

**SPD 601 Contemplative Prayer & Meditation Practices**  
3 hrs / 4 units  
M T 3pm- 5pm  
Fall Term

<b>Instructor Name</b>	Robert Brumet
<b>Office Hours</b>	9- 10am, 2- 3pm; M T Th Other times by appointment.
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<b>Required Texts</b>	Bible (RSV)  De Mello, A. (1984) Sadhana: A Way to God. NY: Doubleday  Godman, D. (Ed.). (1985) Be As You Are: The Teachings of Sri Ramana Maharashi. NY: Penguin.  Goldstein, J. & Kornfield, J. (1987) Seeking the Heart of Wisdom: The Path of Insight Meditation. Boston: Shambala.  Hall, T, (1988) Too Deep for Words: Rediscovering Lectio Divina. Mahwah NJ: Paulist.  Keating, T. (1992) Open Heart, Open Mind: The Contemplative Dimension of the Gospel. NY: Continuum.
<b>Other Required Reading</b>	Gangaji. (2006, July/August) Searching For Happiness. Unity Magazine pp. 42-43
<b>Recommended Reading</b>  (On reserve in the library.)	Kornfield, J. (1993) A Path With Heart: A Guide Through the Promises and Perils of Spiritual life. NY: Bantam.  Rees, M. (2006) Being Prayer: Good news of buddhist practice. Houston TX: Nutshell Publications.  Shear, J. (2006) The Experience of Meditation: Experts introduce the major traditions. St Paul MN: Paragon House.

**Course Description**

This course include the study and practice of a variety of contemplative prayer and meditation practices from both Eastern and Western spiritual traditions. Emphasis is placed on the student's personal experiences of each practice. A short contemplative retreat is a required part of this course.

**Learning Objectives**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Compare and contrast the various meditation practices studied in this course.
2. Describe the spiritual practices in this course and explain how each is a reflection of the spiritual tradition from which it originated.
3. Report on their personal prayer experience during the course with each of the practices.
4. Complete a meditation retreat of at least two full days and report their experience.

The above objectives partially fulfill the following program outcome for the Master of Divinity:

MD-3: Recognize and practice personal habits that provide for a healthy ministry.

The above objectives partially fulfill the following program outcome for the Certificate in Unity Ministry:

C-3: Recognize and practice personal habits that provide for a healthy ministry.

The above objectives partially fulfill the following program outcome for the Master of Arts in Religious Studies:

MA-3: Create and maintain a personal spiritual practice.

**Class Schedule**

Week	Date	Topic	Reading Assignment	Paper/Exam/Activity
1a	9/29	Overview  Spiritual Practice: Christian & Eastern		Discussion Meditation
1b	9/30	Video: Baraka (96 min)		View video & email response
2a	10/06	Lectio Divina	Hall, T, (1988) Too Deep for Words: Rediscovering Lectio Divina. (Recommended)	Praxis
2b	10/07	Lectio Divina	Hall, T, (1988) Too Deep for Words: Rediscovering Lectio Divina. (Recommended)	Praxis
3a	10/13	Centering Prayer	Keating, T. (1992) Open Heart, Open Mind. Ch 1- 3	Meditation

Week	Date	Topic	Reading Assignment	Paper/Exam/Activity
3b	10/14	Centering Prayer	Keating, T. (1992) Open Heart, Open Mind. Ch 4- 6	Meditation
4a	10/20	Centering Prayer	Keating, T. (1992) Open Heart, Open Mind. Ch 7- 9	Meditation <b>Retreat plan due.</b>
4b	10/21	Centering Prayer	Keating, T. (1992) Open Heart, Open Mind. Ch 10- 12	Meditation
5a	10/27	Sadhanna	De Mello, A. (1984) Sadhana: A Way to God. pp 7- 28	Meditation
5b	10/28	Sadhanna	De Mello, A. (1984) Sadhana: A Way to God. pp 28- 62	Meditation
6a	10/03	Lyceum: No Class		
6b	10/04	Lyceum: No Class		
7a	11/10	Advaita Vedanta	Godman, D. (Ed.). (1985) Be As You Are: The Teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi. Part 1- 2	Video (25 min) Meditation
7b	11/11	Vedanta	Godman, D. (Ed.). (1985) Be As You Are: The Teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi. Part 4- 5	Video (15 min) Meditation
8a	11/17	Buddhist Meditation Practices		Meditation
8b	11/18	Insight Meditation (vipassana)		Video (52 min)
9a	11/24	Insight Meditation	Goldstein, J. & Kornfield, J. (1987)	Meditation

Week	Date	Topic	Reading Assignment	Paper/Exam/Activity
			Seeking the Heart of Wisdom: The Path of Insight Meditation. Part 1.	
9b	11/25	Insight Meditation	Goldstein, J. & Kornfield, J. (1987) Seeking the Heart of Wisdom: The Path of Insight Meditation. Part 2.	Meditation
10a	12/01	Insight Meditation	Goldstein, J. & Kornfield, J. (1987) Seeking the Heart of Wisdom: The Path of Insight Meditation. Ch 10 - 12	Meditation <b>Term Paper Due</b>
10b	12/02	Insight Meditation	Goldstein, J. & Kornfield, J. (1987) Seeking the Heart of Wisdom: The Path of Insight Meditation. Ch 13 - 16	Meditation
11a	12/08	Zen Practice		Meditation
11b	12/09	Tibetan Meditation Practice		Meditation <b>Reflection Paper Due Dec 15.</b>

**Assignments for the Master of Divinity or Master of Arts in Religious Studies program:**

1. Practice each meditation at least 20 minutes a day, five times each week.
2. Engage in a retreat of no less than two full days (36 hrs).  
This can be part of a structured retreat with a designated leader or it can be a solitary self-directed retreat. The retreat must be experienced outside of your home in a place that is free from intrusion.
3. Write a one-page description of your retreat plan. **Due Oct 20.**

4. Keep a prayer journal. Include in the journal:
  - A reflection of your retreat experience.
  - A reflection of each classroom experience.
  - A weekly reflection of your prayer/ meditation practice.
  
5. Write a **reflection paper** based upon the entries in your prayer journal. Include reflections from your retreat experience, classroom experience, daily prayer time, daily life experiences. Tell if, and how, you and/or your life has changed as a result of these practices. Tell which practice you found most appealing and the practice with which you had the most difficulty. Write no less than 3000 words (approx 10 pgs). **Paper is due 8am Dec 15.**
  
6. Choose one of the following general categories:
  - Christian Contemplative Prayer
    - Lectio Divina
    - Centering prayer
    - Other (Discuss with instructor)
  - Buddhist Meditation Practices
    - Insight (Vipassana)
    - Zen Meditation
    - Tibetan Buddhist Meditation
  - Advaita Vedanta
  - Other (Discuss with instructor)

Write a **term paper** describing the chosen prayer/ meditation practice to a layperson. Include the following: a brief description of the philosophy of the spiritual tradition from which this practice arises; the theory and technique of the practice; a description of your personal experience with this practice; any other relevant information. Use at least three books for reference. Write no less than 5000 words (16-18 pgs). **Due Dec 1.**

**Grading**

Assignment	Possible Points	Meets Learning Objective
Reflection paper	75	2, 3, 4
Term Paper	100	1, 2
Attendance	40	1,3
Classroom Participation	35	1, 3

**Final Grade Determination:**

- 225 - 250 points = A
- 200 - 224 points = B
- 175 - 199 points = C

Below 175 points = F

**Assignments for the Certificate program:**

1. Practice each meditation at least 20 minutes a day, five times each week.
2. Engage in a retreat of no less than two full days (36 hrs).  
 This can be part of a structured retreat with a designated leader or it can be a solitary self-directed retreat. The retreat must be experienced outside of your home in a place that is free from intrusion.
3. Write a one-page description of your **retreat plan**. **Due Oct 20**.
4. Keep a prayer journal. Include in the journal:  
 A reflection of your retreat experience.  
 A reflection of each classroom experience.  
 A weekly reflection of your prayer/ meditation practice for the prior week.
5. Write a **reflection paper** based upon the entries in your prayer journal.  
 Include reflections from your retreat experience, classroom experience, daily prayer time, daily life experiences. Tell if, and how, you or your life has changed as a result of these practices. Tell which practice you found most appealing and which you had the most difficulty with. Write no less than 3000 words (approx 10 pgs). **Due 8am Dec 15**.

**Grading**

Assignment	Possible Points	Meets Learning Objective
Reflection Paper	100	2, 3, 4
Attendance	25	1, 3
Classroom Participation	25	1, 3

**Final Grade Determination**

- 135 – 150 points = A
- 120 – 134 points = B
- 105 – 119 points = C
- 90 – 104 points = D
- Below 90 points = F

**Standards for Term Papers:**

- Create a cover page which includes: Course name, instructor’s name, date due.
- Do not use a folder or binder.
- Double space.

- Cite all direct quotes or references.
- Include a bibliography.
- Use APA standards for references and text citations.
- Number all pages.
- Indicate word count at end of paper.

Evaluation of the written assignment is based upon the following factors:

- Compliance with assignment parameters.
- Depth of knowledge and insight.
- Comprehensiveness of response.
- Clarity in communicating ideas.
- Grammar, sentence structure, spelling. (Relaxed for ESL students.)
- Use of outside resource material. (When appropriate.)

#### **Late Assignment Policy**

Papers received after the due date may be assessed a penalty up to 5% per day or 25% per week.

#### **Expectations of Students**

Students are expected to attend every class. Students are expected to come to class having read the assigned material and being prepared to discuss it.

#### **Classroom Protocol**

Class participation grade is based primarily on the quality of participation. It is intended that all students participate equally in classroom discussions.

#### **Academic Honesty**

Unity Institute assumes that all students desire to pursue their academic and transformational work with honesty and scholarly integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, facilitating academic dishonesty and misrepresentation of self or other students are prohibited. For further information about academic honesty, students are directed to review the Unity Institute Catalog and Student Handbook.

#### **Special Concerns**

If students have any special concerns and/or challenges that may affect their performance in this course, they are encouraged to speak with the instructor immediately so that any accommodations, if necessary, may be made.

#### **Selected Bibliography**

Borysenko, J. (1997). *7 Paths to God: The Ways of the Mystic*. Carlsbad CA: Hay House.

Foster, R. (1992). *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*. San Francisco: Harper

Fowke, R. (2002). *Finding Your Prayer Personality*. Nashville: Abingdon

Goldstein, J. (1976) *The Experience of Insight: A Simple and Direct Guide to Buddhist Meditation*. Boston: Shambala.

Goldstein, J. (1993). *Insight Meditation: The Path to Freedom*. Boston: Shambala

Kabat-Zinn, J. ( 2005). *Coming To Ours Senses: Healing Ourselves and the World Through Mindfulness*. NY: Hyperion.

Kabat-Zinn, J. ( 1994). *Wherever You Go There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life*. NY: Hyperion.

Kramer, G. (2003). *Meditating Together Speaking from Silence: the Practice of Insight Dialogue*. Portland: Metta Foundation

Michael, C. & Norrissey, M. (1991). *Prayer & Temperament: Different Prayer Forms for Different Personality Types*. Charlottesville VA: The Open Door

Meninger, W. (1996). *The Loving Search for God: Contemplative Prayer and The Cloud of Unknowing*. NY: Continuum.

Nisargadatta, Maharaj (1988). *I Am That: Talks with Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj*. Durham NC: Acorn Press.

Pennington, B. (1982). *Centering Prayer: Renewing an Ancient Christian Prayer Form*. NY: Doubleday

Pennington, B. (1999). *Centered Living: The Way of Centering Prayer*. Liguori MO: Liguori Publications

Suzuki, Shunru. (1986). *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind: Informal Talks on Zen meditation and practice*. Tokyo: John Weatherhill.

Theresa of Avila, (1979). *The Interior Castle*. NY: Paulist

Thich Nhat Hanh. (1995). *Zen Keys: A Guide to Zen Practice*. NY: Doubleday

Thich Nhat Hanh. (1995) *Living Buddha, Living Christ*. NY: Putnam.

Thich Nhat Hanh. (1976) *The Miracle of Mindfulness: A Manuel on Meditation*. Boston: Beacon Press

Trungpa, Chogyam. (1984). *Shambala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior*. Boston: Shamabala Publications.

Walsh, J. (edit.) (1981). *The Cloud of Unknowing*. Ramsey NJ: Paulist.