

St. Joseph's Seminary
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State Persecution of the Church in Modernity:
An Historical Study through the Lenses of Source Documents and Film
Spring 2021

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Course Description

Starting from a discussion of the tensions long held between the Church and the state, as well as the Church's understanding of martyrdom, this course travels around the globe in the modern era in a chronological study of persecutions of the Church, Catholicism, and Catholics by the government. Class sessions will offer a narrative of the key events, personalities, political programs, and ideas behind particular persecutions, as well as a look at source documents (laws, manifestoes, propaganda) which make clear the crisis of conscience faced by faithful Catholics living under unjust regimes. Study materials for the course consist mainly of films, but also of some excerpts from literature and music, which illuminate the historical situation, sometimes revealing particular agendas through bias or historical inaccuracy.

Course Objectives

By the conclusion of the course, students will have:

1. deepened their understanding of Catholic theology through a systematic study of law, government, and morality that is faithful to the Magisterium;
2. become familiar with the sources and methods of historical inquiry, thereby gaining a deeper understanding of living as a faithful Catholic in the modern situation;
3. developed their ability to draw upon source documents, film, literature, and music to explain the truths of the faith in the context of the New Evangelization;
4. developed their critical thinking skills for examining the past and sharpened their consciences in understanding justice and injustice in the current time;
5. deepened their relationship with Christ placing their integrated knowledge of history at the service of the Church.

Instructional Methods: Lecture and student participation

Required Texts: None.

Film and printed resources in the list below are on reserve in the library

Course Requirements and Assessment:

A. (25%) *Participation in class discussion.*

In this online format, students are expected to be present to the class via video, answering questions, offering their thoughts, and posing queries.

B. (25%) *Film reflections.*

Students will write a one-page description of two films in the course material list (2 pages total, single-spaced). Reflections should include a brief synopsis of one key philosophical/conscience issue in the film, describing how the moral choice is set up and portrayed in the film, the circumstances in the film which force an issue of conscience, or the embodiment of a philosophical problem. A resolution/correction to the issue should be offered in the final part of the reflection, and students may wish to comment on the historical accuracy or inaccuracy of the film. **Due April 16 by midnight.**

C. (50%) *Parish film guide.*

Students will select a film not on the course materials list that illustrates a moment of persecution by the state. Imagining that they would one day show the film in their parish, students will create a 3–5 page film guide that facilitates discussion with a parish group viewing the film. The film guide should include: major film credits (producer, director, screenplay, music, main characters in cast, and date of release), a plot synopsis, a summary of the historical setting for the film, a list of major historical inaccuracies in the film (if applicable), one or two key philosophical/conscience issues raised in the film, a Catholic perspective on these philosophical/conscience issues, and three discussion questions they could pose to parishioners viewing the film. More lengthy examples of film guides can be seen at filmeducation.org if students need a model for content, but the model found there should not be imitated in length.

Attendance - Attendance at all Saint Joseph’s Seminary classes is mandatory. All absences must be communicated by the student to the professor, the Dean of Seminarians and the Academic Dean for seminarians and to the professor and the Associate Dean for non-seminarian students before the following class session takes place. If a student misses 25% of their required class sessions, they will not be permitted to complete the course. This policy is in keeping with St. Joseph’s withdrawal policies. Thus, students under these circumstances will risk receiving a failing grade for the course. Exceptions to this policy due to extraordinary circumstances will be evaluated by the Academic Dean.

Grading System

A	93-100	C+	77-79
A-	90-92	C	73-77
B+	87-89	C-	70-72
B	83-87	F	0-69
B-	80-82		

For more detail, refer to the St. Joseph’s Seminary Academic Bulletin.

Auditors

All students who audit courses who attend all class sessions receive an official grade of “Audit” on their transcript. Auditors are not required to submit course assignments.

SUBMISSION OF ACADEMIC WORK AND DEADLINES – All required work for each course is to be submitted by the student to the professor according to the due dates established

in the course syllabus. All St. Joseph’s Seminary students are subject to the guidelines enumerated below if coursework is not submitted on time:

- **LATE SUBMISSION OF ACADEMIC WORK** – Professors, at their discretion, can accept late submissions of academic work. If a professor accepts a late submission, one half-letter grade will be deducted from the grade of the assignment for each day that it is late (e.g., if a paper is three days late, the highest grade which it can be given is a B). The date of reference for the late submission of an assignment will be the due date as indicated on the course syllabus.
- **EXTENSIONS** – If, for serious reasons, a student wishes to request an extension for an assignment (paper or exam), the student must make arrangements with the professor at least two weeks prior to the assignment’s due date. This request is granted at the professor’s discretion. If an extension is granted, the student must file a “Request for Extension Form” (found on our website, www.dunwoodie.edu), which is to be completed, signed by the Professor and the student, and submitted to the Academic Dean (for seminarians) or to the Associate Dean (for non-seminarian students) two weeks prior to the assignment’s due date. The maximum duration for an extension is two weeks. For serious reasons, exceptions to this policy can be granted by the Academic Dean.
- **INCOMPLETE GRADE** – If, for serious reasons, a professor wishes to grant a student the grade of Incomplete (“I”) for a course, the approval of the Academic Dean is required. The professor is to submit a formal request (the form for which is found on our website www.dunwoodie.edu, which requires the reason for the request and the agreed due date for the completion of all course work) to the Academic Dean prior to the end of the semester. If the grade of Incomplete is granted, the maximum duration of an Incomplete grade is six weeks, at which point the grade is automatically changed to a grade of Failure. For serious reasons, exceptions to this policy can be granted by the Academic Dean.
- **FAILURES** – Any student who receives a grade of Failure will have the opportunity to make up the course at the discretion of the Academic Dean, although the failure will remain on the student’s transcript and will be factored into the student’s grade point average.

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC FRAUD – Plagiarism or academic fraud of any type will not be tolerated at Saint Joseph’s Seminary. If plagiarism or cheating is suspected, a professor is to contact the Academic Dean immediately with the paper or exam in question. If an initial review of the evidence deems the suspicion to be credible, the Academic Dean convenes an ad hoc committee of three Professors from the full-time faculty to review the evidence. If the committee deems that plagiarism or academic fraud has occurred, the Academic Dean thereafter requests a meeting with the student in which the student has the opportunity to explain their work and the evidence. If no credible explanation is proffered, the student receives an automatic failure for the course, various disciplinary measures are considered and the Rector and the Faculty will review the student’s continued matriculation at the Seminary.

Course Outline:

	Topic	Course Assignment
Jan. 25	Introduction, Investiture Controversy (11 th -12 th c.) Reformation in Germany (16 th -17 th c.)	<i>Murder in the Cathedral</i> – T.S. Eliot (1951 screenplay adaptation by Eliot and Hoellering)
Feb. 1	Reformation in England	<i>A Man for All Seasons</i> (1966 film)

Feb. 8	Japanese <i>Kakure Kirishitan—Hidden Christians</i> (17 th –19 th c.)	<i>Silence</i> (<i>Chinmoku</i> , 1971 film)
Feb. 22	The Enlightenment and the Question of Papal Primacy and the Authority of the Absolute Monarchy (17 th –19 th c.): Gallicanism, Febronianism, Ultramontanism, Josephinism	<i>Candide</i> (Leonard Bernstein's musical, 1988 BBC production?)
March 1	The Suppression of the Jesuits (1759–1773)	<i>The Mission</i> (1986 film)
March 8	The French Revolution	Student's choice between <i>Dialogues of the Carmelites</i> (F. Poulenc opera) or <i>To Quell the Terror</i> (William Bush book) or <i>Dialogue des Carmelites</i> (Bernanos, adapted to film, 1984) or <i>Le Dialogue des Carmelites</i> (Bernanos, adapted to film, 1960)
March 15	Legal Separation of Church and State: Germany (Kulturkampf, 1871–1887); Switzerland (Konfessionelle Ausnahmeartikel, 1872–2001); France (State Secularism [Laïcité])	<i>I Accuse!</i> (1958 film)
March 22	Mexican Revolution (1910), Constitution (1917), Persecution of the Church (1917–1940) and Cristero War (1926–29)	<i>For Greater Glory</i> (2012 film)
March 29	Russian Revolution (1917) and the Soviet Union—an Atheist State	<i>The Cross and the Mauser</i> (1925 film). In class: footage of restoration of Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Moscow (in the 1990s)
April 5	NO CLASS – Easter Monday	
April 12	Second Spanish Republic (1931) and Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), Film reflections due midnight, April 16th	<i>Un Dios Prohibido</i> (2013 film). In class: excerpts from Catalan anarchist-socialist documentary
April 19	Nazi Germany (1933–1945)	<i>The Ninth Day</i> (2004 film), or <i>Priestblock 25487: A Memoir of Dachau</i> (2007 book)
April 26	Persecution in Modern Times	<i>Of Gods and Men</i> (2010 film)
May 3	Film Guide Due, May 7th by midnight	