

## SPIRITUAL FORMATION IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE PROVISIONARY 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

Course Reading Packet to be distributed on Canvas the week prior to class

Bradshaw, Paul. *Early Christian Worship: A Basic Introduction to Ideas and Practice*. 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 in addition to the reading packet 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.

Students will also be responsible for any additions or corrections to this syllabus at the discretion of the professor and announced in class.

**The selection of textbooks should not be interpreted as implying the professor's or seminary's endorsement of any of the views of the authors.** Textbooks are selected for their perceived value in helping to meet the course goals and objectives. **As graduate students you are expected to be able to read and interact with texts critically** and learn from both those with whom you agree and those with whom you do not.

Work that has been done for other classes may not be used to earn credit in this class. Submission of work for this class is presumed to include an affirmation that it is the student's own work and has not previously been submitted in another course. Further, the student is reminded that "plagiarism is defined as 'passing off as one's own the ideas, writings, etc., of another.' Plagiarism is academically dishonest and is contrary to biblical standards. Any work involving dishonest practices will be graded as zero without any resubmission permitted. In each case, the Dean of Students' Office will be notified" (*Handbook*, 11).

## VII. COURSE LECTURES AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE (**TOPICS FLEXIBLE**)

No.	Date	Topic	Assignments
1	24 Aug	Course Introduction	
2		Tracing Themes across the Tradition	Sittser, <i>Introduction</i>
<b>Spiritual Formation in Early Christianity</b>			
3	31 Aug	Martyrs and Saints, Part 1	Sittser: Chapter 1; <b>Polycarp</b>
4		Martyrs and Saints, Part 2	Van Engen: Wilken essay
	7 Sept	<b>No Class: Labor Day</b>	
5	14 Sept	Martyrs and Saints, Part 3	Sittser, Chapter 2
6		The Worshiping Community, Part 1: Christian Initiation	Bradshaw: Chapter 1-5; <b>The Didache</b>
7	21 Sept	The Worshiping Community, Part 2: The Work of the People	Bradshaw: Chapter 6-10
8		The Worshiping Community, Part 3: Inhabiting Time	Bradshaw: Chapter 11-15
9	28 Sept	Desert Spirituality, Part 1: The Desert Fathers	Sittser: Chapter 3
10		Desert Spirituality, Part 2: The Benedictines	Sittser: Chapter 4; <b>The Rule of St Benedict</b>
11	5 Oct	Spirituality of the Christian East, Part 1	Sittser Chapter 5
12		Spirituality in the Christian East, Part 2	Van Engen: Harakas essay

Spiritual Formation in the Medieval Era			
13	12 Oct	Mendicants, Mystics and Schoolmen, Part 1	Sittser, Chapter 6; <b>GtG, Pastoral Rule</b>
14		Mendicants, Mystics and Schoolmen, Part 2	Sittser, Chapter 7
15	19 Oct	Mendicants, Mystics and Schoolmen, Part 3	Sittser, Chapter 8; <b>The Imitation of Christ</b>
16		Spirituality of the Medieval Laity	Van Engen: Van Engen essay
Spiritual Formation in the Reformation Era			
17	26 Oct	Luther and the Lutheran Tradition, Part 1	Sittser, Chapter 9; <b>Luther Readings</b>
18		Luther and the Lutheran Tradition, Part 2	Van Engen: Steinmetz essay
19	2 Nov	Zwingli, Calvin and the Reformed Tradition, Part 1	Van Engen: Wandel essay
20		Zwingli, Calvin and the Reformed Tradition, Part 2	Van Engen: Kingdon essay; <b>Calvin Readings</b>
21	9 Nov	The Anabaptist Tradition	<b>Schleitheim Confession</b>
22		The English Reformation and the Anglican Tradition, Part 1	DUE: Research Paper
	16 Nov	<b>No Class: Reading Week &amp; Thanksgiving</b>	
	23 Nov		
	30 Nov	The English Reformation and the Anglican Tradition, Part 2	
		Spirituality in the Reformation Era: The Catholic Counter-Reformation & Ignatian Spirituality	Van Engen: Cunningham essay
Post-Reformation Spiritual Formation			
25	7 Dec	The Pietists, Puritans and Revivals, Part 1	Sittser, Chapter 11
26		The Pietists, Puritans and Revivals, Part 2	<b>Edwards Readings</b>
27	14 Dec	Evangelical Spirituality	Sittser, Conclusion
28		Summary & Conclusion	DUE: Course Integration Paper DUE: Reading Report