**WAYLAND BAPTIST UNIVERSITY**

**VIRTUAL CAMPUS**

**SCHOOL OF RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY**

Wayland Baptist University Mission Statement

Wayland Baptist University exists to education students in an academically challenging, learning-focused and distinctively Christian environment for professional success and service to God and humankind.

### RLED/RLGN 5354 VC01

***SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES & CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY***

# Fall 2017 (August 21 – November 4)

## Instructor: Dr. Gary Mitchell

## Instructor Information

* **Phone:** (575) 763-0535
* **Email:** mitchellg@wbu.edu
* **Office Hours:** 10 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. Monday-Friday
* **Office Location:** Clovis, NM

**Class Time and Location:** Asynchronous, Virtual Campus

**Catalog Description:** Orientation to the M.Div. program, survey of the spiritual traditions of the Western Church, and introduction to specific habits and practices which encourage a vibrant Christian life. ***To be taken in the first semester of enrollment in the Master of Divinity program.***

**Pre-requisite Matters: This course is designed to be taken as the initial course in the Master of Divinity program, and should be taken in the first semester of enrollment in that program.**  As such, the course will not count toward degree completion requirements for MCM and MA students.

**Required Textbooks and Resources**

* **Required Texts**
* *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard J. Foster, HarperCollins, ISBN-10: 0060628391; ISBN-13: 978-0060628390
* *Christian Spirituality* by Alister E. McGrath, Blackwell Publishing, 1999, ISBN-13: 978-0-631-21281-2
* *The Holy Bible*

**Optional Text/Resource**

* *The Believer’s Prayer Manual* by Gary Mitchell, can be purchased by contacting instructor or through the Wayland University Bookstore
* **Access to WBU Learning Resources:** Click on link at left entitled "Wayland Library"; Email Distance Librarian Sally Quiroz ([lrcref@wbu.edu](mailto:lrcref@wbu.edu)) about having books mailed to you.
* **Internet links:** See "Web Resources" tab.
* **Class message board:** See “Announcements” and "Discussion Board" tab.
* **Email:** All students will need to set up and use their Wayland student email account.

**Course Outcome Competencies:** Students will be able to

1. Classify and discuss the traditional spiritual disciplines of the Christian faith.
2. Appreciate the necessity that Christianity be a way of life, not merely a set of beliefs or values.
3. Examine the Christian spirituality of key Christians in the history of the Church.
4. Assess the significance of spiritual formation for the individual Christian and congregation in light of biblical materials, theological considerations, and historical practices.

###### Attendance Requirements

Students are expected to participate in all required instructional activities in their courses. Online courses are no different in this regard; however, participation must be defined in a different manner. Student “attendance” in an online course is defined as active participation in the course as described in the course syllabus. Instructors in online courses are responsible for providing students with clear instructions for how they are required to participate in the course. Additionally, instructors are responsible for incorporating specific instructional activities within their course and will, at a minimum, have weekly mechanisms for documenting student participation. These mechanisms may include, but are not limited to, participating in a weekly discussion board, submitting/completing assignments in Blackboard, or communicating with the instructor. Students aware of necessary absences must inform the professor with as much advance notice as possible in order to make appropriate arrangements.

Any student absent 25 percent or more of the online course, i.e., non-participatory during 3 or more weeks of an 11-week term, may receive an F for that course. Instructors may also file a Report of Unsatisfactory Progress for students with excessive non-participation. Any student who has not actively participated in an online class prior to the census date for any given term is considered a “no-show” and will be administratively withdrawn from the class without record. To be counted as actively participating, it is not sufficient to log in and view the course. The student must be submitting work as described in the course syllabus. Additional attendance and participation

policies for each course, as defined by the instructor in the course syllabus, are considered a part of the university’s attendance policy.

Disability Statement:

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any education program or activity in the university. The Coordinator of Counseling Services serves as the coordinator of students with a disability and should be contacted concerning accommodation requests at (806) 291-3765. Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations.

#### \*Course Requirements and Grading Criteria:

1. The course will be composed of reading assignments, discussion forums, a class project, a personal project, a biographical research paper, and an analytical book review during the semester.
2. **Reading Assignments**: Students will read chapters as listed in the schedule of readings and tests. Assigned textbook readings as indicated in the schedule must be completed on a weekly basis in order for you to participate meaningfully in discussion board activities. Active participation in an online forum is measured by posting at least **four substantial comments** per forum (not including the Prayer Requests & Praise forum). Comments may be replies to posted questions or to the responses of other students. Participation in discussion board forums will count for 100 points of the final grade (20% of final grade).
3. **Written Assignments**: Students will submit via Blackboard a 7-12 page (double-spaced), biographical research paper on a post-New Testament, deeply spiritual Christian personality (a list of some of these may be found in McGrath’s book, Chapter 7, and in the citations made by Foster in his text – and the instructor can offer some additional sources as well). The paper must include a minimum of five sources. References must be cited in Turabian style. A title page and a bibliography are required but are not counted as part of the five pages. The paper will consist of three parts: (1) biblical background/personal history of the personality; (2) major contributions/significance or principles demonstrated by the personality; and (3) personal application of the personality to writer's life. Papers are **DUE OCTOBER 22. Any paper not submitted on time will automatically lose one point per day for each day that it is late.** This paper amounts to 20% of the final grade.
4. At the beginning of the course, students will read Alister McGrath’s book, *Christian Spirituality*, and submit a 5 page summary and analytical review of the book (in terms of what was either problematic as well as most beneficial or helpful). This review will be worth 100 points (20% of the final grade). **DUE SEPTEMBER 17**
5. **Class Project:** As members of this class, you have also been selected as members of the elite Mission: Possible Cloak & Prayer Warrior Team (MPCPWT – I have selected an acronym even the military can’t pronounce). Your mission – should you choose to accept it (and if you don’t, the world crumbles) – is not so simple. You have been selected to this team because of your notable humility, outstanding spirituality, tremendous knowledge and wily wisdom – (plus, you’re members of this class). You and your team have been tasked by the director of missions for NoCanDo Association of Churches to develop a prayer retreat for the leaders of the churches of the association, which will be no small task. Here is the background for the association churches: one of the churches is a megachurch, and feels no need to help or cooperate with the other churches in the association; three of the churches in the association have issues with a fourth church because the leaders of the three churches feel the fourth church has been stealing sheep (members) from their congregations; two other churches are poor congregations, have little resources, feel inferior to the other churches, don’t participate and generally have low spiritual self-esteem; the remaining five churches are growing, vibrant and wanting to move on in spreading the Gospel to their communities with the help of the association.

**Your task:** Develop a prayer retreat to help the leaders come together to see the need to forgive and work together and grow into an effective association of believers to change and impact their communities and world. Task members can be assigned different venues to confront the various issues, e.g., structure worship activities; formulate prayer and/or fasting times; meditation activities; Bible study cell groups, and so on. Submission of this project counts up to 20% of the final grade. **DUE OCTOBER 8**

1. Students will be given a choice of doing a specific **personal project**, worth up to 100 points (20% of the final grade), including:

(1) developing a set Bible reading schedule and following it

(2) carrying out at least three extended prayer times of at least one hour in length (with one being two hours or more)

(3) carrying out a three-day fast for a specified purpose

(4) developing a plan for discipling another fellow believer

(5) developing a plan and conducting that plan to share one's faith with another person who doesn't know Christ as Savior

(6) doing at least two inductive Bible studies

(7) maintaining a quiet time at least four times a week during the semester

(8) participating in a class project (assigned or approved by the instructor) with the idea that every class member has a significant contributing role

(9) other projects as discussed and approved by the instructor.

Projects will be reported on a form provided by the instructor and is **DUE OCTOBER 29**.

**Course Evaluation (Method of Determining Grade)**

Grading will be based on the following scale: Students will have the opportunity to accumulate up to 500 points during the semester. This is how they can be earned:

Research Paper = 100 points *(20% of final grade)*

Book Review = 100 points *(20% of final grade)*

Discussion Forum = 100 points *(20% of final grade)*

Personal Project = 100 points *(20% of final grade)*

Class Project = 100 points *(20% of final grade)*

A student can do an additional individual project worth up to 25 points for extra credit.

The grading scale then would be as follows: A = 450-500 points; B = 400-449 points; C = 350-399 points; D = 300-349 points; and F = 299 and below.

##### University Grading System

A 90-100 I INCOMPLETE\*\*

B 80-89 Cr FOR CREDIT

C 70-79 NCr NO CREDIT

D 60-69 WP WITHDRAWAL PASSING

F BELOW 60 WF WITHDRAWAL FAILING

W WITHDRAWAL

\*\*A grade of incomplete is changed if the deficiency is made up by midterm of the next regular semester; otherwise, it becomes "F". This grade is given only if circumstances beyond the student's control prevented completion of work during the semester enrolled and attendance requirements have been met. A grade of "CR" indicates that credit in semester hours was granted but no grade or grade points were recorded.

\*Students shall have protection through orderly procedures against prejudices or capricious academic evaluation. A student who believes that he or she has not been held to realistic academic standards, just evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course by using the student grade appeal process described in the Academic Catalog. Appeals may not be made for advanced placement examinations or course bypass examinations. Appeals are limited to the final course grade, which may be upheld, raised, or lowered at any stage of the appeal process. Any recommendation to lower a course grade must be submitted through the Executive Vice President/Provost to the Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee for review and approval. The Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee may instruct that the course grade be upheld, raised, or lowered to a more proper evaluation.

**Course Outline and Calendar**

The student is responsible for reading the assignments before the class session. The instructor reserves the right to give quizzes over the reading assignments at his discretion.

**Week 1 (August 21 – 27)**

Introduction to Course/syllabus review

Welcome & Orientation to Master of Divinity program

Begin reading McGrath’s book – Book report is due April 2

The Spiritual Disciplines (Foster, 1-11)

**Week 2 (August 28 – September 3)**

Complete Orientation to M.Div. program requirements

Complete reading McGrath’s book – report is due April 2

The Inward Disciplines/Meditation/Prayer (Foster, 15-46)

**Week 3 (September 4 – 10)**

Continue reading/writing up report on McGrath’s book

Fasting/Study (Foster, 47-76)

Select & work on personal spiritual discipline project

Select subject for biographical research paper

**Week 4 (September 11 – 17)**

Continue to work on spiritual discipline project

Work on selected biographical research paper

Work on study guide for Foster’s book Part I – The Inward Disciplines

**Book Review Report Due (McGrath’s *Christian Spirituality*) on September 17**

**Week 5 (September 18 – 24)**

Read: Outward Disciplines/Simplicity/Solitude (Foster, 79-109)

Continue to work on spiritual discipline project

Work on selected biographical research paper

**Week 6 (September 25 – October 1)**

Work on project and research paper

Read: Submission/Service (Foster, 110-140)

**Week 7 (October 2 – 8)**

Work on project and research paper

Read: Corporate Disciplines/Confession/Worship (Foster, 141-174)

**Prayer Retreat Scenario Class Project Due on October 8**

**Week 8 (October 9 – 15)**

Work on project and research paper

Read: Guidance/Celebration (Foster, 175-201)

**Week 9 (October 16 – 22)**

Work on study guide for Foster’s book – Parts 2 & 3

**Research Paper Due – 11:59 p.m. CDT October 22**

**Week 10 (October 23 – 29)**

**Spiritual Discipline Project Report Due October 29**

**Week 11 (October 30 – November 4)**

**Discussion Board Reflection on Texts & Course**

**Academic Honesty (Plagiarism): University students are expected to conduct themselves according to the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, forgery, or plagiarism. Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work. It is the student’s responsibility to be familiar with penalties associates with plagiarism stated in the catalog.**

**Course policies**:  
*Respect*. Because the university classroom is a place designed for the free exchange of ideas, we will frequently encounter the opinions of others which may seem novel and, occasionally, outlandish. We must show respect for one another in all circumstances. I will show respect for you by not belittling or ignoring you. You will show respect for me by giving attention to assignments. We will show respect for one another by exhibiting patience and courtesy in our exchanges.

*Student rights*. Your rights as a student have been outlined in the current WBU catalogue. If you feel that your rights have been infringed upon in this class, please inform me. If you have a disability which will require particular attention on my part, you must inform me as soon as possible.

**\* Required by Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges**