

North Park Theological Seminary
MNST 6301 Religion, Spirituality, and Health in Professional Practice
Cross-listed as NURS 5920
Preliminary Syllabus Spring 2013 3 credits (online)

Faculty

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Course Description

The influence of religious participation and spirituality on health has been a growing topic of medical research that has significant implications for ministry as well as for health care. The relationship between religion, spirituality and health has been widely discussed in popular literature, has been disseminated to the public and consequently is influencing our congregations and communities. This research has also been identified as one of many motivations for churches developing ministries of health. The focus of this class will be to explore the study of religion, spirituality and health, or “theosomatic” medicine as it has come to be known, the context in which it has occurred, the issues it presents, and practical implications for ministry and health care.

Course Objectives

1. Utilize an interdisciplinary approach to explore the study of religion, spirituality and health
2. Identify key factors contributing to the burgeoning research on religion, spirituality and health
3. Critique the values and voices reflected in the study of religion, spirituality and health
4. Explore the influence of culture and religious tradition on health
5. Distinguish spiritual and religious influences on health
6. Discuss the implications from the study of religion, spirituality and health for professionals in ministry and/or health care as they care for others

Course Requirements and Grading

Texts

- 1) Susan Dunlap. *Caring Cultures How Congregations Respond to the Sick*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009.

- 2) Jeff Levin and Keith Meador, eds. *Healing to all Their Flesh: Jewish & Christian Perspectives on Spirituality, Theology & Health*. Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2012.
- 3) Robert Joseph Taylor, Linda Chatters, Jeff Levin. *Religion in the Lives of African Americans*. Thousand Oaks, Ca: Sage Publications, 2004.
- 4) Students will **choose one additional text** for the critical reading in spirituality and health assignment from the list below. Students will identify which text they will read by Friday, September 24.

Practice and Ministry Issues in Spirituality and Health

- a. Cheryl Kirk-Duggan. *The Undivided Soul Helping Congregations Connect Body and Soul*. (2001) Nashville: Abingdon.
- b. Neal Krause, *Aging in the Church How Social Relationships Affect Health*. (2008) Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press.
- a. Joel James Shuman and Keith Meador. *Heal Thyself Spirituality, Medicine, and the Distortion of Christianity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Spiritual care in clinical settings

- b. Judith Shelly (2000). *Spiritual Care: A Guide for Caregivers*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press.
- c. Christine Puchalski & Betty Ferrell (2009). *Making Health Care Whole: Integrating Spirituality into Patient Care*. Philadelphia: Templeton Press.

Spirituality & health in particular groups

- a. Lori Alvord & Elizabeth Cohen Van Pelt. *The Scalpel and the Silver Bear The First Navajo Woman Surgeon Combines Western Medicine and Traditional Healing* (2000). New York: Bantam.
- b. Elena Avila, *Woman who Glows in the Dark A Curandera Reveals Traditional Aztec Secrets of Physical and Spiritual Health* (1999). New York: Tarcher Press.
- c. Anne Fadiman, *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down* (1998). New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Anthropological story of a Hmong family and their spiritual beliefs related to health as they come in conflict with traditional western healthcare.
- d. Elizabeth MacKinley, ed. *Ageing and Spirituality Across Faiths and Cultures* (2010). London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers
- e. Stephanie Mitchem and Emilie Townes, eds. *Faith, Health and Healing in African American Life*. (2008) Westport, CT: Praeger.
- f. Albert Jewell, ed. *Ageing, Spirituality and Well-Being* (2003) London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

- 5) In addition to the texts, articles will be assigned to be read each week that will be posted on Blackboard or available online.

Assignments and Grading

Note: Detailed instructions and guidelines for grading each assignment will be included in the final syllabus

1. Participation

Class participation is required through the discussion board and in small group work. The content for each week, including reading and lecture notes, will have discussion questions for your reflection and response. Students will need to post responses to the week's material on the discussion board by Wednesday midnight of each week, and by Friday midnight of each week to have posted responses to fellow students.

Because your timely participation is important not only in order for you to fulfill the course objectives, but to the experience of your fellow students as well, in order to pass this class students must complete assignments within the allotted time frame unless they have received prior approval for an extension from the professor. If you miss more than 3 weeks of posting (which means either neglecting to post OR posting late without having requested prior approval from the professor), you will not pass this course.

Instructions for class discussion:

(1) Instructions for each week will be posted under Assignments. Each person is responsible for responding to the posted question(s). You will then respond to classmates' original responses (see #2 below). So as to be courteous to time constraints of other members in your group, please make it a precedent to post your original responses to my questions by midnight Wednesday of each week, to give other group members time to respond to you. Your responses should incorporate the readings and major themes of that week. They are not to be merely opinions, but thoughtful statements backed up by the readings, experience with your church and/or by well constructed arguments. Lengths will vary; however, you should be thorough without being too wordy or repetitive. A minimum of 300 words is required for your original post. The more concise and organized your responses, the easier it will be for your co-members.

(2) Two responses to any of your co-members' original responses are also required. You may, of course, respond to more than two, or to responses to the original responses if you are so moved. These responses are due by midnight on Friday of a given week.

(3) You are also responsible for reading all comments by your group members.

****Note, late postings of original responses or of responses to classmates will receive a grade reduction (unless approved *prior* to the due date), as the discussion comprises a**

large component of the course and in order to have a discussion, people need to have time to respond to original postings. After a week, they will not be accepted for credit without approval.

Grading for class participation:

Weekly participation will be graded with a “0, 1, 2 or 3.” If you participate (which means do readings, post and respond) on time, you will receive a 2. If you participate only in part or are late, you will receive a 1. If your response is thoughtful, insightful or creative you will receive a 3. Postings beyond 1 week late (without *prior* approval) will receive a 0 for the week.

2. Informational Interview

Students will complete an informational interview with someone who attends worship an average of once a week or more to discuss their perception of the connection between religion and health. A 3-4 page summary report will be prepared identifying themes from the interview. Detailed instructions will be provided. **Due: TBD**

3. Group Project

Students will work in groups critiquing one area of the study of religion, spirituality and health. Possible topics would include the study of how prayer influences health outcomes, the impact of providing spiritual care in clinical settings or the influence of spiritual practices not associated with religion on wellbeing. Each group will do additional reading on the topic exploring the contributions of different disciplines in theology, healthcare and the social sciences. The group will be responsible for identifying additional online resources, preparing a summary of key points and articulating significant questions to be considered. This can be done in Powerpoint or in text. The group will be responsible for facilitating class discussion on their topic. **To be scheduled weeks 8-10.**

4. Critical Reading in Spirituality and Health

To explore the connections between spirituality and health in an area of interest, students will read a book on either: a) practice and issues in spirituality and health b) spiritual care in clinical settings or c) spirituality and health in a particular group. A list of suggested titles will be provided or students can propose an alternative to be approved by the professor. Students will write a 3 page critical reading essay that discusses key points in the book and implications for ministry and/or practice. Students will also write a one page summary to post on the Discussion Board for conversation with classmates. Book to be read should be chosen by Due: TBD

Students may request a one week extension on one paper (interview or critical reading) without grade penalty. If choosing this option, students must notify the professor prior to the due date. All other later papers will be reduced one letter grade per day.

5. Essay Exam

Students will complete an essay exam based on course reading. A well done essay exam will demonstrate integration of the readings and understanding of application to ministry and/or clinical settings. The exam will be available on Friday, December 3rd and will be **submitted Friday, December 10th**.

Assignment	Due Date	%Final Grade
Participation: Response to weekly course material and engaging fellow students in dialogue	Wednesday & Friday of each week	25%
Informational Interview	Friday, September 24 th	15%
Group Project	To be scheduled weeks 8-10 in October/November	15%
Critical Reading in Spirituality & Health		
Identify book to be read	Friday, October 1	
Submit Report	Friday, November 12	20%
Essay Exam	Friday, December 10	25%

GRADING

North Park Theological Seminary grade scale

A 95-100
A- 93-94

B+ 91-92
B 88-90

B-	86-87	D+	76-77
C+	84-85	D	72-75
C	80-83	D-	70-71
C-	78-79	F	69 and below

Office Hours:

Online: I will be active in the course on Monday and Wednesday and check email regularly Monday – Friday.

On campus: Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 1-3:30 PM

Office Location: Nyvall #31

Academic Honesty:

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park Seminary is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion.

Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

1. Plagiarism – the use of another’s work as one’s own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet.
2. Copying another’s answers on an examination.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one’s answers or work.
4. Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present.

In the special instance of group work, the instructor will make clear his/her expectations with respect to individual vs. collaborative work. A violation of these expectations may be considered cheating as well. For further information on this subject you may refer to the Academic Dishonesty section of the Seminary’s online catalog.

Support Services:

Please see the Course Information button in your course in Blackboard for the Student Support document if you need assistance during your course.

Disabilities Accommodations

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the program's office. Please do so as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. For further information please review the following website: <http://www.northpark.edu/Current-Students/Student-Development/Disability-Resources.aspx>

COURSE SCHEDULE

A detailed course schedule with weekly readings will be available in the final syllabus.

- Module I The study of religion, spirituality and health: Context and concepts
- Module II The influence of religion and spirituality on physical and mental health
- Module III Congregational life and the impact on wellbeing
- Module IV The study of prayer, spirituality and healing
- Module V Responding to spiritual needs in the experience of illness
- Module VI Implications of the research on religion, spirituality & health for health care and ministry