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**WBU Online**

**School of Christian Studies**

# UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

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

# COURSE NUMBER & NAME:

THST3301VC01 Christian Spirituality

# TERM:

Spring 1, 2023

# INSTRUCTOR:

Dr. Michael Dain

# CONTACT INFORMATION:

Office phone: (806) 742-9537

WBU Email: dainm@wbu.edu

# OFFICE HOURS, BUILDING & LOCATION:

WBU Online

# COURSE MEETING TIME & LOCATION:

Meeting day & time: Asynchronous, Virtual Campus

# CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

Introduction to devotional and contemplative forms of Christian spirituality as a means of discipleship and enhancing and deepening faith; study will engage primary sources, considered classics, by women and men who have reflected deeply on the Christian life with God and its implications.

PREREQUISITE(S):RLGN 1301 or RLGN 1303, and RLGN 1302 or RLGN 1304

# REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND RESOURCE MATERIAL:

| **Title** | **Editor/author** | **Publisher** | **Year** | **Ed** | **ISBN** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Christian Spirituality* | Alister McGrath | Blackwell Pub | 1999 | 1 | 978-0631212812 |
| *Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism* | Bernard McGinn | Modern Library | 2006 | 2 | 978-0812974218 |
| Bible | Any translation |  |  |  |  |

# COURSE OUTCOMES AND COMPETENCIES:

Students will be able to

* Recognize the necessity that Christianity be a way of life, not merely a set of beliefs or values.
* Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of devotional and contemplative forms of Christian spirituality as a means of discipleship and enhancing and deepening faith.
* Research and discuss the history of Christian spiritual reflection, by engaging primary sources, considered classics, by women and men who have reflected deeply on the Christian life and its implications.
* Examine the Christian spirituality of key Christians in the history of the Church.

# ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS: WBU Online

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 2 or more weeks of an 8-week session, may receive an F for that course. Instructors may also file a Predict Report 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 session 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.

# STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM & ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

Wayland Baptist University observes a zero tolerance policy regarding academic dishonesty. Per university policy as described in the academic catalog, all cases of academic dishonesty will be reported and second offenses will result in suspension from the university.

# 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 educational 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 personal devotional or contemplative writing project, a critical assessment and evaluation of a classical writing by a man or woman who have reflected deeply on the Christian life, 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 (25% of final grade).
3. **Reflective Critique Written Assignment**: Students will submit via Blackboard a 5-10 page (double-spaced), reflective (critical evaluation) paper on the writing of a post-New Testament, deeply spiritual Christian writer (a list of these may be found in McGuinn’s book as well as McGrath’s book). The paper should include a title page and a bibliography page. References must be cited in Turabian style. The paper will consist of three parts: (1) a summary/highlights of the writing; (2) critical evaluation of the writing; and (3) personal application of the writing to student's life. The completed written assignment will be **DUE FEBRUARY 21. Any paper not submitted on time will automatically lose one point per day for each day that it is late.** This paper amounts to 100 points (25% of the final grade).
4. **Book Journal:** Students will read Alister McGrath’s book, *Christian Spirituality*, and submit weekly journal reflections based on their reading of the text. Journals will be done weekly for the first five weeks of the course and the reading prompts will appear in each weekly session to guide the student which chapters to review for each week. Each weekly journal is worth 20 points for a total of 100 points.
5. **Personal Devotional/Contemplative Project:** As you are reading through the contemplative writings of classic Christian mystics, I hope you would have the urge to jot down your own devotional or contemplative thoughts about your personal faith and your life in Christ. So to help you with that project, please submit a 2-3 page essay expressing those thoughts and ideas. Upload the essay via Blackboard for grading. And if you feel led, please feel free to share it with your classmates via the Discussion Board. Submission of this project counts 100 points (up to 25% of the final grade). **DUE FEBRUARY 28**

# Course Evaluation (Method of Determining Grade)

Grading will be based on the following scale: Students will have the opportunity to accumulate up to 400 points during the semester. This is how they can be earned:

Reflective Writing Critique = 100 points *(25% of final grade)*

Analytical Book Review = 100 points *(25% of final grade)*

Discussion Forum = 100 points *(25% of final grade)*

Devotional Essay Project = 100 points *(25% of final grade)*

The grading scale then would be as follows: A = 360-400 points; B = 320-359 points; C = 280-319 points; D = 240-279 points; and F = 239 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.

Grade Appeal Statement: “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 Vice President of Academic Affairs/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.”

# TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

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 (January 16 – 21)**

 Welcome to the class/Introduction to Course/syllabus review

 Begin reading McGrath’s book –

Begin readings from *Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*: “Preface” and “Introduction”

Respond to Discussion Board prompts for the week

 **Week 2 (January 22 – 28)**

Complete reading McGrath’s book –

Continue readings from *Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*: Part One: Section 1: “Biblical Interpretation” (pages 3-46)

Continue to respond to Discussion Board forums

**Week 3 (January 29 – February 4)**

Continue reading/writing up report on McGrath’s book

Continue readings from *Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*: Part One: Section 2: “Asceticism and Purgation” (pages 47-77)

Section 3: “Prayer, Liturgy, and Sacraments” (pages 79-121)

Continue to respond to Discussion Board forums

 **Week 4 (February 5-February 11)**

Complete the writing up of report on McGrath’s book

Begin work on Reflective Critique paper – due February 20

Continue readings from *Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*: Part One: Section 4: “Inner and Outer Practices” (pages 123-148)

Continue to respond to Discussion Board forums

**Week 5 (February 12 – 18)**

Continue to work on Reflective Critique paper – due February 20

Begin work on Devotional/Contemplative Project – due February 27

Continue readings from *Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*: Part One: Section 5: “Mystical Itineraries” (pages 149-187)

Continue readings from *Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*: Part Two: Section 6: “Living the Trinity” (pages 191-220) and Section 7: “Encountering Christ” (pages 221-250)

Continue to respond to Discussion Board forums

**Week 6 (February 19– 25)**

Complete work on Reflective Critique paper – due February 20

Continue to work on Devotional/Contemplative Project – due February 27

Continue readings from *Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*: Part Two: Section 8: “Love and Knowledge” (any 2 excerpts, pages 251-280), Section 9: “Positive and Negative Ways to God” (any 2 excerpts, pages 281-308), and Section 10: “Vision, Contemplation, and Rapture” (any 4 excerpts, pages 309-364)

Continue to respond to Discussion Board forums

**Reflective Critique Written Assignment Due on February 19**

 **Week 7 (February 26 – March 4)**

Complete work on Devotional/Contemplative paper – due February 27

Continue readings from *Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*: Part Two: Continue readings from *Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*: Part Two: Section 11: “Distress and Dereliction” (any 2 excerpts, pages 365-393), Section 12: “Deification and Birthing” (any 2 excerpts, pages 395-425), and Section 13: “Union with God” (any 4 excerpts, pages 427-477)

Continue to respond to Discussion Board forums

**Personal Devotional/Contemplative Project Due – 11:59 p.m. CDT February 26**

**Week 8 (March 5- March 11)**

Continue readings from *Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*: Part Two: Section 14: “Mysticism and Heresy” (pages 481-517) and Section 15: “Contemplation and Action” (pages 519-551)

Begin to wrap up Discussion Board forums **Discussion Board Reflection on Texts & Course/CONGRATULATIONS! WELL DONE!**