

## History of Western Christian Spirituality

SPIR 240

Winter 2012

Thursday

6:00 – 9:00 PM

Bob Hurd

Office Hours: By Appointment

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### Course Outline

We will take a “great books” approach, exploring selected classic texts on spirituality from week to week, and where helpful, also read contemporary interpretations of classic traditions/texts.

We will begin with the Desert Fathers and Mothers. **Please note that this first set of readings must be read in preparation for our first class meeting. So be sure to secure the books/ERes texts before the first week.** The course then advances through Augustine (*Confessions* and *On the Trinity*) into medieval variations. These include the monastic tradition of *lectio divina* (Guigo II: *The Ladder of Monks*), the *Cloud of Unknowing* and Julian of Norwich’s *Revelations of Divine Love*. With Ignatius (*Autobiography and Spiritual Exercises*) we are on the threshold of modernity’s “turn toward the world.” Passing through Kierkegaard and Freud we arrive at various contemporary thinkers/activists who have plotted spiritualities of service, resistance and liberation (Karl Rahner, Dorothy Day, Dorothee Soelle, Gustavo Gutiérrez).

### Required Books

Henri Nouwen. *The Way of the Heart*, New York: Harper Collins Reprint. Originally published: New York: Seabury Press, 1981. ISBN 978-0-06-066330-8. (paperback) **Must be read for our first class meeting.**

*The Cloud of Unknowing and Other Works*, translated by A. C. Spearing, New York: Penguin Books, 2001. ISBN-13: 978-0-140-44762-0 (paperback)

Julian of Norwich. *Revelations of Divine Love*, translated by Elizabeth Spearing, New York: Penguin Books, 1998. ISBN-13: 978-0-140-44673 (paperback)

St. Ignatius of Loyola. *Personal Writings*, translated with Introductions and Notes by Joseph A. Munitz and Philip Endean, New York: Penguin Books, 1996, 2004. ISBN-13: 978-0-14-043385-2 (paperback)

Ernest Becker. *The Denial of Death*, New York: Free Press Paperbacks, 1973, 1997. ISBN-13: 978-0-684-83240-1 (paperback)

*These books will be supplemented with additional texts on ERes.*

### **Coursework and Grade Computation**

The following gives a good indication of what our coursework will entail, though there may be some adjustments by the beginning of Winter quarter. Requirements for a grade in this course include the following:

#### **1) 3 Papers (4 to 5 pages each).**

Papers 1 & 2 = 20 points each; Paper 3 (in place of a final exam) = 30 points.

#### **2) 4 Graded Class Preparations**

These are less formal than papers though they involve some writing in connection with the texts we are studying. One of these entails attendance and reflection upon a Taize Prayer service at Mercy Center, Burlingame. Details will be given in class.

Preparations 1 & 2 are = 5 points each

Preparations 3 & 4 = 10 points each.

#### **3) Non-Graded Preparations**

These involve guides to the reading which ask you to attend to various questions or themes as you study the assigned text. They are part of the required work of the course—I read and respond to them, but they are not graded.

#### **4) Class Attendance and Participation**

An important part of the work of this course is attendance at lectures and participation in discussion of the readings. If for some reason a student needs to miss a class, please inform and discuss this with the professor. A passing grade will not be given if a student has to miss more than 2 weeks of classes.

### **Academic Honesty**

Santa Clara University insists on honesty and integrity from all members of its community. The standards of the University preclude any form of cheating, plagiarism, forgery of signatures, and falsification of data. A student who commits any offence against academic honesty and integrity may receive a failing grade without a possibility of withdrawal. An offense may also dictate suspension or dismissal from the University.

In particular, it is each student's responsibility to understand the serious nature of plagiarism and the consequences of such activity. Plagiarism is the practice of claiming, or implying, original authorship of (or incorporating material from) someone else's written or creative work, in whole or in part, into one's own without adequate acknowledgment. Unlike cases of forgery in which the authenticity of the writing, document, or some other kind of object itself is in question, plagiarism is concerned with the issue of false attribution.

See: <http://www.scu.edu/studentlife/resources/academicintegrity/>

### **Disabilities**

To receive academic accommodations for a disability, students must contact Disability Resources located in Benson 216. The phone number is 408-554-4109 or inquiries can be emailed to Robin Cole, Administrative Associate, [rcole@scu.edu](mailto:rcole@scu.edu). Students must register with Disabilities Resources prior to receiving academic accommodations.