty, staff and visitors with disabilities. Specific documentation from the appropriate office is required for students seeking accommodation in Summer Session courses. Advanced notice and formal registration with the appropriate office is required to facilitate this process. There are two separate offices at BC that coordinate services for students with disabilities:

- The Connors Family Learning Center (CFLC) coordinates services for students with LD and ADHD.
- The Disabilities Services Office (DSO) coordinates services for all other disabilities.

Find out more about BC’s commitment to accessibility at www.bc.edu/sites/accessibility.

Scholarship and Academic Integrity
Students in Summer Session courses must produce original work and cite references appropriately. Failure to cite references is plagiarism. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, cheating on exams or assignments, or submitting the same material or substantially similar material to meet the requirements of more than one course without seeking permission of all instructors concerned. Scholastic misconduct may also involve, but is not necessarily limited to, acts that violate the rights of other students, such as depriving another student of course materials or interfering with another student’s work. Please see the Boston College policy on academic integrity for more information.