

# GRADUATE RELIGION (RLE)

## RLE 500 Intro to Theology

This course employs an intensive online format introducing students to fundamental philosophical concepts, an overview of church history, the historical-critical method of biblical scholarship, and key concepts in systematic theology. The course requires the students to employ online and traditional research skills to complete a short research paper for each of the four main topics.

## RLE 501 Intro to Biblical Studies

This course introduces students to the theory and application of biblical interpretation methods. Students use the historical-critical method: form, redaction, source, feminist, and post- modern criticism, along with other recent approaches. Internet resources for biblical studies and biblical studies software are introduced and evaluated.

## RLE 503 Foundations of Christian Faith

This course introduces students to the theory and application of biblical interpretation methods. Students use the historical-critical method: form, redaction, source, feminist, and post- modern criticism, along with other recent approaches. Internet resources for biblical studies and biblical studies software are introduced and evaluated.

## RLE 505 Religion & Mod Culture

## RLE 507 Church & Ministry

This course critically examines the identity and praxis of the community called Church. Particular attention is devoted to the ways in which the church has understood and expressed itself in the past, to the issue of leadership structures and their relation to the ministry of all the baptized, to the initiatives for ecumenical unity, and to the scope of the mission of a "world church" acting as a critical dialogue partner with the pluralist and secular world of our time.

## RLE 509 Christology

Using the contributions of critical biblical scholarship, this course reconstructs, from the various Gospel accounts, the traces of what Jesus said and did during his ministry. The way Jesus seems to have faced death is compared with the way his death and resurrection were interpreted by the early church. Moving through the Christological developments of the second to the eighth centuries, the course considers how contemporary human experience impacts on current theological interpretations of Jesus and his meaning for our times.

## RLE 511 Ritual & Sacraments

After exploring the social and psychological foundations for human ritual, the course considers the sacramental character of creation and incarnation. Particular attention is given to developing an understanding of Jesus as the primordial sacrament, and on Church as the continuing sacrament of Jesus. Consideration of the sacraments as actualizations of the Church is complemented with a study of the historical development of the sacraments in different Christian traditions. Students apply theology to sound liturgical practice in parish, school, and family.

## RLE 513 Prin Of Moral Theology

Students explore the foundation of Christian ethics, with a concentration on these and similar questions: On what basis do people decide how to make moral choices? Why do we take the moral stands we do on issues facing the churches and society? Do Christians have different ways of making decisions than people from other religious or secular traditions? The course examines philosophical, sociological, and theological perspectives to these questions.

## RLE 515 Theology of Religions

## RLE 558 Spiritual Classics

## RLE 562 Spec Topics

## RLE 574 Intro To Grad Res & Wrtnng

## RLE 600 Hebrew Scriptures

In this course students are provided with an overview of the canon of Scripture commonly referred to as the "Old Testament." Students explore the general history of Ancient Israel as well as employ the historical-critical method for the interpretation of the text.

## RLE 601 Torah & Early Israel

The history and faith of Israel are examined from the earliest beginnings through the reign of Solomon. The text is interpreted with regard to the cultural context of the Ancient Near East. The early prophetic tradition is explored in light of Torah and the historical writings of the Hebrew Scriptures. Special attention is given to the theological significance for Christian faith.

## RLE 602 The Prophets

This course studies the prophets of Israel and the world in which they lived, from the division of the Israelite kingdom to the Maccabean period, to understand their message as well as the nature of the prophetic tradition and its relevance for the church today.

## RLE 603 The Writings

While giving special emphasis to the book of Psalms, the Five Scrolls, Job and other wisdom materials, this course offers a study of the cultic and wisdom traditions in Israel. Special attention is given to the significance of the Psalms and Wisdom for Christian theology and devotion.

## RLE 610 Christian Scriptures

This course includes an introduction to Gospel literature, the writings of Paul, the text of Revelation, and other writings forming the Christian canon of Scripture. Students gain a knowledge of the origin of the texts, their historical context, and their interpretation through the use of the historical-critical method.

## RLE 615 The Synoptic Gospels

This course explores the origins, structure, and general character of Matthew, Mark, and Luke with special emphasis on the theological thrusts of each gospel. Select pericopes, chosen to create an awareness of the difficulties and problems of New Testament interpretation, are taken for extensive exegesis.

## RLE 616 Johannine Writings

With consideration of the context of the historical situation of the community in which and for which the Johannine texts were written, this course offers an examination of the Gospel and Letters of John. Emphasis is given to the theology (Christology, Ecclesiology, Eschatology, Ethics) of the texts and their significance for contemporary Christian faith.

## RLE 617 Letters & Theol Of Paul

The central topic of this course is an analysis of the authentic Pauline letters, the situation and conflicts that provoked them, and the theology in and behind them. Other letters attributed to Paul (the "deutero-Pauline" literature) will also be considered.

## RLE 631 Documents & Theol Vatican II

In this course, students review the historical context that gave rise to the Council as well as the most important documents produced by Vatican II. After a thorough consideration of the theologies present in conciliar texts, students explore the implementation and development of the Council's teachings in the contemporary Church.

**RLE 632 Theologies Of Liberation**

This course provides an in-depth consideration of the Liberation theology developed in Central and South America. The course also provides an overview of feminist and Black theologies. Some attention is given to the foundation of liberation theologies in the political theology of Western Europe and the general struggle for human freedom as an essential component of Gospel faith.

**RLE 633 Women And Religion****RLE 641 Intimacy & Commitment**

This course investigates the sacramental dimensions of Christian Initiation in the Early Church and the historical factors that contributed to the dissolution of the rite in the West. The biblical foundations and theology of Baptism, particularly as developed in the letters of Paul, are complemented with a study of the development of Confirmation. A consideration of the New Testament theology of the Eucharist and an exploration of the implications of restoring the process of the rites in the contemporary Church completes the course.

**RLE 643 The Eucharist**

This course has two aims. The first is to offer a solid historical and theological understanding of Eucharist as a sacrament of the Christian community. The second aim is to apply the insights offered by a historical perspective and the work of contemporary theologians to the work of celebrating the Eucharist in today's parish. Consideration is also given to topics such as Eucharistic devotion and the Sunday gathering of the Catholic community in the absence of a priest.

**RLE 644 Sem:Min Fam Models****RLE 645 Reconciliation & Vocation**

Attentive to the historical development of the sacraments of Reconciliation, Marriage, Holy Orders, and the Anointing of the Sick, the course also highlights the particular theology operative in the contemporary practice of the rites. The themes of relationship, commitment, forgiveness, service, and leadership are explored as dimensions of Christian living in faith and hope.

**RLE 647 Hum Sexuality/Christ Marriage**

Drawing on the contributions of contemporary natural and social sciences, the course provides a critical investigation of the historical and ideological understandings of human sexuality. Building upon the notion of human sexuality and love as dimensions of human holiness, attention is given to considering Christian marriage as a sacramental event in contemporary theological reflection as well as in historical expression.

**RLE 651 Moral Issues In Health Care**

Although health care began as a ministry of the Church, it is now secularized and commercialized, especially in the United States. This course examines the ethical questions that arise as a result of this shift. Topics, among others, include patient autonomy, the right to life, euthanasia, reproductive technologies, abortion, genetic engineering, research ethics, and the cost of health care. Secular as well as religious approaches are studied.

**RLE 653 Professional Ethics**

Catholic social teaching in general and the U.S. bishops' pastoral letter on the economy, in particular, provide a perspective for the practice of corporate business in the present culture of the United States. This course intends to explore the ethical implications of social teaching that upholds the rights of labor, insists on the dignity of the worker, and advocates a responsible distribution and use of the world's goods. While the major emphasis is on responsibility in corporate enterprise the course also gives perspective to other professionals who provide service through profit and not-for-profit structures.

**RLE 661 The Tradition of the Mystics**

This course includes both a study of the nature of mysticism in the Judeo-Christian tradition and the study of selected writings from representatives of that tradition. Consideration is given to the physical, psychological, and social dimensions of the mystical experience as well as a theological understanding of the mystic's encounter with the Holy.

**RLE 662 Models Relig Educ****RLE 663 Spiritual Classics**

The human search for God takes a variety of forms in the Christian tradition. This course explores the path of holiness given in the writings of significant men and women from the early and Medieval periods of Christianity through the Reformation.

**RLE 664 Biblical Spirituality**

This course explores major themes of the spiritual life as expressed in the Hebrew Bible and Christian Scriptures. After addressing the issues of biblical interpretation and critical understandings of spirituality, the course looks at various biblical themes with particular emphasis on creation, covenant, sin, God's reign, conversion, and justice.

**RLE 665 Contemporary Spirituality**

This course focuses on the dynamics and authors on the spiritual life in post-Reformation Christianity. Consideration is given to European spiritualities of the 17th through 20th centuries and to American movements. Beyond what is generally deemed traditional Christian spirituality, the course proposes some examination of Creation and New Age spiritualities, modern Evangelical Christianity, and feminist and liberation spiritualities.

**RLE 670 Counselng Bereaved****RLE 671 Special Topics****RLE 675 Special Topics****RLE 676 Prog Of Prevention****RLE 701 Serv & Admin Faith Communities**

This interdisciplinary course provides insights from the secular disciplines on administration and management of groups of people as well as pastoral principles on the nature and function of leadership in Christian communities. It addresses the various types and goals of communities of faith, the diversity of interactive and relational dynamics, the multiplicity of human needs and services, and, correspondingly, the various ways in which the ministry of leadership can be implemented.

**RLE 703 Multicult Perspect Ministry**

Major cultural, ethnic, racial, and religious traditions co-existing in contemporary American communities are challenging Church and ministry. The purpose of this course is to appreciate their potential reciprocal contribution to the development of a global, interdependent Christian community. The course explores emerging leadership insights as to how to create and empower a multicultural Christian community around issues.

**RLE 705 Church Acct & Finance**

This course reviews some fundamental principles of accounting and finance with a particular emphasis on not-for-profit regulations. In addition, the course helps the manager of church finances to understand his or her contribution to church ministry. Attention is given to dealing effectively with voluntary and compensated church ministers, church structures, and canon law.

**RLE 707 Canon Law for Parish Ministry**

After reviewing the basic principles of the Revised Code of Canon Law, students examine the sections of the Code that pertain most directly to parish ministry. These sections include regulations concerning the celebration of the sacraments, parish administration, pre-marriage requirements, and procedures for nullity.

**RLE 710 Rel Imag & Models of Rel Edc**

Dynamic images, metaphors, and visions guide the theory and practice of church life. This course seeks to explore the development of appropriate models of religious education relative to the distinct visions of the Church in contemporary culture. Various models are explored in terms of their conceptual framework, operating principles, strengths, and limitations.

**RLE 711 Leadership & Religious Edc**

The communication, decision-making, and evaluative skills needed by educational leadership to meet the challenges of personal and community conversion are the central themes of this course. Participants examine contemporary spirituality and leadership skills that promote community advancement. Strands of spirituality and systems of reflective group process are examined for their underlying energizing principles that nurture shared responsibility, curricular interdependence, creative problem-solving, and the empowerment of people. Participants articulate a personal and community vision reflecting transforming spirituality and enlightened leadership.

**RLE 713 Lit Proclamation**

This course is designed to offer a theological examination of the most recent developments in contemporary Christology. Emphasis is given to his most characteristic title "Teacher" and to the most attractive feature of his ministry, his power to heal spiritual and physical ills. Throughout the course there is a constant reference to the implications of a lived, prayerful relationship with Jesus the Christ for personal commitment and for one's ministry in parish, classroom, and home.

**RLE 715 Sacramental Catechesis**

The course examines the process called "catechesis," its functions and dynamics, and applies the conclusions to sacramental preparation and formation programs for all ages throughout a lifetime. Its primary purpose is to help students develop programs by which the sacramental preparation of Christians of all ages is made more effective personally, and more conducive to the emergence of community.

**RLE 717 Parish Youth Ministry**

Parish youth ministry is moving beyond youth group and religious education models. The ministry requires a comprehensive approach. This course provides a renewed vision for youth ministry and practical programmatic approaches and strategies for proclaiming the Gospel, connecting young people to the faith community, and calling youth to discipleship.

**RLE 719 Pastoral Care Of Adolescent****RLE 720 Special Topics****RLE 721 Intro To Pastoral Counseling**

This course addresses the issues that make Pastoral Counseling a unique orientation to counseling psychology. The totality of human experience is addressed, the spiritual as well as the psychological, as the basis for therapeutic intervention. The basic dynamics and approaches are reviewed along with a brief history of the model. It challenges students to identify their resources of faith, meaning, and value.

**RLE 723 Euch & Japan Tea Ceremony****RLE 725 Ministry to Families with Loss**

The course addresses issues of loss and mourning experienced by families as a result of physical and mental disability, job loss, aging, illness, and death. It presents an understanding of the psychological and relational impact of loss with particular reference to those who minister to families in the face of loss.

**RLE 730 Human Encounter With Death**

This experientially-oriented course explores contemporary psychological approaches to death, dying, and bereavement from a spiritual perspective. Through a variety of learning modalities, including lectures, discussion, guest speakers, videos, personal sharing, journal writing, meditation, and other self-awareness exercises, the course focuses on four interrelated areas: 1) personal grief journey; 2) the psychology of death and bereavement; 3) specific skills in ministering to the dying and bereaved; and 4) human mortality, life after death, and questions of "ultimate concern."

**RLE 731 Psyche & Spirit**

The course explores the meeting of psychology and religion in the works of C.G. Jung, Abraham Maslow, and other contemporary transpersonal psychologists. The course investigates specific methods for actualizing one's spiritual potential. Through lectures, readings, class discussions, and journal writing, students examine the process of coming to wholeness in their lives, in their ministry, and with the culture as a whole.

**RLE 735 Spirituality of 12 Step Progra**

Students will examine the spirituality of the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and other self-help programs, especially as they impact those recovering in these programs and their usefulness to society at large. Issues treated will include the development of Alcoholics Anonymous, the nature of professional treatment programs, and the twelve steps as a way of life for many people.

**RLE 740 Personal, Comm & Lit Prayer**

This course investigates the theological foundations of prayer, while studying the biblical roots of prayer, the prayer of Jesus, and the major traditions of personal, communal, and liturgical prayer in the historical Christian communities. It confronts the distinct problems faced by contemporary men and women in their lives of prayer. It offers guidance to ministers intent on helping people develop personal and communal models of prayer and involving them specifically in the liturgical prayer of the Church.

**RLE 743 Rites Of The Catechumenate**

The rites of the process of Christian initiation of adults are studied from historical, theological, liturgical, and pastoral perspectives. Beginning with the text of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, students reflect on the order and integrity of each of the rites. Working from this foundation, they explore appropriate ritual adaptation and receive guidance for the adapting and enrichment of the rites.

**RLE 745 New Dir Lang Minis****RLE 747 Eucharist & Japanese Tea****RLE 749 Multicultural Trad on Liturgy**

With the increasing cultural diversity of traditional Christian churches, this course attempts to help the student explore ways to integrate various cultural traditions in the community's worship. Appreciating the directive for inculturation of the liturgical rites in the Roman Church, students apply the fundamental dynamic to other churches as well. The topic of incorporating different cultural traditions and offering separate worship opportunities is explored.

#### RLE 751 Independent Studies

Focusing on both church design as well as church art, liturgical objects, and vesture, this course examines the theology and spirituality suggested by the environment and art of different historical periods. The question is raised, "What is appropriate art and architecture for 21st-century America?" Issues regarding contemporary church design, the reordering of space, and art appropriate to a particular community are explored. Visits to local churches and liturgies afford considerations of historic design and liturgical adaptation.

#### RLE 753 Liturgical Music

This course offers a study of both the history of liturgical music and the practical considerations for the use of music in contemporary worshipping communities. Students have the opportunity to apply general theory to a variety of liturgical settings.

#### RLE 770 Special Topics

##### RLE 771 Special Topics: Ministry

##### RLE 775 Special Topics

##### RLE 776 Liturgical Planning Principles

#### RLE 780 Special Topics

In consultation with the program director, a student can contract to study independently a topic not offered in the regular curriculum. The student proposes a topic, develops a tentative bibliography, and identifies a faculty member from the University willing to direct the course of study. The course may be taken for three or six credits.

#### RLE 785 Practicum

With the approval of the program director, a student can contract for a supervised ministry practicum. The ministry may be the student's regular employment or a temporary position. The student outlines goals for the experience, develops a reading list, and proposes a final project. A member of the faculty serves as the practicum supervisor and evaluates the final project. The course may be taken for three or six credits.

#### RLE 790 Integrative Proj & Seminar

Students complete a major project exploring a topic related to their concentration in theology, pastoral ministry, or liturgical studies. The project may take the form of a major research paper, a methodological reflection on supervised experience, or a creative presentation. Students work independently with a faculty mentor and are required to meet with other participating students and mentors for periodic seminars. An initial plan for the project must be approved by the director of the program prior to establishing an agreement with a faculty member for the independent study. Students have one year from the time of registration to complete the project. The course is for three credits.