

St Vladimir's Seminary
Elective Course Descriptions – Fall 2021

BIBLICAL LANGUAGES 301

Credits: 3 credits

REV. DR. SILVIU BUNTA

Introductory Hebrew: Basics of Morphology and Syntax. Languages are usually studied for the purpose of translation, yet a language is not a vocabulary to be translated, but rather another self to be simultaneously nurtured and discovered. Good translations do not ask translation questions (such as "what does this word mean"), but rather fundamental life questions (such as "what life experience does this text speak to"?). The pressure of translation is to relive the life of the text. This is one of the reasons for which this course will cover an introduction to the morphology and syntax of biblical Hebrew only as a basic matter. More fundamentally, every moment of such objective learning will be turned into the subjective opportunity and need to live another life--the Hebrew life of the Fathers of our Fathers. *Prerequisite: None*

Thursday, 9:15a–12:00p**CHURCH HISTORY 344**

Credits: 3 credits

REV. DR. ANTHONY G. ROEBER

History of the Church of Antioch. This hybrid course focuses on the history and theology of the Patriarchate of Antioch. Special attention is devoted to the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. The first week of two in-person meetings on campus examines the Syriac and Greek speaking dyo- and mia-physite Churches, to the calling of the Trullan Council. The focus then shifts for two weeks of remote lectures and discussion on the rise of Islam, the relationship of the Patriarchate to other Orthodox, and the Umayyad, Abbasid, and Mamluk Caliphates. The course then turns for three weeks to the Orthodox in the Ottoman Empire from the fifteenth to the early nineteenth century. The course then examines the nineteenth-century Arabic Christian diaspora, the foundational role of St. Raphael Hawaweeny, the fracturing of the Antiochians in the 1930s and unification of the Archdiocese in 1975. The intensive final week will examine the question of autocephaly, the ill-fated Ligonier Conference of 1994, and the "self-ruled" Archdiocese to the present day. Students will write a term paper utilizing primary and secondary sources on a topic that must be identified and approved by the professor by the fourth week of the semester. *Prerequisite: CH 110.*

Hybrid (online-residential) course, beginning in-person Wednesday, August 25. The class will normally meet online, Wednesdays from 9:15a-11:25a. *The onsite intensive will be held Monday, October 25 through Friday, October 29. Attendance at all onsite sessions is mandatory.*

HOMILETICS 310

Credits: 3 credits

VERY REV. DR SERGIUS HALVORSON

The Art of Christian Rhetoric. This course focuses on applied rhetoric and oral communication skills essential to successful ministry for lay and ordained Church leaders. Students learn the fundamentals of oral communication, beginning with an overview of the essential elements of classical rhetoric, and including contemporary communication theory. A guiding principle of the course is the threefold objective of the oration to teach, delight and persuade. Students will create, deliver and revise several different speeches designed for particular audiences, with specific objectives. This course also includes critical analysis of contemporary and historical speeches and sermons. *Prerequisite: None*

Tuesday, 2:00p–4:45p

LITURGICAL THEOLOGY 366

Credits: 3 credits

THE REV. DR VARGHESE M. DANIEL

The Liturgical Calendar and Feasts of the West Syriac Tradition. This course introduces students to the annual cycle of seasons and major feasts of the West Syriac tradition, focusing primarily on the mystery of incarnation: Annunciation, Birth, Baptism, Passion, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, and Pentecost. Also treated are the remembrances and celebrations of the lives of the saints, especially the Theotokos. *Jurisdictional requirement for M.Div. candidates of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church.*

*Prerequisite: None.***Wednesday, 9:15a–12:00p****OLD TESTAMENT 422**

Credits: 3 credits

REV. DR SILVIU BUNTA

The Inner-Hermeneutics of the Psalter. Throughout early Jewish and Christian exegesis, the interpretations of the Book of Psalms have borne—more than the interpretations of any other books—the additional burden of identifying its speaker(s). For example, both the classical rabbis and the Church Fathers had the intuition that the psalms are written in voices which seek appropriations. This is also true of the interpretation of the psalms in the gospels (e.g., John 10:34-36). This seminar is driven by the question whether this perspective on the Psalter is accurate. As such, the seminar will reverse-engineer the hermeneutical principles at work in the Psalter itself, holding the book not under the modern pressures of analytical and out-referential approaches, but under the ancient expectation of open reference.

*Prerequisite for M.Div. and M.A. students: Second-year standing, minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5, and permission of academic dean.***Thursday, 2:00p–4:45p****PASTORAL THEOLOGY 372**

Credits: 3 credits

VERY REV. DR CHAD HATFIELD

Modern Era Missiology. Beginning with the Russian Mission to Alaska, this course will study the theology, history and praxis of movements and figures associated with missionary efforts that include Roland Allen, Archbishop Anastasios (Yannoulatos), The Evangelical Orthodox (AEOM), Orthodoxy in Guatemala, Bill Black and African outreach by both the Coptic and Ethiopian Churches, Anglican Converts and their mission contributions. *Prerequisite: None*

Thursday, 9:15a–12:00p**PATRISTICS 406**

Credits: 3 credits

REV. DR BOGDAN BUCUR

The Apostolic Fathers. This seminar will study a group of early Christian writings that form the corpus known as “the Apostolic Fathers.” While appropriate attention will be given to traditional background issues (authorship, dating, circumstances, etc.) and to the early Christian realities reflected in these writings (the relationship to biblical Israel and early Judaism; mission and conversions; liturgical, and communal life; persecution and martyrdom; orthodoxy and heresy; the crystallization of a Christian symbolic universe; etc.), the main focus will be on the Christology and Pneumatology of these writings.

*Prerequisite for M.Div. and M.A. students: Second-year standing, minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5, and permission of academic dean.***Tuesday, 2:00p–4:45p**

SACRED ARTS 301

Credits: 3 credits

DR. ROSSITZA B. SCHROEDER

Discovering Sacred Arts. This course introduces and explores fundamental principles common to the theology and practice of sacred arts. Drawing on expertise of our faculty and guest contributions, course sessions will draw on case studies of specific works of art/architecture/music. We will explore the historical context of these arts as well as their function within and/or outside the liturgy, in past and present. The course will also introduce issues of aesthetics, canonicity, tradition, innovation.

Prerequisite: None.

Hybrid (online-residential) course, beginning online Monday, August 23. *The onsite intensive will be held Monday, October 25 through Friday, October 29. Attendance at all onsite sessions is mandatory.*

SPIRITUALITY 316

Credits: 3 credits

DR PETER BOUTENEFF

Prayer and Sanctity. The Church's Tradition features rich resources on the meaning and practice of prayer, primarily through the ascetical writings. Additionally, through the lives of the saints and their liturgical hymnography, the Church teaches about what it means to live a holy life in a broken world. Rather than see prayer as a means to the "end" of sanctity, both are simultaneously process and goal, mutually nourishing each other. Through thoughtful exploration of the Church's teaching, we will seek to gain insight that will nourish our own lives as well as the people to whom we minister to the glory of God. *Prerequisite: None*

Wednesday, 9:15a–12:00p

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY 424

Credits: 3 credits

DR. JOSHUA ROBINSON

Neoplatonism and Byzantine Thought. This course aims to consider several notable aspects of the history of Late Antique and Byzantine engagement with neoplatonic thinkers and ideas. Among topics considered will be the tradition of affirmative and negative theology (rooted in the late-antique interpretation of Plato's Parmenides), and the relationship of Christian teaching on creation with neoplatonic emanationism, as well as the closely related dispute over the eternity of the world. We will give attention to Dionysius, John Philoponus, Maximus the Confessor, Michael Psellos, Nicholas of Methone (and perhaps others) among Christian thinkers, while also considering important background in Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus and Proclus. We will also consider several basic methodological questions: What do we mean by Byzantine Philosophy? What were the main Patristic and Byzantine conceptions of philosophy? What is the relationship of "Byzantine philosophy" to Christian doctrine and theological reflection on the one hand, and to the pagan philosophical heritage on the other? *Prerequisite for M.Div. and M.A. students: Second-year standing, minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5, and permission of academic dean.*

Hybrid (online-residential) course, beginning online Monday, August 23. *The onsite intensive will be held Monday, October 25 through Friday, October 29. Attendance at all onsite sessions is mandatory.*