

**DRAFT v.2**

**Subject to change. Full  
syllabus available in Canvas  
Wednesday, August 13<sup>th</sup>.**

**Loyola Institute for Ministry  
Loyola University New Orleans**

## **Grace, Christ, and Spirit LIM-G714-Y1G0E**

**Fall 2025**

**Important!** You will be notified by email to your Loyola email address when your course web site is available (normally the week before class begins). Please reply to the instructor's email when you receive it to confirm that you are ready to begin the course.

### **Course Description**

This is not simply a course in Church history. Its topics from the Christian theological tradition represent a context within and in support of practical theology. In particular, students study grace as God's invitation to personal and communal transcendence. The course examines the work of God's Spirit (pneumatology) in the redemptive transformation of human experience (soteriology), and it focuses on Jesus as the historical manifestation of God in human history (Christology). It cites important moments in the history of Christian thought, with attention to how language, culture, and history have affected our interpretation of God's saving acts (historical theology). Finally, we explore the theology of Karl Rahner, as an example of systematic theology, along with new approaches to grace and Christology. Students do all of this in the service of critical reflection on and response to a ministry concern they identify at the beginning of the course.

### **Goals and Objectives**

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- understand the historical development and meaning of the basic Christian teaching on Christ, on grace, and on God as Triune.
- be familiar with the expression of Christian faith on these topics in the Bible, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, documents of the Magisterium, and in classics of theology through the ages.
- appropriate a fundamental Christian theology which speaks to today's world and is
- solidly grounded in our historical tradition.

- understand the experiential basis for theology, which is that theology is the verbal expression of what Christians, as a community, have experienced in faith.
- reflect on contemporary challenges in theology.
- correlate what you learn in this course with your own ministry contexts.
- develop as a collaborative community of learners who empower others to live out their baptismal vocations to discipleship.
- pray the graces of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola.

### Course Texts

Please purchase the texts for this class as soon as possible from the bookstore of your choice or from the [Loyola Bookstore](#).

*Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) (Available [online](#), but a hard copy is nice to have)

Dreyer, Elizabeth. *Manifestations of Grace*. Liturgical Press, 1990. ISBN 0814657591

Additional required and recommended texts are available in Canvas.

For guidance on citations and referencing styles see the *LIM Guide to Written Theological Reflection* (available in Canvas under Resources » Writing Assistance).

### Evaluation and Course Requirements

#### Course Schedule (Date and Session/Week) (\*Assignment Due Date)

| Week                | Topic   | Assignments   |
|---------------------|---|---|
| Week 1<br>8/18–8/25 | Introductions and Initial Understandings          | Introduce self, complete readings, video  |
| Week 2<br>8/26–9/1  | Bible, Catechism (September 1, Labor Day holiday) | Complete readings, videos, discussion question; attend optional synchronous class meeting |
| Week 3<br>9/2–9/8   | Experience and Doctrine: Early Christologies      | Complete readings, videos, discussion questions   |

|                        |   |  |
|------------------------|---|--|
| Week 4<br>9/9–9/15     | Medieval Developments   | Complete readings, videos, discussion questions; ; attend optional synchronous class meeting; Prayer Journal 1 due               |
| Week 5<br>9/16–9/22    | Reformation: Protestant and Catholic                                    | Complete readings, videos, discussion questions; Paper 1 due   |
| Week 6<br>9/23–9/29    | Twentieth Century and Vatican II  | Complete readings, videos; attend required small group synchronous meeting; Small Group Reflection due                           |
| Week 7<br>9/30–10/6    | Rahner's Philosophical Foundations: The Human Person and Divine Mystery | Complete readings, videos, discussion question; attend optional synchronous class meeting; Final Paper Worksheet due             |
| Week 8<br>10/7–10/13   | Fall Break  | No assignments   |
| Week 9<br>10/14–10/20  | Rahner's Understanding of God for Us: Grace as God's Self-Gift          | Complete readings, videos, discussion questions, Prayer Journal 2 due  |
| Week 10<br>10/21–10/27 | New Developments I: Spirit  | Complete readings and discussion question  |
| Week 11<br>10/28–11/3  | New Developments II: Contextual Theology                                | Complete readings and videos; share images of Jesus; attend required small group synchronous meeting; Small Group Reflection due |
| Week 12<br>11/4–11/10  | Working Break   | No assignments. Work on Final Paper due Dec. 2   |
| Week 13<br>11/11–11/17 | New Developments III: Creation and World Religions                      | Complete readings, videos, discussion questions; attend optional synchronous class meeting; Spiritual Reflection Journal due     |
| Week 14<br>11/18–11/24 | Working Break   | No assignments. Work on Final Paper due Dec. 2   |
| Week 15<br>11/25–12/1  | Thanksgiving Break  | No regular session assignments. Work on Final Paper due Dec. 5   |
| Week 16<br>12/2–12/5   | Final Assignment and Course Evaluation                                  | Paper No. 2 due Dec. 2, 11:59 PM CT  |

Dec. 15: Due date for posting grades, 11:59 pm CT

## Assessment

Each student's final grade will include the following:

|   |   | Percentage Final Grade |     |
|---|---|------------------------|-----|
|   |   | Graduate               | CEU |
| 1 | Substantive participation in weekly Canvas discussion and small group discussions | 45%                    | 90% |
| 2 | Prayer & Small Group Journals   | 10%                    | 10% |
| 3 | Paper 1   | 10%                    | NA  |
| 4 | Paper 2 Preliminaries   | 5%                     | NA  |
| 5 | Paper 2   | 30%                    | NA  |

### **1) Participation in Discussions (45% of graduate student grade; 90% of CEU student grade)**

The modules of this course include assignments for reading, video segments, and discussion questions. These are provided in the weekly modules in our Canvas course. In addition to reading all the materials assigned and watching assigned videos, all students will also be expected to participate in the class discussions online.

You will also be asked to participate in two virtual small group sessions that you will initiate and assess. That is included as part of this participation grading.

Specific details regarding the schedule for posting, length requirements, discussion leaders, and small group meetings will be included in the final syllabus posted in Canvas the week of August 12<sup>th</sup>.

### **2) Prayer and Small Group Journals (10% of graduate student grade; 10% of CEU student grade)**

Each of 2 Prayer Journals will consist of a 300+-word journal entry in light of your prayer and other material in the spiritual formation. Each of 2 Small Group Reflection will consist of a 300+-word journal entry in light of your work in small groups. Complete details are found in the Canvas course.

### **3) Paper 1 (10% of graduate student grade; CEU students do not complete this)**

The purpose of this 2- to 3-page paper, due at the end of Week Five, is to help you articulate and organize your thoughts around a specific concern that you'd like to put into conversation with your studies this semester. During the course of the semester, you will

be able to chart the growth of your understanding of this topic. Full directions will be included in the final syllabus posted in Canvas the week of August 14<sup>th</sup>.

**4) Paper 2 Preliminaries (5% of graduate student grade; CEU students do not complete this)**

The purpose of this worksheet is to help you prepare to draft paper 2. The worksheet is included in the Canvas course.

**5) Paper 2 (30% of graduate student grade; CEU students do not complete this)**

The purpose of this 10- to 12-page paper is to use the LIM method of practical theological reflection to plot the development of your understanding of central themes (e.g., God, Jesus, the Spirit, the Trinity, or grace) in this course. Full directions will be included in the final syllabus posted in Canvas the week of August 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Grading Scale**

|           |         |           |         |           |         |
|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|
| <b>A</b>  | 93-100  | <b>B-</b> | 80-82.9 | <b>D+</b> | 67-69.9 |
| <b>A-</b> | 90-92.9 | <b>C+</b> | 77-79.9 | <b>D</b>  | 60-66.9 |
| <b>B+</b> | 87-89.9 | <b>C</b>  | 73-76.9 | <b>F</b>  | 0-59.9  |
| <b>B</b>  | 83-86.9 | <b>C-</b> | 70-72.9 |           |         |

**Overall Grading Scale**

| <b>Letter Grade</b> | <b>Quality Points</b> | <b>Characteristics of Student Work</b>   |
|---------------------|-----------------------|--|
| <b>A</b>            | <b>4.0</b>            | Work done with distinction. An outstanding use of all four evaluation criteria as a catalyst for critical reflection.  |
| <b>A-</b>           | <b>3.7</b>            | Work done with distinction, with a few minor corrections needed.   |
| <b>B+</b>           | <b>3.3</b>            | Work of very good quality. The assignment is addressed in an exceptional manner with a good balance of personal insight and academic documentation.  |
| <b>B</b>            | <b>3.0</b>            | The standard for the master's degree. The assignment is adequately addressed in a clear and concise manner with appropriate documentation. If subsequent work meets this standard of quality, the degree will be awarded.  |
| <b>B-</b>           | <b>2.7</b>            | The work is slightly below the standard for master's level work. The assignment is addressed, but a number of corrections is needed to address the assignment in a clear and concise manner. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program. |
| <b>C+</b>           | <b>2.3</b>            | Substandard graduate work. Evaluation criteria are not adequately met in the assignment. Moderate improvement is needed. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program.   |

|           |            |   |
|-----------|------------|---|
| <b>C</b>  | <b>2</b>   | Less than graduate-level work. Evaluation criteria are not met. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program. |
| <b>C-</b> | <b>1.7</b> | Below average, grade does not count towards graduation.   |
| <b>D+</b> | <b>1.3</b> | Minimally passing, grade does not count towards graduation.   |
| <b>D</b>  | <b>1</b>   | Minimally passing, grade does not count towards graduation.   |
| <b>F</b>  | <b>0</b>   | Assignment not addressed at all, incomplete assignment, or not submitted on time.   |

Please note that the LIM grading scale uses B as the standard for graduate-quality work. A and B+ indicate graduate work done with distinction, with B- and below signifying levels below graduate standards.

## **Course Policies**

### **Incomplete Grade Policy**

Students are subject to the university policy regarding incomplete grades with the following additions to university policy. Grades of Incomplete are given at the instructor's discretion. Students must complete LIM's Incomplete Grade Request Form found in the Resources » Policies, Forms, & Services section of their Canvas course. Students should first inquire of their instructor whether or not they are eligible for an incomplete; this must occur with sufficient time to complete the process explained here. To be eligible, students may not have received an Incomplete in the previous semester, must have completed at least 75% of the course work to date, and must have at least a C or above in the course. After the instructor makes an initial assessment of eligibility, including checking with the LIM Office to ensure there was no Incomplete in the previous semester and finds the student eligible, by the due date of the course's final assignment, a student must complete and obtain all signatures for LIM's Incomplete Grade Request Form found in the Resources section of their Canvas course and submit it to their instructor, who will forward a copy to the LIM Director. LIM graduate students may not receive Incompletes in LIM courses in consecutive semesters.

### **Attendance & Participation**

Students are subject to the university policy regarding attendance found online in the *Bulletin*. Students in online courses communicate their presence by active participation in weekly discussions. Each course's instructor sets requirements for how many times students must post on the Discussion Board in Canvas. Failing to post during the first week of class may result in removal from the course. If you foresee that you will be unable to post in a given week, please contact the instructor ahead of time. Extensions for posting

are given at the instructor's discretion and for a valid reason may be granted if arranged ahead of time. In extraordinary circumstances, students may arrange with their instructor to post up to two weeks after a deadline, though this may entail a grade reduction. Posts and other assignments submitted more than two weeks late may be subject to a grade of zero. If students do not post in a given week, they are considered absent. Absence for more than one week without contacting the instructor may result in removal from and failure of the course.

### **University Policies**

Please read Part 2 of the syllabus (located in Canvas) for university policies on plagiarism, accessible education, and more.