SYLLABUS

Developing Christ-minded leaders who make a difference in the world

PT 540 Spiritual Formation
Spring Intersession, 2016

INSTRUCTOR: Allan L. Effa, Ph.D. Phone 780-431-5244
allan.effa@taylor-edu.ca

SCHEDULE: May 15, 7 PM – May 19, 7 PM at Gull Lake Retreat Centre. There is a surcharge of $340.00 for room and board payable at the Taylor front office. This is in addition to tuition costs. A limited number of single occupancy rooms are available for an additional $40.00.

CREDITS: 3

DESCRIPTION:
A foundational study of the process of making space for the Holy Spirit’s work of transformation into the likeness of Christ. It introduces spiritual practices, grounded in the Christian tradition, that sustain and nurture a life-long pursuit of union with God. Includes a prayer retreat. 3 Credits.

OBJECTIVES:
The aim of this course is to:
• Enable students to understand and articulate spiritual formation from a biblical and historical perspective.

• Help students reflect on their spiritual formation and to assess areas of strength and needed growth.

• Offer opportunities to experience and participate in a variety of spiritual disciplines, in an effort to integrate them into a personal quest for Christlikeness.

• Increase awareness of the value of Christian community in the pursuit of spiritual formation.

We are like eggs at present. And you cannot go on indefinitely being just an ordinary, decent egg. We must be hatched or go bad. - C. S. Lewis
TEXTBOOKS:


Suggested sites from which to order texts: www.amazon.ca  www.chaptersindigo.ca  www.bookdepository.com  www.abebooks.com

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:


COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. **PRE-COURSE WORK:** Prior to class time, all students should complete the reading of Henri Nouwen’s The Way of the Heart. Bring to class a 500 – 800 word reflection on the reading. A suggested format would be to choose three quotes from the book and then write a response on how those quotes address you and consider what they are inviting you toward. We will share these with each other in class.

2. **Attendance and Participation**

   Spiritual formation is not an individual, solitary process, but requires interaction and the involvement of many other people in our lives. This is why our class times together are very important. Each student has a role to contribute toward the spiritual formation of the instructor as well as fellow classmates. Like worship, it is a “work of the people.” Not only should students strive to be physically present in the classroom, but devote their full attention to what is going on there, by minimizing distractions from email, phone messages, web surfing, etc. This course is being held at Gull Lake Retreat Centre and students are expected to stay overnight and participate in the community life that we will share over five days. Only in exceptional cases will students be permitted to be absent from the retreat centre.
3. **Reading Log and Blogs**
   Students will submit a reading log of a minimum of 250 pages from Richard Foster and James Bryan Smith’s *Devotional Classics*. Use the template on page 6 of this syllabus. This reading log is due **June 30, 2016 at 11:55 PM (MDT)** and should be submitted on the Moodle platform. Each student will also write two reflective blogs in response to two articles in *Devotional Classics*. The point of reflection may be either personal (how you are addressed or challenged by the article), or cultural (how does the article critique, inform or challenge the predominant culture?). These blogs should be 500 – 750 words and should be posted on our course website so classmates are able to read them. [To start a blog, click on the “Add a New Entry” button in the blog menu (right side of the website, under Calendar)]. These are due **June 10, 2016 at 11:55 PM (MDT) and June 24, 2016 at 11:55 PM (MDT)**.

4. **Book Review**
   Students will submit a review of Marjorie Thompson’s *Soul Feast*, following the template on page 7 of this syllabus. This review should be submitted on the Moodle site no later than **June 30, 2016, 11:55 PM (MDT)**.

5. **Internet Reading**
   Students will spend a minimum of 7 hours exploring some of the online links related to spiritual formation. These can be accessed through our course website. This should be documented by means of the reading log on page 5 of this syllabus. For your convenience, the Reading Log is also downloadable in an Excel format on our course website. Submit this on the Moodle site no later than **June 30, 2016, 11:55 PM (MDT)**.

6. **Barbara Brown Taylor Journal**
   Students will select **three** practices out of the 12 described in Taylor’s book and intentionally look for ways to live out a **different one in each of three given weeks** during the period between the conclusion of our classes at Gull Lake and the June 30, 2016 deadline for course work. It might be helpful to make a cue card or write it on your hand to remind you throughout the day to cultivate this chosen practice. Students will keep a journal reflecting on the challenges, joys and insights of this practice. The journal should be 1.5-2 double-spaced pages per week for a total of 5-8 pages of reflections. Answer questions such as, “How is this practice shaping your day? How is it changing you? What frustrates you about yourself and the challenge of engaging in this practice? This assignment should be submitted on the Moodle site no later than **June 30, 2016, 11:55 PM (MDT)**.

7. **Final Examination**
   The Final Examination will cover all materials presented in the form of lectures and media as well as the contents of Nouwen’s *The Way of the Heart*. This examination will be completed online and students will need to sign a statement that they did not consult any sources or other people to assist them in their examination. Students will have two hours to complete it and may **start the examination any time between Wednesday, May 25, 12:05 AM and Saturday, May 28 at 9:50 PM (all times are MDT)**.
LATE ASSIGNMENTS:
Because the spiritual life is also a disciplined life, all assignments are expected to be completed by their respective due dates. The instructor will not assign grades to any late assignments except where unusual and tragic circumstances lead the students to make arrangements for an extension prior to the deadline. No extensions may be granted to the June 30 deadline, except where students have applied for and received an Incomplete from the Academic Committee.

GRADING AND COURSE LOAD DISTRIBUTIONS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nouwen Reflective Paper</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>May 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Devotional Classics Reading Log</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>June 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blogs (2X2.5)</td>
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<td>June 10 and June 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Reading Log</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>June 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Review Thompson</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>June 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Brown Taylor Journal</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>June 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>May 25 - 28</td>
</tr>
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COURSE OUTLINE:
The Nature of Spiritual Formation
Disciplines and Spiritual Formation
Community and Spiritual Formation
Spiritual Formation in the Congregation
Practices of Prayer
Practices of Scripture Intake
Practices of Spiritual Friendship

We will observe a silent prayer vigil from Wednesday afternoon until Thursday noon, with Daily Office prayers every three hours, day and night.

Access to our Course Web Site

In order to access Taylor’s online learning platform, you will need to follow these steps:

1. Go to www.online.taylor-edu.ca

2. Your user name is tsXXXXX (ts followed by your Taylor Student ID Number)

3. Your password is your last name in small case letters (eg., effa). Once you log in you may change your password by going into PROFILE and accessing EDIT PROFILE.

4. If you are already registered on the platform you will need to click on PT 540 Spiritual Formation in order to access the course materials.
INTERNET READING LOG TEMPLATE (This is also uploaded on our web site)

Name ____________________     Box S-____

1.  Web site researched (give name of site) ______________________
    Minutes spent reading/exploring ______

2.  Web site researched (give name of site) ______________________
    Minutes spent reading/exploring ______

3.  Web site researched (give name of site) ______________________
    Minutes spent reading/exploring ______

4.  Web site researched (give name of site) ______________________
    Minutes spent reading/exploring ______

5.  Web site researched (give name of site) ______________________
    Minutes spent reading/exploring ______

6.  Web site researched (give name of site) ______________________
    Minutes spent reading/exploring ______

7.  Web site researched (give name of site) ______________________
    Minutes spent reading/exploring ______

8.  Web site researched (give name of site) ______________________
    Minutes spent reading/exploring ______

9.  Web site researched (give name of site) ______________________
    Minutes spent reading/exploring ______

10. Web site researched (give name of site) ______________________
    Minutes spent reading/exploring ______

11. Web site researched (give name of site) ______________________
    Minutes spent reading/exploring ______

TOTAL MINUTES OF INTERNET READING = 420
<table>
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<th>Page numbers read (e.g, 3-55)</th>
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<tr>
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**TOTAL PAGES READ**
BOOK REVIEW FOR SOUL FEAST, by Marjorie Thompson

Name ______________________ Percentage of pages read ________/100%

Write a reflective review of Thompson’s book, by responding to each of the nine chapters in her book. Write a paragraph of 300 – 400 words in response to each chapter (total review should be between 2,700 – 3,600 words) reflecting on how the chapter addressed you personally. What strengths did it affirm? What weaknesses did it reveal? What practices did you find yourself drawn toward?

Offer a brief concluding paragraph summarizing the impact this reading has had on your thinking and cultivation of Christian Spirituality.
Select Bibliography


*Eat This Book: A Conversation in the Art of Spiritual Reading*. Eerdmans, 2006.


