SPF560 — Sacraments & Asceticism: Christian Spiritual Practices
(3 credit hours)
Master’s Block Course @ KC Campus
Spring 2013

Course Information

All standard courses at NTS span a 14-week period from the beginning of coursework to the completion of coursework. This course commences on Tuesday, February 5, 2013 and finishes on Thursday, May 9, 2013, with class sessions held on Tuesdays, 9:00am – 12:35pm, in Room #304.

A course syllabus will sometimes go through more than one version, reflecting scheduling updates and/or the addition of detail as the course unfolds. The document footer indicates the version #. Students are responsible for the latest version of the syllabus which will be made available along with email notice in Moodle.

Instructor

Professor: Rev. Douglas S. Hardy, PhD
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Web: http://www.nts.edu/faculty/dr-douglas-hardy.html
Assistant: Micah Horton

Catalog Description

This laboratory course in spiritual formation explores the interplay of world-affirming and world-denying practices of the Christian spiritual life—the sacramental and the ascetical (e.g., baptism, Holy Communion, sacred art & music, nature, marriage & family, fasting, exercise, celibacy, living simply, Sabbath). Students will study, practice, and theologially reflect on these as biblical, historical, and psychological perspectives are brought to bear on the experience of class members individually and in the context of congregational leadership. Students culminate the course by articulating a spiritual theology of sacramental and ascetical living, and designing a strategy for the implementation of select practices in their personal and congregational contexts. This course satisfies a “Ministries of Formation” Domain elective in the MDiv program, a “Ministry Practice Domain” elective in the MACFD program, and can count toward the Certificate in Spiritual Formation.

Course Narrative & Rationale

The Duke Clergy Health Initiative http://divinity.duke.edu/initiatives-centers/clergy-health-initiative has identified three common areas of bodily/physical poor health for many Christian clergy: (1) eating problems, (2) lack of exercise, and (3) sleeping problems. These affect the short-term capacity of a minister to fulfill the tasks of ministry, as well as the long-term viability of the minister’s service. What might the combined wisdoms of science and the Christian tradition offer by way of understanding and responding to these problems? Specifically, how might Christian sacramental and ascetical practices speak into issues of health, and how might the virtues they cultivate help to combat poor health habits? This course will seek to answer these questions in the context of a class that engages sacramental & ascetical practices and resources each student for personal and congregational health.
Course Outcomes

It is the intention of this course that full participation will enable the student to:

1. KNOW the facts about (a) healthy eating, exercise, and sleep, and (b) a theology of Christian sacraments and ascetical practices.
2. UNDERSTAND the relevance of the practices of fasting, Eucharist, and Sabbath to physical, emotional, social, and spiritual health & well-being.
3. DESIRE a healthy, shalom-producing relationship with the body and the Body of Christ.
4. PRACTICE personal sacramental & ascetical disciplines.
5. LEAD a community of faith in a sacramental & ascetical practice.

Required Texts & Course Materials


Select chapters/articles furnished or referred to in class (approximately 100 pages)

Total Pages: 1248

Course Calendar, Assignments & Requirements

Method for Submitting Assignments

This course requires internet access to NTS Moodle for instructional information about assignments and electronic assignment submission. Unless otherwise instructed, do not send assignments to the professors via email. Some assignments via Moodle incorporate the “Turnitin” software program that provides accountability for plagiarism opportunity for improving writing.

Policy Regarding Late Work

Grades for late assignments will be affected as follows: 2% reduction per day. No assignments received after the final day of the course will be graded.

Assignment Descriptions & Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Description &amp; Requirements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Secure all the required course texts and read them according to the schedule in the Course Calendar. You are always welcome to read ahead of schedule.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Faithfully attend classes and participate in listening, thinking &amp; speaking.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>For at least ten (10) weeks of the semester you are to:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Fast from food for a minimum of 8 continuous non-sleeping hours that contains a dedicated block of at least 1/2 hour of prayer</td>
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<td></td>
<td>b. Practice Sabbath by refraining from work and delighting in God &amp; God’s creation for a minimum of 6 continuous non-sleeping hours</td>
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<td>c. Receive the Lord’s Supper</td>
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</table>
d. Submit a Practices Report each Monday night (i) indicating your level of participation in the previous week’s practices and (ii) writing theological and formational reflection & commentary (minimum 300 words) on your week’s experience with these practices and the assigned readings. The Practices Report Forms are available in Moodle. The highest 10 scores will count toward your grade.

4. Contact and arrange to interview one of the “Spirited Life Wellness Advocates” of the Duke Clergy Health Initiative http://divinity.duke.edu/initiatives-centers/clergy-health-initiative/about-us/staff about their work, their vision for clergy health, and their understanding of the role of spiritual practices in clergy well-being. Write a brief report (approximately 1200 words) that (i) lists the questions you asked, (ii) summarizes the responses, (iii) comments on the theological & practical implications for you and pastor(s) you know or work with, and (iv) provides contact information for at least one clergy wellness resource for pastors in the Kansas City area. Due: Friday, March 15.

5. Develop & submit a Proposal (approximately 500 words) outlining your plans for introducing & leading a shared spiritual practice into your local congregation (or other ministry context) that integrates both sacramental and ascetical dimensions of the Christian life. You can team up with others in the class who are a part of the same community. The Proposal must include:
   - Your name and a description of your ministry community/context
   - The “need” this shared practice will address & its potential Gospel value for those who participate (and the life of your Church if you are working with a smaller group)
   - A description of your proposed shared practice, explaining both the sacramental & ascetic dimensions of it, i.e., how it will help the group to say an integrated YES and NO
   - A description of your role and tasks in preparing for & leading the shared practice
   - A timeline and to-do list to guide your planning for, communications regarding, and execution of the shared practice. Due: Tuesday, March 26.

6. Write & submit a Report (approximately 1000 words) of the outcomes from introducing & leading a shared spiritual practice into your local congregation (or other ministry context) that integrates both sacramental and ascetical dimensions of the Christian life. The Report must include:
   - Your name and ministry community/context
   - A description of the event(s)/process(es) you introduced into your ministry setting
   - The outcomes, with reference to your original goals & hopes as stated in your Proposal; how has this practice helped the group to say an integrated YES and NO?
   - Looking ahead, a statement of what might be a next step
   - A summary of what you observed & learned theologically (vis-à-vis the Gospel) as well as ministerially/ecclesiially (vis-à-vis life in the Church) through this communal practice.
   Due: Tuesday, April 30.

7. Write a “Yes and No” Theology & Practice Paper (minimum 3000 words) that will serve as a summative articulation of your learning from the semester, i.e., pulling it all together. Drawing from the other assignments and including the course texts, provide (a.) a substantive theology of the ascetical & sacramental dimensions of the Christian life (theoretical grounding), and (b.) a rich description of how you will live them out in terms of personal & communal practices at this point in your life (practical application). Include bibliography & proper reference citations. Due: Monday, May 6.

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**Course Calendar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Class Date</th>
<th>Class Topic / Activities</th>
<th>This Week’s Assignments / Due Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Feb 4-10)</td>
<td>Feb 5</td>
<td>Course Orientation</td>
<td>Read: Terry-Intro &amp; Part 1, Ward-chs 1-9</td>
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<td>5 (Mar 4-10)</td>
<td>Mar 5</td>
<td>Sabbath</td>
<td>Practices Report 4 due Mar 4 Read: Jung-Intro-ch5, Osborne-chs 1-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Reading &amp; Research</td>
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<td>7 (Mar 18-24)</td>
<td>No class on Mar 19</td>
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<td>8 (Mar 25-31)</td>
<td>Mar 26 Eucharist</td>
<td>Shared Practice Leadership Proposal due Mar 26; Read-Jung- chs 6-9, Osborne-chs 3-4</td>
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<td>9 (Apr 1-7)</td>
<td>Apr 2 TBD</td>
<td>Practices Report 6 due Apr 1</td>
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<td>10 (Apr 8-14)</td>
<td>Apr 9 TBD</td>
<td>Practices Report 7 due Apr 8</td>
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<td>11 (Apr 15-21)</td>
<td>Apr 16 TBD</td>
<td>Practices Report 8 due Apr 15</td>
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<td>12 (Apr 22-28)</td>
<td>Apr 23 TBD</td>
<td>Practices Report 9 due Apr 22</td>
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<td>13 (Apr 29-May 5)</td>
<td>Apr 30 TBD</td>
<td>Practices Report 10 due Apr 29; Shared Practice Leadership Report due Apr 30</td>
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<td>14 (May 6-9)</td>
<td>Apr 7 TBD</td>
<td>Practices Report 11 due May 6; Yes &amp; No Paper due May 6</td>
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**Course Grading**

Attendance & Class Participation 5%  
Shared Practice Leadership Proposal & Report 20%  
Weekly Practice Reports 35%  
Yes & No Theology & Practice Paper 30%  
Clergy Health Interview 10%  

Grade Standards:  
“A” (90%) - EXCEPTIONAL WORK (surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives)  
“B” (80%) - GOOD WORK (strong, significant achievement of course objectives)  
“C” (70%) - ACCEPTABLE WORK (basic, essential achievement of course objectives)  
“D” (60%) - MARGINAL WORK (inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives)  
“F” (<60%) - UNACCEPTABLE WORK (failure to achieve course objectives)

You have access for viewing your grades in the “Grades” area of Moodle. Any questions or concerns about your assigned grades should be immediately brought to the attention of the instructor.

**Bibliography**

**Sacraments**


**Asceticism**

Institutional Information & Policies

Please refer to the following resources for information essential for the successful completion of courses and degree programs at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Links to these resources are available in the Essential Information section at http://support.nts.edu.

- NTS Mission Statement & Purpose Degree Objectives
- Tips for online learning success
- NTS library services
- NTS textbook information
- Online technical requirements and Moodle support information
- NTS Student Handbook including statements on quality of work, plagiarism, and academic probation
- Handbook for Inclusive Language

Form and Style Expectations

All formal written documents are to be carefully proof-read for correct spelling and grammar before submission; it is the responsibility of the student to ensure “clean” copy, even if it means securing assistance.

All research-based written documents are to be formatted (and will be evaluated) utilizing either the “Footnotes–Bibliography Style” or “Parentheses-Reference List Style” for source citation as detailed in the most current edition of the Turabian Style Guide: http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/manual.

Inclusive Language

NTS is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, NTS urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions, and in their writings. All written work presented to meet course requirements must use gender inclusive language. Inclusive Language usage guidelines can be found at http://www.nts.edu/nts-resources/student-handbooks.

Students with Disabilities

In accordance with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, NTS is committed to providing students with disabilities the opportunity to participate and benefit from its programs and activities. Accordingly, NTS will make reasonable modifications to its programs and activities to accommodate otherwise qualified students with disabilities, unless such modifications would impose an undue burden on the operation of the particular program or activity or would fundamentally alter the nature or purpose of the program or activity. Students needing accommodations should contact the Office of the Registrar. They also should contact the instructor no later than the end of the first class session to discuss learning needs and adaptive strategies that have been beneficial for the student in the past.

Class Attendance

Attendance at classes is essential for realizing the maximum benefit of your education. Since the professor in each course is best acquainted with the importance of consistent attendance, he or she will determine the rules for attendance. If you must be absent because of extenuating circumstances, contact the professor as soon as possible.
to discuss the situation. If a student is absent for 9 hrs of a two week module or is absent four or more weeks of the pre/post module, the professor may automatically fail the student. Daily attendance records must be reported for those obtaining V.A. and Department of Education benefits. Students must make the professor aware if their attendance must be recorded.

**Degree Objectives**

This course specifically addresses the following MDiv program objectives:

1. Mature knowledge of God and self, attained through practices of Christian formation and personal discipline.
2. Development of wisdom and discernment through engagement with the literature of the Christian faith through critical, scholarly study of the history and theology of Christianity and the application of that heritage to personal and corporate Christian life.
3. Cultivation of gifts, practical skills, and vocational identity as a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ through engagement in and reflection on the pastoral arts.

**and the following MACFD program objective:**

1. Appropriate and enhance the student’s ecclesial understanding of the Word of God, the heritage of the faith, the doctrines of the church, and the fellowship of believers, sufficient to enable him or her to deepen a personal commitment to God and His Church and to inform a passionate, vital, and redemptive ministry.

2. Cultivate practices and abilities necessary for skillful performance of age-level and family ministries, for educating the laity in faithful discipleship, for guiding relationships in the church, for spiritual and professional development, and for engaging in theological discernment of sound educational practice.

**Church of the Nazarene COSAC Ability Statements for Ordination**

This course specifically contributes to the following ability statements:

CN20: Ability to reflect theologically on life and ministry.

CH6: Ability to pursue holy character (Christlikeness) by practicing faith formation & the classic Christian disciplines as a means of grace.

CH7: Ability to locate, understand, & use the resources for individual & corporate spiritual formation.

CH8: Ability to take responsibility for his or her own continuing spiritual development.

**Cross-Reference of Assignments with Course Outcomes, Degree Objectives, & COSAC Ability Statements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Course Outcomes</th>
<th>MDiv Objectives</th>
<th>MACFD Objectives</th>
<th>COSAC Ability Statements</th>
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**Distribution of Student Learning Hours**

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<td>TOTAL WRITING</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL OTHER ASSIGNMENTS &amp; LEARNING ACTIVITIES</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
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