Course Description:
This course asks the question, “What is the church?” in dialogue with Christian theological figures and schools representing Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox Christian traditions. While one of the aims of this course is that students be conversant with those voices, it ultimately aims at the student’s ability to articulate the ecclesiology of his or her own tradition and to bring that to bear on the contemporary situation and particular problems of Christian practice in church and society.

Method:
This course will be taught primarily in a seminar format centered around a discussion of key readings.

Reading Response Papers
Twice during the semester each student will prepare a 7-8 page response paper on the assigned reading material. This paper should be divided into two equal parts and should (1) briefly summarize what the student understands the author to be saying followed by (2) a critical response and evaluation of what the student understands the author to be saying. The paper should be typed, double-spaced, using a standard 12-pt. font. If the student is the designated reader for that afternoon, enough photocopies should be brought to class so that the professor and each student can have their own copy.

The summary of the reading should not attempt to move page by page, chapter by chapter, but should instead summarize what you understand the author to be saying and how you understand the author to be developing his or her thesis.

The critical response and evaluation of the reading is not a list of questions you have about the reading nor is it more summary, only now in a different form. It is instead an argument or arguments (not merely a claim or a set of claims) for what is helpful, provocative, useful, disturbing, difficult,
Students should be very careful to maintain an equal balance between the two required parts of the paper and to stay within the required page length parameters. At the beginning of the class, the student will read the paper followed by a discussion of the paper and the reading material.

**Participation**
On each of the days you are not preparing a reading response paper and as a way of promoting a lively, meaningful discussion of the reading, you should bring to class your own responses to the reading in the form of bullet points with questions and observations. This is not meant to be a string of quotations that you found important or striking, but examples of your own critical engagement with the reading. What do you want to say about the reading or what questions do you have? The instructor will call on students periodically to provide input from these prepared comments and questions.

**Term Project**
You are asked to write a 18-20 page research paper in which, first, you conduct an ecclesiological analysis of a contemporary issue, problem, or practice in the church or society. The paper begins by unpacking that issue, problem, or practice, as one that is ecclesiological (think back to Cavanaugh’s examination of “torture” as an ecclesiological problem in *Torture and Eucharist*). The question here is how this issue, problem, or practice, bears upon how we are to understand or re-think the nature and mission of the church (or vice-versa). The second section of the paper then moves into a more systematic ecclesiological reflection in dialogue with the issue, problem, or practice raised in the first section and in dialogue with whatever thinkers or resources the student argues are helpful. The third section is more strategic or prescriptive, and builds upon the ecclesiological work of the paper in order to make recommendations about future Christian practice. All three sections should be roughly the same length. Students not in the practical theology Th.D. program may write a paper in the above format or propose to the professor some other 18-20 page paper on another topic with relevance to the course.

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1 Please note the following distinction between commonly confused terms:

- **Ecclesiastical**: “of or relating to the church as an established institution” (e.g., “our church follows an ecclesiastical calendar”)
- **Ecclesial**: “of or relating to the church or to the church’s nature” (e.g., “Christian existence is ecclesial existence.”)
- **Ecclesiological**: “of or relating to the understanding, doctrine, or concept of the church” (e.g. “Church architecture has enormous ecclesiological significance”)
Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Response Papers/Participation</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Project</td>
<td>30%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Class Participation**
If, in the professor’s opinion, the student is missing too many class sessions or is not actively participating, this will affect the student’s final grade —sometimes seriously. Class participation is a key to meeting the course objectives. Please consult with the professor ahead of time if you believe you will have difficulties in this area.

**Inclusive Language**
The instructor will conscientiously attempt and all students are urged to use inclusive language, images, and metaphors in both their speaking and writing.

**Students with Disabilities**
Any students in this course who have a disability that might prevent them from fully demonstrating their abilities should meet with the instructor as soon as possible to initiate disability verification and discuss accommodations that may be necessary to ensure your full participation in the successful completion of course requirements.

**Plagiarism**
Do not plagiarize.

**Late Policy**
Work will not be accepted late.

A church engaging the world
# Course Calendar

Note: All items in green are available on the Blackboard website (http://blackboard.bu.edu/). All other items should be purchased or retrieved some other way. They should be placed on reserve in the library as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>September 6</strong> – Introduction to the Course</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Ecclesiology Reader</strong>, 1-86</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>September 13</strong> – Intersections: Ecclesiology, Ethics, and Practical Theology</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cavanaugh, William T.</td>
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<td><strong>September 20</strong> – Historical Background: Medieval and Reformation Periods</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Ecclesiology Reader</strong>, 87-210</td>
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<td><strong>September 27</strong> – A Mennonite Perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yoder, John Howard</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>October 4</strong> – Feminist Perspectives</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Ecclesiology Reader</strong>: Ruether, Schüssler Fiorenza, Williams, Isaac of Stella, Hildegard of Bingen, Russell</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td></td>
<td>Russell, Letty</td>
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<td>Kwok, Pui-lan</td>
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<td><strong>October 11</strong> – A Korean-American Perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Ecclesiology Reader</strong>, 211-24</td>
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<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jung Young Lee</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>October 18</strong> – A Postliberal Perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Ecclesiology Reader</strong>, 224-46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Title</td>
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Lindbeck, George


### October 25 – Neomonasticism & The Emerging Church Movement

*Ecclesiology Reader*: Here O Lord Your Servants Gather, Martin Luther King, Jr., Lesslie Newbigin, M. M. Thomas, World Council of Churches

The Rutba House (ed)

2005 | *School(s) for Conversion: 12 Marks of a New Monasticism*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books. |

### November 1 – Roman Catholic Ecclesiology

*Ecclesiology Reader*: de Lubac, Butler

Gaillardetz, Richard R.


Flannery, Austin (Ed.)


### November 8 – African Perspectives, The Spirit, and Eschatology

*Ecclesiology Reader*: Küng, Moltmann, Pannenberg, Volf, Johnson, Yong.

Bujo, Bénézet


Daneel, Martinus

2004 | “The Church as Healing and Liberating Institution,” | in *African Earthkeepers*: |
### Wholistic Interfaith Mission
Maryknoll: Orbis, 137-63.

Healey, Joseph and Donald Sybertz


Oduyoye, Mercy


### Also recommended

Msaﬁri, Aidan G.


Majawa, Clement


Oduyoye, Mercy


### November 15 – A Theo-Dramatic Approach


Healy, Nicholas


### November 22 – No class

### November 29 – Liberationist Perspectives

*Ecclesiology Reader*: Segundo, Cone, Gutiérrez, Romero

Boff, Leonardo


### Also recommended

Boff, Leonardo

1986 *Church, Charism, and Power: Liberation Theology and the Institutional Church*. Crossroads.

Segundo, Juan Luis


Cone, James


Gutiérrez, Gustavo


### December 6 – An Orthodox Perspective

*Ecclesiology Reader*: Zizioulas

Schmemann, Alexander

1991 *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy*. St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press.