

THEOLOGY, B.A.

Program Goals

1. To maintain a challenging and current curriculum for our Majors to provide them with a foundation for pursuing careers as teachers, ministers, and many other professions or for graduate work in Theological Studies;
2. To maintain a challenging and current curriculum for our Minors to provide them with a solid understanding of theology and religious studies, ethical values, social justice, and spirituality;
3. To maintain a current and challenging set of core curriculum courses that contribute to fulfilling the mission of Loyola Marymount as a Catholic liberal arts University.

Generalist or Specialist Track

Theology Majors have a choice of two tracks: the Generalist Track or the Specialist Track.

Generalist Track

The Generalist Track allows students to develop broad understanding of religious thought and practice in a variety of traditions across time and cultures. The Generalist Track develops students' overall religious and theological competency as well as widely applicable skills in research, writing, and critical thinking.

Specialist Track

The Specialist Track allows students to concentrate their major in particular areas of Theological Studies. The Specialist Track helps students to prepare for particular career pathways or to develop particular interests they have in the field. For the Specialist Track, three upper-division (3xxx) electives of the major must now be fulfilled through three courses within a concentration.

- **Interreligious Studies and Intercultural Leadership:** This concentration enables students to explore the world's major religious traditions and to cultivate interreligious competencies grounded in understanding and respect. Through comparative analysis of beliefs, texts, and practices in diverse religious traditions, students will engage these traditions in dialogue with one another within their distinctive cultural contexts. Students will learn to critically analyze religious categories and will discover plural approaches to religious thought and practice within public, private, and sacred spaces. Students will gain confidence in addressing emerging social issues through interreligious and intercultural perspectives and the ways in which they inform ethical engagement in, and responsibility for, our interconnected world. These courses will demonstrate the embeddedness of religion in culture and the importance of religious knowledge for professional contexts, leadership skills, and social responsibility.
- **Faith, Politics, and Power:** This concentration enables students to describe, analyze, and assess the contested narratives, structures and institutions, and ideologies and perspectives that underlie dynamics of power in religious contexts. Students will explore the relationship between faith traditions, political influence and power, and questions of justice with particular attention to intersectional dimensions such as race/ethnicity, gender, and class/caste. Students will apply skills to understand the theoretical and practical dynamics of oppression and liberation in historical and contemporary contexts and the ways in which religion has contributed to both aspects.
- **Contemplation, Meditation, and Spiritual Practices:** This concentration enables students to explore the embodied, eclectic, and ritual aspects of spiritual experiences. Using diverse methodologies (e.g., ritual studies or anthropology), students will analyze individual and communal dimensions of contemplation, mindfulness, and contemplative-driven action rooted in diverse religious texts, traditions, and practices. Students will apply skills to interpret, compare, and, in some courses, participate in various forms of contemplative exercises to understand the ways in which they inform ethical action and care for our social, animal, and environmental worlds.
- **Sacred Scriptures and Traditions:** This concentration enables students to engage major religious texts and traditions in their historical, literary, social/political, and religious contexts (texts include but are not limited to the Upanishads, Guru Granth Sahib, Pali canon, Agamas, Sutras, Hebrew Bible, New Testament, Quran, and mystical and devotional literature). Using an interdisciplinary approach, students will study the central concepts, themes, and practices in the origins and development of the religious tradition(s). Students will apply various methodological approaches to interpret texts in their historical contexts, critical receptions, and contemporary expressions, highlighting the significance of ongoing historical and textual (re)interpretation.
- **Catholic Theology and Practice:** This concentration enables students to focus on the structure, teachings, practices, and development of the Catholic intellectual tradition. Students will engage historical, systematic, liturgical, theological, and practical dimensions of the tradition in dialogue with wider social, political, economic, and cultural developments, as well as contemporary lay and ecclesial perspectives. Students will apply skills to understand and analyze the theological, moral, and pastoral responses of Catholic theology to historical and current social issues.
- **Individual Program:** Students may design an individual area of concentration in consultation with a faculty advisor and with the approval of the Department Chair. The Individual Program must incorporate courses offered in the department and may not be fulfilled only through independent studies courses.
- **Religion, Media, and the Arts:** This concentration enables students to examine the relationship between material and visual culture, religious beliefs and practices, and the development of personal, cultural, and spiritual identities. Attending to diverse approaches such as theological aesthetics, faith and culture, and ritual studies, this concentration invites students to engage the ways in which art and the theological imagination have mutually challenged, illuminated, and influenced one another. Students will apply skills to interpreting the significance of religion, arts, and media (broadly construed) in premodern, modern, and contemporary contexts.

Theology Society

The Theology Society is a co-curricular student group open to all Theological Studies undergraduate majors and minors, as well as non-majors/minors who are interested in theological issues and topics. The group convenes monthly, typically sharing lunch and discussion, often with a guest speaker. The group also organizes various outings as opportunities for students to socialize with one another and with Theological Studies faculty. The Theology Society hosts annual visits from admissions representatives from graduate theological programs around the country for interested students. The Theology Society's members also participate in an annual paper competition sponsored by

the Department of Theological Studies, in which the winning paper is presented to faculty and students each Spring.

Theta Alpha Kappa

LMU's Department of Theological Studies is an institutional member of Theta Alpha Kappa (TAK), the only national honor society serving the needs of those involved in the study of religion and/or theology. The membership of Theta Alpha Kappa is composed of students and professors who have been elected to membership upon the basis of excellence in Theology and Religious Studies. Each Spring the department inducts eligible students into this honor society.

TAK Undergraduate Admission Qualifications:

1. Completion of at least three semesters at LMU
2. Successful completion of 16 semester hours of THST course work
3. Cumulative GPA of at least 3.0
4. GPA of at least 3.5 in THST course work

Student Learning Outcomes

By virtue of their Theological Studies courses, majors should:

1. Identify the beliefs and practices of major religious traditions, including Christianity and especially Catholic Christianity;
2. Understand the richness and complexity of theological and religious traditions, especially in light of contemporary issues and diverse voices;
3. Examine and evaluate critically the diverse ways in which religious beliefs and practices change across time and space;
4. Integrate theological and religious questions and problems through the careful study of a major theological or religious thinker or theme;
5. Develop theological and religious comprehension and reflection through engaged learning.

By virtue of their Theological Studies courses, minors should:

1. Identify the beliefs and practices of major religious traditions;
2. Understand the richness and complexity of theological and religious traditions, especially in light of contemporary issues and diverse voices;
3. Examine and evaluate critically the diverse ways in which religious beliefs and practices change across time and space;
4. Integrate theological and religious questions and problems through the careful study of either a major theological or religious thinker or a major theological or religious theme.

Major Requirements

The undergraduate major consists of 40 semester hours total (10 courses).

Code	Title	Semester Hours
Lower Division Requirements		
THST 1000	Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: Theology, History, Interpretation ¹	4
or THST 1010	New Testament Contexts	
THST 1030	Exploring the Catholic Theological Tradition	4
or THST 1080	Comparative Theology	
THST 1500	World Religions in Los Angeles	4

Subtotal		12
Upper Division Requirements		
THST 4090	Major Theological and Religious Thinker	4
THST 4091	Major Theological and Religious Theme	4
THST Upper Division Elective (Explorations: Historical Analysis Perspectives)		4
THST Upper Division Elective (Flagged: Engaged Learning)		4
THST Upper Division Elective		4
THST Upper Division Elective		4
THST 4000-Level Elective		4
Subtotal		28
Total Semester Hours		40

¹ Normally, THST 1000 Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: Theology, History, Interpretation or THST 1010 New Testament Contexts is taken at the beginning of the program of study.

Additional Requirements

Requirements include taking an additional Engaged Learning flag (beyond the one required in the University Core) in a Theological Studies course.

Note:

An average grade of C (2.0) must be obtained in the courses included in the major.

We recommend that additional philosophy courses be taken as early as possible. The specific courses are to be determined in conjunction with the student's Theological Studies advisor.

Core Curriculum in Theological Studies

- Theological Inquiry (Foundations level) (see Course Descriptions)
- First Year Seminar (Foundations level) (see Course Descriptions)
- Studies in American Diversity (Foundations level) (see Course Descriptions)
- Historical Analysis and Perspectives (Explorations level) (see Course Descriptions)
- Faith and Reason (Integrations level) (see Course Descriptions)
- Ethics and Justice (Integrations level) (see Course Descriptions)
- Interdisciplinary Connections (Integrations level) (see Course Descriptions)

Only courses in the 1000 series and 3000 series will fulfill the core curriculum requirements. All 4000-level courses have a prerequisite of one upper division course. The 4000-level courses fulfill major or minor requirements. Except for those entering LMU as a transfer student, no student may take a 3000-level course without successful prior completion of a 1000-level course and class standing must be junior or senior.

Theological Studies Model Four-Year Plan

The normal course load is 16 semester hours (4 classes). By following the model below, a student will complete all lower division core requirements by the end of the sophomore year as well as most major prerequisites. Note that core areas are suggested to provide a distribution of various disciplines every semester. Please be flexible implementing

these suggestions, given your own interests and course availability. In four years, this plan meets all common graduation requirements.

Course	Title	Semester Hours
First Year		
Fall		
THST 1000 or THST 1010	Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: Theology, History, Interpretation or New Testament Contexts	4
FFYS 1000	First Year Seminar	4
University Core		3-4
Lower Division Elective		3-4
Semester Hours		14-16
Spring		
THST 1030 or THST 1080	Exploring the Catholic Theological Tradition or Comparative Theology	4
RHET 1000	Rhetorical Arts	4
University Core		3-4
Lower Division Elective		4
Semester Hours		15-16
Sophomore Year		
Fall		
THST 1500	World Religions in Los Angeles	4
University Core		3-4
University Core		3-4
Lower Division Elective		4
Semester Hours		14-16
Spring		
Any THST Historical Analysis and Perspectives		4
University Core		4
University Core		3-4
Lower Division Elective		4
Semester Hours		15-16
Junior Year		
Fall		
THST 4000-level		4
THST Upper Division Elective		4
University Core		3-4
Elective		4
Semester Hours		15-16
Spring		
THST Upper Division Elective		4
University Core		3-4
Elective		4
Elective		3-4
Semester Hours		14-16
Senior Year		
Fall		
THST 4091	Major Theological and Religious Theme	4
THST Upper Division Elective (with additional Engaged Learning flag)		4
Elective		3-4
Upper Division Elective		4
Semester Hours		15-16
Spring		
THST 4090	Major Theological and Religious Thinker	4
Upper Division Elective		4
Upper Division Elective		4
Upper Division Elective		4
Semester Hours		16
Minimum Semester Hours		118-128