

The General Theological Seminary of The Episcopal Church
The Center for Christian Spirituality

AT 347

A Contemplative Approach to Sexuality and Spirituality

Easter (Spring) Term

March 31 – April 2, 2017

Friday & Saturday, 9:30 am – 3:00 pm and Sunday 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm.

One credit, 13 hours

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Course Description

This spiritual direction practicum will be offered in an intensive weekend format to enhance the capacity of participants (spiritual direction students, clergy, lay leaders, community partners, etc.) to discuss issues of faith and sexuality. The course will draw upon the rich resources of Christian contemplative tradition to influence the spiritual director's interior life and spiritual practice as a key aspect to personally connect to a conversation from a place of openness through "holy listening." This practicum course will provide tools for participants to engage in healthy discussion around sex, sexuality, and spirituality in a Christian contemplative tradition. This course will not attempt to convince participants to adopt any view but rather offer an opportunity to share knowledge and information and to facilitate open and honest discussion.

This course is designed for participants who share an interest in how to discuss the often "taboo" subjects of sex, sexuality, spirituality, and the impact of The Episcopal Church's (TEC) shift of the theology of marriage on faith and sexuality. Students will also learn to apply ethical standards for spiritual direction and spiritual guidance ministries. The course provides a foundation for further training and supervised experience in offering spiritual direction to individuals and groups.

Learning Objectives

- To provide the history of theology of marriage and The Episcopal Church's shift of the theology of marriage and its implications for faith and sexuality.
- To introduce and facilitate open and frank conversation about sexuality using guidelines and principles of spiritual direction (e.g., examining resistance, Holy Listening, integrating pastoral care, etc.) that can be used by participants in their various ministry settings.
- To educate, discuss, and provide accurate definitions of sex, sexualities, and gender identification.
- To provide innovative practical tools for Christian leaders (clergy, lay, community, spiritual directors, students) to facilitate healthy and holistic conversations around faith and sexuality in spiritual direction.

Learning Objectives Contd.

- Develop and enhance participants' capacity to offer spiritual direction to individuals and/or with groups.
- Gain familiarity with appropriate boundaries and ethical standards for spiritual direction.

Course Requirements and Expectations

To receive credit for this course, you must complete the following expectations:

Grade A: # 1 – 4, special consideration given to the final paper

Grade B: # 1 - 4

Grade C: #2 – 4

1. **Active attendance and participation.** You are expected to attend all class sessions unless there is an emergency, and fully participate in the discussion. **30%**
2. **One class presentation.** This presentation will be a summary of the chapter(s) you have been assigned to read. **25%**
3. **Practicum activities.** Participating in practice pairs and triads in class; offering/leading at least two opening or closing meditations/prayers for class sessions; discussing processes and dynamics of practice experiences in class. **Required but not graded.**
4. **Final paper**
An integrative paper on a selected theme, based on class discussions and your readings. The final paper must be six to seven pages double-spaced, with references; and is due by **May 5, 2016**. Additional instructions regarding the paper once enrolled. **40%**
4. **One supervisory conversation** with the professor either in person, by email or by telephone, during or after the intensive weekend, to discuss the final paper topic. **5%**

In offering textual support for your final paper, please cite material using the Turabian style sheet for sources used in religion papers. Students are expected to be familiar with the Seminary's academic regulations as stated in the Seminary Catalog. The Policy on Inclusive Language deserves special attention.

Extensions: Requests must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the due date to secure a four-week extension beyond the final due date.

The Seminary is committed to meeting the needs of qualified students with disabilities who meet the academic and technical standards requisite for admission to the Seminary or participation in the Seminary's educational programs or activities. It is the Seminary's intent to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities in order to afford them full participation in the Seminary's programs and activities and give them equal opportunity to attain the same quality of

education as students without disabilities.” For specific instructions and guidelines, see the information provided under **THE GENERAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY STUDENT DISABILITY POLICY AND SERVICES** at “Course Offerings & Registrar: at www.gts.edu/academics/course-offerings-a-registrar)

Required Reading

Articles read before class:

Anastasiadis, Jo. Sexuality, Spirituality and Spiritual Direction. 2008 A Research Project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Spiritual Directors’ Training Programme of Spiritual Growth Ministries.

http://www.sgm.org.nz/uploads/2/0/1/6/20165561/whisperings_of_intimacy_-_jo_anastadiadis.pdf

May, Gerald. Contemplative Spiritual Formation: an introduction. 2001 Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation, Bethesda, Maryland. (provided by professor)

Review Reflection Questions before class:

Hamilton-Poore, Samuel. “The Given and the Gift: Sexuality and God’s Eros in Spiritual Direction and Supervision,” in Bumpus, Mary Rose and Langer, Rebecca Bradburn (Eds.) *Supervision of Spiritual Directors Engaging in Holy Mystery*, Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing. 2005. (Appendix D, pp 193 - 196) ISBN-10: 0-8192-1994-0 (provided by professor)

Also, one of the following chapters:

Because this is a weekend intensive, each class member will be assigned to read specific chapters (usually no more than 2 chapters) from one or two of the following books and will be asked to report to the class on the assigned chapter(s). Books also will be on reserve in the library. Please wait to receive your assignment before beginning to read.

In sharing with the class your assigned reading , please keep in mind the following:

- How is this reading relevant to a class on contemplative supervision?
- What two or three new ideas/thoughts/practices did you learn from your reading?
- Are there any open questions that resulted from the reading that might be discussed further with the class?
- Do you recommend particular pages or sections to your classmates for future reference?

Cahill, Lisa. *Sex, Gender, and Christian Ethics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Chapter Five “Sex, gender, and early Christianity” (pp 121-165). ISBN-10:0521578485.

Edwards, Tilden. *Living in the Presence: Spiritual Exercises to Open Your Life to the Awareness of God*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1995. Chapter 5, “Communing.” (pp. 60 – 78) ISBN-10: 006062127

_____. *Spiritual Friend: Reclaiming the Gift of Spiritual Direction*. Paulist Press. 1980. Chapter 5 “Seeking a Spiritual Friend”, (pp 105 – 124), ISBN-10: 080912288X

Required Reading Contd.

Also, one of the following chapters, contd.

Hamilton-Poore, Samuel. "The Given and the Gift: Sexuality and God's Eros in Spiritual Direction and Supervision," in Bumpus, Mary Rose and Langer, Rebecca Bradburn (Eds.) *Supervision of Spiritual Directors Engaging in Holy Mystery*, Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2005. (Chapter 6) ISBN-10: 0-8192-1994-0

Lebacqz, Karen, and Joseph D. Driskill. *Ethics and Spiritual Care: A Guide for Pastors, Chaplains, and Spiritual Directors*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000. Chapter Two "Ethics for Clergy" (pp 37 – 55) ISBN-10: 0687071569.

Rossiter, Rich. "Spiritual Direction with Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Persons," in Vest, Norvene, ed. *Still Listening: New Horizons in Spiritual Direction*. Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, 2000. (Chapter Six) ISBN-10: 0819218146.

Ruffing, Janet. "Flesh Is More than Flesh: Sexuality and Spirituality in Spirituality in Spiritual Direction," in Vest, Norvene, ed. *Still Listening: New Horizons in Spiritual Direction*. Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, 2000. (Chapter Twelve) ISBN-10: 0819218146.

Reference/Reading List

Based on the selected theme for your final paper, read at least three chapters from one of the following books. You may also draw upon additional readings of interest to you that may not be on the reading list for your final theme paper. (*During the course, the professor will offer suggestions of other books or articles related to the theme of your final paper*):

Barry, William A., and William J. Connolly. *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*. 2nd ed., rev. New York: HarperOne, 2009. ISBN 978-0-06-165263-9 3.

Douglas Brown, Kelly. *Sexuality and the Black Church: A Womanist Perspective*. New York: Orbis Books, 1999. ISBN-13: 978-1570752421.

Guenther, Margaret. *Holy Listening: The Art of Spiritual Direction*. Cambridge: Cowley Publications, 1992. ISBN 1-56101-056-1 2.

McMinn, Lisa Graham. *Sexuality and Holy Longing: Embracing Intimacy in a Broken World*. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass, 2004. ISBN-13: 978-0787968182

May, Gerald G. *Care of Mind, Care of Spirit: Psychological Dimensions of Spiritual Direction*. San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 20009. ISBN-10: 0060655674

Silver, Anne Winchell. *Trustworthy Connections: Interpersonal Issues in Spiritual Direction*. Cambridge: Cowley Publications, 2004. ISBN 1-56101-252-1

Additional Resources/Episcopal Church Resources on Marriage

For those who are interested in exploring further the position of the Episcopal Church on Marriage, the following resources may be of interest:

Report from the Marriage Task Force of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church
<https://extranet.generalconvention.org/staff/files/download/12485.pdf>

Resolution A036-Amend Marriage Canon I.18
http://www.generalconvention.org/gc/2015-resolutions/A036/current_english_text

Resolution A054-Adopt Resources and Rites from “Liturgical Resources I: I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing, Revised and Expanded 2015”
http://www.generalconvention.org/gc/2015-resolutions/A054/current_english_text

Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music-Marriage Supplemental Materials
<https://extranet.generalconvention.org/staff/files/download/13068.pdf>