

Theology 525: Integrating Seminar in Spirituality
M.A. in Spirituality, Bellarmine University
Spring Semester, 2008

This online syllabus should be used to gain a better understanding of the content and focus of a course. The syllabus given out in the class may differ from this online version and its content supersedes that of the online syllabus.

Class Meetings:

Thursdays (February 7 – May 1, 2008) from 6:30 – 9:30 p.m.
Room 206, Gardencourt, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Faculty:

Professor Carol J. Cook

Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary – Office: Schlegel Hall

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Course description:

At the end of the cohort experience, students will assess their development—individually and collectively—in terms of having defined Christian Spirituality as not another kind of life, but about the whole of human life in its depth dimensions.

Goals and objectives:

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to interpret biblical texts and historical theological texts as sources for contemporary Christian theology.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to understand convergence and consensus in sacramental theology and praxis across a spectrum of Christian churches.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to correlate social justice concerns with biblical and historical models and their ecclesial and personal expressions.
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to interpret contemporary literary art (fiction) as an imaginative source for Christian spirituality.

Required books and Articles:

1. Dreyer, Elizabeth and Mark S. Burrows, eds., *Minding the Spirit: The Study of Christian Spirituality*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.
2. Erdrich, Louise. *Love Medicine*. New York: Perennial/HarperCollins, 1993.

3. Lathrop, Gordon W. "A Rebirth of Images: On the Use of the Bible in Liturgy," *Worship* 58 (1984) 291-304.
4. Ortiz, Dianna. "The Color of God," *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality* 4:2 (Fall 2004) 195-202.
5. Peterson, Eugene H. "Saint Mark: The Basic Text for Christian Spirituality." In *Exploring Christian Spirituality: An Ecumenical Reader*, ed. Kenneth J. Collins. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000. pp. 327-338.
6. Sheldrake, Philip. *Spirituality and Theology: Christian Living and the Doctrine of God* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1998.
7. Tyson, John R. ed., *Invitation to Christian Spirituality: An Ecumenical Anthology*. New York: Oxford, 1999.

Course Requirements:

1. Students will be active participants in class discussions. This will include taking responsibility for: (a) a summary of salient points of the presentation and discussion during one class period (TBA: preparing a concise 1-page summary "integrative learning capsule" to be distributed to classmates at the following class meeting); and (b) leading a brief "opening worship" at one of the class meetings. (30 %)
2. Students will complete four short (TBA, about 3 pp. each) responses to questions on class readings, as assigned (60%)
3. Students will prepare in advance (for distribution at least 48 hours before the designated class meeting) a list of reflective questions for discussion. (10%).

Late Work Policy:

Students are expected to meet deadlines for written work and to prepare in advance the assigned readings and requisite notes in order to participate actively and contribute to the seminar discussions. The grade for any late work will be reduced a full "letter-grade" for every 3 day interval beyond the announced deadlines.

A word on inclusive language: we are reading Christian writings from a variety of centuries and settings. Both these original authors and their translators exhibit a number of understandings of the ways to speak both of the richness of God's relations with us and of the diversities of the human race. We, in reading them, must think also of the insights and commitments of our own time and context—commitments to speak of God with the reverence and humility our traditions enjoin and to embrace all God's people in our speech. While these commitments can be honored in a number of ways, it is essential that we show ourselves mindful of them—and thus of the difference between listening attentively to the wisdom of writings from the past and echoing their words exactly in our own speech.

Academic Honesty Policy:

“[We] strongly endorse and will follow the academic honesty policy as published in Bellarmine’s Catalog 2007-2009 (pp. 48-59) and in the 2007-2008 Student Handbook (pp. 16-19); both documents are available online via the student portal on the University’s intranet. Students must be fully aware of what constitutes academic dishonesty; claims of ignorance cannot be used to justify or rationalize dishonest acts. Academic dishonesty can take a number of forms, including but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, aiding and abetting, multiple submissions, obtaining unfair advantage, and unauthorized access to academic or administrative systems or information. Definitions of each of these forms of academic dishonesty are provided in the academic honesty section of the 2007-2009 Student Handbook. All detected instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, and sanctions will be imposed as dictated by the policy. Penalties range from failing an assignment or test to dismissal from the University, depending, in part, on the student’s previous record of academic dishonesty. On the second offense during a student’s academic career, as a minimum additional penalty, the Provost will immediately suspend the student for the semester in which the most recent offense took place. On the third offense, the SVPAA will immediately dismiss the student from the University.”

In this particular course—Theology 525—a ZERO will be given for any work evidencing any academic dishonesty. You will *not* be allowed to make up the assignment in any way.

Bellarmino students are expected to demonstrate a high standard of academic honesty in all aspects of their academic work and university life. Without intellectual integrity there can be no genuine learning. Academic dishonesty represents a direct attack on this integrity. In taking tests and examinations, completing assignments and laboratory work, writing papers, and using information technology, students are expected to perform honestly.

You are especially reminded *not* to present work found on the Internet as your own work; identify all such work as to web site address(es), author(s), etc.

(8) DISABILITY ACCOMODATION / SERVICES

Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Disability Services Coordinator. Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor. The Disability Services Coordinator is located in the Counseling Center, phone 452-8480.

Grading Scale:

A = Excellent (4 quality points earned per credit hour)
A- = (3.68 quality points)

B+ = (3.34 quality points)
B = Good (3 quality points earned per credit hour)
B- = (2.68 quality points)
C+ = (2.34 quality points)
C = Average (2 quality points earned per credit hour)
F = Failing (0 quality points earned per credit hour)
W= Withdraw (0 quality points earned per credit hour)
X = Deferred (0 hours, 0 points)

Attendance policy: Students are expected to attend and actively participate in each scheduled class meeting. If serious illness or a family emergency keeps you from attending, contact the instructors—in advance if possible. Unexcused absences will result in a conference with the instructors and, when appropriate, to consequences in grading.

TENTATIVE OUTLINE & SCHEDULE FOR THE COURSE

- February 7 ***Christian Spirituality: The New Testament as Source***
 READ: Eugene H. Peterson, “Saint Mark: The Basic Text for Christian Spirituality,” in Collins, *Exploring Christian Spirituality*, pp. 327-38.
 Burton Christie, “The Cost of Interpretation: Sacred Texts and Ascetic Practice in Desert Spirituality,” In Dreyer & Burrows, *Minding the Spirit*, 100-107.
- February 14 ***Spirituality: “The Whole of Life in Depth”***
 READ: Philip Sheldrake, “Living our Theology,” “The Divorce of Spirituality and Theology,” and “Partners in Conversation,” in *Spirituality and Theology*, pp. 3-95.
 J. Matthew Ashley, “The Turn to Spirituality? The Relation between Theology and Spirituality,” in *Minding the Spirit*, pp. 159-70.
- February 21 ***Historical Spirituality: Case Studies***
 READ: Sheldrake, “A Practical Theology of the Trinity: Julian of Norwich” and “Spiritual Freedom in Ignatius of Loyola, *Spirituality and Theology*, pp. 99-164.
 Jon Sobrino, “Monsenor Romero, a Salvadoran and a Christian,” in *Minding the Spirit*, pp. 229-40.
- February 28 ***Spirituality and Sacramentality***
 READ: Gordon W. Lathrop, “A Rebirth of Images: On the Use of the Bible in Liturgy,” *Worship* 58 (1984) 291-304.

- March 3-7 ***Bellarmino Spring Break (no classes)***
- March 13 ***Spirituality and Justice***
 READ: Dianna Ortiz, "The Color of God," *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality* 4:2 (Fall 2004) 195-202.
 Lisa Dahill, "Reading from the Underside of Selfhood: Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Spiritual Formation," in *Minding the Spirit*, pp. 249-66.
- March 20 ***Maundy Thursday (no class)***
- March 21 ***Good Friday – Ecumenical Way of the Cross** (Downtown Louisville –**from 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.** beginning at the Federal Court House)
- March 24-28 ***LPTS Research and Study week (no class)***
- April 3 ***Spirituality and the Sacraments: An Ecumenical Case Study***
 READ: TBA
- April 10 ***Spirituality and Sacred Place***
 READ: Philip Sheldrake, "'Place' and Human Identity," in *Spirituality and Theology*, pp. 165-202.
 Sheldrake, "Christan Spirituality as a Way of Living Publicly: A Dialectic of the Mystic and the Prophetic," in *Minding the Spirit*, pp. 282-98.
- April 17 ***Eco-Theology and Spirituality***
 READ: Thomas Berry, "An Ecologically Sensitive Spirituality," in *Minding the Spirit*, pp. 241-9.
 Wendy Wright, "'A Wide and Fleshly Love': Images, Imagination, and the Study of Christian Spirituality," in *Minding the Spirit*, pp. 314-333.
- April 24 ***Spirituality and Art***
 READ: Louise Erdrich, *Love Medicine*
- May 1 ***Reconsidering your Spiritual Autobiography: Retractions***
 READ: Bernard McGinn, "The Language of Inner Experience in Christian Mysticism," in *Minding the Spirit*, pp. 135-151.
 Final thoughts