

SYLLABUS (Final Version)
HSSP 5000 Doctoral Seminar in the History of Christian Spirituality

Spring 2010

Mondays, 2:10-5:00 FST Classroom #2

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Available by Appointment

<http://courseweb.fst.edu/Pryds>

This seminar is primarily intended for advanced GTU students interested in studying the history of Christian Spirituality at the doctoral level. For doctoral students in the Area of Christian Spirituality, the course has a special purpose to help them prepare for their General Comprehensive Exam in History. Therefore, the readings for this course are taken from the bibliography for that exam, which can be found on my webpage. Because the bibliography is extensive, there will be no effort to cover the entire bibliography. Instead, this course will cover some of the materials for that exam (primarily texts chosen by the students) and will emphasize training students in methods of analyzing primary texts and critiquing secondary literature.

All students in the class, regardless of their degree program, will be expected to participate in doctoral level discussions of texts and write a doctoral level research paper.

This course is based on the assumption that all scholarly research is a conversation (Huff, p. 1). Therefore, we will treat primary texts within the contexts of secondary scholarship.

Some attention will be given to professionalization skills, so that students learn professional skills to take with them in their academic careers. To that end, you will see that each class section has both a content topic (Ancient, Medieval, etc.) and a research skill topic (choosing a topic, compiling a literature review, etc.).

In the first four weeks of the term, the professor will provide some background lectures on the history of Christianity and on Historical methodologies. She will give at two formal presentations on two primary texts, providing the historical context and a historiographical context (i.e. how historians have engaged with the text) as a model for future student presentations.

After this introductory period, each class will be turned over to students to make presentations based on primary and supporting secondary texts. Each student is responsible for offering one formal presentation on a primary text placing the text in its historical context and in a historiographical context.

Students need to select their text in consultation with the professor and the rest of the class; student must make a photo copy of a 50 page selection from the text which will be the basis of common reading in the class. Students must submit this selection (including title page and publication information) to class on Monday

February 22. A class reader will be made from these selections and will be available for purchase at Copy Central on Hearst around Friday Feb. 26.

This format requires some ambiguity at the beginning of the course, since students will have at least two weeks to decide which texts to present. For this reason, the syllabus is presently incomplete. Once the selection of texts is made, the syllabus will be revised and reposted on the class webpage.

The learning objectives of this course are:

1. to be able to offer sophisticated analysis a broad range of primary texts and secondary literature related to the history of Christian Spirituality
3. to learn how to give and receive scholarly critique within a safe environment
4. to learn how to prepare a literature review of secondary literature surrounding a primary text
5. to learn how to contextualize primary texts historically
6. to learn how to write and revise a scholarly article that will potentially be publishable in a scholarly journal
7. to learn how to write and to present a scholarly paper suitable for a scholarly conference

To meet these goals, students will be evaluated in the following manner:

1. 20% Class Discussion: Active participation in class discussion is expected, and will be evaluated on the relevance to the topic at hand. The goal is for participation to include: thoughtful questions related to the texts being discussed; sensitive and perceptive critique of student presentations; and a willingness to share ideas related to the topic. This includes participation in a prepared oral critique of a research paper delivered orally by a peer as part of the Class Conference.

2. 35% Oral Presentations of primary document(s): The course centers on the presentation of primary texts within a context of scholarly discussions related to the texts. Each student will give one presentation of 30-45 minutes on a primary text or a group of shorter, closely related texts from the Bibliography. Once the student has selected the text, s/he must provide the professor with a photocopy of the text for the other students.

Copies of these texts are due in class on Feb. 22.

The student may select a document that will then lead into their Research Project (see below) so that class assignments build on one another.

The Oral Presentation of a primary text is a professional quality presentation including:

- 1.) an explanation of the text (author, date, genre of text, editions available, historical context;
- 2.) a discussion of how scholars have used this text to examine one particular theme (do not try to examine the entire scholarly literature on the text. Instead choose one particular

theme that especially interests you and examine the scholarly literature related to this theme.)

3.) Identification of areas left untapped by scholars and ready for further research on the given text(s).

3. 25% Research Project: 20-25 page research paper based on primary and secondary texts. Use of documents in original languages in a critical edition is preferred, but a scholarly translation is also acceptable. Relevant bibliography including non-English secondary literature is expected.

All Research papers must have a clear thesis and argument to support the thesis.

The Term Paper is Due on May 10. No Extensions given without prior approval from the instructor.

4. 20% Oral Presentation of Research Project: 20 minute oral presentation of a research project. Professional quality presentation with visual aids (video/dvd clips, Power Point, handouts, etc.) if appropriate. The format will be like a professional academic conference. Peers will be chosen to offer a prepared critique. A careful use of time is expected.

Required Books:

- Philip Sheldrake, *History and Spirituality*
- Athanasius *Life of Antony*
- A. Holder, ed. *Christian Spirituality. The Classics.*
- *The Rule of St. Benedict*
- Photocopies of primary texts available as a Course Reader after Feb. 25.

Recommended Books:

- Anne Sigismund Huff, Writing for Scholarly Publication (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1999)
OR 6-page summary of the book found on my webpage.
<http://courseweb.fst.edu/pryds/Study/research.pdf>

Schedule of Classes

Feb. 1: Introduction to the History of Christian Spirituality

Introduction to History as an Academic Discipline

How to Study and Research in History

Determining Content of the Course

Reading Historically rather than Theologically

Creating a Writing Community in this Class

Required Reading:

In-Class Reading: How to read historically. Selections from Prayerbook; Angela of Foligno, *Memorial*; Analyzing the bibliography used in the Doctoral Area of Christian Spirituality

Feb. 8: Historical Method within the Discipline of Christian Spirituality:

Be prepared to discuss the thesis and argument of Sheldrake's book. To prepare, use the Template for Notetaking found at <http://courseweb.fst.edu/pryds/Study/notes.pdf>

Continued discussion of analysis and critique of the bibliography for the Area of Christian Spirituality

Required Reading:

Philip Sheldrake, *History and Spirituality*

February 15: President's Day

No Class session

Feb. 22: Hagiography and the Life of Antony

Read: Athanasius, *Life of Antony*

Due in Class:

A selection of 50 pages photocopied with title page and publication information to be made into a Class Reader.

Mar. 1: The Rule of Benedictine and Monastic Spirituality

Read: *Rule of St. Benedict*

March 8:

Teresa of Avila

March 15:

Ignatius of Loyola

March 22: Reading Week. No Class Meeting**April 29:**

Origen

Gregory the Great

April 5: No Class: Easter Monday**April 12:**

Hadewijch

April 19:
The Wesleys

April 26:
Merton

Due in Class: All Students must provide a copy of the paper they will present on May to their peer reviewer today.

May 3: Class Conference

May 10: Summary Comments and Overview
All Term Papers are due today in class. No exceptions.