

Units for 2024

Semester 1

Interpreting the New Testament

The unit gives an introduction to contemporary interpretation of the New Testament by reading it as a collection of different kinds of literature and by exploring the historical, cultural and social backgrounds of the New Testament writings. It introduces some methods used in the exegesis of biblical texts and explores some of the issues surrounding the application of the ancient writings to contemporary contexts. A series of incremental topics will be covered during the semester, presenting both an overview of the literature and specific study of representative sections of biblical material.

Theology and Leadership

This unit is designed to assist in the formation of effective leaders for a healthy, missional church. Students will explore the nature of leadership and ministry practice in the light of biblical theology. Topics may include: visioning, strategic planning, team development, decision-making and effective implementation from a Christian theological and ethical framework; issues of power, authority in decision-making; and developing healthy leadership practices.

Ecotheology

This unit equips students to critically analyse the use of the Bible in ecological discourse and interpret key biblical texts in conversation with wider wisdom regarding the relationship between Creator and Creation (including Indigenous wisdom and scientific discourse) to enable robust application. Engaging with concepts of ecological justice, students will consequently develop an eco-theology for local contexts and articulate holistic, hopeful and collaborative action for today.

Introduction to Christian Spirituality and Discipleship

This unit assists students to become familiar with personal and communal practices of Christian spirituality and discipleship. It both engages them in a personal journey of formation and skills them up to use a range of these practices within their formal and informal ministry contexts, thereby engaging others in Christian formation.

Pauline Letters

Students will develop an understanding of significant historical, geographical, social, cultural and religious factors for the interpretation of Pauline letters, and become familiar with the social setting, literary structure, key theological ideas, and purpose of the letters. Students will engage in close study of one or more Pauline letters. In the process they will acquire necessary exegetical skills for interpreting biblical texts.

Homiletics

This unit offers an introduction to the theology and practice of Christian preaching. It examines the nature of preaching in the context of Christian community and gives attention to such issues as adult pedagogy, speaker authority, listener response, gender and culture awareness, processes of creativity and public speech communication theory. The course will explore the process of sermon preparation and the dynamics of sermon delivery. This will include context analysis, selection and responsible interpretation of biblical texts and themes, the use of appropriate language, images, narratives and structures; and attention to the particulars of voice, non-verbals and style expressed in presentation. In addition to interactive lectures and small group work, the presentation of sermons and short talks in class will give practical opportunity for learning through preaching and listening.

Beginning with Jesus

"No-one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart who has made him known" (John 1:18). Christian theology affirms that the ultimate source of our knowledge of God is what God reveals of Godself through Jesus the Christ. This unit introduces the study of theology, its sources and methods, through the study of Christology. It focusses on Jesus Christ, his life and ministry, his saving death and resurrection and the subsequent reflection of the Church on his person and work.

Community Ministry: Theology, History Contemporary Praxis

This unit will explore theological underpinnings for Community Ministry by drawing upon key texts from the New Testament and accounts from the early Church, as well as paying special attention to the place of the diaconate throughout the history of the church and to diaconal renewal movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including within the Uniting Church in Australia. Key theological motifs for responding to issues facing our contemporary social contexts will also be explored.

Intro to Pastoral Care

This unit provides the foundations for the confident and competent practice of pastoral care. The theological and ethical challenges of offering such care are examined as well as the necessity for considering pastoral care in the wider context of a community of faith. A variety of pastoral issues are presented as case studies in order for students to consider their responses and reflect on their learning from these pastoral situations. Pastoral caring skills are presented for practice and reflection.

Hebrew 1

Unit content includes: learning the particularities of Hebrew grammar and syntax and biblical vocabulary with a view to being able to read and translate elementary Hebrew sentences into English. The unit covers just over half the material in the set text, whereupon Hebrew 2 focuses on the remaining material.

Supervised Theological Field Education

This Supervised Theological Field Education unit provides students with the challenge to establish learning goals appropriate to their learning stage and to the actual ministry context in which they are placed, and to demonstrate the capacity for self-directed learning within the supervisory process. The unit will focus on formation for ministry practice, self-awareness, pastoral identity and appropriate use of ministry skills, including theological reflection on ministry experience and the integration of theological study and ministry practice. LCA professional ministry standards including safeguarding underpin this unit.