THEO116101 | The Religious Quest: Comparative Perspectives I / 3 credits
Boston College Summer Session 2018
Summer 1, May 15th to June 21st
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
Religious Quest courses present Christianity and at least one other world religious tradition. Students are strongly encouraged to take both semesters of the same Religious Quest class. If circumstances require switching sections, students need permission of the instructor of the spring term course and may be asked to do additional background reading and writing for the religious tradition(s) not covered in their first semester of the course. You must take both sections of the Religious Quest I and II (THEO1161-1162) first Part I, then Part II to receive Theology Core credit. There are no exceptions.

The Religious Quest explores the individual and communal search for wisdom about human nature, the world, ultimate realities and God, secrets of love and death, enduring values to live by, and paths to spiritual maturity. Although each section is different, likely themes include symbols, myths, doctrines, rituals, holy texts, saints, comparisons and contrasts among traditions, relevance of classical religious traditions to issues in today's world, interreligious dialogue today, and religious diversity in the Boston area. Each section brings the Biblical and Christian tradition into conversation with at least one other religious tradition.

Textbooks & Readings (Required)


All texts except Goldberg are assigned for both semesters of this course.

**Textbooks & Readings (Recommended)**

- *The Jewish Study Bible*.
- Paul Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions* (c.2002).

**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 narratives, historical memories, and thought patterns by which Jews and Christians construct meaning and coherence;
2. Analyze ways in which theological understanding and individual and/or communal practices inform one another in Judaism and Christianity;
3. Understand the bimillennial relationship of Judaism and Christianity, with the aim of recognizing how this present moment in their history is teeming with great hope, and yet is chastened by fragility;
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 impact of culture, gender, and age in Judaism and Christianity as demonstrated in each tradition’s primary narratives and liturgies.

**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+. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped.
- 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 an electronic device but only to take notes or to access class materials. Use of any electronic device for other purposes will detract from the class participation grade.
• Extra Credit opportunities are each worth one point (i.e. raising a quiz grade by one point). These will be on Canvas and will take the form of movies, other media, or articles. 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 description of the opportunity, how you’re able to understand it through the course material, and what you thought about it. See Canvas for more information.

Essays: 45% of grade:
• One 1000-word essay on Religious Identity in two parts, and one 1000-word essay on master stories. See the Assignments page on Canvas for specifics. Improving your expository writing is an important element of the theology core. Expect detailed critiques! You are highly encouraged to consult with me in advance.

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.

Course Schedule

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading/Assignments</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>5/15</td>
<td>Introduction &amp; Identity and</td>
<td>-Christine Kraemer</td>
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| 5/17 | Textual Foundations and Foundations of Texts | - Donald Senior, RG 3-9  
- Genesis 1-12, 15, 17, 22, 32, 37-50 |
| 5/22 | Jewish Master Story 1: Slavery & the Burning Bush | - Goldberg, Prologue, Chs. 1-3  
- Exodus 1-4 |
| 5/24 | Jewish Master Story 2: Plagues, Passover, & Exodus | - Goldberg, Chs. 4-6  
- Recommended: Exodus 5-18  
- Exodus 19-20, 24  
- Goldberg, Ch. 7  
- James Kugel, 373-384, 400-407  
- Exodus 21-23, 32  
- Joshua 1-5  
- 2 Samuel 6-7  
- 2 Chronicles 34-36 |
| 5/29 | Jewish Master Story 3: Sinai & Living with the Covenant | |
- Matthew 1-4  
- Goldberg, Chs. 8-10 |
| 6/5 | Christian Master Story 2: Sermons & Revelations | - Daniel Harrington, 76-111  
- Matthew 10-11; 13-17; 19; 21:1-13; 24  
- Goldberg, Ch. 11 |
| 6/7 | Christian Master Story 3: the Passion & Resurrection | - Matt 26-28  
- Goldberg, Chs. 12-14, Epilogue |
| 6/12 | Celebrating the Master Story in Judaism | - Ruth Langer, 337-346  
- Shema and Amidah  
- Passover Haggadah  
- Walter Wurzburger, 139-148 |
| 6/14 | Celebrating the Master Story in Christianity | - *Dies Domini*, pars. 19-30, 55-73  
- Liturgy of the Word, 2-7, 8-11  
- Liturgy of the Eucharist, 12-13, 24-27, 39-44 |
| 6/17 | Master Stories Paper | |
| 6/19 | History of Jewish-Christian Relations & *Nostra Aetate* | - *Irreconcilable Differences*, Ch. 2  
- Review: Matt 3:1-17; 11:1-19; 14:1-12; and 27:55-28:20; and Romans 9-11  
- *Nostra Aetate* |
| 6/21 | Christian and Jewish Theologies of Religion & FINAL EXAM | Prepare for final exam |

**Written Work**

Summer Session students are expected to prepare professional, polished written work. Written materials must be typed and submitted in Microsoft Word (more details on Canvas). 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](https://www.loyola.edu/ConnorsFamilyLearningCenter).
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 evening. Illness and family emergencies count as excused absences, so long as you contact me before class.

- A set of three 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.