Longing for God?
Christian Spirituality in Theological Perspective

Instructor: Prof. Dr. Najib George Awad
Office Location: 76 Sherman Street, Building of ‘Faith in Practice’
Office, second floor

Mobile Phone Number: 860-987-8048
Email Address: nawad@hartsem.edu

- **Office Hours:** I shall be available every **Wednesday and Thursday, 10:00 am-1:00 pm.** Students are welcomed to drop by my office after making an appointment. Asking for an appointment can be done via my email: nawad@hartsem.edu, or via my cell phone: 860-987 8048

---

- **Course Description:** This course endeavors to introduce the broad traditions of spirituality from different historical eras in Christian history, from Antiquity, to Medieval time, through to Renaissance/Reformation and then to Modern time. It aims to achieve this by exposing the students to primary spiritual texts and then trying to highlight and extract the theological foundations and dimensions of the spiritual orientations in these texts, so that students will be introduced to theological hermeneutics in the study of spirituality. The primary goals of the course are for the students to get introductory information on what are some of the basic spiritual trends in Christianity in light of the Christian theological tradition as a whole.

- **Course’s Objectives:**
  At the end of the course the students would:
  1- Get exposed to conceptual, scriptural and historical understanding of the pluriform nature of Christian Spirituality
  2- would have a chance to discover the link between Spirituality and theology and to discern their mutual importance to each other.
  3- will try to read some primary spiritual texts written by different Christian figures at different eras and try to learn from them ideas on experiences of the relation with God and of faith.
-Suggested Primary Readings: there is no single textbook for this course and there are no required texts to be read before the beginning of the class. Students are required to read the assigned texts for every session during the semester (you will find them recorded underneath the title of every session in the course’s outline section, and you will be able to obtain a pdf copy of each text from SONISWEB).

- Course’s Outline and Reading Assignments

I- Week One (Thurs, Jan. 24, 2019):

1- 4:00 pm- 5:20 pm: Introducing the Course & Syllabus
2- 5:30 pm – 6:45 pm: On Christian Spirituality in the Course

II- Conceptual Framework

II- Week Two (Thurs, Jan. 31, 2019):


III- Scriptural Framework

III- Week Three (Thurs, Feb. 7, 2019):

2- 5:30 pm- 6:45 pm: Spirituality in the Old Testament (2): Textual Samples [R.R: Texts from the Bible: Abraham conversing with God; Jacob’s Dream; Job; the Suffering Servant]
IV- Week Four (Thurs, Feb. 14, 2019):

1- 4:00 pm - 5:20 pm: Spirituality in the New Testament (1): An Overview

2- 5:30 pm – 6:45 pm: Spirituality in the New Testament (2): Samples

III- Historical Framework

V- Week Five (Thurs, Feb. 21, 2019):

1- 4:00 pm - 5:20 pm: Spirituality in Roman Empire (100-600 A.D.) (1): Overview
[R.R: A. Holder, Blackwell Companion to Christian Spirituality, pp. 73-89]

2- 5:30 pm - 6:45 pm: Spirituality in Roman Empire (100-600 A.D.) (2): Samples

VI- Week Six (Thurs, Feb. 28, 2019):

1- 4:00 pm- 5:20 pm: Spirituality in Byzantium & the East (600-1700 A.D.) (1): Overview

2- 5:30 pm - 6:45 pm: Spirituality in Byzantium & the East (600-1700 A.D.) (2): Samples

VII- Week Seven (Thurs, Mar. 7, 2019):

1- 4:00 pm- 5:20 pm: Spirituality in Medieval West (600-1450 A.D.) (1): Overview
[R.R: Holder, Blackwell Companion to Christian Spirituality, 106-121]

2- 5:30 pm - 6:45 pm: Spirituality in Medieval West (600-1450 A.D.) (2): Samples
VIII- Week Eight (Thurs, Mar. 14, 2019):

1- 4:00 pm- 5:20 pm: Spirituality from Renaissance to Modern Time (1450-2000 A.D.)
   (1): Overview

2- 5:30 pm– 6:45 pm: Spirituality from Renaissance to Modern Time (1450-2000 A.D.)
   (2): Samples

**IV- Communal/ Churchly Framework**

IX- Week Nine (Thurs, Mar. 21, 2019):

1- 4:00 pm- 5:20 pm: Spirituality in Orthodox Christianity
   [R.R: T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 208-218; 264-273; 298-306]

2- 5:30 pm– 6:45 pm: Spirituality in Catholic Christianity

X- Week Ten (Thurs, Mar. 28, 2019):

1- 4:00 pm- 5:20 pm: Spirituality in Lutheran Christianity

2- 5:30 pm– 6:45 pm: Spirituality in Reformed Christianity

XI- Week Eleven (Thurs, Apr. 4, 2019):

1-4:00 pm- 5:20 pm: Spirituality in Anglican/Episcopalian Christianity

2- 5:30 pm– 6:45 pm: Anabaptist/Born-again Spirituality
XII- Week Twelve (Thurs, Apr. 11, 2019):

1- 4:00 pm - 5:20 pm: Charismatic/Pentecostal Spirituality

2- 5:30 pm - 6:45 pm: Black/African American Spirituality
[R.R: M. Battle, The Black Church in America, pp. 22-42; 163-182]

Reading Week & Easter…Reading Week & Easter….Reading Week & Easter

XIII- Week Thirteen (Thurs, Apr. 25, 2019):

1- 4:00 pm - 5:20 pm: Spirituality & Inter-Faith Encounter

2- 5:30 pm - 6:45 pm: Conclusion and Evaluation.

- Course Requirements

1) Assigned readings’ preparation and active class participation: Students are required to read these texts as thoroughly and perceptively as they can and then to demonstrate an active class participation by coming to the sessions with questions or comments on them and the taught materials therein.

2) Weekly Assignments: between week three and week eight, when the course will cover the theological aspects of spirituality in the Scripture and in the history of Christian thought, the instructor will avail to the students sample texts of spiritual pieces of writing that are relevant to the subject and historical period that are studied that week. The students must read these samples carefully and then present written responses to the following questions:

   1) How is God imaged and understood in the spiritual imagination of the text’s author?

   2) How is the human life and condition are presented and understood in the spiritual imagination of the text’s author?

   3) what are the nature and characteristics of the God-human spiritual relation which the author presents in the text?
4) what is spirituality according to the presentation of the text’s author?

The students must respond to this task in written form every week and submit the written tasks in the relevant class of every week.

3) Book Review: Students are required to write 4-6 pages-long book appraisals (2000-2500 words-long). The appraisal must:
   A- present a sufficient and accurate exposition of the book’s main argument and claims.
   B- offer a perceptive critical assessment of these argument and claims
   C- end with a proposal on how such a book is valuable for today’s readers on Christian Spirituality.

Students must submit this book appraisal to the instructor no later than the week Fourteen (the last week) of the course’s schedule. The book the students must review should be one of the following texts:


The Book appraisals must be presented to the instructor at the end of the course, Friday night of the Week 14 (last week) of the course.

- Grading Division:

1- reading’s preparation and class participation (40%)
2- Weekly Assignments: (30%)
3- Book Review (30%)
- Additional Policies:

1) Forbidden in the Classroom:
   - mobile phones, unless shut down completely, are disallowed in the classroom.
   - while bringing laptops or electronic Tablets is allowed for the purpose of recording or writing lecture notes, surfing the net or using any other program on the internet during the session is strictly forbidden.

2) Attendance: Attendance in class is required. If you know you will be unable to attend a class session please inform the professor in advance. Missing two sessions will result in an automatic lowering of your final grade by 10%. Missing three or more sessions will result in automatic failure of the course.

3) Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the failure to give proper credit for the words or ideas of another person, whether published or unpublished, and is strictly prohibited. Credit will not be given for written work in this course containing plagiarism, and plagiarism may result in a failing grade for the entire course. Please consult the Plagiarism Policy on pp. 56-57 of the Hartford Seminary Catalogue 2011-2012, and/or contact the instructor with questions in this regard.

- Selected Bibliography

The books enlisted here are by no means exhaustive of all the literature on Christian Spirituality that is available in the field. Students are encouraged to look for other primary and secondary literature and to use every theological book they believe is helpful for their presentations or their understanding of Christian Spirituality.

- Dillenberger, John (ed.), *Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings*, Garden City, NY: Doubleday,
- Palmer, Andrew. *The Seven Century in Western-Syrian Chronicles*, Liverpool: Liverpool University