

Divinity Elective Course Descriptions for spring 2015

Listings for courses either not in the bulletin or courses that now have permanent numbers. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Biblical Studies

BIB 790A Topics: Food & Faith in the World of the Hebrew Bible

Leann Pace

This course explores points of intersection between food and faith in the texts of the Hebrew Bible and in the archaeological record from the Levantine region. Topics for the course include: the sacrificial system as a means of creating and maintaining relationship with the divine; home cooked meals in the Hebrew Bible and their ability to create sacred space within the household; the practice of feeding the dead, a practice prevalent in the world of the Hebrew Bible but about which the text itself is nearly silent; hunger and food scarcity; creating a religious and cultural identity through what you eat (or don't eat). Not only will the class explore these topics in their ancient historical and textual contexts but will also consider how opinions and practices related to food and faith in the world of the Hebrew Bible can help us to think deeply and act meaningfully in relation to these issues in our own faith communities.

Leann Pace is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Religion Department at Wake Forest this semester. Currently, she is very interested in the many roles food has played in the lives of humans for millennia. She received her doctoral degree in Near Eastern Archaeology and is a senior member of the Neubauer Expedition to Zincirli, a decade-long investigation of the site of ancient Samal in south-central Turkey.

Cross Disciplinary Studies

CDS 790 Topics: Readings in Theology & Debt

Katherine Shaner and Jonathan Miller

"Debt" has been a potent metaphor in Christian thought from the beginning. But debt is also a pressing social problem – and, for many Americans, an urgent legal problem. This readings course surveys both the Biblical literature on debt and the landscape of consumer debt in the 21st-century United States. In the context of reflection papers and class discussion, participants will consider the relationship between "debt" as theological symbol and debt as economic-justice problem, as well as implications for parishioners and other constituents.

Jonathan R. Miller holds an M.A. in Theology from Loyola University Chicago and a J.D. from Harvard Law School. He works as an attorney in New York City, where he represents consumers who have been sued by debt collectors or who have been victims of abusive or unfair debt-collection practices. He writes and speaks about theological constructions of debt.

Denominational Studies

MIN 641 Congregational Leadership, Presbyterian Polity, and Reformed Theology

Joe Blankinship

Joe Blankinship serves as Pastor of Forest Hills Presbyterian Church, High Point NC. Prior to becoming a minister he worked 12 years as a producer and director in the film and video industry. He currently serves on the Committee on Ministry of Salem Presbytery and on the board of Open Door Ministries and is a member of High Point's Interfaith Affairs Committee and the High Point Ministerial Conference. Education: BA, University of Kentucky, Temple University, MDiv, San Francisco Theological Seminary

MIN 693 United Church of Christ Polity and History
Craig Schaub

This course will explore the history, theology, and polity of the United Church of Christ (UCC) in order to provide an understanding of the structure, ministries, and mission commitments of the UCC. Through reading, research, reflection, writing, and dialogue, the course will enable and encourage students to be faithful interpreters of the United Church of Christ. Students will be able to tell the story of the UCC accurately and in some detail. They will be able to describe covenantal polity and name issues and opportunities for the UCC today. Familiarity with the history and polity of the UCC will help students to participate more fully in the life of their congregations, Associations and Conferences. It is anticipated that students will carry forward the ecumenical commitments, the zeal for mission and justice, and the passion for the Gospel that is characteristic of the UCC.

Craig Schaub began his tenure as pastor at Parkway United Church of Christ in Winston-Salem at the beginning of December 2010. Previously, he served as pastor at UCC churches in Syracuse, New York and Cleveland, Ohio. He has been a community leader in advocating immigrant rights and the rights of prisoners. He is a strong supporter of the "Open and Affirming" policy of the UCC, welcoming LGBT persons. Craig is a bicyclist and a gardener. He and his wife, Cynthia, have a young daughter.

Historical Studies

HIS 630 Culinary Culture of Black Religious Experience

Derek Hicks

This course explores the historical, social, cultural, theological, ethnographic, and practical components of African American religious life and food way culture. Particular attention is given to the historical relationship between eating and church life, highlighting diverse and creative forms of culinary expression in the African American faith tradition and the ways in which food becomes transformative for those struggling for human dignity.

HIS 790A Topics: Religion and the Civil Rights Struggle

Derek Hicks

Resistance to racial bias dates back to institutional slavery. This course will chart an intellectual history from antebellum America through the most publicized protest movement during the mid-to-late twentieth century—the Civil Rights Movement. Students will assess several classic and contemporary texts on radical black political thought, connecting those historical voices to contemporary religious thinking and social activism. This course will consider the ways in which faith communities, organizations, and individuals have fueled or been reinforced by African American protests and demands for equal rights. As a site of investigation, this class also will pay some attention to the history and nature of the civil rights struggle in Winston-Salem and surrounding areas. Ultimately, this class will engage the

complexity of religious voices within the American freedom struggle—including Judæo-Christians, Muslims, or even the non-religious. We will trace the role religious faith plays in the various forms of the resistance over the nearly 400 years of the African American pilgrimage for equal rights.

HIS 790B Topics: The Factor of Religion in North Carolina History 1566-2015: Pivotal Moments & Critical Issues

Larry Tise

(The course will meet on campus or travel to various off-campus sites on Friday mornings throughout the semester.)

The purposes of this course are twofold: (1) To provide a general chronological overview of religious history in that territory that eventually became the State of North Carolina from the Indian pre-history of the area to the present; and (2) To focus on dramatic pivotal moments or events in this history for the purpose of discussing critical issues that have been encountered by people of faith in North Carolina irrespective of their race, class, gender, or religious persuasion.

Larry E. Tise was born in Winston-Salem and grew up in the shadow of Wake Forest University. With A.B. and M.Div. degrees from Duke University and a Ph.D. in history from the University of North Carolina in Chapel, he has pursued multiple careers as scholar, academician, and professional historian. He was North Carolina's State Historian (1975-81) and Pennsylvania's thereafter (1981-87). He then served as Executive Director of the American Association for State & Local History and the Benjamin Franklin National Memorial. He has previously taught at the University of Pennsylvania, Vanderbilt University, and since 2000 served as the Wilbur & Orville Wright Distinguished Professor of History at East Carolina University. Among his books are *Proslavery: A History of the Defense of Slavery in America* (1987), *The American Counter-Revolution* (1997), *Benjamin Franklin and Women* (2000), and *Conquering the Sky: Secret Flights of the Wright Brothers* (2009).

Ministerial Studies

MIN 630 Christian Ministry & Public Leadership in America

John Senior and Frank Dew

This course explores the role of minister as public leader. It attends to four areas of concern: (1) what public leadership is, and what it means in the context of Christian ministry; (2) how U.S.-Americans make morally relevant meaning of their social and political life together, and how these meanings are relevant to ministry leadership in broader publics; (3) what models of public leadership are available to ministry leaders, and what it means to lead well through them; and (4) how ministry leaders reflect theologically on their role as public leaders. To focus our conversations around these matters, the course will examine the theme of urban poverty throughout.

Frank Dew is the founding (and current) pastor of New Creation Community. He is a graduate of Wake Forest University and Duke Divinity School. Frank served as pastor of the Vandalia Presbyterian Church in Greensboro for six years before beginning New Creation. He has also served on the Greensboro Human Relations Commission and on the boards of Habitat for Humanity, Family Life Council and the Greensboro Urban Ministry. He was instrumental in developing the Presbyterian Pilgrimage movement. Frank presently serves part time as Chaplain at the Greensboro Urban Ministry. Frank maintains a blog called [Dew Justice](#). He has written a book called [Improving Our Acoustics for Hearing the Gospel](#) with Jane Murden.

MIN 790B Topics: Just Preaching: Developing & Refining the Sermon

Veronice Miles

Prerequisite: MIN 551 Homiletics and Worship

This course is designed to build upon the interpretive, theological and homiletical skills and practices gained in *Introduction to Preaching and Worship* (MIN 551). Participants will explore a variety of sermon forms, preaching styles and contexts in order to refine their skills in sermon development and delivering. The course will emphasize creativity in sermon development, lively and engaged delivery and attentiveness to the theological and ethical implications of preaching and of sermons preached during this course. Students will preach with and in congregations of their choosing and, where possible, will do so in consultation with the congregational leader. Therefore, we will explore the significance/relevance of each preacher's sermon for the specific persons and communities with which they preach.

Spirituality**SPI 790A Topics: Modern Spiritual Writing: A Language to Make Us Whole**

Fred Bahnsen

(The course will meet most Fridays and will require attendance at visiting writer events to be held on campus and around the Piedmont, including Tuesday April 14, 5:00 - 9:00 pm and Wednesday April 15, 5:00 – 9:00 pm. Other Visiting Writer events TBD.)

Modern spiritual writing has become its own genre, and this course will introduce students to a variety of examples. The course will also help students develop their own piece of writing. Each 3-hour class will be divided into two parts. In the first half, students will discuss the book assigned for that week, not only the content, but also how the book was put together. Students will look at narrative structure, voice, character development, scene, and dialogue—all tools of the writer's craft—and discuss how those tools can be employed to create compelling stories of religious experience. In the second half of each class session, students will participate in a writer's workshop, reading and critiquing each other's creative writing. Each student will have the opportunity to have his or her work reviewed twice by the class. NOTE: this class is for writers who are already adept at prose writing and who wish to work on their creative writing.

SPI 790B Topics: Spirituality of the Enneagram

Chris Copeland

This course introduces students to some historical, theological, and spiritual foundations of the Enneagram. Students will learn the nine different type patterns of the Enneagram using didactic and type panels. They will explore and experience spiritual practices that engage each type pattern and invite each type into more healthy spiritual growth.

SPI 790C Topics: Spirituality & Poetry Writing

Jennifer Wheelock

Weekend Course: February 27-28, 2015

This course explores American and British poets from three different time periods, each of whom reflects and responds to liturgy in his or her own verse. In addition to discussing these works with special attention paid to social context, metaphor, use of imagery, and rhyme and meter, students will

write original poetry – in collaboration and individually – and discuss it in a workshop setting designed to make them sharper, more disciplined, and more challenging writers.

Jennifer Wheelock's poems have appeared in many journals and anthologies, including *River Styx*, *New Millennium Writings*, *Garbanzo*, *North Atlantic Review*, *Atlanta Review*, *The Peralta Press*, *Comstock Review*, *The Emily Dickinson Award Anthology*, and the online journal *Blaze*. She placed third in the 2008 *River Styx* International Poetry Contest. Her poem "Feeding Francis Bacon" appears in the book *Thirteen Ways of Looking for a Poem: A Guide to Writing Poetry*, in the chapter on formal verse. She recently finished a collaborative book of poetry with two other writers. She lives in Los Angeles, CA and works at UCLA. Wheelock has her MFA and her PhD in creative writing with an emphasis on poetry. She has taught at Florida State University, Georgia State University, Kennesaw State University, and Georgia Tech.

SPI 790D Topics: Spirituality & Fiction Writing

Stacia Brown

Weekend Course: April 10-11, 2015

This course undertake fiction-reading and fiction-writing exercises using a writers-workshop format. Students will study the contributions of established fiction writers who grapple explicitly with religion or theology in their novels and stories. We will work collaboratively to strengthen our own original short stories and creative work. Examining our writing together will challenge us to retrieve the art and the discipline of storytelling for ministry and theological education.

Stacia Brown earned her M.Div. in 1998 from Candler School of Theology, where she was a Woodruff Fellow, and her Ph.D. in historical theology from Emory University in 2007. She was a W.M. Keck Foundation Fellow at the Huntington Library in Pasadena and a Fellow of the Hambidge Center in north Georgia. Her first novel, *Accidents of Providence*, was published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt in 2012 and was a finalist for the 2014 Townsend Prize in Fiction. She has taught as an adjunct professor at Candler. She currently works as a Senior Director of Development for Emory School of Medicine and is finishing her second novel, slated for publication in 2015.

SPI 790E Topics: Into the Desert: Contemplative Practice and Life in Community

Douglas Christie

Weekend Course: April 17-18, 2015

What does it mean to enter the desert? To dwell there, either by choice or necessity? To struggle with its emptiness and desolation? To discover there unexpected inner resources, the potential for life-altering transformation, renewed capacity for life in community? The desert is a central image in the Christian spiritual imagination. As a *locus* of encounter with the holy, the desert has figured importantly in the Western spiritual imagination--from the Hebrew peoples' encounter with Yahweh in the Sinai, to Jesus' sojourn in the Judean wilderness, to the sudden upwelling of early Christian monastic life in Egypt. As a *metaphor* for the deep unknowability of God, for the stillness, silence and emptiness in which a meeting with the divine becomes possible, the image of the desert has become one of *the* central images of the spiritual life in the Christian tradition. Nor are these only ancient concerns. The profound sense of emptiness and absence experienced by many in the contemporary moment has given new meaning to the image of the desert. By contrast, the relative absence of silence and space in much contemporary life has given us renewed appreciation for stillness and vast horizons of the desert. This course will examine the significance of the desert for spiritual practice, in both its ancient and

contemporary expressions. Students will be invited to examine the significance of the desert as it is expressed in Christian mystical texts, in art, in literature and poetry, and in natural history writing. The work of the course will be concentrated around the question of what it might mean to *retrieve* the image of the desert as a central part of contemporary Christian spiritual life.

Douglas E. Christie, Ph.D., is Professor of Theological Studies at Loyola Marymount University. He is author of *The Word in the Desert: Scripture and the Quest for Early Christian Monasticism* (Oxford) and *The Blue Sapphire of the Mind: Notes for a Contemplative Ecology* (Oxford). He serves as editor for the journal *Spiritus* and is co-director of the Casa de la Mateada Program in Córdoba, Argentina

SPI 790F Topics: Embodying the World's Religions

Angela Yarber

This course begins with the foundation that the major religions of the world value embodiment. Whether they are participating in Israeli folk dance, whirling dervishes, Tai Chi, liturgical dance, or bharatanatyam, persons from differing faith traditions can find themselves on common ground when they move their bodies. The course is a fusion of theory and praxis, enabling students to learn about the histories and theories surrounding embodiment through reading, lecture, discussion, and research, while also witnessing embodiment and dancing themselves. Students will concentrate on the dances of the five major world religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, and Christianity), though attention will also be given to ways of embodying other traditions. Utilizing Parker Palmer's threefold goals of pedagogy, students will engage in the course material by *knowing, being, and doing*.

Angela Yarber holds a Ph.D. in Art and Religion from the Graduate Theological Union. She is author of five books and numerous articles that deal with the intersections among the arts, embodiment, religion, and gender/sexuality. She has been a clergywoman, professional artist and dancer since 1999.

Theological Studies

THS 739 Neuroscience and Ethics (previously listed as Neuroethics)

Kevin Jung

This course considers the central philosophical and ethical issues at the intersection of neuroscience, ethics, and theology. The course explores neuroscientific accounts of human nature and morality as well as the ethical implications of neurotechnology.

THS 790A Topics: Theologies of Resistance

Earl Crow.

This course explores the thoughts and actions of noted Christians who resisted unjust social and political powers primarily through nonviolent civil disobedience. To understand the foundation of this theology the personal and historical influences on these Christians will be noted. The following people will be the focus of this study: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Thomas Merton, Henry David Thoreau, Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Phillip and Daniel Berrigan. The influential people in their lives will include a variety of philosophers, theologians, and social activists.

Earl Crow is a native of North Carolina. Educated at Duke University, the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, and the University of Manchester, England, his primary teaching and research interests focus

on the development of Christian thought and peace movements. A trustee of the writings of Fr. Daniel Berrigan, S.J. and a consultant for a nationally televised documentary on the Berrigan brothers to be released soon, he is professor emeritus of High Point University where he was chair of the Dept. of Religion and Philosophy and Dean of the Adult Education program.