

COURSE SYLLABUS

INT 505 Practice and Theology of Christian Spirituality Spring, 2021 (Online)

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Course Description

An introduction to the theology and practice of Christian spirituality, both as it varies across the church's history and the diverse communities that are part of the contemporary church. Particular attention is given to the vital connection between spiritual practice and engagement with the needs of the world and to the approaches to Christian spirituality arising out of the Wesleyan tradition.

Course Objectives

What will students know when they leave class?

The student will leave the class with a sound, basic definition of spirituality and the challenges that arise in defining it.

The student will be able to identify the core characteristics of Christian spirituality.

The student will be able to understand the various forms of practices in Christian spirituality.

The student will have a basic familiarity with Christian practice and disciplines, an understanding of their purpose, a sense of how those disciplines are related, and their place in the worship and life of Christian communities.

The students will be able to define the connection between spirituality and theology.

The students will be able to describe the vital connection between spiritual practice and justice.

The students will be able to explain the purpose behind the development of a rule of life.

What will students be able to do?

They will be able to lead from a spiritually centered approach to life and to their vocations.

They will be able to identify the implied and explicit theological assumptions imbedded in diverse approaches to Christianspirituality.

They will be able to guide others in grasping the central inspiration behind Christian spiritual practice.

They will be able to articulate the vital connection between spiritual practice and service to others.

They will be able to introduce others to Christian spiritual practice.

They will be able to develop a rule of life.

What will be key values, attitudes, habits and/or commitments promote in the course for faithful and righteous Christian learning, living, leadership and/or service?

A familiarity with spiritual practice that can inform their own lives

An appreciation for the unique genius of Christian spirituality

An appreciation for the vital connection between spiritual practice, theology, and social engagement with the needs of the world

An awareness of the importance of spiritual practice and a rule of life

Texts

Foster, Richard J. *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1998. ISBN-13: 978-0340979266, ISBN-10: 0340979267. Price: \$13.99

King Jr., Martin Luther. *Strength to Love*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000. ISBN-13: 978-0800697402, ISBN-10: 0800697405. \$17.99.

Please note: The prices listed above are as posted at Amazon.com and in paperback.

Course Schedule

The synchronous sessions will be held on the following dates, 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

2/4

2/11

2/25

3/11

3/25

4/5

4/19 (this might be an asynchronous session)

4/29

5/6

Please reserve Thursdays 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. each week for this class during this semester, in case we need to schedule more synchronous sessions. When we don't have a synchronous session, the class will be offered as an asynchronous session. During the asynchronous weeks, the students will work on the lectures, readings, and assignments on their own terms.

The schedule during the asynchronous weeks:

- Lecture will be posted on Moodle by Tuesday, 9 a.m.
- Students will submit a lecture reflection paper by 11:55 p.m.

Assessment

Weekly Reflection Paper (5% each, Total: 45%)

One page (typewritten, single-spaced, one inch margins, 12 font) reflection paper on assigned readings or lecture, or a journal entry, on assigned weeks. For reading reflection papers, choose one chapter from the assigned readings. For journals, focus on a spiritual practice. For a lecture reflection paper, please answer the questions after the lecture. Please see the class schedule for the weekly paper schedule.

Due: Sunday, 11:55 p.m.

Midterm Exam (10%)

The midterm exam will be provided on Moodle. All questions will be from lectures and readings.

The exam will be open from Tuesday, 3/17, 9 a.m. – Sunday, 3/21, 11:55 p.m.

Paper on the Rule of Life (10%)

Write a 5-page paper on the following:

- What is the purpose of having a rule of life?
- What is your own rule of life?
- What are the guiding principles of your rule of life?

Please incorporate the insights from the Rule of Saint Benedict and from the entire class.

Due: Sunday, 4/11, 11:55 p.m.

Group Presentation (15% - Presentation 10%, Outline 5%)

Each student will be part of a small. Each group will choose ONE mode of Christian spiritual practice and present on the following questions:

1. What are the theological and historical background of this spiritual practice?
2. What is this spiritual practice important for our contemporary life?
3. How does this spiritual practice contribute to social justice?
4. How can this spiritual practice be incorporated in a local church ministry as a way to reach out to diverse population?

Not everyone needs to speak, but it has to be evident that everyone in the group has contributed to this project.

Please also submit a detailed outline of the presentation with a bibliography and the names of the participants. Due: April 29.

Presentations on 4/26 & 5/3

Integrative Essay (15%: Topic and bibliography 3%, Essay 12%)

Each student will be required to complete one integrative essay. This essay will address a question drawn from the material and students will be expected to respond, drawing in an integrative fashion on the readings and lectures. The essays should not quote material from readings or lectures at length, but students will be required to demonstrate a familiarity with the reading and course material (citing the relevant author, title, and page numbers or dates).

The essay must be between 5 and 6 pages in length (typewritten, double-spaced, one inch margins, 12 font). The essay should draw critically and thoughtfully from the material, but advance an argument, not simply summarize, list, or report on what was heard or read. Note that language “critically and thoughtfully” is chosen intentionally here. These are analytical essays and language involving how the student “feels” about the material is not germane.

Please also submit your essay topic and a preliminary bibliography. Due: 4/25, 11:55 p.m.

Essay due: 5/13, 11:55 p.m.

Participation (5%)

- Attentive participation in all sessions is expected.
- Participants are expected to engage in all sessions with a spirit of learning.

Note on Synchronous Sessions

- Synchronous sessions will be done via Zoom.
- Please turn off the sound, except when you are speaking.
- Please use your computer (instead of a cell phone), if possible, so that you can see the screen well when documents are shared.
- Please use the chat function, if you would like to request to speak or have any questions. Please do not use the chat box for personal conversations.
- Your instructor will have two screens.
- Students are expected to participate in all synchronous sessions fully.

Note on Late Submissions

Late submissions will result in a 10 % deduction for each 12-hour period that the assignment is late. For instance, if an assignment is submitted 36 hours after the due date and time, there will be a 30% reduction to the grade. All assignments are due at 11:55 p.m. on the date designated in the calendar.

Course Schedule

*SL: *Strength to Love*

*CD: *Celebration of Discipline*

Week of 2/1

Synchronous Session on Thursday, 2/4, 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

No reading or writing assignment

This first session is designed to serve as an introduction to the class and also to create a setting for class members to get to know each other. We will go over the syllabus, clarify class expectations, and spend time to introduce ourselves. Each one will have up to 3 minutes to share. Please share your name, degree program, family, your undergraduate work, your church involvement, work (if you have one), and any other aspects of your life that you'd like to share. Please bring one object that symbolizes your spiritual journey and share with us why you have chosen that object. This may seem a lot to share in 3 minutes, but I think it will work out well! But please be mindful of this 3-minute time frame to make sure everybody will get a chance to speak.

Please complete “Student Information Form.” The link is provided on Moodle. This is for the instructor to get better acquainted with the students. There is no grade for this activity.

Week of 2/8

Christian Spirituality and Theology

Synchronous Session on Thursday, 2/11, 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Reading:

CD: 1. The Spiritual Discipline: Door to Liberation

SL: 11. God Is Able

Weekly Paper #1 - Journal: How do you define spirituality? What are factors that have shaped that definition? Inventory your spiritual practice: What do you do on a regular basis that enhances your spiritual journey?

Week of 2/15

Christian Spirituality and Baptism

Asynchronous

Reading:

CD: 11. Worship

SL: 13. The Answer to a Perplexing Question

Weekly Paper #2 – Lecture Reflection Paper

Week of 2/22**Christian Spirituality and Scripture****Synchronous Session on Thursday, 2/25, 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.***Reading:*

CD 2. Meditation & 5. Study

SL: Love in Action

*Weekly Paper #3 – Reading Reflection***Week of 3/1****Christian Spirituality and Holy Communion****Asynchronous***Reading:*

CD 11. Worship & 13. Celebration

SL: A Knock at Midnight

*Weekly Paper #4 – Lecture Reflection***Week of 3/8****Christian Spirituality & Prayer****Synchronous Session on Thursday, 3/11, 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.***Reading:*

CD 3. Prayer & 4. Fasting

SL: Antidotes for Fear

*Weekly Paper #5 - Journal***Week of 3/15 – Midterm****Midterm Exam will be open from Tuesday, 3/17, 9 a.m. to Sunday, 3/21, 11:55 p.m.****Week of 3/22****Christian Spirituality & Rule of Life****Synchronous Session on Thursday, 3/25, 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.***Reading:*

CD 6. Simplicity & 7. Solitude

SL: The Man Who Was a Fool

*Weekly Paper #6 – Reading Reflection***Week of 3/29****Spring Break. No Class.**

Week of 4/5**Christian Spirituality and Justice****Synchronous Session on Thursday, 4/8, 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.***Reading:* SL: 2. Transformed Nonconformist*Weekly Paper #7 – Journal***Week of 4/12****Christian Spirituality and Service****Asynchronous***Reading:*

CD 9. Service

SL: 3. On Being a Good Neighbor

*Weekly Paper #8 – Lecture Reflection***Week of 4/19****Asynchronous or Synchronous on 4/22****Christian Spirituality & Reconciliation***Readings:*

CD: 10. Confession

SL: Pilgrimage to Nonviolence

Weekly Paper #9 - Journal

Week of 4/26 & 5/3**Synchronous Sessions on Thursdays, 4/29 and 5/6, 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.*****Group Presentation***

Each student will be part of a group of 3-4 persons. Groups will be formed sometime in October. Each group will choose ONE mode of Christian spiritual practice and present on the following questions:

1. What are the theological and historical background of this spiritual practice?
2. What is this spiritual practice important for our contemporary life?
3. How does this spiritual practice contribute to social justice?
4. How can this spiritual practice be incorporated in a local church ministry as a way to reach out to diverse population?

Not everyone needs to speak, but it has to be evident that everyone in the group has contributed to this project. Please also submit a detailed outline of the presentation with a bibliography and the names of the participants. Due: 4/29.

**INT-505 Practice and Theology of Christian Spirituality
Spring 2021
Class Calendar**

Week of	Meeting Method	Topic & Reading	Assignments
2/1	Synchronous/Zoom Meeting on 2/4	Introductions No reading assignment	Bring an object Submit "Student Information Form"
2/8	Synchronous/Zoom Meeting on 2/11	Christian Spirituality & Theology Reading: CD: 1. The Spiritual Discipline: Door to Liberation SL: 11. God Is Able	Weekly Paper #1: Journal (Due 2/14)
2/15	Asynchronous	Christian Spirituality & Baptism CD: 11. Worship SL: 13. The Answer to a Perplexing Question	Weekly Paper #2: Lecture Reflection (Due 2/21)
2/22	Synchronous/Zoom Meeting on 2/25	Christian Spirituality & Scripture CD: 2. Meditation & 5. Study SL: Love in Action	Weekly Paper #3: Reading Reflection (Due 2/28)
3/1	Asynchronous	Christian Spirituality & Holy Communion CD: 11. Worship & 13. Celebration SL: 6. A Knock at Midnight	Weekly Paper #4: Lecture Reflection (Due 3/7)
3/8	Synchronous/Zoom Meeting on 3/11	Christian Spirituality & Prayer CD: 2. Prayer & 4. Fasting SL: 12. Antidotes for Fear	Weekly Paper #5: Journal (Due 3/14)
3/15	Asynchronous	Midterm Exam	On Moodle
3/22	Synchronous/Zoom Meeting on 3/25	Christian Spirituality & Rule of Life CD: 6. Simplicity & 7. Solitude SL: The Man Who Was a Fool	Weekly Paper #6: Reading Reflection (Due 3/28)
3/29		Spring Break/No Class	
4/5	Synchronous/Zoom Meeting on 4/8	Christian Spirituality & Justice	Weekly Paper #7: Journal

		SL: 2. Transformed Nonconformist	The Rule of Life paper due (Due 4/11)
4/12	Asynchronous	Christian Spirituality & Service CD: 9. Service SL: 3. On Being a Good Neighbor	Weekly Paper #8: Lecture Reflection (Due 4/18)
4/19	Asynchronous or Synchronous on 4/22 (please leave both opens open)	Christian Spirituality & Reconciliation CD: 10. Confession SL: 15. Pilgrimage to Nonviolence	Weekly Paper #9: Journal Final Essay Topic and Outline (Due 4/25)
4/26	Synchronous/Zoom Meeting on 4/29	Group Presentation	Group Presentation Outline Due (for all groups) (Due 4/29)
5/3	Synchronous/Zoom Meeting on 5/6	Group Presentation	Final Essay (Due 5/13)

*SL: Strength to Love

*CD: Celebration of Discipline