



Institute for Black Catholic Studies
XAVIER UNIVERSITY *of* LOUISIANA

2025 Continuing Education and Enrichment (C&E) Course Offerings
June 29-July 18, 2025

Ms. Valerie Shields, M.A.R.S., Interim Associate Director for C&E Programs

C&E Programs provide lifelong learning and spiritual formation for pastoral leaders, clergy, religious, administrators, teachers and others who minister with Black communities or serve in multi-cultural settings. These featured courses offer unique opportunities for students to grow in their understandings of Black Catholicism and its impact on their ministry, community and the Church at-large. Students are graded on a pass/fail basis and will receive 1.5 CEUs for each course successfully completed. There is a limit of 15 students per class unless otherwise noted. Check the IBCS website <https://www.xula.edu/ibcs/> for other program updates. Applicants can access the 2025 C&E program application at <https://gradapply.xula.edu/apply/>.

Week 1: June 30 – July 4, 2025

Africana Reading of Exodus. Investigate use of the exodus tradition in 1) biblical and post biblical sources; 2) the “freedom narratives” that chronicle the movement from enslavement of the “middle passage” to “freedom”, and 3) later Black literature and the civil rights movement and in the new African diaspora. **Stephen Breck Reid, Ph.D.** (M-F 8:45-11:45am).

Black Approaches to Catechesis. This course will focus on catechesis – faith formation – using Black cultural expressions (ritual, storytelling, music, imagery), Sacred Scripture and religious education texts of the Catholic Church. **Cassandra Will, Th.M.** (M-F 8:45-11:45am).

Tracing the Color Purple: Exploring Womanist Theology. More than 40 years ago, Alice Walker birthed the term womanism and provided one of the earliest demonstrations of womanist spirit through her novel turned film “The Color Purple.” Since then, womanism has gone through several waves. Each wave deepens the commitments of womanists in religious studies and theology to center the experience, knowledge, and liberation of Black people. **Nicole Symmonds, Ph.D.** (M-F 1:45-4:45pm).

Black Religious Expression: Holistic and Holy. Learn here how to effectively incorporate the arts - spoken word, drama and song – in pastoral ministry, presentation and classroom settings. Celebrating the Black aesthetic in

community encourages dialogue, healing and remembrance. **Sunni Patterson, B.A.** (M-F 1:45-4:45pm).

Week 2: July 7- July 11, 2024

Preaching from the Pews. Ineffective preaching is a challenge in our communities. Study ways that the laity can help clergy become better preachers and strategies that help clergy reinforce their preaching skills! We hope to rekindle the fire in the pulpit with the fire in the pews! **Fr. Manuel Williams, C.R., Th.M.** (M-F 8:45-11:45am).

Black Celebration – Explores the rich theological, cultural, and spiritual dimensions of Black Catholic liturgical practice through an embodied, celebratory lens. Students will engage the matter of worship as a profound act of spiritual resistance, cultural affirmation, and communal healing for Black Catholics through the exploration of key texts, visual cultures, and interactive exercises. **Nicole Symmonds, Ph.D.** (M-F 8:45-11:45am).

How We Worship Is What We Believe. Explore how inculturation of the Eucharistic Liturgy requires that Black Catholic worship reflect what we believe and inform how we live. We who believe are called to be committed disciples of Christ. Our daily lives must correspond with our Eucharistic celebration. **Fr. Roy A. Lee, Ph.D.** (M-F 1:45-4:45pm).

Faith, Health and Justice. How do our faith traditions and concepts of justice impact decisions about the health of individuals and communities today? Informed by Catholic Social Teaching, Christian theologians, and medical ethicists, students will learn foundational concepts of healthcare and justice. **Lashaunda Reese, Ph.D.** (M-F 1:45-4:45pm).

Week 3: July 14-July 18, 2024

Facing the Racialization of America. Catholic Social Teaching affirms the dignity of the human person and asserts that we are all one human family. This course will bring awareness to the sin of racism in the context of U.S. Catholicism by delving into the pastoral letter *Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love* and other works written by leading Black theologians. **Joyce Jones, ThM** (M-F, 8:45-11:45AM).

Give Us This Day: Evangelization for These Times. What do people of God do to get through the challenges and changes of our world? How do we help others to encounter Jesus, to grow in relationship with God? The playbook for outreach and evangelization is found in "The Acts of The Apostles". We will journey

through "The Acts" for practical insights for evangelizing in these times. **Therese Wilson Favors, M.A.** (M-F, 8:45-11:45AM).

Sexuality, Gender, Race and a New Theology of Black Embodiment. Participants will engage a number of questions: How are the experiences of LGBTQ+ persons changing our understanding of God and ministry formation? On these questions, what does a welcoming Church look like to Gen Z? What difference does our shared Blackness make when we are divided on these topics? **Craig Ford, Ph.D.** (M-F 1:45-4:45pm).

Music Ministry. Explore the rich history of music ministry in the church and its relevance to biblical teachings. Introducing practical techniques and strategies, students will learn to create worship experiences that engage and spiritually uplift the assembly. **Kim Harris, Ph.D.** (M-F 8:45-11:45am).

SREP 0001 Elders Retreat: Renewed - Revived- Ready! African American Elders (age 62+) spend the week in prayer, reflection, discussion and recreation. Come celebrate the legacy of eldership in the Black Catholic community. Let the Spirit renew, revive, and get you ready in the spirit of wisdom that continues to sustain our community. Limit 15 retreatants. **Chaplain Thelma Lucas, Th.M. and Fr. John Odeyemi, Ph.D.** (M-F 9:00-11am and 2:00-4pm).

11/22/24