

# BOSTON COLLEGE

## S U M M E R S E S S I O N

\*Please note that this syllabus should be regarded only as a general guide to the course and is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

### **THEO 102301 Exploring Catholicism I: Tradition & Transformation (3 credits)**

**Boston College Summer Session 2019**

**Summer Session 1, May 14 – June 20**

**Tuesday and Thursday, 6:00-9:15pm**

**Location: Check Agora Course Information and Schedule**

**Instructor Name: Stephanie C. Edwards**

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**Phone Number: N/A**

**Office: Stokes Hall N330D**

**Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 4:30-5:30pm, or by appt.**

### **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**

**Description: This is a year long course where you must take both sections of Exploring Catholicism (THEO1023-1024) first Part I, then Part II to receive Core credit. There are no exceptions.**

This course is a two-semester exploration of the vision, beliefs, practices, and challenge of Catholicism. The first semester explores human existence as lived in the light of the Mystery of God and the gift of Jesus Christ. The second semester considers the Church as the people of God, gathered and sent forth in the Spirit; the sacraments as catalysts of ongoing transformation in Christ; and the challenge of the spiritual life today. Close analysis of passages from the Bible will be supplemented by readings from contemporary theologians, literary figures, and social commentators.

**Satisfies Core requirement for: Theology**

### **Textbooks & Readings (Required)**

Elizabeth Johnson. *Quest for the Living God: Mapping Frontiers in the Theology of God*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011. ISBN: 1441174621/ ISBN-13: 978-1441174628

Thomas Rausch, S.J. *Towards a Truly Catholic Church: An Ecclesiology for the Third Millennium*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005. ISBN-10: 0814651879 / ISBN-13: 978-0814651872

For readings from the Bible (marked + in the syllabus), you may use any NRSV translation available online. Additionally, the New American Bible which is online at <http://www.usccb.org/bible/books-of-the-bible/> which includes helpful introductions to each biblical book. If you would like to purchase an academic Bible, I highly recommend the *New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha (3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> edition)*, edited by Michael Coogan, available online or in the BC Bookstore.

All other required readings will be available on Canvas (marked [C] in the syllabus). Please print them out and bring them with you to class.

Library resources/Course Reserves: All primary texts are on reserve at O’Neill library. If you use reserve copies, take good notes so you can be prepared for in-class discussion. If BC copies are checked out, please request an additional copy through [Interlibrary Loan](#).

**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](#).

**I will use Canvas regularly for assignments (rubrics, submission, and returning), grading, attendance, announcements, and uploading readings and materials (in “Modules” organized chronologically by week).**

**Course Objectives**

1. Students will gain factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends) of the historical development of Catholicism and Christian theology, demonstrated through written quizzes and exams.
2. Students will learn the fundamental principles, themes, and practices that form the tenets of the Catholic Church and Christian theology, expressed through in-class discussion and written analysis.
3. Students will hone the synthetic style of thought that characterizes Christian theology through written essays that critically engage course material.
4. Students will learn to communicate, both orally and in writing, with greater clarity.
5. Students will be able to demonstrate critical theological thinking across cultural settings, and will learn the impact of culture, gender, age and historical location on the formation of the Christian tradition and the Catholic Church, as evidenced by analytic writing and in-class discussion.
6. Students will demonstrate ethical reasoning and debate pertaining to the Catholic Church and Christian tradition as evidenced by written and oral performance.
7. Students will be equipped to bring foundational theological knowledge and skills to further study in the field and into personal spiritual exploration.

**Grading**

<b>Assignment Breakdown</b>				
<i>Class Participation</i>	130 pts	13%	In class	30%
<i>Daily Reading Quizzes</i>	120 pts	12%		
<i>Daily Exit Tickets</i>	50 pts	5%		
<i>Integration Paper 1</i>	200 pts	20%	From writing	40%
<i>Integration Paper 2</i>	200 pts	20%		
<i>Exam 1</i>	150 pts	15%	From exams	30%
<i>Exam 2</i>	150 pts	15%		
<b>Total: 1000 pts = 100%</b>				

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)

The graduate grading system for Summer Session is as follows: A (4.00), A- (3.67) B+ (3.33), B (3.00) B- (2.67)  
 Passing but does not count toward degree: C (2.00)  
 Passing but not for degree credit: 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**

Students are expected to submit assignments on time and in the medium designated by the professor (e.g., in hard-copy form, over email). If you would like to request an extension for a valid reason (e.g. illness, family circumstances, etc.), please contact the professor more than 24 hours before the assignment due date. Work submitted late and without an extension will incur a grade penalty of 10% per 24hrs past the deadline. Note: Communication is key! Please email/discuss any challenges ASAP with the professor.

## Course Assignments

Please note that you are expected to spend 13 hours per week on out-of-class assignments and exercises. 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.

### Important Course Dates:

May 21	Integration Paper #1 (Due at 6pm, before class)
May 30	Exam #1 (In class)
June 13	Integration Paper #2 (Due at 6pm, before class)
June 20	Exam #2 (In class)

### *Class Participation* (130 pts)

- Completion of the entire daily reading and/or viewing assignment is expected before the class begins. In addition to reading, students should prepare for the class session by noting the main points of the day's reading, questions of clarification about the text, and their own opinions about author's arguments.
- Every student should come to class with the reading for the day in hard copy and the necessary materials for taking notes by hand. If this is a hardship, please speak with the professor.
- Any time you contribute to the class, whether through thoughtful comments and questions or through active listening, you will improve your participation grade. I expect every student to speak several times throughout the semester.

### *Daily Reading Quizzes* (120 pts)

- Each class session will begin with a three-question quiz on the assigned readings for the day. Each question is worth 5 points, for a total of 15 points per quiz.
- You will have exactly ten minutes to complete the quiz.
- I may offer an alternative, comparable make-up assignment to a student who has missed a quiz due to extenuating circumstances (major health issues, death in the family, etc.). Otherwise quizzes cannot be made up.
- The purpose of this exercise is to hold students accountable for (a) completing the reading assignments before class, a vital practice for honing reading comprehension skills, and (b) class attendance.

### *Daily Exit Tickets* (50 pts)

- We will dedicate the last 5 minutes of each class to exit tickets, a writing exercise designed to help you review and process the material covered during the class session. The professor will provide you a prompt for the day's exit ticket, and you will submit your ticket as you leave the classroom.
- Each exit ticket is worth 5 points, for a total of 50 possible points throughout the term. Your grade is based solely on participation: you will either receive 5 points for completing and turning in the exit ticket, or 0 points for failing to complete and turn in the exit ticket.
- If you are absent at the conclusion of class, you cannot make up the exit ticket assignment.

### *Integration Papers* (400 pts)

- Over the course of the semester you will write two papers that integrate the course readings with personal and critical reflection about on the Christian tradition and the Catholic Church. The goal of this exercise is (a) to hone your ability to communicate and support your opinions in written form, (b) to make connections between various theological loci and synthesize your own ideas about them, and (c) to reflect on your personal beliefs and values in light of course content.
- All papers will respond to the following prompt: "Who is God? Who is Jesus Christ? What is Christian theology? What is the Catholic Church?" Papers must address all questions in the prompt, though not necessarily at equal length. Ideally, you will address the questions of the prompt in relation to one another (e.g., your reflection on "Who is God?" should inform your reflection on "Who is Jesus Christ?" and vice versa).
- For the first Integration Paper, you should address the prompt with your own opinion. You should explain *what* led you to hold these opinions and *why* you hold them. You may find it helpful to contrast your opinions with alternative views. A further rubric and explanation will be provided in class and on Canvas.

- For the second Integration Paper, you should address the prompt with your own opinion. However, this time you are expected to articulate your opinion in reference to assigned texts from the class. You may cite course readings because you agree with them or because you disagree with them. Please cite texts by using the author last name and page number at the end of the sentence. For example: “This is how to cite a reference,” explained the professor (Coblentz, 4). Additional research and references to outside class materials are welcome but by no means required. If you use outside sources, you must provide a full bibliography. You must cite at least 4 different course readings (lectures, notes, handouts are okay to cite but only in addition to the readings). A further rubric and explanation will be provided in class and on Canvas.
- For both papers: You will not be evaluated on your personal opinions. Rather, evaluation will reflect your ability to (a) communicate clearly and effectively, (b) engage course readings in an accurate and analytical fashion, and (c) demonstrate critical reflection in response to the paper prompt. Please see the Integration Paper grading rubric on Canvas.
- Papers should be 1500 words in length with 1” margins on all sides. Please use 12 pt. Times New Roman font. The heading should be single-spaced and the body text should be double-spaced. I use blind grading, please only list your ID number on the upper right corner of the first page. Papers should be uploaded to Canvas by 6pm (before class) on the due date. If you run into technology issues, please bring a printed copy to class and/or email me a copy immediately so you do not incur a late penalty.
- Each paper will be worth 200 points and constitute 20% of your grade for a total of 400 possible points or 40% of your overall grade.

#### Exams (300 pts)

- You will have two exams based on course readings and lectures. The goal of the exams is (a) to test your understanding of reading and lecture materials, and (b) evaluate your ability to engage these materials with critical-thinking skills.
- The first exam will test the material covered in class so far; the second exam is cumulative.
- While spelling and grammar on the exams will not affect your test grade, I must be able to read your handwriting. Exams will consist of T/F, short answer, and essays. A full study guide will be provided.
- I practice blind grading, so I will not know who wrote each exam until grades have been determined (please write your ID number on the exams, not your name). Each exam will be worth 150 points and will count for 15% of your grade for a total of 300 possible points or 30% of your overall grade.

## Course Schedule

### Daily Class Schedule:

6:00-6:10	Daily Reading Quiz
6:10-7:30	Lecture & Discussion
7:30-7:45	Break
7:45-9:10	Lecture & Discussion
9:10-9:15	Daily Exit Ticket

**Tuesday**  
**May 14**

### 1. Christian Theology & Its Sources

*Key issues:* introduction to the course (syllabus); the nature and task of Christian theology; sources of Christian theology

- Syllabus
- Richard Plantigna, Thomas Thompson, and Matthew Lundberg, “What is Theology?” in *An Introduction to Christian Theology*, First Edition (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1-26 [C]
- Daniel Migliori, “The Meaning of Revelation,” in *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 21-40 [C]
- Tara Burton, [“Study theology, even if you don’t believe in God”](#) [C and online]

**Thursday  
May 16**      **2. The Bible & Its Interpretations**  
*Key issues:* history and composition of the Bible; scriptural interpretation; hermeneutics of suspicion; the debates about the authority of scripture today; creation

- Dawes, *Introduction to the Bible*, 11-74 [C]
- Dan Harrington, S.J., “How Do Catholics Interpret Scripture?” in *How Do Catholics Read the Bible?* 95-111 [C]
- The Book of Genesis 1-3 [+]

**Daily Reading Quizzes Begin**

**Tuesday  
May 21**      **3. The Hebrew Bible**  
*Key issues:* covenant & liberation; sin; Israel Awaits the Messiah; supersessionism

- Johnson, Introduction and Chapters 1 & 2
- Ken Boa, “How accurate is the Bible” [C]
- Pontifical Biblical Commission, “[The Jewish People and their Sacred Scriptures in the Bible.](#)” I.A, I.B., II.A., II.B. and II.C [C and online]
- The Book of Exodus [+]

**Integration Paper #1 Due – “Confession”**

**Thursday  
May 23**      **4. The Gospels and the Historical Jesus**  
*Key issues:* the composition of the Gospels; the historical context of Jesus; Jesus the Jew

- Johnson, Chapters 3 & 4
- Rausch, “The Jewish Background” [C]
- BBC, “Jesus” [C]
- Gospel of Luke [+]

Optional: [Dei Verbum](#) [C and online]

**Tuesday  
May 28**      **5. Jesus of Nazareth**  
*Key issues:* teachings of Jesus; the Reign of God; miracles of Jesus; the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ

- Johnson Chapters 5, 6 & 7
- Time Magazine, “Why did Jesus die?” [C]
- Amy Jill-Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus* [C] \*Groups assigned in class
  - Group 1: “The Good Samaritan,” 77-116
  - Group 2: “The Kingdom of Heaven Is like Yeast,” 117-138
  - Group 3: “The Pearl of Great Price” 139-166
  - Group 4: “The Mustard Seed,” 165-182
  - Group 5: “The Widow and the Judge,” 239-265

**Thursday  
May 30**      **6. Exam #1 and “From Belief to Church”**  
*Key issues:* the early Jewish Christians; Pentecost; the problem of Jesus in the early Church

- 6:00-7:30pm: Exam #1
- 7:30-7:45pm: Break
- 7:45-9:10pm: Lecture & discussion about new material
- 9:10-9:15pm: Exit Tickets

**No reading assignment or reading quiz**

**Tuesday  
June 4**      **7. Church Councils & Defining the Faith**  
*Key issues:* early Christological and Trinitarian controversies; Council of Nicaea; Council of Chalcedon

- Rausch, Introduction and Chapters 3 & 4
- Rausch, “From the New Testament to Chalcedon” [C]
- YouTube: [Crashcourse, “Christianity from Judaism to Constantine”](#) [online]

- Thursday  
June 6**      **8. Sacraments**  
*Key issues:* sacramental content and purpose; sign/symbol; divine action on earth
- Rausch, Chapters 5 & 6
  - Martos, Chapters 2 & 3 [C]

- Tuesday  
June 11**      **9. Vatican II**  
*Key issues:* modern Church development; ecclesiology; Vatican II
- Rausch, Chapters 1 & 2
  - Winter, “Vatican II After 50 Years” [C]
  - Wainwright, “Anamnesis, Epiclesis, Prolepsis” and Lamb, “Concluding Remarks” [C]
  - Pope Benedict XVI, “A Proper Hermeneutic for the Second Vatican Council” [C]

- Thursday  
June 13**      **10. The Church as Communion**  
*Key issues:* ecclesial understanding of Church as covenant and community; liberative views of God
- Rausch, Chapters 7 & 8
  - Johnson, Chapter 8
  - De La Torre, “Introducing Liberative Theologies” [C]

**Integration Paper #2 Due – “Community”**

- Tuesday  
June 18**      **11. The Church in the World**  
*Key issues:* praxis; ecclesial understanding of Church in the World; the Future Church
- Rausch, Chapters 9, 10 & 11
  - Johnson, Chapter 10

- Thursday  
June 20**      **12. Exam #2**
- 6:00-7:30pm: Exam #2
  - 7:30-7:45pm: Break
  - 7:45-9:15pm: *Where do we go from here?*
- No reading assignment, reading quiz, or exit ticket**

**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, per your instructor’s requirements. Develop your thoughts fully, clearly, logically and specifically. Proofread all materials to ensure the use of proper grammar, punctuation and spelling. 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. When circumstances prevent a student from attending class, the student is responsible for contacting the instructor before the class meets. Students who miss class are still expected to complete all assignments and meet all deadlines. Many instructors grade for participation; if you miss class, you cannot make up participation points associated with that class. Makeup work may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor. If circumstances necessitate excessive absence from class, the student should consider withdrawing from the class. Please note that you cannot make up certain assignments, such as Daily Reading Quizzes and Daily Exit Tickets, if you are absent.

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.

### **Classroom Decorum**

- Please silence all phones and store them out of sight before class begins. The use of cell phones, including text messaging, is absolutely prohibited in class.
- Computer use during class time is not allowed. If this policy causes undue hardship, please contact the professor to discuss the possibility of an exception.

### **Accommodation & 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](http://www.bc.edu/sites/accessibility).

### **Title IX Protections**

Boston College upholds a zero tolerance policy for discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct. If you (or someone you know) have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence or stalking, we encourage you to tell someone promptly. For more information, please go to <http://www.bc.edu/offices/diversity/compliance/TitleIX.html> or contact the University's Deputy Title IX Coordinator for Students, Melinda Stoops at [stoopsme@bc.edu](mailto:stoopsme@bc.edu) or 617-552-3482. You can also receive assistance 24-hours a day by calling BC's Sexual Assault Network (SANet) at 617-552-2211.

### **Scholarship & 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.