

VATICAN II
The Theology and Historical Context of the Documents
RGT 3115 HF **M. LAVIN**

This course will study the documents of the Second Vatican Council with a view to understanding their theological foundations, their historical context and development, and their pastoral implications.

Course outline

1. Introduction
2. A Hermeneutic for the Documents (***Book Review Due***)
3. Revelation: *Dei Verbum* and Religious Freedom: *Dignitatis Humanae*
4. Ecclesiology: *Lumen Gentium*
5. Ecclesiology: *Gaudium et Spes*
6. Liturgy: *Sacrosanctum Concilium*
7. - READING WEEK -
8. Ecclesial Structure and Governance: *Christus Dominus*
(***Analysis Paper Due***) *Optatam Totius*
Presbyterorum Ordinis
9. Ecclesial Structure and Governance: *Perfectae Caritatis*
Apostolicam Actuositatem
10. Education and Communications: *Gravissimum Educationis*
(***Topic and preliminary*** *Inter Mirifica*
bibliography for Disputed Issue)
11. Mission: *Ad Gentes Divinitus*
12. Ecumenism and Inter-Faith Dialogue: *Unitatis Redintegratio*
(***Disputed Issue Paper Due***) *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*
Nostra Aetate
13. Synopsis
14. - EXAM WEEK -

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To provide an understanding of the context and teaching of the Second Vatican Council;
- To investigate the process of the Council, and how the documents evolved as formal presentations of church teaching;
- To present the historical context and development of the documents;
- To present a hermeneutic for the documents;
- To articulate contemporary reception of the documents.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The requirements of the course are threefold: 1) careful reading of assigned works; 2) attendance and consistent participation in class discussions; and 3) fulfillment of the written requirements.

- 1) A careful reading of assigned works:
The readings for each class have been chosen as a foundation for the written assignments and for seminar discussion.
- 2) Involvement in class sessions built upon careful preparation by way of study. This means establishing a disciplined method of reading reflectively, such as:
 - a. Taking notes on key ideas in the reading;
 - b. fashioning some mode of personal appropriation of what has been read, such as keeping a journal, belonging to a regular study group, and/or responding in a non-discursive mode (e.g. poetry, drawing, etc.);
 - c. Preparing for class sessions, especially those involving discussion and written assignments.
- 1) The written requirements for the course are as follows:
 - a. A review of Ormond Rush's book, *Still Interpreting Vatican II*
 - b. One in-class discussion paper
 - c. One 5 page analysis paper
 - d. One 5-7 page disputed issue paper

Weighting:	Book report:	20%
	In-class discussion paper	10%
	Analysis paper	30%
	Disputed issue paper	40%

Course Outcomes

By the end of this course students will have

- Read and discussed the sixteen documents of the Second Vatican Council
- Be able to place the development of these documents in their historical and theological context
- Be able to articulate a hermeneutic for interpreting the documents
- Have an increased awareness of how the interpretation and context of the documents affect contemporary ecclesiology and theological discourse

ASSIGNMENT REQUIREMENTS AND SCHEDULE

Book Review - Due January 18

Length: 2-3 pages.

Read Ormond Rush's book, *Still Interpreting Vatican II*, and write a response on the following:

“The meaning of a text is the product of the interpretation of a threefold hermeneutic of the author, text, and receiver.” Explain.

In-class discussion paper – Due week topic is discussed

Length: 2 pages.

The first half-page should consist of three to five bulleted items that highlight significant points from the readings. Note that this should not be a summary of the readings, but points that you deem important for discussion. The remainder of the paper should consist of a theological/pastoral reflection on *one* of the highlighted items. Copies to be distributed to all participants.

Analysis Paper – Due March 1

Length: 5 pages.

An analysis and commentary on *one* of the four constitutions of the Council (*Dei Verbum*, *Lumen Gentium*, *Gaudium et Spes*, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*).

Disputed Issue Paper – Due March 29

Length: 5-7 pages

An analysis of a contemporary disputed issue in the life of the church that illustrates competing

understandings of Vatican II. The paper should research the primary arguments and evaluate their cogency in light of the Second Vatican Council and its aftermath, and discuss implications of the issue in the contemporary context. When formulating your issue and when addressing it in the paper, keep in mind the hermeneutical principles offered by Ormond Rush in *Still Interpreting Vatican II*.

Your paper should evidence the following general principles:

- A clear thesis statement
- Focused argument
- Analytical development
- Critical analysis
- Summation