

## SPFM 5211: Intercultural Spirituality

*Fall Intensive*

Course Instructor: Rev. Dr. Stephen Wong: [snwong@northpark.edu](mailto:snwong@northpark.edu)

Sept. 22-23, 2021, Wednesday-Thursday: 6:30-9:00pm Location: Mission Springs extension

Oct .9, 2021, Saturday: 9:00am-5:00pm. Location: Zoom

Nov 5, 2021, Friday: 4:00-6:00pm. Location: Zoom

1 credit

---

**Course Description:** This spiritual formation course is designed to help students better understand their own spiritual development in the context of their personal cultural context and worldview, thus equipping them to better serve a diversifying society. Spiritual formation and intercultural engagement will be viewed through the lens of stage developmental theory to give students a greater appreciation for the cultural context of spiritual practices that are different from their own and to give them a greater ability to grow spiritually from these interactions. The use of the Lord's Prayer in various Christian traditions will be explored as a case study.

### **Course Objectives:**

By the end of this course students will:

1. Be able to briefly describe the great traditions of Christian spirituality
2. Have a framework for evaluating underlying values of cultural expression in society at large and in expressions of Christian spirituality
3. Be able to describe stages of intercultural and spiritual development
4. Have an understanding of the Lord's Prayer in its original cultural context
5. Be able to evaluate corporate worship practices, e.g., the use of the Lord's Prayer, for cultural context and in light of traditions of Christian spirituality
6. Have language to name their own cultural biases in prayer and worship
7. Articulate personal goals for intercultural and spiritual growth

## Course readings:

Required readings for this course can be accessed in Canvas except for books that are to be purchased prior to the course: “Foreign to Familiar” by Sarah Lanier, “The 3D Gospel” by Jayson Georges, and “What Color is Your God?” by Breckinridge & Breckinridge. Lanier and Georges are to read in their entirety along with chapters 7-11 in Breckinridge & Breckinridge.

Please consult the Course Reading List for required readings and the schedule of due dates for the readings.

### **To successfully pass the class, students must complete all the following:**

***NOTE: All assignments are to be submitted through Canvas. All questions should be directed to the instructor.***

#### **1. Pre-course work**

- Course Readings: It is recommended that all of the readings be completed before the first class session on September 22. About half of the readings are to be completed by September 22 and the other half are to be completed by October 4.
- Use Assignments in Canvas to report on completing the required Course Readings.

#### **2. Attendance and participation in discussion**

- Because this is an intensive class, attendance at every session is required.
- Students are expected to come prepared having read the required Course Readings prior to the class sessions so that they can engage fully with material presented during class sessions.
- Students are expected to participate vigorously in small group discussion, both during in-person class sessions September 22-23 and when assigned to Zoom breakout rooms on October 9.

#### **3. Cultural and spiritual autobiography due October 9, 2021**

- This is a reflection paper (**10 pages double-spaced 12 point font, 1 inch margins, or 5 pages single-spaced**) on personal cultural and spiritual roots and practices. The goal of this paper is to help you place yourself in the cultural and spiritual matrix (6 streams and 9 categories/dimensions) introduced in the course.
- Questions to consider in this paper (feel free to include other reflections):
  - What terms would you use to name your own cultural identity?
  - Are you more comfortable in a hot-climate or cold-climate culture? Where would you fall on a continuum between hot-climate and cold-climate cultures?
  - Give some examples of practices that demonstrate your personal values.

- Discuss how these practices and the underlying values were transmitted to you by your family or the community you grew up in or another community that has had a formative influence on you.
- Describe ways in which you differ from your family or community. How did you develop these differences?
- Which Christian spiritual traditions are you most comfortable with?
- How is your spirituality influenced by your cultural upbringing and/or current cultural choices?
- What is the goal of your personal spirituality? What are the prayer practices of your personal spirituality? How do your local church's worship practices fit with your personal spirituality?

#### 4. Analysis of a different culture and spirituality due November 6, 2021

- Students will attend a *Christian* worship service of a religious and ethnic tradition different from their own ethnicity and current tradition.
  - This experience may be done following the class sessions September 22-23. Note that many of the categories that will help with analysis will be found in the October 9 class session readings and instruction.
  - It must be a worship service and not a Bible Study or prayer meeting.
- Each student will write an analysis of the worship service they attended: **10 pages double-spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margins (or 5 pages single-spaced)**. The goal of this paper is to observe cultural artifacts and then seek to understand the underlying beliefs and values that are being expressed while coming to an understanding of differences and the validity of a different way of approaching and knowing God.
- In your paper, include responses to these questions:
  - What Christian tradition are you most comfortable in and what terms would you use to describe your culture?
  - Describe the worship and/or prayer practices constituting the worship service that you attended.
  - What Christian tradition(s) does it express?
  - What cultures are represented by the usual attenders of this service?
  - What cultural values are expressed in the worship/prayer practices you observed? For example, do they emphasize the collective or the individual?
  - Which worship/prayer practices were you least comfortable with? Why? What might this suggest about your own cultural or spiritual upbringing, i.e., the values and practices that you were raised to think were "right" or were expressions of maturity?
  - How do you think your own church community would respond if it were suggested that they adopt some of the worship practices that you found uncomfortable? What stage of intercultural development would this express? What stage of spiritual development would this express?

- Reflect on what might be some next steps for you to grow interculturally and/or spiritually.

## 5. Two sessions of Spiritual Direction

- Spiritual Direction is an important part of each of our spiritual formation classes. It is a spiritual practice meant to help each student engage more deeply with the topic at hand as well as increase their awareness of the work of God more broadly.
- Each student will participate in two sessions of spiritual direction. Spiritual Direction is commonly a monthly meeting. Please keep this in mind when scheduling. These sessions must be completed by **November 5, 2021**.
- Students are responsible to contact their spiritual director and arrange the two sessions. The list of directors will be posted in Canvas.
- Report on completion by **November 5, 2021** by submitting the dates of each session on Canvas.

**Students with disabilities** who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact seminary academic services at 773-244-6217. Please do so as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. If needed, appointments can be relocated. For further information please review the following website: <http://www.northpark.edu/Current-Students/Student-Development/Disability-Resources/Resources-for-Students.aspx>

### Title IX

Students who believe they have been harassed, discriminated against, or involved in sexual violence should contact the Seminary Dean of Students and Community Life ((773) 244-6222) or Dean of Students (773-244-5565) or Director of Human Resources (773-244-5599) for information about campus resources and support services, including confidential counseling services.

As a member of the North Park faculty, we are concerned about the well-being and development of our students, and are available to discuss any concerns. Faculty are legally obligated to share information with the University's Title IX coordinator in certain situations help ensure that the student's safety and welfare is being addressed, consistent with the requirements of the law. These disclosures include but are not limited to reports of sexual assault, relational/domestic violence, and stalking.

Please refer to North Park's Safe Community site for contact information and further details. <http://www.northpark.edu/Campus-Life-and-Services/Safe-Community>

# SPFM 5211: Intercultural Spirituality

Fall Intensive

## Reading schedule

Reading all of the material prior to the start of class on Sept 22 is recommended so that you can focus on writing between Sept 23 and Oct 9. Otherwise, due dates for required reading are as follows:

**Readings due Sept 22:** Foster (chapter 1), Law (introduction, chapters 1-3), Lanier, Peck (chapter IX), Yee (chapter 4)

**Readings due Oct 9:** Bailey (chapter 7), Breckinridge (chapters 7-11), Georges

## Books to be purchased

Breckinridge, James and Lillian. What Color is Your God?: Multicultural Education in the Church. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995. Read chapters 7-11.

Georges, Jayson. The 3D Gospel: Ministry in Guilt, Shame and Fear Cultures. Timē Press, 2017.

Lanier, Sarah. Foreign to Familiar: A Guide to Understanding Hot- and Cold-climate Cultures. Hagerstown: McDougal Publishing, 2000.

## Book excerpts

Excerpts from Bailey, Foster, Law and Yee are available in Canvas as PDF files.

Bailey, Kenneth E. Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels. Downer's Grove: IVP Academic, 2008. Chapter 7.

Foster, Richard J. Streams of Living Water: Essential Practices from the Six Great Traditions of Christian Faith. New York: HarperCollins, 1998. Chapter 1.

Law, Eric. The Wolf Shall Dwell With the Lamb: A Spirituality for Leadership in a Multicultural Community. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1993. Introduction, chapters 1-3.

Peck, M. Scott. The Different Drum: Community Making and Peace. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987. Chapter IX.

Yee, Russell. Worship On The Way: Exploring Asian North American Christian experience. Valley Forge: Judson Press, 2012. Chapter 4.

# SPFM 5211: Intercultural Spirituality

Fall Intensive

## Reading schedule

Reading all of the material prior to the start of class on Sept 22 is recommended so that you can focus on writing between Sept 23 and Oct 9. Otherwise, due dates for required reading are as follows:

**Readings due Sept 22:** Foster (chapter 1), Law (introduction, chapters 1-3), Lanier, Peck (chapter IX), Yee (chapter 4)

**Readings due Oct 9:** Bailey (chapter 7), Breckinridge (chapters 7-11), Georges

## Books to be purchased

Breckinridge, James and Lillian. What Color is Your God?: Multicultural Education in the Church. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995. Read chapters 7-11.

Georges, Jayson. The 3D Gospel: Ministry in Guilt, Shame and Fear Cultures. Timē Press, 2017.

Lanier, Sarah. Foreign to Familiar: A Guide to Understanding Hot- and Cold-climate Cultures. Hagerstown: McDougal Publishing, 2000.

## Book excerpts

Excerpts from Bailey, Foster, Law and Yee are available in Canvas as PDF files.

Bailey, Kenneth E. Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels. Downer's Grove: IVP Academic, 2008. Chapter 7.

Foster, Richard J. Streams of Living Water: Essential Practices from the Six Great Traditions of Christian Faith. New York: HarperCollins, 1998. Chapter 1.

Law, Eric. The Wolf Shall Dwell With the Lamb: A Spirituality for Leadership in a Multicultural Community. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1993. Introduction, chapters 1-3.

Peck, M. Scott. The Different Drum: Community Making and Peace. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987. Chapter IX.

Yee, Russell. Worship On The Way: Exploring Asian North American Christian experience. Valley Forge: Judson Press, 2012. Chapter 4.