

JOURNEY BEGINNINGS
IST 1051 - 1
FALL 2017

INSTRUCTORS:

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JOURNEY DAYS CLASS MEETINGS:

October 8, Sunday, 12:30-7:00

October 12, Thursday, 9:00-4:00 (Journey Retreat)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course is about being a new student in the Journey program at the Iliff School of Theology. It is designed so that you will get to know Iliff, the Iliff faculty, the curriculum, and the logistics about being a Journey student.

We will engage with the critical questions, disciplinary perspectives, and skills needed for theological education. We will delve into what it's like to be an online student, including the technology required for the program. This course encourages your self-reflection and for you to develop a sense of identity and place within the Iliff community and the cohort learning community model.

TEXTBOOK & COURSE MATERIALS

The texts for this course will be weekly readings of journal articles, book chapters, web pages, or blogs that the instructors will upload to *Canvas*. Readings for the course are located under "modules" on *Canvas*.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Develop an understanding of primary curricular areas in the Iliff curriculum.
- Identify strengths and challenges of being an online student.
- Develop good practices for online discussions.
- Articulate Iliff faculty expertise, research focus, and commitments to Iliff and theological education.
- Become familiar with research inquiries within the Iliff online library database.
- Develop a sense of identity and place within Iliff and within the cohort learning community model.
- Enhance time management skills needed for graduate school.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

1. Participation: The success of this class will be greatly influenced by the level of participation of all class members. This course is designed to be a learner centered course with each student responsible for maximizing their own experience. This class depends on the participation of students in order to provide a learning community for one another. Because participation is so central to the learning experience, regular, timely participation in the online and class activities is essential.

Online discussions are areas to share ideas, ask questions, and deepen our understanding of course concepts and practice. Our instructional responsibility is to create a welcoming environment where sharing of different views, opinions, critiques, and expertise are valued and respected. Various learning and teaching styles will be utilized and we also hope to see you be critical and creative in how you present your work.

Student Expectations

1. Invest in the course by establishing a regular and respectful online presence.
2. Genuinely try to learn the concepts, principles, and material by reading and listening; collaborate in the spirit of learning critically and enthusiastically.
3. Respect other students' preparation by being prepared, having read and watched the assigned materials carefully and thoughtfully.
4. Turn in assignments in a timely fashion.
5. Communicate with the instructor when you anticipate being unable to participate in discussions or turning in assignments in a timely manner.

2. Readings/Lectures/Online Discussions: There are weekly online discussions. In an online course, discussions are where the collective aspect of the course “takes place.” It is an area to share ideas, ask questions, and deepen our understanding of course concepts.

Discussion Guidelines:

Our expectation is that you will participate in all discussion threads by responding to one another's posts, asking questions for clarification and deeper meaning. You are welcome to share links, documents and images that may seem relevant. Discussions are a place for critical exploration. It can be serious and lively, critical and fun.

There are no expectations or guidelines about how often you respond to one another. You are all adult learners and we trust that you will engage at the level that you are able. There aren't guidelines that you will respond to a certain number of times, or respond to everyone. Just make an effort when you can, and we are fine with that. You do not need to post an original post before responding to others. Each discussion is worth a certain number of points (usually 2-5 points). Discussions will be graded either complete or incomplete.

Discussions and Small Groups:

There are several ways to participate in discussions and we will utilize different approaches throughout the course.

Entire class discussions. For these discussions, all of you will be in the same discussion and we will encourage using hashtags to organize discussion threads. We use this approach when we think it is valuable for all of you to be in the same discussion. We will use entire class discussions sparingly, but we will use them. For example, we use the entire class discussion for student introductions. We realize that these will be long discussions and with over 100 different posts.

Time management (Small group discussions). You will be randomly assigned into a small group of 7-8 for your weekly time management check ins. These groups remain consistent throughout the entire quarter. We hope that you will gain trust in one another in a small group environment, sharing the joys and challenges in your life as it relates to organizing your time. *These groups will remain the same the entire quarter.*

Other group discussions. Depending on the type of discussion, smaller or larger groups are most beneficial and you will be randomly assigned to these groups throughout the quarter (either in a group of 7-8 or a group of 15-17). *These are randomly assigned and will automatically and randomly change with different discussions.*

3. Faculty Engagement Project: This assignment involves identifying a faculty member that you may wish to pursue an academic relationship with or to learn more about their area of study. The purposes of this assignment is for you to be introduced to one faculty member and for you to learn about the faculty at Iliff as a whole. This assignment will provide a foundation for you learn about the courses, teaching philosophies, and personalities of the Iliff faculty.

Graduate students most successful when they have an academic or mentor connection with 1-2 faculty members during their time of study. Additionally, knowing a faculty member is beneficial if you ever want to pursue independent study (a class where it's just you and the faculty member), or if you need a letter of reference in the future.

There are five parts to this assignment. See *Canvas* for more details.

1. Choose one faculty member to focus on and sign up for that faculty member on the sign-up page in *Canvas*. (Due week 1)
2. Research their background, academic pursuits, and interests by searching Primo (library database), the web, Google scholar, You Tube and any other research means. Look for articles, book and book chapters, presentations, keynote addresses and other published works. (Due week 3)
3. Conduct a 10-minute interview with the faculty member. Instructions on *Canvas* (Due week 4)
4. Participate in the online discussions.
 1. Background/research (Week 3)
 2. Interview (Week 4)
5. Submit interview reflection/notes to your instructors (Week 4)

Timeline- Faculty Engagement Project

Week 1: Sign up for the faculty member interview – Due Sept. 15

Week 2: Research the faculty member and schedule an interview

Weeks 2-4: Interview the faculty member

Week 3: Post in faculty research discussion – Due Sept. 29

Week 4: Post in faculty interview discussion – Due Oct. 6

Week 4: Submit interview reflection/notes – Due Oct. 6

4. Core Areas: We will engage with the six core areas in a variety of ways through readings, mini guest lectures from the faculty, and media content during weeks 7, 8, 9. Instructions and details are located on *Canvas*. For some discussions students will research and discover content to share to elicit conversations in the discussions about the core areas found through a variety of venues including Ted Talks, iTunesU, YouTube, etc.

5. Time Management Check In's:

Time management is the process of organizing and planning how much time you spend on specific tasks and activities. Effective time management is essential for your success as a graduate student. You will have an opportunity to create your own time management plan that entails creating the time and space you need to accomplish your goals. You will have an opportunity to think about and plan how your specific classes, employment, family commitments, fun and leisure, work together in an effective time management plan. Each week you will submit your progress to a small group of your peers (weeks 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8)

6. Final reflection and planning strategy paper

A 5-page reflection paper will be due at the end of the quarter. Details about this assignment is on *Canvas*.

GRADING

Our assumption is that students in a master's program can be expected to produce academic work that is above average (in comparison to undergraduates). Therefore, we expect that you will excel. Assignments/papers will earn an A for exceptional quality. Assignments will earn a B+ when it meets and fulfills all of the requirements of the assignment. Assignments/papers will earn a grade of B or B- if there are minor to moderate shortcomings. Grades below B- are reserved for assignments with major shortcomings.

This course may be taken pass/fail, but you must request this during the first two weeks by emailing the instructors. You do *not* need to provide a justification for your request.

Class Participation	15 points
Online Discussions	30 points
Faculty Engagement Assignment	20 points
Time Management Check Ins	15 points
Final Planning Strategy and Reflection Paper	20 points
TOTAL:	100 POINTS

A: 4.0 = 93-100
A-: 3.7 = 90-92
B+: 3.3 = 87-89
B: 3.0 = 83-86
B-: 2.7 = 80-82
C+: 2.3 = 77-79
C: 2.0 = 73-76
C-: 1.7 = 70-72

Course Topics

Each week will consist of discussions, projects, activities, and/or readings. The course is organized in weekly modules and all of the assignments and activities are located within the modules in *Canvas*.

Module 1 Week 1 - Getting started: Introductions

Module 2 Week 2 - Online Learning/Journey Program

Module 3 Week 3 - Who are the Iliff faculty? (Part 1)

Module 4 Week 4 - Who are the Iliff faculty? (Part 2)

Module 5 Week 5 - Journey Week

Module 6 Week 6 - Learning Communities

Module 7 Week 7 - Core Areas: Constructive Theology; Practical Theology

Module 8 Week 8 - Core Areas: Social Analysis; History

Module 9 Week 9 - Core Areas: Comparative Religions; Sacred Text

Module 10 Week 10 - Wrap Up, Final Reflection Paper

POLICIES AND SERVICES

- **Hybrid Online/In-Person Course Requirements:** It is your responsibility to procure reliable, readily-accessible Internet service in order to fulfill course expectations. Please consider identifying an alternative Internet source in case of technical problems. Computer support is available at support@iliff.edu. On-campus class meetings during Journey week are required. Please be prepared to arrive on time and stay the entire class periods.
- **Degree Learning Goals:** Please take some time to look over the Professional Degree Learning Goals in the Masters Student Handbook.
- **Incompletes:** Incompletes are not allowed in this course, see the Master's Student Handbook for Policies and Procedures.
- **Pass/Fail:** Masters students wishing to take the class pass/fail should discuss this with the instructor by the second week.
- **Academic Integrity and Core Values:** All students are expected to abide by Iliff's statement on Academic Integrity, as published in the Masters Student Handbook. All participants in this class are expected to be familiar with Iliff's Core Values.
- **Accommodations:** Iliff engages in a collaborative effort with students with disabilities to reasonably accommodate student needs. Students are encouraged to contact their assigned advisor to initiate the process of requesting accommodations. The advising center can be contacted at advising@iliff.edu or by phone at 303-765-1146.
- **Writing Lab:** Grammar and organization are important for all written assignments. Additional help is available from the Iliff Writing Lab, which is available for students of any level who need help beginning an assignment, organizing thoughts, or reviewing a final draft.
- **Inclusive Language:** It is expected that all course participants will use inclusive language in speaking and writing, and will use terms that do not create barriers to classroom community.