

CH-520 Theology and Scripture in Spiritual Care Practice

Fall Semester 2024

Synchronous Online: Mondays 7:00-9:00 pm

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course, intended for aspiring professional chaplains, strengthens students' ability to articulate their theological and scriptural foundations for spiritual care. Students self-reflectively learn their limitations by exploring others' religious path scriptures and traditions. The curriculum, featuring comparative theology, dialogic scripture study, and an integrative case study approach, encourages understanding how to support diverse communities in spiritual crises. The course elucidates potential answers to worldview queries by peer-reviewed theological/spiritual reflections based on sacred/secular sources. Students will enhance their knowledge of theology and scripture to establish and maintain interdisciplinary relationships of professional care.

Required Readings: (Note: These reading will be posted on Canvas so you do NOT need to buy)

George Fitchett and Steve Nolan (eds.), *Case Studies in Spiritual Care: Healthcare Chaplaincy Assessments, Interventions & Outcomes*, (Jessica Kingsley Publishers: Philadelphia, 2018).

_____, *Spiritual Care in Practice: Case Studies in Healthcare Chaplaincy*, (Jessica Kingsley Publishers: Philadelphia, 2015).

Jonathan Fuqua, Robert C. Koons, *Classical Theism: New Essays on the Metaphysics of God*, (Routledge, 2023).

Jonathan Z. Smith and Christopher Lehrich (ed.), *On Teaching Religion: Essays by Jonathan Z. Smith*, Oxford University Press, 2013).

Omid Safi (ed.), *Progressive Muslims on Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*, (OneWorld Publications, 2003).

Adler, Mortimer J., and Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. *The Syntopicon, Volume 1: An Index to the Great Ideas*, 2nd ed. Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 1990.

_____, and Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. *The Syntopicon. Volume 2: An Index to the Great Ideas*, 2nd ed. Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 1990.

_____, *Religion and Theology*, Encyclopedia Britannica, 1961.

Short Stories: Nikolai Gogol's *The Overcoat*, Jorge Luis Borge's *The Library of Babel*, Anton Chekhov's *The Student*, James Baldwin's *The Outing*, and Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Minister's Black Veil*

Films: Timbuktu (2014), Ida (2013)

Course Outcomes (along with corresponding [BCCI Common Qualifications](#)):

As a result of taking this course, students will:

1. Develop a habit of self-reflection and awareness of one's role as a caregiver in public ministry settings;
ITP1 Can articulate an approach to spiritual care, rooted in one's faith/spiritual tradition that is integrated with a theory of professional practice.
PIC1 Can be self-reflective, including one's professional strengths and limitations in the provision of care.
2. Provide evidence of the use of theological reflection and scriptural resources to human experience of crisis or trauma;
PPS2 Can provide effective spiritual care that contributes to well-being of the care recipients, their families, and staff
PPS3 Can provide spiritual care that respects diversity and differences including, but not limited to, culture, gender, sexual orientation, and spiritual/religious practices
PPS4 Can triage and manage crises in the practice of pastoral care
PPS5 Can provide spiritual care to persons experiencing loss and grief
PPS6 Can provide religious/spiritual resources appropriate to the care recipients, families, and staff.
PPS7 Can develop, coordinate, and facilitate public worship/spiritual practices appropriate to diverse settings and needs
PPS8 Can facilitate theological/spiritual reflection for those in one's care practice.
PPS10 Can formulate and utilize spiritual assessments, interventions, outcomes, and care plans in order to contribute effectively to the well-being of the person receiving care.
PPS11 Can document one's spiritual care effectively in the appropriate records.
3. Engage constructively in the profession of chaplaincy within a network of colleagues;
PIC4 Can function in a manner that respects the physical, emotional, cultural, and spiritual boundaries of others.
PPS1 Can establish, deepen, and conclude professional spiritual care relationships with sensitivity, openness, and respect
4. Articulate one's own theology and spirituality of pastoral caregiving.
ITPS6 Can articulate how primary research and research literature inform the profession of chaplaincy and one's spiritual care practice.
PIC8 Can communicate effectively orally and in writing.
OL1 Can promote the integration of spiritual care into the life and service of the institution in which one functions

Teaching and Learning Strategies:

This course will be organized into three content sections: First, students will have the opportunity to reflect on how their religious scripture, tradition, and context have provided

resources for their own spiritual life and care and others. Second, students will engage with various texts (short stories, films, and scripture) responding to the question of human crisis and suffering. Third, the class will utilize the case study method, including published case studies and those written by students from their experiences in Field Education, CPE, or other ministerial/community experiences. These case studies will provide opportunities for further reflection on the theory and practice of ministry in chaplaincy settings, with the intention of developing skills in spiritual assessment and care plans. Finally, students will draw on the resources of the class to develop a self-reflective integrative paper on pastoral spiritual care.

Values for Collaborative Teaching and Learning:

- Showing mutual appreciation and respect for others—modeling the privilege to learn from and partner with each other.
- Engaging in cross-disciplinary content and teaching
- Paying attention to the whole personhood of another – history, race, religion, knowledge, gender, and rank
- Demonstrating how to disagree respectfully and well
- Embodying mutuality – Learning to construct ideas and skills and experiences together

Classroom Netiquette and Etiquette

Students should be aware of, respectful of, and engage those students who are not in the same physical space. Be respectful in all written and oral conversations. Written communication cannot express human inflection, tone, or any accompanying body language. As a result, it can be tempting to express ourselves in ways we might not be prepared to do in a face-to-face conversation. Video communication does help, but it is not the same as embodied communication. Always choose words carefully and refrain from assuming another person's attention. When in doubt, it is always better to ask for clarification. On the other hand, sarcasm is not a good way to communicate, and it is better not to utilize it. If needed, the instructor may contact students privately regarding classroom netiquette and etiquette.

Grading

Attendance: 20%

Active Participation in Class: 20%

Weekly Canvas response: 20%

Canvas response to others' post: 10%

Final Paper: 30%

Course Assignments

- Weekly discussion posts and responses on Canvas.
- Final paper on Theological and Scriptural Reflection (20-30 pages)

Discussion Posts

The total expected word count for your initial post and comment on another's post should be approximately 250 words.

Respond to at least two of your classmates' postings. Your responses should show that you have thought about what the original post said. They should also push the conversation forward, offer insights, or ask clarifying questions.

When engaging with your peers, always treat one another with respect. It can be difficult to interpret tone within computer-mediated communication, so strive to clearly show kindness when engaging with your peers - especially those with a different perspective, experience, or worldview.

Instructions:

Post a "substantive" response to discussion prompts by Friday at 11:59 PM (EST). Include information from the weekly readings to support your response. Post a "substantive" response to two peers by Sunday night at 11:59 PM (EST).

Theological and Scriptural Reflection Paper: Final Integration Paper

Topic: Spiritual Care from Theological and Scriptural Perspectives

Overview:

For this course, master-level students will write a 4,500-6,000-word paper (20-24 double-spaced pages, 12-point, Times New Roman Font); doctoral students will write a 6,000-7,500-word paper (24-27 double-spaced pages, 12-point, Times New Roman Font). This typewritten paper will be submitted in Canvas, in Chicago style, and will present your beginning perspective on integration based on the material covered in this course. While this paper will incorporate research into various topics, it will be a theoretical paper incorporating material from your theology and scripture. While this kind of theoretical paper might be new to you, this course will walk you through the weekly steps you must accomplish to have a final theological reflection/integration paper by the end of the semester. Sections of the paper will be submitted every other week of class, and you will receive feedback on the different sections so the paper can improve over the course of the semester. By the end of the term, your paper should be close to completion.

This paper aims to help you articulate and create an integrative approach to spiritual care rooted in your faith/secular tradition. An outcome is to help you begin to reflect, from the standpoint of theology and scripture, in providing care as a chaplain. Instead of struggling to pick a topic for your paper, this course will help you develop working knowledge and practical skills as we think about theology and scripture together. As we move through the content of the course, you will form a broad and deep perspective on spiritual care in light of the Western tradition's major works in theology and the scriptures of others.

Recommended Timeline of Final Paper:

- Week 2 -Write an Introduction and Working Thesis
- Week 4- How does your own intersectionality, personal and cultural experiences shape your approach to spiritual care and chaplaincy?
- Week 6- How does personal religious belief/faith/scriptural understanding inform your approach to chaplaincy?
- Weeks 8- How does theology and/or scripture guide your actions?
- Weeks 10- How do worldviews and theological boundaries inform one's perception of events?
- Weeks 12- What is your practical and applied approach to care?
- Weeks 14- Synthesize: Towards an Integrative Theological and Scriptural View of Spiritual Care
- Week 16- Final Concluding Remarks
- Paper Submission Deadline- December 20th

Part 1 Philosophy, Religion, and Scripture

Week 1 (September 3rd)- Who are we?

Introductions

Week 2 (September 10th)- Personal Approaches to Tradition

- “Definition” and “Knowledge” in Adler, Mortimer J., and Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. *The Syntopicon. Volume 1: An Index to the Great Ideas*. 2nd ed. Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 1990.
- “Plato Euthyphro, Law” in Adler, Mortimer, *Religion and Theology*, Chapter 2.

Recommended reading: Asad, Talal. *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*. Cultural Memory in the Present. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003;———. *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993; Mortimer Adler, *Aristotle for Everybody*, Touchstone, 1978.

Discussion Post: What is your personal approach to chaplaincy? What are your views on your tradition's ability to provide care to those suffering and in need?

Week 3 (September 17th)-The Human Person: intersectionality in race, gender, sex, religion, and economics

- “Theology” and “Metaphysics” in Adler, Mortimer J., and Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. *The Syntopicon. Volume 2 : An Index to the Great Ideas*. 2nd ed. Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 1990.

- Nancy Ramsay, ‘Analyzing and Engaging Asymmetries of Power: Intersectionality as a Resource for Practices of Care,’ in *Pastoral Theology and Care: Critical Trajectories in Theory and Practice*, 1st ed. Nancy J. Ramsay, ed. (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell, 2018), 149-171. [available on the DTL]

Recommended reading: Gustavo Gutierrez, *On Job, God-Talk and the Suffering of the Innocent* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2002); and Sherman A. Jackson, *Islam and the Problem of Black Suffering* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). [both available on the DTL]

Discussion Post: How does intersectionality play a role in your practice as a chaplain? How do you bring together the transcendent metaphysics of your tradition with the lived realities of people in the world?

Week 4 (September 24th)- Theodicy in the story of Job and Ayyub

- Trokan, John, “Models of Theological Reflection: Theory and Praxis”, *Journal of Catholic Education*, 1 (2), 144-58.
- Edward Feser, “What is Classical Theism?,” in Jonathan Fuqua and Robert C. Koons (eds.), *Classical Theism: New Essays on the Metaphysics of God*, Routledge, 2023, 7-25.
- The Book of Job; chaps. 1-2, 40-42;
- al-Nisa’ (4):163; al-An‘am (6):84; al-‘Anbiyya (21):83-84; al-Şad (38):41-44; and Ibn Kāthir, *Tales of the Prophets*, 92-6.

Recommended reading: David Burrell, *Deconstructing Theodicy: Why Job Has Nothing to Say to the Puzzle of Suffering* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2018) [available on the DTL]; Maimonides, *Guide for the Perplexed*, Part III, Chapters XIX-XXVI; Jon Hoover, “God’s Wise Purposes in Creating Iblīs. Ibn Qayyim Al-Ġawziyyah’s Theodicy of God’s Names and Attributes,” *Oriente Moderno* 90, no. 1 (2010): 113–34.

Discussion post: Write a theological reflection summary. 1) Choose a model. What is your preferred model of theological reflection? Write why it is your approach to spiritual care. Is it rooted in Classical Theism or is it not?

Week 5 (October 1st)-Suffering and Theodicy

- James H. Cone, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2011), Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2 [on Canvas]
- “Man” and “Good and Evil” in Adler, Mortimer J., and Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. *The Syntopicon. Volume 1 : An Index to the Great Ideas*. 2nd ed. Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 1990. [on Canvas]

Recommended Reading: Robert Kolb, ‘Luther on the Theology of the Cross,’ in *The Pastoral Luther: Essays on Martin Luther’s Practical Theology*, Timothy J. Wengert, ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2017), 33-58. [both available on the DTL]; Vineet

Chander and Lucinda Mosher, eds. *Hindu Approaches to Spiritual Care: Chaplaincy in Theory and Practice* (Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2019). [available on the DTL]

Discussion Post: What is the connection between suffering and your metaphysics as you understand it from your own tradition? What avenues for alleviating that suffering exist? How would you provide that care as an advisor to your community?

Part 2 Literature and Humanism

Week 6 (October 8th)- Impossible Knowledge

- Jorge Luis Borge's *The Library of Babel* [on Canvas]
- Tim Winter, "New Convergences: Jesus and Muhammad", *The Muslim World*, 99 (1), 2009, 21-38. [on Canvas]
- El Shamsy, Ahmed, "The Social Construction of Orthodoxy." in *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology*, edited by Tim Winter, Cambridge Companions to Religion, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, 97–118.

Discussion post: What are the kinds of knowledge that are accessible, and what are unknowables that you have to account for when dealing with problems you encounter in your work? How do you continue to practice chaplaincy despite the limits on your knowledge? What do you think about orthodoxy in your own tradition?

Week 7 (October 15th)- Piety and Sin

- Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Minister's Black Veil* [on Canvas]
- "Sin" and "Prophecy" in Adler, Mortimer J., and Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. *The Syntopicon. Volume 1 : An Index to the Great Ideas*. 2nd ed. Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 1990. [on Canvas]

Discussion post: What is the function of piety and sin in your tradition? What are the limitations of these concepts in your tradition?

Week 8 (October 22nd)- The Community and Tolerance

James Baldwin's *The Outing* [on Canvas]

John Locke, "A Letter Concerning Toleration, an Essay Concerning Human Understanding", in Adler, Mortimer, *Religion and Theology*, 193-208.

Jackson, Sherman A. *On the Boundaries of Theological Tolerance in Islam: Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghāzalī's Fayṣal al-Tafriqa Bayna al-Islam Wa al-Zandaqa*. Studies in Islamic Philosophy, v. 1. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2002, 3-32.

Recommended Reading: Al-Ghazzālī, “On the Boundaries of Theological Tolerance in Islam”, in Jackson, Sherman A. *On the Boundaries of Theological Tolerance in Islam: Abū Hāmid al-Ghāzālī’s Fayṣal al-Tafrīqa Bayna al-Islam Wa al-Zandaqa*. Studies in Islamic Philosophy, v. 1. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2002, 85-132. [on Canvas]

Discussion post: How do you approach the question of theological difference? How do you create space for heterogeneous positions within your spiritual care practice and how do you help people with very different ideas from your own?

Week 9 (October 29th)- Tradition and Religion

- Anton Chekhov’s *The Student* [on Canvas]
- M.A.S. Abdel Haleem, *Early Islamic Theological and Juristic Terminology: "Kitāb al-Ḥudūd fi 'l-uṣūl," by Ibn Fūrak*, Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, Vol. 54, No. 1 (1991), pp. 5-41. [on Canvas]
- Smith, Jonathan Z. *On Teaching Religion: Essays by Jonathan Z. Smith*. Edited by Christopher I. Lehrich. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2013, Chapters 3 and 8.
- Jonathan Levens, “Classical Theism and Jewish Conceptions of God,” in Fukua and Koons, *Classical Theism*, chapter 9. [on Canvas]

Discussion post: What is a tradition? Why is being from a particular tradition important to you and to those you seek to help? Does the academic study of religion miss something in its study of the category of religion?

Week 10 (November 5th)- Structural Violence

- Nikolai Gogol’s *The Overcoat* [on Canvas]
- Galtung, Johan. “Violence, Peace, and Peace Research.” *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 167–91.
- “Peace and Violence.” Harvard Divinity School: Religion in Public Life, Accessed August 15, 2024.
<https://rpl.hds.harvard.edu/what-we-do/our-approach/peace-violence>.

Discussion post: What are the limitations of spiritual care? What kind of approach would you have to problems that are unresolvable but still affect the lived realities of those under your care? Is spiritual care an enterprise that is more broad than helping individual people that ask for help?

Part 3 Contemporary Conversations: Gender, Environment, and Violence

Week 11 (November 12th)- Gender Theory and Cultural Violence

- Galtung, Johan. “Cultural Violence.” *Journal of Peace Research* 27, no. 3 (1990): 291–305. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343390027003005>.
- Sa’diyya Shaikh, “Transforming feminism: Islam, women, and gender justice, in Omid Safi (ed.), *Progressive Muslims*, Oneworld Publications, 2003, 147-62.
- Gwendolyn Zoharah Simmons, “Are we up to the challenge? The need for a radical re-ordering of the Islamic discourse on women”, in Omid Safi (ed.), *Progressive Muslims*, Oneworld Publications, 2003, 235-50.

Discussion post: What kind of problems are so deeply ingrained in society and sometimes invisible that it is difficult to articulate what they are? What makes saying them so difficult (whether taboo, not having the language for it, or something else)? Do you have examples from your own experiences?

Week 12 (November 19th)- Case Studies

- **Selections from** George Fitchett and Steve Nolan (eds.), *Case Studies in Spiritual Care: Healthcare Chaplaincy Assessments, Interventions & Outcomes*, (Jessica Kingsley Publishers: Philadelphia, 2018).

Watch the film: *Ida* (2013)

Discussion post: How would you provide support to *Ida* as she is thinking through her situation? What kind of resources would you provide her?

Week 13 (November 26th)- Reading Week

No class.

Week 14 (December 3rd)- Case Studies

- **Selections from** George Fitchett and Steve Nolan (eds.), *Spiritual Care in Practice: Case Studies in Healthcare Chaplaincy*, (Jessica Kingsley Publishers: Philadelphia, 2015).

Watch the film: *Timbuktu* (2014)

Discussion post: none

Week 15 (December 10th)- final class

Reflection and feedback

This final class will feature a dialogue about the class itself, what we have learned, and how it has helped us articulate our own views and listen to others about theology, scripture, and human embeddedness in the world.

Additional Policies and Procedures

For additional information on format, proper footnotes, acknowledgments, etc., students are directed to consult the Hartford Seminary General Guidelines for a Research Paper. These guidelines can be picked up in the student forms center or downloaded from our website at:

<http://www.hartsem.edu/current-students/student-writing-resources/>. Students may also consult Kate L. Turabian's, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* (at least the 9th Ed., 2018).

The Seminary research paper guide can be found at:

<http://www.hartsem.edu/current-students/student-writing-resources/>.

Seminary Grading Scale

A (95-100) Demonstrates excellent mastery of the subject matter, a superior ability to articulate this, and provides helpful connections to daily life or contemporary issues. Exceeds expectations of the course.

A- (90-94) Demonstrates mastery of the subject matter, ability to articulate this well, and makes connections to daily life or contemporary issues. Exceeds expectations of the course.

B+(87-89) Demonstrates a very good understanding of the subject matter, able to articulate lessons learned in the assignment well. Meets expectations of the course.

B (83-86) Demonstrates an understanding of the subject matter and the ability to articulate lessons learned. Meets expectations of the course.

B-(80-82) Demonstrates an understanding of the material at hand, has some difficulty articulating this, and basic connection of the material to daily life or contemporary issues/life. Meets basic expectations for the course.

C+(77-79) Demonstrates a basic comprehension of the subject matter, weak articulation and connections. Does not meet expectations for the course.

C (70-76) Demonstrates a minimal comprehension of the subject matter and has difficulty making connections. Does not meet expectations of the course.

F (below 70) Unable to meet the basic requirements of the course.

Email Policy: The instructor will use the official Hartford student email addresses for all communications. Please check your Hartford email account regularly.

AI Usage: Please do not use AI generated content in your writing. It is often incoherent and does not provide proper citations or factual information. The purpose of the course is to produce things that will inform your day-to-day interactions with people, where AI will not be available to mediate between you and the other person. By producing your own words, you will be able to rely on these ideas and build on them as a solid foundation for your practice.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity: Academic honesty and integrity are expected of all students. Plagiarism exists when: a) the work submitted was done, in whole or in part, by anyone other than the one submitting the work, b) parts of the work, whether direct quotations, ideas, or data, are taken from another source without acknowledgement, c) the whole work is copied from another source [especially a web based source], or d) significant portions of one's own previous work used in another course. See "Plagiarism" at

<http://www.hartsem.edu/current-students/policies/>.

Inclusive Language: Hartford Seminary is committed to a policy of inclusion in its academic life and mission. All members of the community are expected to communicate in language that reflects the equality of genders, openness to diverse cultural and theological perspectives, and sensitivity to one another's images of God.

Extensions: Extensions for assignments will be given only in consultation with the instructor.

Official Handbooks: For all other questions you might have regarding policies or procedures, please check the student handbook <https://www.hartfordinternational.edu/current-students/student-resources/student-handbook> and seminary policies at Academic policies are listed at <https://www.hartfordinternational.edu/current-students/academics/academic-policies>.