SPIR 278, Christian Spiritual Traditions, is a blended course in the Graduate Program in Pastoral Ministries, Santa Clara University. Over the span of the Fall Quarter, the course will convene three times at De Paul Evangelization Center (Saturdays: 9/28; 10/26; 12/7). In the weeks between, all course content will be delivered in online modalities, meeting Wednesdays, 6:00-8:00.

I. Approaching the Course

Course Description: SPIR 278 examines the nature and development of spirituality in the Church with special attention given to forms of adult ministry. (Elective, 4 Units).

Course Goals: The goals of the course include: a) an understanding of Christian spirituality as both a lived experience and an academic discipline; b) knowledge and appreciation of the markers and general contours of Christian spirituality; c) a recognition of diverse spiritualities and the social, ecclesial, political, and economic contexts in which they emerged; d) use of methodologies in reading and interpreting select primary texts; e) valuation of rituals, and of popular religion, practices of local Christian communities; f) attention to emergence of new spiritualities.

Our approach will be hermeneutical, that is as an interpretive dialogue, or conversation, between various Christian spiritual traditions and contemporary human experience. In the process, we will develop abilities to discern the strengths and weaknesses of various practices and teachings, identify what elements are no longer relevant, or those which might be creatively and critically appropriated for our times.

Learning Objectives:

3A.1. Students will employ historically informed knowledge of the tradition to assess theological positions and pastoral issues.

5A 1. Students will describe and address cultural differences in Christian practice.

II. Preparing for Class

Course Camino Website

On “Camino,” the SCU online learning management portal, you will find all course materials: syllabus, class preparation guidelines, readings, discussion posts, attendance and grade summaries. [https://camino.instructure.com/courses/55017](https://camino.instructure.com/courses/55017)

Prior to class: Reading and posting assignments for the three Saturday sessions should be completed in the days leading up to our meetings at the De Paul Center; readings for online discussions are to be finished and responses posted by Monday of each week and responded to by Tuesday, in anticipation of our Zoom discussions on Wednesday evenings. Discussions about course texts, written assignments all depend upon careful attention to the texts examined but also to each other in our collaborative efforts. Formal writing requirements include two essays, one to be submitted October 9th, and the other on November 9th.

The final project is developing a Pastoral Plan for your faith community. Participation is a major component of both graduate studies and a course of this nature; our in-class and online discussions will depend on present – physically and intellectually. Leadership: Each student will choose several readings from the syllabus to present informally and for discussion.
Questions, Lecture, Student-led discussions.

On-line classes will generally begin with a brief praxis and Q&A session, lecture or close reading directed by the professor, followed by a reflection on a specific reading led by a student, and then conversation among us on how this topic focuses, deepens or contests your understanding of spirituality and ministry, and a sense of how this material could be useful to ministry in your faith community.

III. Course Policies and Expectations

Grading Policy Santa Clara’s grading scale indicates that an A is reserved for work that is “excellent.” Please note that an “A” does not reflect “sufficient” or even “full” engagement with the material: it is reserved for truly exceptional work. B correlates to “good,” and a C to “adequate.” You should not expect to receive an A or a B for cruising through the class with “adequate” work. These grades require consistent levels of diligent, thoughtful attention and excellent work on papers and exams. Be proud of passing grades. They indicate that you have done hard work well!

Grading Policy Participation, grounded on well-prepared reading and personal reflection, is a major component of both graduate studies and a course of this nature; out in-class and online discussions will depend on presence – physically and intellectually. Leadership: Each student will choose a reading from the syllabus to present informally and for discussion. Writing requirements include one on-going journal, six entries (outlines, reflections, and two essays) on the developing content of the course. The final project is a Model of Spirituality for your faith community.

Assessment and Grading

Grade Components and Scale

Class participation and attendance (Camino prep & exercises, engagement in class activities (as conversant and as facilitator), and Table Conversation 30%.
Two written reflective, integrative and comparative assignments (30% - 15 pts. each) A “Pastoral Plan” for your faith community, in-class presentation and written work 40%

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Paper Formatting A link to the GPPM style sheet for all students can be found here, under “Writing Resources”: https://www.scu.edu/cas/academics/graduate-program-in-pastoral-ministries/student-resources

Late Policy Papers turned in late will be given an F unless prior arrangements are made.

Grading Breakdown

Class Participation 30%
Camino prep & discussion posts
Engagement in class activities (as conversant and as facilitator)
Table Conversation (requires attendance at religious service new to you - see Camino).
Two essays, post on line
DUE 10/9 AND 11/9 30%
Final project, DUE 12/7 40%

Attendance Policy We have limited time together and I expect everyone to be present to each of our sessions. You should not expect to miss sessions and be successful in this class. For absolutely unavoidable absences, communicate with me before the class. Do not expect to tell me later and be accommodated. Students will be allowed one unquestioned, excused absence for our Zoom meetings. Unexcused absences of two or more result in one whole letter-grade deduction each (i.e. B to C). For unavoidable absences, please speak to me in advance.

The use of video-conferencing software to record or replace in-person attendance for part or all of our three in-person sessions is not allowed, except in exceptional circumstances with the permission of the instructor and Program Director.
Technology Policy If you are on the Internet—checking email or Facebook, chatting, news-skimming, tweeting, texting, gaming, shopping, et cetera—you are not in class. You are expected in this course to focus on lectures, listen purposefully to one another, thoughtfully respond to your classmates, and share your insights and questions. You will not be able to do this if you let yourself be distracted by tech that is not in service of learning. Be present to the time we spend together and to your education. You deserve it!

The Student Handbook prohibits video- or audio-recording or streaming of private, non-public conversations and/or meetings, inclusive of the classroom setting, without the knowledge and consent of all recorded parties. If you require the recording of classroom lectures, discussions, simulations, and other course-related activity for a documented disability, make arrangements through Disabilities Resources (see below) and discuss this with the instructor. If for some reason other than disability you would like to record the class, please seek the permission of the instructor first, and then of the class.

Office Hours and Availability I welcome you to set up a time to talk to me individually, over the phone or Zoom. My email is on the top of the syllabus. We can discuss questions you have about class material, strategize about how to do well in the course and the program, and connect what is going on in class to your life and the world. If there is something big going on in your life effecting you, please communicate with me about it. I am here, and the University has many resources, to help you do your best. Email me anytime with questions. I will try to respond within twenty-four hours.

Academic Integrity The Academic Integrity pledge is an expression of the University’s commitment to fostering an understanding of—and commitment to—a culture of integrity at Santa Clara University. The Academic Integrity pledge, which applies to all students, states:

I am committed to being a person of integrity. I pledge, as a member of the Santa Clara University community, to abide by and uphold the standards of academic integrity contained in the Student Conduct Code.

Students are expected to uphold the principles of this pledge for all work in this class. For more information about Santa Clara University’s academic integrity pledge and resources about ensuring academic integrity in your work, see www.scu.edu/academic-integrity.

Citations Material taken verbatim from another source must be enclosed in quotation marks (i.e. “Generally speaking, the Roman Empire had little time to worry over the particularities of the Jewish faith.”) and should be followed by a footnote reference to the source of the material. Material paraphrased from another source should be introduced as belonging to another author (i.e. Here, Ehrman explains that the Roman Empire was quite tolerant of the Jewish religion, as long as it did not pose a threat to their rule) and should also be followed by a footnote reference to the source of the material. Failing to cite sources constitutes plagiarism.

Accessible Education Resources. I am committed to meeting each of my students’ learning needs. If you have a documented disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact The Office of Accessible Education Disabilities www.scu.edu/oae, (408 554-4109) as soon as possible to discuss your needs and register for accommodations with the University. If you have already arranged accommodations through OAE, please discuss them with me during my office hours. Students who have medical needs related to pregnancy or parenting may be eligible for accommodations.

While I am happy to assist you, I am unable to provide accommodations until I have received verification from OAE. The Office of Accessible Education will work with students and faculty to arrange proctored exams for students whose accommodations include double time for exams and/or assisted technology. (Students with approved accommodations of time-and-a-half should talk with me as soon as possible). The Office of Accessible Education must be contacted in advance to schedule proctored examinations or to arrange other accommodations, and would be grateful for advance notice of at least two weeks.
Title IX Syllabus Statement. Santa Clara University upholds a zero tolerance policy for discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct. If you (or someone you know) have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence or stalking, we encourage you to tell someone promptly. For more information, please go to www.scu.edu/studentlife and click on the link for the University’s Gender-Based Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policy or contact the University’s EEO and Title IX Coordinator, Belinda Guthrie at 408-554-3043 or by email at bguthrie@scu.edu. Reports may be submitted online through www.scu.edu/osl/report or anonymously through Ethicspoint: www.ethicspoint.com

IV. Course Assignments & Evaluation:
Two five-page essays will make up 30% of your grade, one due on Wednesday, October 9th, and the other on Wednesday, November 9th. (15% each).
In Essay 1, critically engage with Religion vs. Spirituality: A Contemporary Conundrum by Sandra M. Schneiders. Spiritus 3, no. 2 (Fall 2003), available on Camino along with guidelines. Essay 1 is due and to be posted on CAMINO. In Essay 2, you are to compare and contrast two contributions to the Christian spiritual tradition. Guidelines on Camino.
LEARNING OBJECTIVE 3A, 5A

Final Project, the “Pastoral Plan,” makes up 40% of your final grade. Develop a praxis, a model for one program founded on the traditions of Christian spirituality and created with a selected contemporary group in mind. 
LEARNING OBJECTIVE 3A.1, 5. A1. Options:

1) Develop a three-week program on spirituality for a select audience, as high school students, married couples, or a faith formation program for adults.
2) Write a research paper (10-12 double-spaced pages) aimed at further exploration of a practice or topic you want to investigate in depth.
3) Write a proposal to a parish council on spiritual practices in the parish, contextualizing and discerning the strengths and weaknesses of current practices. Suggest and propose a practice, with historically informed knowledge, which might be creatively and critically appropriated for your parish.
4) View film: Of gods and of men, directed by Xavier Beauvois. How is it a “window” into Christian spirituality? into cultural differences in Christian practices? Consider course readings which would be helpful for context, research writings of Christian de Chergé, and note Church’s 2018 recognition of them as martyrs . . . What are the implications, the lessons? Prepare an evening discussion of the film with a select group.

V. Course Texts

Additional readings for each class, as uploaded documents or links to websites where the readings are located, are listed in the appropriate date on Camino.

VI. Schedule. See Camino for guidelines.

Saturday 9/28 WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY?
Write and post: Guidelines on CAMINO.

W 10/2 APPROACHING SPIRITUALITY
Examining Christian spirituality as a way our values, lifestyles and practices reflect particular understandings of God, human identity and creation as context for human transformation.
Read: Sheldrake, What is Spirituality?: 1-20.
10/9 No class. FIRST ESSAY DUE, see guidelines on CAMINO.

W 10/16 BIBLICAL SPIRITUALITY and THE EARLY CHURCH
What are the origins for the Christian Way and the community’s early practices?
Read: Sheldrake, Foundations: Scriptures and the Early Church, 23-45:

W 10/23 MONASTIC SPIRITUALITY
What can we retrieve from these ancient sources for our lives today?
Read: Sheldrake, Monastic Spiritualities: 300-1150, 47-74; The Classic Monastic Practice of Lectio Divina, and the Benedictine Liturgy of the Hours. Camino. Primary sources TBD.

Saturday, 10/26 MEDIEVAL SPIRITUALITIES: Visionary and Beauty
How can charisms and historical primary sources be resources for our contemporary lives? How to interpret spiritual texts. Women mystics, writings, and leadership.
Read: Sheldrake, 2013, Spirituality in the City: 1150-1450, 79-106;

10/30 No class.

11/6 SPIRITUALITIES IN THE AGES OF REFORMATION AND OF REASON
What in the world is going on in the Christian family?
Read: Sheldrake, Spirituality in the Age of Reformations: 1450-1700, 110-142.
TBD Primary sources on Ignatius of Loyola and John of the Cross, Teresa of Avila.

11/9 SECOND ESSAY DUE, see guidelines on CAMINO.

11/13 SPIRITUALITIES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY – Practical & Prophetic
After World War II, people of faith wrestled with the problem of Auschwitz. How could a gracious God permit such evil as the Holocaust? How do people of faith begin to understand God, human persons and spiritual practice? The Emergence of Liberation Spirituality
TBD Primary sources on Dorothy Day, Simone Weil, Thomas Merton, Gustavo Gutierrez.

11/20 EMERGENT SPIRITUALITIES AND PRACTICES OF OUR TIMES
In our increasingly global world, what spiritualities are emerging, and why? Contemplative way of being; intentional communities, accompaniment, inter-religious dialogue, prophetic
Read: Sheldrake, Twenty-first Trajectories, 202-222. Primary sources, TBD

Saturday 12/7 CLIMATE CRISIS AND CONTEMPLATIVE ECOLOGY
Sheldrake, Twenty-first Trajectories, 202-222. Other sources, TBD


Prepare for your seat at the Council of Mentors: A Table Conversation
Prepare to share your project (10 minutes)