

SPF/CHS 6615 DL History and Literature of Christian Spirituality

ASHLAND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Summer Semester, 2020

Online Course (May 11-August 27)

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I. Course Description

This course is a chronological survey of outstanding devotional writings from the apostolic age to the present. The focus will be on the breadth of this literature as well as acquaintance with major authors and their works.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

This course format consistently meets the same quality, assessment, learning outcomes and requirements of the traditional semester course format.

As a result of this course, students will be able to:

1. Not assessed in this course.
2. Not assessed in this course.
3. Not assessed in this course.
- 4a. Identify important people, movements, and events in the history of Christian spirituality.
- 4b. Analyze the cultural contexts that shaped the life and thought of various individuals during the history of the church.
- 4c. Reflect critically on significant primary source documents from the history of Christian spirituality.
- 4d. Apply insights from historic Christian spirituality to the contemporary church.
5. Not assessed in this course.
6. Not assessed in this course.

III. Course Requirements

A. Textbooks

Holt, Bradley P. *Thirsty for God: A Brief History of Christian Spirituality*. 3rd ed.

Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2017. ISBN: 9781451487947. **This edition must be used.** (284 pages)

Foster, Richard J. and James Bryan Smith, eds. *Devotional Classics: Selected Readings for Individuals and Groups*. Revised edition. San Francisco: HarperOne, 2005.

ISBN: 0060777508. **This edition must be used.** (375 pages)

***In completing the three Primary Source Reflection papers (a description of this assignment may be found below), it is expected you will read at least 200 pages between the primary source and your additional research for the project. This will then total 600 pages.

B. Attendance

According to the *Student Handbook*, attendance at all class sessions is expected, unless the professor has been notified in advance and has approved the absence. Students should be on time and should stay through the duration of all classes. Any student missing more than six

class hours (2 weeks) will be required to do additional work, receive a lower grade, audit or withdraw from the class, or be penalized otherwise at the discretion of the professor.

C. Assignments/Assessment of Student Learning

This course utilizes an online component (Blackboard) as its major teaching medium. Access to a reliable computer and the internet through a high-speed means (dial-up access does not usually work satisfactorily in this course) is required, as is familiarity with the use of Blackboard (assistance in Blackboard is provided in video format through Learn AU). It is highly recommended that you be familiar with computer and web functions prior to starting the course since it is not advised to try to learn them while the course is in progress. On-line learning often requires more self-motivation than a regular class and is not suitable for every student.

Online Discussions (25%): Online discussions are the primary way in which you participate in the course and interact with others and your participation in these discussions will constitute your weekly “attendance” for the course. Therefore, non-participation in the discussions after two weeks will require extra work or a reduction of your grade. Non-participation after three weeks will result in failure or withdrawal from the course. Your participation will be evaluated not just by completing the required number of posts but by the quality of your online interaction. Your online participation will be evaluated by evidence presented that you have read the assigned reading material in its entirety, that you have grasped key concepts and ideas, that the questions you pose are related to the readings and their implications for our work in the course, and by thoughtful and respectful responses to your co-learners’ postings. Constructive disagreement is encouraged, but courtesy at all times is required. Any discourtesy will result in a deduction from your grade.

Each week there will be two discussion forums: one will cover the week’s reading from the textbook (i.e., the selections from the Holt text); the other will discuss the primary source readings (i.e., those from the Foster & Smith text). The professor will post a series of questions to help facilitate discussion. In both forums each week the student will write one substantial paragraph in response to at least one of these questions and will write a one-paragraph response to one classmate (so, each student will make a minimum of four posts each week—two initial posts and two responses). All initial posts must be made each week by Wednesday at 11:59pm. All responses must be made each week by Friday at 11:59pm. **Late posts will not receive credit.**

Please note: there are three weeks for reading for the Critical Reflection Papers (Weeks 4, 9, 14). During these three weeks, there will be no discussion forums. However, there will be lecture videos that will need to be viewed (the content of these will be included on the quizzes).

Primary Source Reflections (54% total; 18% each): Over the course of the semester, you will read three extended primary sources that have been important for the development of Christian spirituality (the lists of available sources for each paper and the directions for the assignment may be found on pages 9-10 of the syllabus) and write a 5-page (note: not 4 pages; not 6 pages) critical reflection of each. Paper #1 will be due **June 6**; Paper #2 will be due **July 11**; Paper #3 will be due **August 15**.

Quizzes (21%; 7% each): The quizzes will consist of objective questions (multiple choice, matching, true or false, fill in the blank, short answer etc.). You will be given 30 minutes to answer 15-20 questions. The material will include the lectures and all of the reading assignments on the syllabus. The quizzes may be taken anytime during the given week. For example, Quiz #1 may be taken anytime between Sunday, May 27 and Saturday, June 2. Quiz #1 will cover weeks 1-5, Quiz #2 will cover weeks 6-10, Quiz #3 will cover weeks 11-15. Quiz dates: **Week 5 (June 7-13), Week 10 (July 12-18), Week 15 (August 16-22).**

Writing Guidelines: When writing your papers, please follow these general guidelines: use 12-point Times New Roman or Courier New fonts only; use one inch margins; use Turabian formatting for citations; when in doubt, include a citation. The instructor will spot-check for plagiarism. **For this course, all papers must be submitted via the appropriate drop-box in Blackboard.**

Late Policy: Papers and quizzes turned in after the deadline will be docked five points for each day late, unless permission to do otherwise was granted by the professor ahead of time. Late discussion forum posts will not receive credit unless permission to do otherwise was granted by the professor ahead of time.

D. Calculation of Grade and Connection with Learning Outcomes

<i>Assignments</i>	<i>Learning Outcomes</i>	<i>Percent of Final Grade</i>
Online Discussions	4b, 4c, 4d	25%
Primary Source Reflections	4b, 4c, 4d	54%
Quizzes	4a	21%

IV. Course Schedule

<i>Week</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Lecture/Topic</i>	<i>Readings/Assignments</i>
1	May 11-16	Introduction	<i>Thirsty for God</i> , pg. 1-30 <i>Devotional Classics</i> , “Preparing for the Spiritual Life,” pg. 1-55
2	May 17-23	Spirituality in the Earliest Church—Acts and the Epistles	<i>Thirsty for God</i> , pg. 31-50 <i>Devotional Classics</i> , “The Prayer-Filled Life,” pg. 63-86
3	May 24-30	Spirituality before Constantine	<i>Thirsty for God</i> , pg. 51-72 <i>Devotional Classics</i> , “The Prayer-Filled Life,” pg. 87-120
4	May 31-June 6	Spirituality and the Growth of the Church	Read for Critical Reflection Paper ¹ Critical Reflection Paper #1 Due: June 6

¹ Because the Critical Reflection Papers require at least 200 pages of reading for each, space for these has been built into the course schedule to help with this.

5	June 7-13	Spirituality of the Early Middle Ages	<i>Thirsty for God</i> , pg. 72-94 <i>Devotional Classics</i> , “The Virtuous Life,” pg. 121-142 Quiz #1 (before June 13)
6	June 14-20	Spirituality of the High Middle Ages	<i>Thirsty for God</i> , pg. 95-105 <i>Devotional Classics</i> , “The Virtuous Life,” pg. 143-169
7	June 21-27	Mysticism and the Eve of the Reformation	<i>Thirsty for God</i> , pg. 105- 120 <i>Devotional Classics</i> , “The Spirit-Empowered Life,” pg. 171-199
8	June 28- July 4	Spirituality and the Reformation	<i>Thirsty for God</i> , pg. 121-140 <i>Devotional Classics</i> , “The Spirit-Empowered Life,” pg. 200-219
9	July 5-11	Puritans, Pietists, and the Enlightenment	Read for Critical Reflection Paper Critical Reflection Paper #2 Due: July 11
10	July 12-18	Nineteenth-Century Protestant Spirituality	<i>Thirsty for God</i> , pg. 141-172 <i>Devotional Classics</i> , “The Compassionate Life,” pg. 221-250 Quiz #2 (before July 18)
11	July 19-25	Nineteenth-Century Catholic Spirituality	<i>Thirsty for God</i> , pg. 173-216 <i>Devotional Classics</i> , “The Compassionate Life,” pg. 251-277
12	July 26- August 1	Twentieth-Century Catholic Spirituality	<i>Thirsty for God</i> , pg. 217-246 <i>Devotional Classics</i> , “The Word-Centered Life,” pg. 279-301
13	August 2-8	Twentieth-Century Protestant Spirituality	<i>Thirsty for God</i> , pg. 247-262 <i>Devotional Classics</i> , “The Word-Centered Life,” pg. 302-329
14	August 9- 15	Global Spirituality	Read for Critical Reflection Paper Critical Reflection Paper #3 Due: August 15
15	August 16- 22	Modern Mysticism	<i>Thirsty for God</i> , pg. 263-284 <i>Devotional Classics</i> , “The Sacramental Life,” pg. 331-375 Quiz #3 (before August 22)

V. Recommendations for Lifelong Learning

Continue to garner the wisdom of those from the past through their efforts to seek God both through reading about their experiences and through applying them to your own journey. Also journals such as *Spiritus* and *Magistra* are helpful for keeping up to date with current research.

VI. Seminary Guidelines

A. ATS Academic Integrity Policy

Ashland Theological Seminary expects each student to uphold the Seminary's core value of academic excellence by contributing to an environment that is both challenging and supportive. In such an environment a student will neither seek nor offer improper assistance. All students have an obligation to be forthright in their academic endeavors and to respect ethical standards. The work that one submits for academic evaluation must be one's own, unless an instructor expressly permits certain types of collaboration. Academic integrity requires that each student will use one's own capabilities to achieve one's fullest potential and will neither offer nor accept aid that is not in keeping with regularly accepted standards of academic integrity. Failure to conform to this conduct shall constitute academic dishonesty. The full Academic Integrity Policy statement may be found in the *Student Handbook*.

B. Seminary Writing Consultation Service

The Seminary Writing Consultation Service can help you brainstorm, draft, and revise your writing assignments in your graduate Seminary classes. Masters and doctoral qualified Consultants can advise you online or in person.

To schedule an appointment, visit [Writing Center Online](#) and select "Graduate and Online" from the schedule menu.

C. Accessibility Resources and Accommodations

It is Ashland University's goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on a disability, please contact the Student Accessibility Center at [419-289-5904](tel:419-289-5904), or send an email to dservices@ashland.edu. The Student Accessibility Center office and the course instructor will work together in order to establish accommodations and to meet your learning needs.

D. ATS Grading Scale

Grade	Quality	Percent	Description
A	4.0	97-100	Superior achievement of course objectives, diligence and originality, high degree of freedom from error, outstanding evidence of ability to utilize course knowledge, initiative expressed in preparing and completing assignments, positive contributions verbalized in class.
A-	3.7	92-96	
B+	3.3	89-91	
B	3.0	86-88	Good work submitted, commendable achievement of course objectives, some aspects of the course met with excellence, substantial evidence of ability to utilize course material, positive contributions verbalized in class, consistency and thoroughness of work completed.

B-	2.7	83-85	
C+	2.3	80-82	
C	2.0	77-79	Acceptable work completed, satisfactory achievement of course objectives, demonstrating at least some ability to utilize course knowledge, satisfactory class contribution.
C-	1.7	74-76	
D+	1.3	71-73	
D	1.0	68-70	Passing but minimal work, marginal achievement of course objectives, poor performance in comprehension of work submitted, inadequate class contributions.
D-	0.7	65-67	
F	0.0	Below 65	Unacceptable work resulting in failure to receive class credit, inadequacy of work submitted or of performance and attendance in class.

VII. Selected Bibliography

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- Cox, Harvey. *Fire from Heaven: The Rise Of Pentecostal Spirituality And The Reshaping Of Religion In The 21st Century*. Da Capo Press, 2001.
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- _____. *Francis of Assisi: Performing the Gospel Life*. Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 2004.
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- Earle, Mary C. *Celtic Christian Spirituality: Essential Writings--Annotated & Explained*. Woodstock, VT: Skylight Paths Publications, 2011.
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- LaNoue, Deirdre. *The Spiritual Legacy of Henri Nouwen*. New York: Continuum, 2000.
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CRITICAL REFLECTION PAPER DETAILS

Source Options²

(Choose one from each section)³

Paper 1 (Covering 100-850 CE): Due June 2

- Athanasius, *The Life of Antony* (this work is often coupled with the *Letter to Marcellinus*—you don't need to read this part)
- Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Soul and the Resurrection*
- Augustine, *The Confessions of St. Augustine*
- Gregory the Great, *The Book of Pastoral Rule*

Paper 2 (Covering 850-1600 CE): Due July 7

- Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love*
- Thomas à Kempis, *Imitation of Christ*
- *The Cloud of Unknowing*
- Martin Luther, *A Letter to the Christian Nobility Concerning the Reformation of Christianity*, *A Prelude on the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, and *A Treatise on Christian Liberty with a Letter to Pope Leo X*
- Teresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle*

Paper 3 (Covering 1600-present): Due August 11

- Jonathan Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*
- Phoebe Palmer, *The Way of Holiness: With Notes By the Way; Being a Narrative of Experience Resulting from a Determination to Be a Bible Christian*
- Therese of Lisieux, *Story of a Soul*
- Gustavo Gutierrez, *We Drink from Our Own Wells*
- Martin Luther King, Jr., *The Strength to Love*

Paper Guidelines

Introduction (1/2- 1 page)

² Feel free to use any edition of these works that is convenient for you (many of these are available online through Google books or places such as ccel.org)—just be sure to include all of the relevant publication information in your bibliography.

³ You may petition the instructor two weeks before the paper is due if there is another source you would like to use in a section. For example, if you would like to use another source for the first paper, you must request the change no later than May 23.

Set the context for the work. What is the historical/theological context out of which this document arises? What was happening in the church and/or world that may have prompted its writing? What was happening in the life of the author?

Critical Summary (2 pages)

In this section, critically summarize the content of the work. This involves accurately conveying the main themes of the work (note: this does not mean a chapter-by-chapter or section-by-section summary) and evaluating those themes. Consider questions such as: How does the author's understanding of Scripture compare with your own; What was the author's intention in producing this document; How well does the author accomplish his/her goals; How does this work contribute to the development of Christian spirituality? In this section, be sure to consult **at least three scholarly sources**.

Analytical Reflection (2 pages)

What are the primary positive and negative features of the document from your perspective? How does this document apply or relate to concerns within the life of the church today? How does this work affect you personally? What are some practical ways the lessons imparted can be implemented in your life, your specific congregation, and/or within the church universal? Be as specific as you can.

Bibliography (this does not count towards your total page count for the paper)

You should use **at least three scholarly sources** (in the Critical Summary section). In your bibliography, make sure to include an entry for your primary source (including all publishing, translation, and edition information). Be sure to footnote all uses of outside sources including the page number (whether paraphrased or quoted). Any paraphrases or quotes of the primary source may be done with a simple parenthetical citation that includes the relevant page number(s). Scripture citations may also be done parenthetically with book, chapter, verse, and translation.