

SPIRITUAL FORMATION IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE SYLLABUS

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study in the history of Christian spiritual formation from the patristic era through its contemporary evangelical expressions designed to introduce students to the rich resources of the Christian tradition available for providing nurture and guidance in soul care.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

A. Cognitive

Upon the successful completion of this course, the students will:

1. Identify key themes and practices that can be traced across the tradition of Christian spiritual formation,
2. Recognize the continuities and discontinuities that exist across various eras of the church's history with respect to spiritual formation,
3. Discern ways in which the contemporary theology and practice of Christian spiritual formation could be informed and enriched by a more thorough historical grounding.

B. Affective

Upon the successful completion of this course, the students will:

1. Appreciate the profound example of Christian faith and virtue set by the various figures considered in the course.

C. Behavioral

Upon the successful completion of this course, the students will:

1. Be stimulated to integrate the key ideas and practices from the tradition of Christian spirituality into their own devotional lives,
2. Be stimulated to integrate the key ideas and practices from the tradition of Christian spirituality into their philosophy and practice of ministry.

III. COURSE TEXTBOOKS

A. Required

Bradshaw, Paul. *Early Christian Worship: A Basic Introduction to Ideas and Practice*. 2nd Edition. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2010.

Sittser, Gerald L. *Water from a Deep Well: Christian Spirituality from Early Martyrs to Modern Missionaries*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007.

Van Engen, John, ed. *Educating People of Faith: Exploring the History of Jewish and Christian Communities*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004.

B. Suggested

Jones, Cheslyn, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold. *The Study of Spirituality*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

C. Supplementary Bibliography

Additional bibliography to be distributed in class.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Attendance and Participation (10%)

Attendance at every session is important. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class period. The student will be allowed four absences without grade penalty (in accordance with the Student Handbook). If you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and to acquire copies of handouts and/or articles distributed in class.

In addition to attending class, you are expected to come prepared to actively participate in class discussions (asking relevant questions, making appropriate comments, sharing personal experiences). In order to participate more fully in class discussions, it is recommended that you read the relevant chapters in the course text and/or any articles distributed in class prior to the session in which that material is to be discussed.

B. Reading (20%)

There are three required textbooks for this course. The student will be required to submit a reading report at the conclusion of the course indicating the percentage of the required reading completed. **DUE: Finals week**

C. Research Paper (35%)

The student will prepare a **12-15 page** paper that focuses on one key figure discussed in the course lectures or reading material. First, the paper should be careful to situate the selected figure within his or her historical context and should consider the historical stream out of which he or she emerges. Second, the paper should summarize and critically interact with the selected figure's teaching on a key theme or practice in spiritual formation, giving careful consideration to the figure's treatment of relevant biblical material as well as his or her continuity and/or discontinuity with earlier figures in the history of Christian spirituality. **DUE: November 9**

D. Course Integration Paper (35%)

The student will prepare a **12-15 page** paper responding to the assigned reading by identifying 3 to 5 key themes or practices that emerge from the course reading that could further inform and enrich contemporary evangelical spiritual formation. The paper should discuss the ways in which these themes/practices are dealt within different historical eras and by key figures discussed in the course. Careful attention should be given to where various figures under consideration converge with and diverge from one another in their respective treatments of these themes. The paper should conclude with a discussion of the ways in which the historical treatment of these themes/practices might shape contemporary evangelical spiritual formation and the student's own life and ministry. **DUE: December 14**

V. COURSE POLICIES

A. Letter/Numerical Grade Scale

A+ 99-100	B+ 91-93	C+ 83-85	D+ 75-77	F 0-69
A 96-98	B 88-90	C 80-82	D 72-74	
A- 94-95	B- 86-87	C- 78-79	D- 70-71	

A = Work of *distinctive* quality.

A-, B+, B = Work of *superior* quality.

B-, C+, C = Work of *acceptable* quality.

C-, D = Work of *inadequate but passing* quality.

F = Failure to do minimal work required for a passing grade.

B. Late Assignments

Late assignments will be subject to a penalty of 4% for each business day beyond their due date. In cases of extreme personal emergency the student should contact the professor as soon as possible to make arrangements to fulfill the requirements of the assignment in a timely manner.

C. Cheating and Plagiarism

All work submitted for this course should be your own. Cheating and/or plagiarism will result in an automatic *zero* on the assignment in question (in accordance with the Student Handbook). Cheating involves presenting another person's work as though it was your own. Plagiarism means using words, ideas, or information from a source without giving appropriate credit to that source (either in the text, a parenthetical note, or in a footnote). It is important to underscore the fact that this does not merely refer to using specific words but to ideas more generally. Even if you are paraphrasing someone else's thoughts, you must cite your source. *When in doubt, use a footnote!*

D. Language and Style

All written submissions should be carefully proof-read and should consistently follow Turabian style where appropriate.

All written submissions should strive to use gender-inclusive language. While this has become standard academic practice, this request is not merely an attempt at “political correctness.” As a gospel-shaped, gospel-centered community of learning, we have compelling reasons to think, write, and speak in such a way as to insure that none are either intentionally or inadvertently excluded by our use of language. Consider using “humans,” “persons,” “humanity,” or “humankind” rather than “man” or “men” when referring to human beings in general. Consider alternating between the use of “he” and “she” as generic pronouns or substituting the use of the plural (“they,” “them,” “their”) when appropriate.

VI. COURSE SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

DTS does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the operation of any of its programs and activities. To avoid discrimination the student is responsible for informing the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities and the course instructor of any disabling condition that will require modifications.

VII. COURSE LECTURES AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

No.	Date	Topic	Assignments
1	8/29	Course Introduction	
2	8/31	Tracing Themes across the Tradition	Sittser, <i>Introduction</i>
Spiritual Formation in Early Christianity			
3	9/5	Martyrs and Saints, Part 1	Sittser: Chapter 1;
4	9/7	Martyrs and Saints, Part 2	Van Engen: Wilken essay
5	9/12	Martyrs and Saints, Part 3	Sittser, Chapter 2
6	9/14	The Worshiping Community, Part 1: Christian Initiation	Bradshaw: Chapter 1-5
7	9/19	The Worshiping Community, Part 2: The Work of the People	Bradshaw: Chapter 6-10
8	9/21	The Worshiping Community, Part 3: Inhabiting Time	Bradshaw: Chapter 11-15
9	9/26	Dessert Spirituality, Part 1: The Dessert Fathers	Sittser: Chapter 3
10	9/28	Dessert Spirituality, Part 2: The Benedictines	Sittser: Chapter 4
11	10/3	Spirituality of the Christian East, Part 1	Sittser Chapter 5

12	10/5	Spirituality in the Christian East, Part 2	Van Engen: Harakas essay
Spiritual Formation in the Medieval Era			
13	10/10	Mendicants, Mystics and Schoolmen, Part 1	Sittser, Chapter 6
14	10/12	Mendicants, Mystics and Schoolmen, Part 2	Sittser, Chapter 7
15	10/17	Mendicants, Mystics and Schoolmen, Part 3	Sittser, Chapter 8
16	10/19	Spirituality of the Medieval Laity	Van Engen: Van Engen essay
Spiritual Formation in the Reformation Era			
17	10/24	Luther and the Lutheran Tradition, Part 1	Sittser, Chapter 9
18	10/26	Luther and the Lutheran Tradition, Part 2	Van Engen: Steinmetz essay
19	10/31	Zwingli, Calvin and the Reformed Tradition, Part 1	Van Engen: Wandel essay
20	11/2	Zwingli, Calvin and the Reformed Tradition, Part 2	Van Engen: Kingdon essay
21	11/7	The Anabaptist Tradition	
22	11/9	The English Reformation and the Anglican Tradition, Part 1	DUE: Research Paper
	11/12-11/16	NO CLASS; READING WEEK	
	11/19-11/23	NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK	
23	11/28	The English Reformation and the Anglican Tradition, Part 2	
24	11/30	Spirituality in the Reformation Era: The Catholic Counter-Reformation & Ignatian Spirituality	Van Engen: Cunningham essay
Post-Reformation Spiritual Formation			
25	12/5	The Pietists, Puritans and Revivals, Part 1	Sittser, Chapter 11
26	12/7	The Pietists, Puritans and Revivals, Part 2	
27	12/12	Evangelical Spirituality	Sittser, Conclusion
28	12/14	Summary & Conclusion	DUE: Course Integration Paper
	12/20	NO CLASS: FINALS WEEK	DUE: Reading Report