CH/SF/TH 619  Reformation Era Spirituality
Hamilton Campus

Gordon L. Isaac, Ph.D.
Fall Semester 2014
Tu/Thu 8:00am-9:25am
Office hours in AC 142
Tuesdays 1-4pm and Friday 9am-12pm

Course Description: According to Alistar McGrath, “In its basic sense, spirituality designates the Christian life – not specifically its ideas, but the way in which those ideas make themselves visible in the life of Christian individuals and communities. Spirituality represents the interface between ideas and life, between Christian theology and human existence.” This course on Reformation Era Spirituality will highlight the distinctive contributions of the Reformers over against the background of the dominating medieval spirituality to which it is an answer and the context of ongoing competing spiritualities of the time.

Course Objectives: The student will have opportunity to read extensively in sixteenth-century texts that represent some of the best examples of spirituality available. A close examination of the pastoral and thus spiritual nature of the Reformational Aufbruch will be analyzed and assessed. Through lecture, integrative exercises and research components the student will be encouraged to give careful consideration of the matters of personal formation and the development of a more Christological spiritual practice.

Textbooks:


Online Readings or CAMS material:

1) Luther on the Three Rules LW 34: 285-296
2) Monastic Memoria in Luther’s Preface to the Complete Edition of Latin Writings 1545  10 pages

Assignments:

1. **Reading (40 points)**: You must complete the assigned reading for the course according to the schedule included in the syllabus. The reading is primarily theological and historical treatments of spirituality and cognate topics. Discussion of this reading will be a major learning activity in class, and thus it is crucial that you complete each reading assignment prior to the class meeting in which it will be discussed. For each class session a one-page response is due. It will include the following: a record of how long the reading assignment took to complete, four or five clarifying questions about the reading or reflective questions that flow out of the material, and select quotations that are central to understanding the texts.

2. **Midterm Integrative Paper (20 points)** You will write a reflective paper of approximately 10 pages on the topic: “Christian Spirituality for a Modern Age.” The paper will comprise the following elements: 1) an account of the spirituality in which you were raised addressing the matters of prayer, meditation, and the use and view of the sacraments; 2) a comment on how a Reformation Spirituality, if implemented, might change your personal practice and context. 3) comment on what the greatest challenge to spiritual practice in the current climate in North America might be.

3. **Final Paper (40 points)** A 12-15 page final paper touching on one of the four streams of spiritual practice covered in class. The paper will demonstrate depth knowledge of the given stream and will reflect historically, theologically, and personally on its contents.

**Grading Scale:** The point values listed above mean that the total number of points available for the course is 100. Final letter grades will be applied with cutoffs as follows: A 95, A- 90, B+ 87, B 83, B- 80, C+ 77, C 73, D+ 67, D- 60, below 60 failing.

**Course Schedule:** (subject to change)

**Sept 9:** Medieval Spirituality – Rising Anti-Clericalism, Relics, and Indulgences
**Sept 11:** No Class – professor out of town
**Sept 16:** Medieval Spirituality – Ladder to Heaven/Facere in quod se est
Luther’s Spirituality, p xiii - 45
Sept 18: Luther’s Spirituality: Pastoral Care and Indulgences
   Luther's Spirituality, p 46 – 68; 91 - 182
Sept 23: Luther’s Spirituality: The Freedom of a Christian
   Luther's Spirituality, p 69 - 90
Sept 25: Luther’s Spirituality: Renewal of Catechesis and the Prayer-Book
   Tradition
   Luther’s Spirituality, p 183 - 252
Sept 30: Luther’s Spirituality: A Theology of the Cross – Prayer, Meditation, and Spiritual Trial
   CAMS Reading on the Three Rules and Monastic Memoria
Oct  2: Calvin's Spirituality: On The Necessity of Reforming the Church
   Steward, p ix - 73
Oct  7: Calvin's Spirituality: The Christian Life and Prayer
   Steward, p 74 - 160
Oct  9: Calvin's Spirituality: Comments on Scripture
   Steward, p 161 -324 (selections)

Oct 13 – 17 READING WEEK

Oct 21: Calvin’s Spirituality: Prayers and Sermons
   Steward, p 325 – 400
Oct 23: Anabaptist Spirituality: Swiss Anabaptism
   Anabaptist Spirituality, p 1 - 63
Oct 28: Anabaptist Spirituality: South German and Austrian Anabaptists
   Anabaptist Spirituality, p 64 - 137
Oct 30: Anabaptist Spirituality: Hutterite Anabaptism
   Anabaptist Spirituality, p 138 - 199
Nov  4: Anabaptist Spirituality: Dutch Anabaptism
   Anabaptist Spirituality, p 200 - 272
Nov  6: Ignatian Spirituality: Autobiography
   Ignatius, p 1 - 112

Nov 10 -14 READING WEEK

Nov 18: Ignatian Spirituality: Spiritual Exercises
   Ignatius, p 113 – 214
Nov 20: Ignatian Spirituality: On Poverty
   Ignatius, p 215 - 322
Nov 25: Ignatian Spirituality: Letters
   Ignatius, p 323 - 368

Nov 27: Thanksgiving

Dec  2: Reformation Spirituality: Sorting Out the Trajectories
Dec  4: Reformation Spirituality: What is Reformational about Reformation Spirituality?
Academic Standards
Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of personal and academic integrity. Cheating involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination or the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors. Plagiarism involves the use of another person’s distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one’s own instead of giving proper credit to the source. Plagiarism can also involve over dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one’s writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures. For more information, please consult the Student Handbook.

A Brief Note on Intellectual Property Rights
No audio or video recordings are allowed. Furthermore no publication (audio, video, written) or live transmission of classroom proceedings will be permitted. Any requests for such privileges must be made in writing and must receive written approval from the instructor.

A Brief Note Regarding Internet Usage
Please do not access the internet (email, apps, websites, etc.) for non-class activities during class time. This can be extremely distracting to all parties and quite frankly it is unbecoming to do so. Exceptions may be made on occasion.

Regarding Extension Requests
No extensions will be granted on the assignments unless there is a “last-minute” event that was unavoidable and substantial (as determined by me). An extension request may not be granted, even in the event of an “unavoidable, substantial, last-minute circumstance,” if an appropriate amount of progress (determined by me) on the assignment has not been made prior to the request of the extension.