

School of Theology and Ministry  
Seattle University  
901 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, PO Box 222000  
Seattle, WA 98122-1090

Spring Quarter 2014

**COURSE INFORMATION**

**STMA 5200 Spiritualities: East and West**

WKND: 4/5-6, 5/17-18 (Sa 8:30am-4:30pm, Su  
9am-4pm)

Classroom: HUNT 110

Prerequisites:

**INSTRUCTOR**

**Valerie Lesniak PhD and Jamal Rahman**

Office: (Hunthausen Office Hours: ( by  
appointment)

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**Texts and Materials**

▪ **Required Texts**

- Calhoun, Adele Ahlberg. **Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us.** InterVarsity Press, 2005. 978-0-8308-3330-6
- Corcoran, Nancy. **Secrets of Prayer: A Multifaith Guide to Creating Personal Prayer in your Life.** Skylight Paths Publishing, 2007. 978-1594732157
- Hanh, Thich Nhat. **The Energy of Prayer: How to Deepen your Spiritual Practice.** Parallax Press, 2006. 978-1-888375-55-8
- MacKenzie, Donald, Falcon, Ted and Rahman, Jamal. **Religion Gone Astray: What we Found at the Heart of Interfaith."** Skylight Paths Publishing, 2011. 978-1594733178
- Rahman, Jamal. **Spiritual Gems Of Islam: Insights and Practices from the Qur'an, Hadith, Rumi and Muslim Teaching Stories to Enlighten the Heart and Mind.** Skylight Paths Publishing, 2013. 978-1-59473-430-4
- Smith, Houston. **The Illustrated World Religions.** Harper. 1995. 978-0060674403
- **Optional Reading:**
- Easwaran, Eknath. **Meditation.** Nilgiri Press. 1991. 0-915132-66-4
- Brown, Patricia. **Paths to Prayer: Finding your Way to the Presence of God.** Jossey-Bass, 2003. 0-7879-6565-0

## **Course Description**

*“Until sight converges from more than one angle, the world looks as flat as a postcard. The rewards of having two eyes are practical; they keep us from bumping into chairs and enable us to judge the speed of approaching cars. But the final reward is the deepened view of the world itself.”*

*Houston Smith*

This course is designed to view **the spiritual life** from the different angles of several traditions. It will expose the participant to an **experiential appreciation** of the major traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity and Islam. The participants will design a personal spiritual program that incorporates practices and insights from these traditions. The course is an effort to aid the cultivation of **sapientia** as well as **scientia**, of wisdom and knowledge. To facilitate this end, classroom time will be divided between group process and discussion, teaching and actual prayer practice.

## **Course Objectives**

1. To develop an **appreciative understanding** of the traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam.
2. To reflect on insight from the traditions that enhance and deepen one’s own faith and beliefs.
3. To study, experience and then possibly incorporate worship practices, meditations, and techniques from different religions that blends in well with one’s unique personal spiritual practices.
4. To experience a spaciousness in one’s mind and heart by becoming aware of the wealth of insights and practices from the diverse traditions.

This course contributes to the following MATS learning outcomes:

- Ability to listen and respond to how the Spirit is active and alive in local, global and cosmic communities
- Ability to discern and nurture spiritual experience in relation to self and others
- Ability to be a responsive, discerning listener who can enter another’s worldview

## **Course Requirements**

1. Class participation and a keeping of some type of notes or journal of some kind appropriate to your mode of learning.
2. Completion of Reading assignments.

3. Reflection Paper # 1: Dialogue with another tradition by conversing with someone of another tradition. **Due the beginning of the Second Weekend. (3-5 pages). More instructions will be given during the first sessions of the course.**
4. Reflection Paper #2 (3-5 pages)  
Drawing on the insights, techniques, rituals and practices discussed and experienced in class, design a personal spiritual practice that integrates spiritual traditions. Due date to be decided by the course participants in dialogue with instructors

Grade Distribution:

Class Participation: 60%

Written Assignments: 40%

**Schedule of Course Activities** Including:

**Prior to Weekend 1, - Students should acquaint themselves and start reading the books by Smith, Calhoun, Corcoran, Hanh and Rahman.**

**By acquaint we mean read pertinent sections associated with the description of the scheduled themes of the block syllabus below. (i.e. Smith on Hinduism, Taoism, Buddhism etc.)**

**Please read MacKenzie et.al. pp. vii-14 "What we Found at the Heart of Interfaith."**

***Please do some type of note keeping, journaling, scrape booking, or highlighting of each of the texts so that you will be able to participate in class room discussions.***

**Prior to Weekend 2. - Students should read the entire books of Corcoran, MacKenzie et.al. Rahman and Hanh.**

**The Calhoun, Corcoran Rahman, Hanh and Smith books will be used during both weekends.**

**Tentative Schedule: (Schedule may be changed and adapted at the discretion of the instructors to meet the learning needs of the participants.)**

**Weekend One:**

**Block One:** Introduction to course; expectations

Introduction to spiritual teachings of the world religions: **Buddhism**

**Block Two:** Introduction to spiritual teachings of **Hinduism and Islam**

**Third Block:** Insights from the Spiritual traditions of **Sufism and Taoism**

**Fourth Block:** Experience of a variety of practices, meditations,

Breathing techniques, chanting.

### **Weekend Two**

**First Block:** Experience of a variety of practices, meditations.

Breathing techniques, body movements and chanting:

Exploring our interviews

**Block Two:** Reclaiming aspects of the traditions (We will be working with the Mackenzie et.al. book in particular.)

**Block Three:** Divergence/Convergence within traditions

**Block Four:** Continuation of practice: Practices continued and implications for ministry and social justice and compassion

### **Policies**

- Attendance, late arrival to class, and participation policies
- Policies concerning missed assignments and student failure to meet deadlines
- Academic Honesty (including plagiarism): The School of Theology and Ministry strictly adheres to the academic policy regarding Academic Integrity as indicated on the Seattle University Registrar website, as noted in the box below.
- Disability: If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an 'invisible disability' such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, please see related note in the box below.

#### University Resources and Policies

##### Academic Resources

- Library and Learning Commons (<http://www.seattleu.edu/learningcommons/>)
  - (This includes: Learning Assistance Programs, Research [Library] Services, Writing Center, Math Lab)
- Academic Integrity Tutorial (*found on Angel and SU Online*)

##### Academic Policies on Registrar website (<https://www.seattleu.edu/registrar/academics/performance/>)

- Academic Integrity Policy
- Academic Grading Grievance Policy
- Professional Conduct Policy (*only for those professional programs to which it applies*)

##### Notice for students concerning Disabilities

*If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an 'invisible disability' such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff located in Loyola 100, (206) 296-5740. Disability-based adjustments to course expectations can be arranged only through this process.*

