

Sacred Heart University

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New Department of Catholic Studies Announced

Michelle Loris, *Sacred Heart University*



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Sacred Heart University has announced the formation of a Department of Catholic Studies, the goal of which is to administer a key component of the University's core curriculum, the seminars in the Catholic intellectual tradition, as well as an interdisciplinary minor in Catholic studies.

"Both symbolically and functionally, the establishment of the department affirms Sacred Heart University's mission, its Catholic identity and the interdisciplinary nature of the Catholic intellectual tradition," says Robin L. Cautin, dean of SHU's College of Arts and Sciences. "At this moment in the university's history, the Department of Catholic Studies is an organic development that affirms who we are as a Catholic university."

Cautin says the new department will serve to connect interdisciplinary and intercollegiate collaboration in the service of engaging SHU students in the primary and affiliated texts related to the Catholic intellectual tradition.

"The creation of the Department of Catholic Studies underscores the University's mission, notes Professor Michelle Loris, chair of the new department. "Because of the interdisciplinary and intercollegiate nature of Catholic studies, this is the only department intentionally dedicated to integrating the richness and breadth of the Catholic intellectual tradition for all students and faculty across the University. The vision and development of this department further positions the University as a leader in Catholic higher education."

Working in concert with various University offices—such as Mission and Catholic Identity, Campus Ministry, Study Abroad and Service Learning—the new department will provide the structural basis from which to develop, implement and oversee curricular and co-curricular programs; create and nurture institutional partnerships; and pursue grant opportunities.

"The foundation of the Department of Catholic Studies is an important step in the growth of Sacred Heart University, and I look forward to seeing this interdisciplinary effort grow in its mission in the coming years," says SHU President John J. Petillo. "The new department is a reflection of a broader change that is represented by the new core curriculum. This will also

specifically enhance students' experience and understanding of the Catholic intellectual tradition."