REL 3029

Christian Mysticism

Section: RVBB

Internet/Fully Online

Spring Term 2027

Course Time Zone | Eastern Time (ET). Course due dates are according to this time zone.

Professor Information

Joseph Holbrook

Roles: Primary Instructor

Email: jholbroo@fiu.edu

Response Time: 48 hours

Phone: (786) 395-5402

Office Hours: by appointment

Office Location: Vicki's bakery

Website: YouTube Channel: https://www.youtube.com/@MrJosephholbrook

Department or Academic Unit: Department of Religious Studies

Course Prerequisites

Course prerequisites, if any, are listed below.

Course Description

This course offers an overview of the Christian mystical tradition, from the times of Jesus to the contemporary period. It is intended to provide students with knowledge of the history, the major mystics and mystical theological, emphasizing its diversity, complexity, and its influence on Western culture.

Christian Mysticism will also encourage the study of a variety of Christian mystics and their influence on the development of the Christian tradition.

In summary, the course will cover the following topics:

- Biblical precedents for the mystical experience of God.
- The contribution of Greek Platonism.
- Christian monasticism.
- Discussion of key figures of Christian mysticism.

- Discussion of various approaches to Christian mysticism.
- Discussion of various disciplines in Christian mysticism.
- The role of Christian mysticism today.

Readings, Materials, and Open Educational Resources (OER)

PDF copies of Richard Foster's "Sancturary of the Soul" will be available (and optional) in the weekly journal.

Textbook and Course Materials

Introduction to Christian Mysticism

Subtitle: Recovering the Wildness of Spiritual Life

Required/Recommended: Required

Authors: Jason M. Baxter

Publisher: Baker Academic

Publication Date: 2021

Copyright Date: 2021

ISBN 10: 1540961228

ISBN 13: 978-1540961228

Notes: The audible version of this book is also very good.

Chapters/Pages: 208

Panther Book Pack

Get all required course materials for $22 per undergrad credit hour through Panther Book Pack. You'll be charged automatically unless you opt out within 3 days after the add/drop deadline.

For more details, to compare costs, and to learn how to access your course materials, visit the Panther Book Pack information page on FIU OneStop.

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives

- Identify and analyze the historical tradition of Christian Mysticism.
- Evaluate, contrast, and analyze the wide variety of approaches and perspectives of Christian Mysticism.
- Demonstrate professional or scholarly writing.
- Experiment with practices of mindfulness and reflection.

Expectations of this Course

This is an online course, which means most (if not all) of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same as a traditional course. In fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills which can make these courses more demanding for some students.

Students are expected to:

- **review the getting started** page located in the course modules;
- **introduce yourself to the class** during the first week by posting a self-introduction in the appropriate discussion;
- **take the practice quiz** to ensure that your computer is compatible with the learning management system, Canvas;
- **interact** online with instructor and peers;
- **review** and follow the course calendar and weekly outlines;
- **log in** to the course **5 times** per week;
- **respond** to discussions by the due date specified. **No late work will be accepted;**
- **respond** to **emails** within 2 **days**;
- **submit** assignments by the corresponding deadline.

The instructor will:

- log in to the course **6** week;
- respond to **emails** within 36 **hours**;
- grade assignments and/or provide feedback within 3 **days** of the assignment deadline.

Course Communication

Communication in this course will take place via the Canvas Inbox. Check out the Canvas Conversations Tutorial or Canvas Guide to learn how to communicate with your instructor and peers using Announcements, Discussions, and the Inbox. I will respond to all correspondences within 24 hours.

Policies & Resources

Before starting this course, please review the Policies & Resources Page in Canvas which includes comprehensive information on various University and Course Level Policies such as:

- University Policies
- Accessibility and Accommodations
- Online Etiquette
- Technical Requirements and Skills
- Computer & Digital Literacy Skills
- Course Technology Accessibility Statements and Privacy Policies
- Academic Integrity
- Copyright Statement
- Core Principles of This Course
- Nondiscrimination Statement
- Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

- Fair Use Policy

Assignments & Assessments

Discussion Forums

All Discussions can be found by clicking on the Discussions link located on the left-hand side ofthe course.

- View "How do I reply to a discussion ."
- View "How do I upload and embed an image in the New Rich Content Editor as a student ?"
- View "How do I create hyperlinks to user files in the New Rich Content Editor as a student ?"

Participation in the discussion forums is critical for maximizing student learning in this course, both because your participation is graded and because it's a chance to engage in a dialogue about course material. In this course, students are required to be a part of a community of learners who collectively interact,through discussion,to enhance and support the professional performance of each other. Part ofthe assessment criteria for the course includes evaluating the quality and quantity of your participation in the discussion forum. Keep in mind that your discussion forum postings will likely be seen by other members ofthe course. Care

should be taken when determining what to post.

Some characteristics I consider to be part of excellent discussion contributions are outlined below. I will consider these characteristics when assessing the quality and level of student participation.

- Posts and responses should be thorough and thoughtful. Just posting an "I agree" or "Good ideas" will not be considered adequate. Support statements with examples, experiences, or references. Be brief — keep each post and response to one or two
  short paragraphs.Keep in mind that fellow learners will be reading and responding to you,too.
- **Posts should be within a range of 250-300 words. Do not use headings, subheads, numbering or bullet points. These formatting items raise suspicion of the use of AI**.
- Make certain that all posts and responses address the question, problem, or situation as presented for discussion. This does not mean you should not extend the topic, but do not stray from the topic.
- Discussions occur when there is dialogue;therefore, you need to build upon the posts and responses of other learners to create discussion threads. Make sure to revisit the discussion forum and respond (if necessary) to what other learners have posted to your initial responses.

- When relevant, add to the discussion by including prior knowledge, work experiences, references, web sites, resources, etc. (giving credit when appropriate). Contributions to the discussions (posts and responses) should be complete and free of grammatical or structural errors.
- Three replies to other student's posts constitute twenty percent of the grade. Please avoid using headings, subheads, numbered paragraphs or bullet points. These all raise suspicions of the use of ChatGPT or some other AI to write the posts.
- See individual discussion assignments for prompt and grading criteria

20 Point Canvas Discussion Rubric

Required elements	Poor (0)	Fair (1)	Good (2-3)	Excellent (4)	Total
(20%) Brief Summary	Missing forum post or is less than 50 % of the minimum word count.	Too short, fails to meet the minimum word count. Factual errors.	Factually accurate but too long and wordy. Shows that the student read or viewed the source.	Factually accurate, concise and brief. Shows that the student read and understood material.	
(20%) Personal Reaction	No mention of personal reactions or opinions.	Personal reaction mentioned in passing but minimally.	Personal reaction mentioned but could be amplified.	Good clear discussion of personal and critical reaction.	
(20%) Analysis and relevance	No analysis or relevance. The post is all descriptive summarization	Minimal analysis of source and little discussion of relevance to class themes.	Analysis of source and discussion of relevance to class themes.	Good insightful analysis of source and discussion of relevance to class themes.	
(20%) Mechanics – grammar, word choice, spelling, sentence structure	Unacceptable – too many errors to be comprehensible.	Many errors of grammar, spelling, word choices, vague or confusing sentences	Some few errors of grammar, spelling, word choices, poor sentence structure.	No errors of grammar, spelling, word choices or sentence structure.	
(20%) Replies	No replies.	One reply, or short incomplete sentences.	Only two replies of substance.	Three replies of substance to fellow students.	
Total score					

Writing Assignments

- There is one major writing assignment (minimum 1200 to 1500 words) in this class. You will receive a prompt at least three weeks prior to the deadline for submission. The writing assignment must meet the normal standards for writing college-level papers. Each ofthese papers requires thesis-driven writing that is supported by cited evidence. Full details, prompts, and rubrics are available in the assignment details on Canvas.
- College essays should have double spaced body text, a title page that includes complete information such as the name of the author, the name and number of the course, the name of the institution or department, the name of the instructor and the date or semeste.There should be citations and a List of References (or Works Cited). ChatGPT or other AI programs can be used for research as long as you write in your own words (no copy and pasting) and provide citations and a souce reference.

  Each writing assignment needs to cite sources in footnotes (or in-text, short-form citations) according to the Chicago Manual of Style format, and follow the layout specifications provided on the assignment prompts. Technical issues are not acceptable excuses for failing to submit papers by the deadline, which means that you must leave yourself enough

time to successfully submit your paper with extra time to account for technical problems.Always check to ensure that you successfully submitted your assignment. [always keep the receipts!] Note: all writing assignments must be submitted in either Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format -- also Rich Text Format, RTF -- (.docx, .doc, or .pdf) Submissions of any other file type will not be accepted and will be counted as missing with appropriate late penalties applied until the correct format is submitted.

Essay Rubric

100 point, 10-part Essay Rubric

Reflection Journal

There will be a weekly assignment to write personal reflections in a weekly journal. I suggest that you try to write a few words per day with a goal of 250 or 300 for the week. It can be anything you want, your personal reflections, your meditations, your prayers or quotes that you like from the chapters of the book by Baxter. It does not need to be "Christian" in nature -- just your own thoughts as you read through the textbook. Other students will not be able to see it. Let me know if you prefer that I do not read it, In such a case, I can give you full credit for the submission without reading it. This is a daily/weekly exercise designed to help you become more intentional in your own mindfulness

Each weeks submission is worth 10 points and It is worth 10 percent of your final grade.

Quizzes

In order to mitigate any issues with your computer and online assessments, it is very important that you take the Practice Quiz from each computer you will be using to take your graded quizzes and exams. Assessments in this course are not compatible with mobile devices and should not be taken through a mobile phone or a tablet.

There 8 quizzes, one for each chapter, worth 20% ofthe total course grade. These quizzes are designed to help you study the course material and will help you prepare for the Civic Literacy Exam. Each quiz is composed of multiple choice questions (usually 15).

Quizzes are due on Fridays by midnight

Exams

There will be a Final Exam which will be based on the weekly reading quizes and multiple choice.

The final exam consists of 50 randomly selected multiple choice questions (taken from the quizzes) covering the entire book by Jason Baxter, Introduction to Christian Mysticism, and comprising of quizzes 1 through 8. Each question is worth 2 points (for a total of 100 points) and 2 hours are allotted to complete the exam. The

exam is open book and can be taken collaboratively with other students in the class. Students will have 200 minutes to take the exam.

In order to mitigate any issues with your computer and online assessments, it is very important that you take the Practice Quiz

Online Attendance = Participation assignments

Since this is an online course, attendance and particpation will be measured by six "participation" assignments worth 20 points each, and at the end of the semester, one lowest grade will be dropped. No replies are necessary for Participation assignments.

Proctored Exams

Please note that the information contained in this section applies only if your course requires a proctored exam.

Through a careful examination of this syllabus, it is the student's responsibility to determine whether this online course requires proctored exams. Please visit our Student Proctored Exam Instructions webpage for important information concerning proctored exams, proctoring centers, and important forms.

Zoom Video Conference

Zoom is a video conference tool that you can use to interact with

your professor and fellow students by sharing screens, chatting, broadcasting live video/audio, and taking part in other interactive online activities.

Zoom meetings can be accessed via the Zoom link in the course navigation menu. Once you click on the Zoom link, it will route you to join the meeting for the respective class session. You will also be able to view upcoming meetings, previous meetings that you have already joined, and meeting recordings. Before joining an actual class session:

> Reference the Zoom Student Tutorials to learn about the tool, how to access your meeting room, and share your screen. Access the Zoom Test Meeting Room to test out the software before joining an actual session.

If you encounter any technical difficulties, please contact the FIU Canvas Help Team. Please ensure you contact support immediately upon the issue occurring.

Grading

Course Grades Distribution Table

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Points of Each	Total Points Available	Weight

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Points of Each	Total Points Available	Weight
Discussion Forums	8	20	160	20%
Reading Quizzes	8	20	160	20%
Writing Assignments	1	100	100	20%
Participation/ Attendance	6	20	100	10%
Reflection Journal	8	20	160	20%
Final Exam	1	100	100	10%
Total	**10**	**N/A**	**780**	**100%**

Letter Grade Distribution Table

Letter Grade	Sample Range %
A	95 - 100

Letter Grade	Sample Range %
A-	90 – 94.99
B+	87 – 89.99
B	83 – 86.99
B-	80 – 82.99
C+	77 – 79.99
C	70 – 76.99
D	60 – 69.99
F	0 – 59.99

Schedule of Topics

1. Introduction.

2. The Desert of Modernity.

3. Pagans Grope toward God.

4. The Inward Turn.

5. The Darkness of God.

6. Praying with the Whole Wolrd.

7. How to Perform Scriptures.

8. Conclusion.

Nondiscrimination Statement

The **Office of Civil Rights (OCR)** is responsible for ensuring that FIU maintains a workplace and learning environment free from discrimination, where current and prospective faculty, staff, and students are treated equitably. If any student, employee, or applicant has a sincere and reasonable belief that they have been discriminated against or harassed based on age, color, disability, marital status, ethnic or national origin, race, religion, retaliation, sex, or any other protected category, they can report their concerns to the OCR team through report.fiu.edu.

Syllabus Desclaimer

This syllabus may be subject to change without prior notice. The latest changes will be announced via Canvas announcement.