

North Park Theological Seminary
SPFM 6303 Embodiment One credit
Spring 2012

Note: Syllabus posted as of Nov.9,2011. The professors reserve the right to make small revisions.

Faculty:

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Time: Mondays, 1:00-2:20 Full Class
2:25- 3:45 Small Groups

Location: tba

Course Description:

This spiritual formation course is topics based and designed to develop self-awareness as to how persons inhabit their longings. The focus of this study will be discernment as to how the body might experience and express longings for personal health, relational intimacy, sexual integrity, and vocational satisfactions, in ways that embody the expression, "The body is for the Lord and the Lord is for the body." I Cor 6:13

Course Objectives:

1. To grow in appreciation for the gift of the body which God has given to us for the enjoyment of human life.
2. To explore the interrelationships between spirituality, health and sexuality from a personal perspective.
3. To explore the stewardship of one's personal being as embodied in gender, culture and in relationships.
4. To become familiar with biblical foundations for the stewardship of the body and its sexual expression.
5. To discern the extent by which contemporary culture obscures God's purposes for embodiment.
6. To be able to identify what are life affirming and life denying habits of being and becoming.
7. To practice praying the attractions and resistances which inhabit our intimacy so that we may honor the body.
8. To explore the meaning of embodiment in relationship to the natural environment and the communal life of the church.

Text:

Rodney Clapp, Tortured Wonders (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2004). ISBN: 158743184X
Additional readings as assigned will be available on the Moodle course sight.

Other readings as assigned will be available on the course site in Moodle.

Course requirements (Grading is pass/fail)

To successfully pass the class, students must complete the following:

1. Attendance and participation in group discussion

The small formation groups (of 3-5 students) for this class will be announced at the first class and posted on Moodle. Weekly assignments will be given by course instructors but group leadership will rotate within the small group and meeting time will follow the class time (unless a different arrangement is approved by instructors). Each assignment given will relate to the primary topic of the class session.

The following policies and procedures are built on the convictions that small group process and mutual accountability are core educational values for this course. We hope you will all be well this semester and not need to miss class, but the points below will help clarify your responsibilities in case of absence.

- 1) Class attendance and participation is essential to the desired learning outcomes for this class. Students are expected to attend each class and to be prepared to discuss any assigned readings. Keep in mind that both presentation *and* small group meeting times of the class *are required*.

For any and all absences (including seminary sponsored courses and mission trips) class members will be responsible to:

- a. **Inform** both small group leader and the group as to the reason for the absence.
 - b. **Write** a response to the discussion questions for the day and email them to the group leader and group peers within a week following the absence.
- 2) Students whose absences exceed two will be referred to the professors. Since participation is the main requirement for successfully completing the class, it may be necessary to repeat the class.

2. Self-Care Discipline with journaling

Students will identify an area for personal growth related to their health, set a realistic goal and commit to a minimum of one hour a week for the semester. Students will reflect on this discipline in a weekly journal entry as they seek to identify the personal spiritual dimensions in addressing this issue. This may comprise a portion of the weekly small group sharing.

3. Integrative Reflection Paper- Due Monday, May 7, 2012. *Papers submitted late, without prior permission from one of the professors, may receive a failing grade which would result in failing the class.*

In light of what you have learned in this class write a 3 page reflection paper on the current state of your well-being and identify plans for how you might grow in life-affirming behavior in the future. The dimensions of physical, mental and relational health, which includes sexual well-being, should each be addressed. Please submit the paper via email to both Dr. Carlson and Dean Auger.

Reflection papers are a dialogue between you *and* the class material, *including* required readings, class presentations, lectures and experiential classes. This is not a report or an evaluation of the class. Discuss *your own* thoughts and feelings that this material has evoked in

you as well as any issue(s) that it has raised for you personally. There is no prescribed outline for the paper but the following guiding questions may be used to help to stimulate your thinking as you write your integrative reflection. They *do not* all need to be addressed explicitly but the expectation is that you will incorporate required class readings and discussions:

- How are you currently experiencing your body? How is your experience of your body related to your spirituality and your relationship with God?
- What in this class did you find thought provoking or challenging, and why?
- What was your personal experience with the self-care and journaling discipline? What did you learn about yourself and your relationship with your physical self from this experience?
- What is the current status of the care of your physical, mental, relational and sexual well-being, and was there anything in the class that stimulated or challenged your thinking in these areas?
- In what areas might self-care be challenging for you as you contemplate continued seminary studies and/or moving into ministry?
- What in your life contributes or challenges your sexual health?

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact seminary academic services at 773-244-6217. Please do so as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. If needed, appointments can be relocated. For further information please review the following website: <http://www.northpark.edu/Current-Students/Student-Development/Disability-Resources/Resources-for-Students.aspx>

Class Schedule

Additional readings may be given in class or posted in Moodle.

THE BODY HEALTHY

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| 1/23 | Flesh and Faith
Reading: Flora Slossom Wuellner, <i>Prayer and Our Bodies</i> . (Nashville: Upper Room, 1987). Ch.2, "Reconciling and Celebrating With our Bodies." |
| 1/30-2/3 | Midwinter Conference-No class |
| 2/6 | Breathing and Being
Reading: Clapp, chapter 11
Meet at Helwig Recreation Center, Mezzanine |
| 2/13 | A Healthy Body is Whole: Wholism vs. Dualism
Reading: Clapp, chapter 1 |
| 2/20 | Preventative Action: Food and Faith
Guest lecturer: Dr. Mary Chase -Ziolek
"The Pleasures of Eating by Wendell Berry," available online at http://www.ecoliteracy.org/publications/rsl/wendell-berry.html |

2/27 Emotional and Mental Health
Presenter: Robert J. Auger, M.A. LMFT
Reading: *Mental Health Issues Among Clergy and Other Religious Professionals: A Review of Research*, by Weaver et al.

3/5 Singleness and Sexuality
Presenter: Sue Braun
Reading: tba

3/12 SPRING READING WEEK –No class

THE BODY VULNERABLE

3/19 When the Body Fails/Disabilities
Reading: Clapp, chapter 8 & 9
Guest presenter: Tim and Sherrie Lowly

3/26 Aging, Disease and Death
Guest presenter: Rev. Sarah Hillabrant, chaplain, Covenant Methodist Homes
Reading:tba

4/2 Pornography and Addictions
Reading: Gerald May, Addiction and Grace. Ch.1, p.1-20 “Desire”

4/9 Easter Monday-No class

THE BODY ENCULTURED

4/16 Color, Culture and the Body
Reading: Clapp, chapter 3

4/23 Femaleness Embodied
Reading: Reuther,Rosemary. *Sexim and God-Talk*. “Woman, Body and Nature: Sexism and the Theology of Creation” p.72-92.

4/30 Maleness Embodied
Reading: Clapp, Chapter 10; Dale S, Kuehne, Sex and the iWorld. Introduction, p.19-29 and Ch.8 “r-Sex” p.147-171.

THE BODY RESTORING

5/7 The Spirituality of Created Beings: Dust to Dust
Reading: Marjory Zoet Bankson, *This is My Body: Creativity, Clay and Change*. (San Diego: Luramedia, 1993.) Chapter 1, “Grounding”

5/7 The Body and Worship
Reading: Clapp, chapter 5, 6
Assignment Due: Integrative Reflection