

RPS 506 E1: Spirituality and Wellness

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Phone meetings with Course Instructor as requested by individual students.

This 3 semester graduate credit class meets, through Zoom, Tuesdays, 6:30p.m. and via Blackboard Discussion Board each week from August 25, through October 6, 2020. Because the class is an accelerated one, there is a **required pre-assignment**, due the first class.

Course Description and Objectives:

Judeo-Christian spirituality is an "incarnational spirituality" at its core. In Genesis, God "walks in the garden" to encounter Adam and Eve. Moses first encounters God in a bush and his people are freed through natural plagues and physical death. The prophets see God's hand in the political-social-economic events of the day, and call people to live justly through it all. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is born as a human being to show us that the kingdom of God is among us in the here and now. In this spirituality, God enters the "natural world" to show us how to live as whole, healthy humans, through the exercising of our freedom of choice, our "Free Will," in accord with the Divine Will. This course will explore the connection between a deeply incarnational spirituality and "wellness," a state of wholeness mediated through the "divine challenge" of free will exercised "on earth as it is [archetypically] in heaven."

Outcomes for this course, integrating the Learning Outcomes, are:

- To explore the connection between spirituality and wellness using required texts and online sources (including but not limited to Blackboard), critical thinking, and appropriate written, shared discussion and other communication skills.
- To explore awareness of core beliefs and their contributions and impediments to "spirituality and wellness."
- To explore spirituality from a variety of perspectives, in order to help the students clarify their own perspectives and develop a better understanding of culturally and religiously diverse approaches.
- To explore how sustainable development and concern for our Earth are crucial dimensions of "spirituality and wellness."

Required Texts:

Seaward, Brian L. *Stand Like Mountain, Flow Like Water: Reflections on Stress and Human Spirituality*, c. 2007

Cannato, Judy. *Radical Amazement: Contemplative Lessons from Black Holes, Supernovas and Other Wonders of the Universe*. C. 2006

Grading:

Pre-assignment	20%
Other Written Assignments and Blackboard work	30%
Final Integrating Paper and Zoom Presentation	25%
Intelligent Class participation and presence	25%

COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

- That students will participate fully during the class Zoom meetings and Blackboard discussions, through active participation as well as respectful listening and reflective thinking.
- Since this is a course based on an adult learning model, with fewer actual class meetings, students will be prepared to spend extensive time each week on the class assignments, as well as Blackboard discussions, and will be present at each Zoom class meeting.
- That students will be respectful of other beliefs and professorial and student presentations.
- That students will follow the Mount's Academic Honesty Policy: Students are expected to be familiar with and abide by the Mount's Academic Honesty Policy. This policy is found at <http://registrar.msj.edu/undergraduate-catalog/rights-policies/academic-policies/academic-honesty/>. We will follow the Mount's undergraduate policy.
- Disability Policy:
- *In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Mount St. Joseph University provides academic adjustments and auxiliary aids for students with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit or restrict one or more major life activities such as walking, seeing, hearing, or learning. Students with disabilities should contact the Learning Center at 513-244-4202, located in room Seton 156, to present documentation and develop individualized accommodation plans. Further questions can be directed to the University's Acting 504 Coordinator, Heather Crabbe, J.D., Associate Provost for Academic Support at 513-244-4631 or at heather.crabbe@msj.edu. Students who have already registered with MSJ Disability Services are encouraged to discuss their accommodations with their course faculty at the beginning of each semester. Additional information can be found at <http://www.msj.edu/academics/disability-services/>.*
- Incomplete Grades: An "I" grade is only assigned by an instructor for a student who has made significant academic progress in the course, but for a serious reason has not fulfilled all requirements. A student must initiate a request for an "I" (incomplete) grade with the instructor by the last week of classes. The completed form must be submitted by the student to the Office of the Registrar prior to exam week. The student's petition may be approved or denied by the instructor. Please consult the MSJ Catalog for complete details.

Pre-Assignment:

Read the Seaward text from the Introduction through Chapter 3 and Cannato from the Introduction through Chapter 3. Answer the following questions **IN DEPTH**: Have a copy of this available during the first Zoom class on August 25th, for discussion and for email submission to the professor at the end of class.

1. In his Introduction, Seaward discusses stress, spirituality and the need for balance through accepting the Divine in our lives. Summarize Seaward's thoughts and then explain your own beliefs on this.
2. In Chapter 1, Seaward uses an ancient Chinese proverb to explain the book's title and the call to walk in balance. What is this and how does it apply?
3. Seaward writes of anger and fear as the root of stress. How does he explain these and how does he connect them to the concept of death? What are your own beliefs about the meaning of life, death and beyond death?

4. In Chapter 2 Seaward connects the “evolution of the soul” and love. Explain this. How is this connected to the various definitions of spirituality which he shares? What do you believe?
5. In Chapter 2 Seaward speaks of the “medicine of the soul” which helps in times of stress. What inner resources (soul medicine) do you have? How does regular exercise fit into your lifestyle choices?
6. Seaward presents stress as a “tension between divine will and free will” as well as a “resistance to living in the present moment.” (58) What do you think this means and how might it apply to your own life?
7. What are the four pillars of human spirituality described by Seaward? What do you believe is the meaning or purpose of life? Have you or a close family member or friend experienced anything similar to his examples of the fourth pillar?
8. What are the four legs of the spiritual path? How do you relate to these in your own life?
9. Explain Cannato’s title “Radical Amazement.” How might this connect with your own life and ministry?
10. At the end of her first 3 chapters, Cannato asks what the reader find most challenging and most “radically amazing.” Answer this in terms of each of the three chapters.
11. What do you believe is the connection between “personal spirituality and wellness” and care and concern for Earth’s wellness?
12. Please include the following information: your name, best email for connection, cell phone number and if you text, and what your hopes are for this course.

Tentative Syllabus:

August 25 Introductions, Overview of Syllabus and Requirements
 Introduction to Judeo-Christian concepts of Incarnational Spirituality and Free Will
 Spirituality Technique, presentation and practice.
 Chapters 1-3 in the Seaward text including pre-assignment questions
 Chapters 1-3 in the Cannato text including pre-assignment questions

Assignment:

Blackboard Discussion Board:

- Answer the questions on the Blackboard Discussion Board.
- Be sure to read others’ answers and if you can, respond to these with your own thoughts.
- Respond by August 31st a.m.

Read Chapters 4-6 in Seaward.

- Take notes and be prepared to discuss these chapters on Blackboard and in more depth during our Zoom class. Give special attention to the “seasons of the soul,” the 4 processes to nourish spirituality and the connection to Free Will and our reason for living.
- Take notes or highlight key ideas in these chapters which strike you. Be prepared to share these in our Zoom meeting or on Blackboard.
- Work with Centering Exercise #1 (129) and Connecting Exercise #1 (165). Be prepared to share these experiences.

Sept. 1 Continuation of Class 1 and begin Seaward Chapters 4-6.
Spirituality Technique, presentation and practice.

Assignment:

Blackboard Discussion Board (Respond by Sept. 7 a.m.)

Read Chapter 5 in Cannato.

- How does this chapter connect with the Seaward text? Highlight key ideas, questions or confusion.

Find a YouTube presentation by Dr. Raymond Moody on his experiences with persons who have died and been resuscitated.

- How does this connect with our Seaward text? With your beliefs? Be prepared to share this during our Zoom class.

Sept. 8 Continuation of Class 2
Spirituality Technique, presentation and practice.
TBD

Assignment:

Blackboard Discussion Board

WRITE a 5-6 PAGE ESSAY connecting the key points from course readings and Blackboard and Class discussions. Be prepared to share during Zoom meeting and to submit via email at the end of the class.

Sept. 15 Continuation of Class 3
Spirituality Technique, presentation and practice
Shared Essays
TBD

Assignment:

Seaward Chapters 6&7. Take notes/Hi-Light key concepts.

Cannato Chapters 6& 8. Take notes/Hi-light key concepts.

TBD

Sept. 22 Zoom presenter on the Spirituality of Creativity
Continuation of Above
Assignment: TBD

Sept. 29 TBD

Assignment:

Final Integrating Paper: Prepare a final paper in which you synthesize and integrate course readings, discussions and course presentations. Be sure to include the interconnections between your own personal spirituality and wellness, and care for God's Earth. Finally, reflect upon what is important to you and any actions you might consider in light of this.

October 6 – Final Class: Presentation and Discussion

Submission of integrating paper at the end of the Zoom class.