

*The mission of Houston Graduate School of Theology is empowering spiritual leadership through the intellectual, spiritual and vocational development of men and women in order to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world.*

## **I. Course Description**

A study of the reciprocal relationship of theology and spirituality for development of a foundation for spiritual formation and direction. Systematic, biblical, and historical theology will be surveyed and incorporated into an informed spirituality.

This course offers an opportunity for students to faithfully explore confessional, doctrinal, theological, and biblical impulses and attitudes that underlie, inform, and give shape to varying theological approaches to and representations of the indivisibility of the nature of theology and Christian Spiritual practice within the Christian theological tradition.

## **II. Course Outcomes:** Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- A. Identify and describe what constitutes a “theology of Christian spirituality”
- B. Develop their theological understanding of “a theology of Christian spirituality” through the lenses of doctrinal, creedal, confessional, and theological particulars, and scripture, reason, and experience within the Christian tradition.
- C. Articulate an understanding concerning the ways in which Christian spirituality is both thoroughly and theologically grounded in a coherent, truthful, and uniquely distinctive Christian theological framework.
  - a. Articulate the major doctrines of the Christian faith, including their exegetical basis in Scripture.
  - b. Demonstrate a basic understanding of the development of Christian theology in history from early to modern times, including the historical forces and contexts in which the major doctrines of the Christian faith were formally defined and/or articulated.
  - c. Relate the historical development of Christian theology to the parallel development of the great Christian spiritual traditions.
- D. Identify and describe the ways in which Christian spirituality is essentially theological speech about God:
  - a. How Christian spirituality originates in the grace of God
  - b. How Christian spirituality is a concretization of creaturely life participating in God for the life of the world.
- E. Identify and describe how Christian spirituality is more than mere praxis/exercises and, in particular, connects directly to and with Christian theological doctrines of the Trinity, Christology, incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and scripture to name a few.

- F. Identify the major spiritual masters and figures in Christian history and be able to recognize both their contributions to and dependence upon the Christian theological tradition.
- G. Understand one's own spirituality in light of historic Christian belief and practice with a view to continue developing a theological framework of a theology of Christian spirituality understanding for ministry and the life of the church.

### III. Required Texts

- [3.00] *Rule of Saint Benedict*. Collegeville MN: Liturgical Press, 1982. ISBN-10: 0814612725
- [13.00] Bernard of Clairvaux. *The Twelve Steps of Humility*. Collegeville MN: Cistercian Publications, 1989. ISBN: 978-0-87907-115-8
- [43.00] Holder, Arthur, ed. *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Spirituality*. Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010. ISBN-10: 1444337653
- [18.00] Noll, Mark. *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000. ISBN-10: 0801039967
- [Free] Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola  
<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/ignatius/exercises.html>

\*\*\*\* Students must purchase one text from the *Foundations of Theological Exegesis and Christian Spirituality* Series for the Critical Book Review.

Option 1 Leithart, Peter. *Athanasius*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011. ISBN-10: 0801039428

Option 2 Guarino, Thomas G. *Vincent of Lérins and the Development of Christian Doctrine*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013. ISBN-10: 0801049091

Option 3 Hildebrand, Stephen M. *Basil of Caesarea* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014. ISBN-10: 0801049075

### IV. Course Requirements

- A. **Course Preparation (10%):** Students are expected to have read assigned texts and readings **prior to the class meeting** in which they are to be discussed, and to participate in seminar discussions. Students must demonstrate evidence of having read the assigned reading(s) and be prepared to discuss it in class. As proof that students have read, critically reflected, and digested the assigned reading(s), each Tuesday, students should come prepared with at least a one-page written response to the assigned readings. This

can express critical questions, substantive summary reflection(s), observations, constructive criticism(s), praise, and/or a more formal summary essay in which the student demonstrates theological engagement with the assigned texts/readings. The point is to crystallize at least two to three clear impressions of what you've read. These responses, critical questions, substantive summary reflection(s), observations, constructive criticism(s), praise, and/or formal summary essays combined with student participation in the class discussion will together comprise 30% of the students overall mark. The main component of this mark is the evidence shown of having completed the reading each week.

**B. Seminar Presentations (20%):** Every student will be responsible for at least one 35–45 minute presentation introducing/identifying, summarizing/analyzing one of the week's topics as well as assigned text(s)/readings in the course schedule/outline. This presentation will open the week's discussion, and should cover at least three points.

These points could include (but are not limited to) the following:

- What is the theological argument made by the author(s) in question?
- What are the major theological moves the author has proposed?
- What is the author's primary aim in writing?
- What moral issues, questions, and/or particulars does the author(s) address?
- What is the author's primary context and why have they chosen to put their contention/ideas/claims forth in the manner they have?
- What resources are provided and/or questions raised for Christian ethics today?

➤ The presentation must be accompanied by a two-page handout, provided for each of the other students in the class, that guides the rest of the class through main points of the presentation.

**C. Critical Book Review (20%):** Write a three-page book review for one of the texts in the *Foundations of Theological Exegesis and Christian Spirituality* series (see **Required Texts** section)

- ❖ *The book review will draw attention to the ways in which the author has laid the framework for developing a theological understanding of “a theology of practice—practice of theology” through the lenses of theological, doctrinal, scriptural reflection.*
- ❖ *The book review will articulate the students understanding [practical take away] of the ways in which these works provide a theological basis for thinking about the ways in which one's own pastoral/ministerial work is thoroughly and theologically grounded in a coherent, truthful, and uniquely distinctive Christian doctrinal framework.*
- ❖ *The book review should follow the standard Houston Graduate School of Theology critical book review formatting guide.*
- ❖ *Please do not go over the three-page minimum.*

**D. Journal: (20%)** Since Christian spirituality is a way of life given definite shape in faithful prayer that seeks the object of Christian faith; namely, God, students must keep a regular journal for developing his or her personal understanding theological impulses that influence, inform, and give definite shape to Christian spirituality.

- Two journal entries per week are required.
- Journal entries can take many forms (TBA 1<sup>st</sup> day of the course)
- Since our course occurs in the Spring students will be given many opportunities to think about and practice Christian spirituality during the season of Epiphany, Lent, Holy Week, Easter, and Pentecost.

**Failure to have the appropriate journal material available for discussion in class will result in a deduction of 2 points from the total grade for this journal requirement, to a maximum of 20 points (out of a possible 20).**

E. **Essay (30%):** Due Date 6:00pm, Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Students are required to prepare an essay of approximately 2500 words in length on one of the following prompts:

**[Option 1]:**

Choose a concrete theological question/topic/issue relating to Christian Spirituality dealt with in the readings we have examined in the course. Outline and assess the arguments, issues, main contentions used to derive a conclusion about an appropriate theology of Christian spirituality in the light of the prevailing issue/question(s) related to the context of the examined content.

**[Option 2]:**

Identify, critically reflect on, and analyze the theological positions of the early Church writings on Christian spirituality, showing the linkages between the underlying theological sensibilities (doctrinal, confessional, historical biblical, etc) that influence and inform Christian spirituality and Christian spiritual exercises/practices.

**[Option 3]:**

Explain what constitutes a “theology Christian spirituality”

1. Develop your theological understanding of “a theology Christian spirituality” through the lenses of doctrinal, creedal, confessional, and theological particulars, using scripture, reason, and experience within the Christian tradition and our own ministerial/pastoral work.
2. Articulate an understanding concerning the ways in which Christian spirituality is both thoroughly and theologically grounded in a coherent, truthful, and uniquely distinctive Christian theological framework.
3. Identify and describe the ways in which theology Christian spirituality is, in essence, theological speech about God:
  - a. How theology Christian spirituality originates in the grace of God
  - b. How theology Christian spirituality is a concretization of creaturely life participating in God for the life of the world.
4. Identify and describe how Christian spirituality is more than mere praxis/exercises and, in particular, connects directly to and with Christian theological doctrines of the

Trinity, Christology, incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and scripture to name a few.

\*\*\*You are more than welcome to make an essay proposal for this course. To do so you can either email me a full one-page proposal outlining your flow of thought, thesis, and relevancy of your research idea.

Well-written papers and presentations will not rely on Internet resources. Research in this class will require the close reading of primary and secondary texts, or at least printed texts. A bibliography of secondary materials is attached, that does not even exhaust the full range of research materials held in the library. Essays that show evidence of too much reliance on the Internet will be marked down accordingly. Consider this an invitation to read, mark, and inwardly digest and then re-read your primary texts in order to formulate your own opinions

Unless otherwise specified, one copy of your essay, complete with signed coversheet, should be submitted to Dr. Benjamin Wall on or before the due date. The second copy must be submitted electronically via email to [bwall@hgst.edu](mailto:bwall@hgst.edu) utilizing Microsoft Word (e.g., .doc or .docx). **No essay will be accepted and graded until and unless you have submitted both copies.**

#### V. Grading Scale

In-class Participation	10%
Seminar Presentations	20%
Journal	20%
Book Review	20%
Essay	30%

❖ “A” represents excellent work in all categories (fulfillment of assignment, writing and formatting, and doctoral level content); “B” represents good work in all categories; anything below a “B-” is considered below doctoral level.

A	96-100	C+	84-85
A-	94-95	C	80-83
B+	92-93	C-	78-79
B	88-91	D	70-77
B-	86-87	F	69 or below

## VI. Course Schedule

DATE	Reading Assignments Due
21-Jan	COURSE INTRODUCTION
28-Jan	Noll (Ch. 1); Holder (Ch. 2, 3)
4-Feb	Noll (Ch. 2); Holder (Ch. 4, 10)
11-Feb	Noll (Ch. 3); Holder (Ch. 11)
18-Feb	Noll (Ch. 4); Holder (Ch. 1); RB (Ch.1, 6, 20))
25-Feb	Noll (Ch. 5) Holder (Ch. 6); RB (Ch.1, 4, 31, 48)
4-Mar	Noll (Ch. 6); (Ch. 5, 12); RB (Ch.1, 6, 20)
11-Mar	Noll (Ch. 7); Holder (Ch. 7, 13); RB (Ch.1, 7, 33, 53)
25-Mar	Noll (Ch. 8); Holder (Ch. 15); RB (Ch.1, 5, 71)
1-Apr	Noll (Ch. 9); Holder (Ch. 8); RB (Ch.1, 49, 73)
8-Apr	Noll (Ch. 10); Holder (Ch. 9); RB (Ch.1, 32, 36, 53)
15-Apr	Noll (Ch. 13); Holder (Ch. 16); RB (Ch.73)
22-Apr	Bernard of Clairvaux (Entire); RB (Ch.7)
29-Apr	Ignatius of Loyola (Presupposition - Week Two)
6-May	Ignatius of Loyola (Week Three - Mysteries of Christ...)

\*Readings from McGrath's *Christian Theology: An Introduction* will be read and/or assigned periodically throughout the course for the purpose of augmenting the students' understanding of various theological issues that may arise in this course.

## VII. Policies

1. Regular attendance and regular submission of assignments on due dates in syllabus is expected. Students must talk to the instructor about circumstances affecting their ability to attend class, complete assignments, and take exams. Attendance is required at scheduled classes and at the scheduled start time. Two excused absences will not affect the student's grade, but more than this will affect the student's class participation grade. The student could lose as much as a letter grade for excessive tardiness and absences.
2. Work is expected on the due date. With prior permission from the instructor, late work will receive a letter grade reduction until it is one week late, and a two-letter grade reduction until two weeks late. After two weeks, the assignment will not be accepted and a zero will be entered for the assignment.
3. Electronic Equipment Usage in Class  
It is expected that students will use technology (cell phones, laptop computers, iPads, etc.) during classes only for the purposes of class work. Therefore, students should turn off cell phones and refrain from texting and using laptop computers during classes except for the purposes of taking notes or doing research specifically authorized by the course instructor. Students who have emergency needs not covered by this policy must ask for an exception from the course instructor.

#### 4. *Incompletes*

In cases of extenuating circumstance, and at the discretion of the Instructor, a student may request and apply for an extension on all required assignments that are not completed before the end of the semester or term, **subject to a half-letter grade or more reduction on the final grade (e.g., A to A-; B to B-)**. If an extension is granted, **the instructor will record a grade of “I” (Incomplete) and set an extension of time within which to complete the work that shall not exceed thirty (30) calendar days from the end of the term**. The student is responsible to ensure that all necessary paperwork is submitted to the Registrar’s Office by the deadline listed in the school calendar.

Additional extensions may be granted only by the Dean of the Faculty and only after a student has petitioned the Dean in writing. If the course work is not completed within the extended time allotment, the grade of “I” will be converted to the grade earned by the student up to that point. A failing grade, or “F,” will be counted as hours attempted in computing the grade point average.

#### 5. *Plagiarism*

Plagiarism in any form is not acceptable and severe penalties will be applied to any student who chooses to do so.

- a. Plagiarism is defined as representing the work (written, thought, or conclusion) of another as your own. Any phrase longer than three words obtained from the work of another must be attributed to its original author. Please use proper citations and credit the original author when necessary. Internet plagiarism is rampant in some schools. As a seminary, HGST holds its students to the highest standard and expects them to avoid temptation. Please do not “Cut and Paste” portions of documents from the Internet into your paper without proper citation. Papers will be checked online for plagiarism.
- b. If a portion of a paper is plagiarized from the work of another the student will receive a grade of zero (F) for the paper or assignment. Blatant plagiarism of large portions a paper/ assignment, or a second offence of plagiarism will result in failing the course and a conference with the Dean of the Faculty to determine if dismissal from HGST is warranted.

#### 6. Turnitin.com

1. All written assignments are subject to required submission to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) to check for originality and style. The assignments that are required for submission will be described in the syllabus.
2. Students will create an account at [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com). After doing so, the student will join the course page with the code and password supplied by the instructor. A list of assignments and due dates will be available on the course page.
3. Students will submit assignments by the due date and time and may be required to submit the assignments in a hard copy format.

### 7. Library Usage

The student will find it necessary to utilize the following library facilities, in addition to the HGST library.

- a. Fondren Library at Rice University is probably the best Houston library for your purposes. The Fondren Library (713-348-5113) is located at 6100 Main. For more information, please visit [www.rice.edu/fondren](http://www.rice.edu/fondren).
  - The procedure for borrowing books at the Fondren Library is:
    - First, search the online catalog ([www.rice.edu/fondren](http://www.rice.edu/fondren)) for available books;
    - Second, fill out the appropriate form for each book (available in the HGST library), have the form signed by an authorized HGST library representative, and take with you to the Fondren Library;
    - Third, retrieve the book(s) yourself at Fondren Library;
    - Fourth, take the book(s) and the signed form(s) to the circulation desk at the Fondren Library to complete checkout (return the yellow copy to the HGST Library);
    - Fifth, when you return your book(s) to the Fondren Library, they will indicate so on the pink and gold copies; and
    - Sixth, return the pink copy to the HGST Library and keep the gold copy for your records.
- b. Cardinal Beran Library at St Mary's Seminary is the home of an extensive theological library. St Mary's Seminary (713-686-4345) is located at 9845 Memorial Drive. For more information, please visit <http://beran.stthom.edu>. The Doherty Library on the main campus of University of St. Thomas is also an option.
- c. The Houston Public Library is conveniently located for HGST students. The Central Library (832-393-1313) is located at 500 McKinney. In addition, HPL has many other locations. For more information, please visit [www.hpl.lib.tx.us](http://www.hpl.lib.tx.us). The HPL, as well as the Harris County Public Library, can obtain almost any desired published source through interlibrary loan, usually at no cost to the patron.
- d. Harris County Public Library. For more information on locations and hours, visit [www.hcpl.net](http://www.hcpl.net).

### VIII. Notes for Writing Assignments

Students should consult the HGST *Writer's Manual*, available from the Business Office for all writing matters. When an item is not addressed in the *Writer's Manual*, all writing assignments should conform to Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. This includes matters of style and format.

The instructor requires the use of footnotes for documentation. The student should number pages. According to Turabian, page numbers should be in the upper right hand corner, except on pages with major headings. Margins should be one inch on all four sides, except where major headings require a two inch top margin.



The student should utilize 12-point Times New Roman font throughout. The instructor prefers that the student **not** use presentation or report binders or folders. The instructor prefers submission of papers with staples or binder clips.

Critical, or formal, writing differs from colloquial writing or spoken English at several points. The student should note the following guidelines for critical writing. The instructor expects students to follow these guidelines strictly. Failure to do so will be penalized.

- Avoid 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> person references (“I,” “we,” or “you”). Keep the written projects objective and professional. The student must remember that imperative forms are second person.
- Never use contractions.
- Avoid passive voice construction (i.e. The student should write “God chose Joshua” rather than “Joshua was chosen by God.”). Some exceptions are necessary, but limiting the use of passive is a good policy.
- Be sure that number and tense always agree (i.e., Do not write in one place that “Brueggemann argues . . .” and at another place “Brueggemann argued . . .”). Subject-verb agreement is imperative.
- Spellcheck! Spellcheck! Spellcheck! Failure to spellcheck may result in a letter-grade reduction on the grade for written assignments.
- Grammar check works as well!
- All pronouns should have clear antecedents. Avoiding “it is” and “there is” in the paper removes much of the ambiguity of pronoun usage.
- Sentence fragments are unacceptable. Every sentence must have a subject and a predicate.

## **IX. Bibliography**

Bevans, S. B., and R. P. Schroeder. *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004.

George, Timothy, Alister E. McGrath. *For all the Saints: Evangelical Theology and Christian Spirituality*. 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. Louisville KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003.

Holder, Arthur, ed. *Christian Spirituality: The Classics*. 1st Edition. Oxford UK: Routledge, 2009.

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

McGrath, Alister E. *Christian Spirituality: An Introduction*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1999.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Fifth Edition). Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

McIntosh, Mark A. *Mystical Theology: The Integrity of Spirituality and Theology: Challenges in Contemporary Theology*. Wiley-Blackwell, 1998.

Mursell, Gordon, ed. *The Story of Christian Spirituality: Two Thousand Years, from East to West*. Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2001.

Powell, Samuel M. *Theology of Christian Spirituality*. Nashville TN: Abingdon Press, 2005.

Sittser, Gerald Lawson. *Water from a Deep Well: Christian Spirituality from Early Martyrs to Modern Missionaries*. IVP Books, 2007.