Puritanism in America
Hamilton Campus

Instructor: Dr. Garth M. Rosell  Spring Semester 2012
CH513: Puritanism in America  Thursdays from 1:15-4:15 p.m.

This course is designed to introduce students to the rich heritage of American Puritanism through lectures, classroom discussions, research papers, classroom presentations, the reading of materials both by and about the Puritans and through one or two visits to important Puritan sites here in New England.


Requirements: Those who are taking the course for credit will be expected to attend class regularly, to read the assigned texts, to write two 12-15 page research papers, and to make several oral presentations in class. No examinations will be given.

Research papers: Students are required to write two 12-15 page research papers. The first (due at the time of the class meeting on Thursday, March 15th) will focus on a key individual within the Puritan movement. The second (due at the time of the final class meeting on Thursday, April 26th) will focus on an important theme, issue or topic within American Puritanism. Assignments will be made during the first class meeting on Thursday, February 2nd.

Oral Presentations: Students will also be asked to make several 10-15 minute oral presentations at appropriate times within the course. At the time of the classroom or on-site presentation, the presenter should bring a one to three page handout (with sufficient copies for distribution to the entire class) summarizing the presentation and providing a brief bibliography of the major sources that they have used in their research. Assignments will be made during the first class meeting on Thursday, February 2nd.

On-site visits: Given New England's rich Puritan heritage, students are encouraged to visit some of the many Puritan sites throughout this region.
using "Exploring New England's Spiritual Heritage" as a guide. The class will also be making some "on-site" visits as a group to locations not far from the campus.


**Class Sessions:**

**Thursday, February 2: Introduction to the American Puritan Tradition**

Assignments for the research papers and the classroom presentations will be made during this first class session.

**Lecture:** "Understanding the Puritan Tradition" (Rosell)

**Required reading:** Ryken, pp. ix-xix and 1-21.


**Thursday, February 9: The Separatist Puritans (Plimoth, 1620)**

New England's first Puritan settlement was established at Plimoth in 1620. This branch of English Puritanism was "separatist" -- that is, they had clearly broken with the Church of England and were seeking to establish a new kind of church and society here in the new world.


**Thursday, February 16: The Non-Separatist Puritans (Massachusetts Bay Colony, 1630)**

New England's larger settlement, established north of Plimoth at a place they named Boston, was "non-separatist" -- that is, they had not broken with the Church of England. Rather, by establishing a "city on a hill," to borrow the famous phrase from John Winthrop, many of these early Puritans hoped to reform the Church of England by their godly example.


February 20-24, 2012: Reading Week

Thursday, March 1: "For the Glory of God and the Common Good": The Puritan Understanding of Vocation and Work

Lecture: "The Puritan Understanding of Work and Vocation" (Rosell)


Mini-Lecture: "Making Sense of the Salem Witch Trials" (Rosell)

Thursday, March 8: "Visible Saints": The Puritan Understanding of the Church

Required reading: Ryken, pp. 91-134; Rosell, 29-54.


Thursday, March 15: "The Practice of Piety": The Puritan Understanding of Spirituality and Devotion to God
(Research papers on the "person" you have been studying are due today)

Required reading: Ryken, pp. 137-154; Rosell, pp. 55-78.

Lecture: "Devotion to God: The Uncommon Devotion of Anne Bradstreet and Sarah Edwards" (Rosell)


Some concluding thoughts on Puritan Spirituality: Rosell

Thursday, March 22: "Spiritual Awakening": The Puritans and Religious Revivals
Today the class will travel to "Old South" Presbyterian (PCUSA) in historic Newburyport to talk about the coming of the Great Awakening and the ministry of the great Anglican preacher, George Whitefield. We will also have opportunity to visit Whitefield's grave, to visit some of the sites where actually preached and to see the house in which he died.


March 26-30, 2012: Reading Week

Thursday, April 5th: "The Intellectual Life of Colonial New England":
The Puritan Understanding of Education


Lecture: "The Rise of Higher Education in America" (Rosell)


Thursday, April 12: "The Family as a Little Church": The Puritan Understanding of Marriage and Family

Required reading: Ryken, pp. 75-88, 39-54.


Discussion: "What Can the Puritans Teach Contemporaries about Family Life and Values?"

Thursday, April 19th: No Class (time to work on reading and papers)

Thursday, April 26: What Can We Learn from the Puritans?
(Final research papers are due by the beginning of this final class meeting)


Final class discussion: "The Puritan Legacy"