



AM 667 Times of Crisis in Interreligious Perspective
An Asynchronous Online Course
Spring Term 2022
Syllabus

Instructor:

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Office Hours: Dr Mosher teaches from her office in northeast Florida. She may be “visited” via Zoom or phone on Monday evenings 8:00 – 9:00 PM (Eastern) or Wednesday mornings 8:00 – 9:00 AM (Eastern) and other times by appointment. Occasionally, Dr Mosher holds “Open House”—an opportunity for informal voice-and-video group conversation—via Zoom.

Course Format: Asynchronous online.

Course Description:

The havoc wrought by COVID-19 has foregrounded the need for robust resources and strategies for interreligious understanding and collaboration in situations where loss is multireligious—or the response to it should be. At the same time, evidence of the insidiousness of systemic racism and White immunity has mounted, such that some have said we have been dealing with two pandemics at once! In times of great stress, to what spiritual resources do we and our neighbors of other lifeways turn? What are we to do when access to those resources is disrupted? How can any of us provide comfort, hope, and cautious wisdom with integrity when anxiety, grief, fear, or demands for physical distancing threaten to overwhelm or isolate? When great loss exacerbates bigotry and blaming, what actions can we take? What sorts of collaborative efforts have proven effective? Drawing upon case studies, scripture, devotional/theological writings, and interreligious scholarship, this asynchronous online course takes on these (and related) questions as it strives to develop or deepen awareness of effective

forms and methods of religion-specific and interreligious spiritual guidance in religiously plural contexts.

Course Learning Outcomes

The course promotes:

- 1) Developing or deepening familiarity with spiritual caregiving resources from a range of religious traditions.
- 2) Developing or deepening familiarity with exemplary interreligious leadership paradigms, skills, and methods of assessment.
- 3) Progress in command of the BCCI's *Common Qualifications and Competencies for Professional Chaplains*, particularly,

Integration of Theory and Practice Competencies 1 through 6
Professional Identity and Conduct Competencies 3, 4, 7, & 8
Professional Practice Skills Competencies 3, 4, 5, & 7

Course Plan

The course facilitates engagement with themes and materials such as:

- a. Interfaith/multireligious questions raised by emergent occasions (e.g. pandemics; natural disasters; mass shootings; terrorist attacks; catastrophic fires) and the ongoing “virus” of systemic racism
- b. Religiously informed attitudes toward healthcare, illness, death, mourning, and memorializing
- c. Exemplary interfaith leadership, collaborative-action, and spiritual caregiving paradigms, skills, attitudes, and assessment methods
- d. The literature of solace in times of great loss and stress: scripture, supplication, poetry, hymnody, theological reflection (featuring examples drawn from the Jewish, Christian, Islamic, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, and Unitarian Universalist traditions—and others)
- e. Narratives, news stories, and case studies about caregiving in mass casualty situations, natural catastrophes, and times of grave stress.
- f. Theologies of pastoral care in times of great crisis

The course is delivered in “modules,” each filled with a variety of items such as detailed instructions for reading assignments; downloadable files; audio-visual items (among them, lectures by your professor); case studies; or discussion-board prompts. An unnumbered “Preliminary Matters” module includes basic information for enrollees, who are expected to work systematically through twelve numbered instructional modules:

1. Overview: an introduction to course themes
2. Religiously informed attitudes toward end of life concerns
3. At a distance: social distancing and the social contract; solitude versus isolation
4. The “other pandemic”: systemic racism

5. Mourning; lament as a spiritual discipline; scriptural and other sources of solace
6. Disaster spiritual care preparedness and response
7. Self-care in times of crisis
8. Remembrance: memorializing in interreligious perspective
9. Making the most of “Blue Sky Time”: preparedness; interreligious leadership and collaboration
10. Cultivating hope; models and methods of reconciliation
11. Resilience and restoration
12. Now what? An opportunity to summarize, theologize, and create

The website also provides several “resource closets”: modules containing materials related to course topics, but which are not required reading/watching.

Required Texts:

Joshi, Khayti Y. *White Christian Privilege: The Illusion of Religious Equality in America*. NYU Press, 2021. ISBN 978-1479812004

Mosher, Lucinda Allen, et al., eds., *Deep Understanding for Divisive Times*. Interreligious Studies Press, 2020. ISBN 978-0-57878-508-0

Mosher, Lucinda. *Personhood, Illness, and Death in America’s Multifaith Neighborhoods: A Practical Guide*. Jessica Kingsley, 2018. ISBN 978-1-78592-784-3

Roberts, Stephen. B. and Willard Ashley. *Disaster Spiritual Care, Second Edition: Practical Clergy Responses to Community, Regional and National Tragedy*. SkyLight Paths, 2008. 168336029X

Other required items will be made available through the course website. (For information about the course website, see “About CANVAS” below.)

Assessment

Lecture-Watching: 25% of final grade

For each module, your instructor provides an introductory lecture—and usually, at least one more. These are delivered through VoiceThread—a tool that enables you to receive credit for taking in a lecture and commenting on it.

Summary Reflection and Discussion: 50% of final grade

Each module concludes with a discussion forum—a tool that provides an opportunity to demonstrate deep thinking about a module’s readings, lectures, and other activities—both in your own post and in your responses to classmate posts.

Other Activities: 5% of final grade

Into this category fall points-earning items that do not fit neatly into our first two categories.

Final Assignment: 10% of final grade

A paper or project addressing course themes.

Hartford Seminary Grading Scale

- A (95-100) Demonstrates excellent mastery of the subject matter, a superior ability to articulate this, and provides helpful connections to daily life or contemporary issues. Exceeds expectations of the course.
- A- (90-94) Demonstrates mastery of the subject matter, ability to articulate this well, and makes connections to daily life or contemporary issues. Exceeds expectations of the course.
- B+ (87-89) Demonstrates a very good understanding of the subject matter, able to articulate lessons learned in the assignment well. Meets course expectations.
- B (83-86) Demonstrates an understanding of the subject matter and the ability to articulate lessons learned. Meets expectations of the course.
- B- (80-82) Demonstrates an understanding of the material at hand, has some difficulty articulating this, and basic connection of the material to daily life or contemporary issues/life. Meets basic expectations for the course.
- C+ (77-79) Demonstrates a basic comprehension of the subject matter, weak articulation and connections. Does not meet expectations for the course.
- C (70-76) Demonstrates a minimal comprehension of the subject matter and has difficulty making connections. Does not meet expectations of the course.
- F (below 70) Unable to meet the basic requirements of the course.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Academic honesty and integrity are expected of all students. Plagiarism exists when: a) the work submitted was done, in whole or in part, by anyone other than the one submitting the work, b) parts of the work, whether direct quotations, ideas, or data, are taken from another source without acknowledgement, c) the whole work is copied from another source [especially a web based source], or d) significant portions of one's own previous work used in another course.

See "Plagiarism" at <http://www.hartsem.edu/current-students/policies/>.

Inclusive Language

Hartford Seminary is committed to a policy of inclusion in its academic life and mission. All members of the community are expected to communicate in language that reflects the equality of genders, openness to diverse cultural and theological perspectives, and sensitivity to one another's images of God.

Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act ensures equal access to qualified individuals with disabilities, and prevents discrimination on the basis of a disability. It is Hartford Seminary policy to provide reasonable accommodations on a case-by-case basis, which may mean working with outside social and governmental agencies to provide the necessary range of services for student success. Students with disabilities who wish to receive accommodations must contact the Student Services Coordinator. Students with disabilities are eligible for

disability support services when they are enrolled in courses and they have disclosed their disability and requested related accommodations during enrollment and/or before the start of each semester.

All students seeking accommodation must fill out HartSem's Request for Disability Accommodations form.

Official Handbooks

For all other questions you might have regarding policies or procedures, please check the student handbook <http://www.hartsem.edu/current-students/student-handbook/> and seminary policies at Academic policies are listed at <http://www.hartsem.edu/current-students/policies/>.

About CANVAS

This course's Canvas website is your primary roadmap for this course.

- Be sure to explore the site thoroughly before you begin.
- If you have difficulty navigating or operating any aspect of the site, do take advantage of the "Help" button (indicated by a question-mark). The "live chat" feature works very well; you can expect prompt and clear responses to your questions.
- You may also phone the Canvas Support Hotline: (877) 249-4494.
- If you have questions about course content (or you tried Canvas Help but are still mystified), please do email or text-message your professor right away. If the situation is better addressed voice-to-voice, request a specific time for a phone or Zoom conversation. (Making an appointment ensures that your professor is ready to talk with you seated at her desk rather than standing in the supermarket!)

Attendance

All students will need to log into the course site several times per week. Lack of engagement with the Canvas website for seven days in a row constitutes "absence" from the course and can lead to failure. Students who believe they have a legitimate reason for such disengagement must discuss this with the professor—preferably in advance. If you fall behind, skip ahead to the next module so that you can stay current with your classmates in discussions. When time permits, you may return to an earlier module to address what you omitted. Late submissions are permitted up to a point, but a penalty may be assessed.

Communication and Technology

Students will be expected to use their Hartford Seminary email for communication regarding the course. Students must also create a free account with VoiceThread and have access via the VoiceThread app, in Canvas, or in a separate browser window.

Within Canvas, the *Announcements* feature will be used to convey information "for the good of the order." These messages are automatically emailed to all enrollees.

Recommended Texts

- Ashley, Willard W. C. *Learning to Lead: Lessons in Leadership for People of Faith*. SkyLight Paths, 2013.
- Bueckert, Leah Dawn and Daniel S, Schipani, eds., *You Welcomed Me: Interfaith Spiritual Care in the Hospital*. Kitchener, Ontario: Pandora Press, 2010.
- Chander, Vineet and Lucinda Mosher, eds. *Hindu Approaches to Spiritual Care: Chaplaincy in Theory and Practice*. Jessica Kingsley, 2020.
- Edington, Mark D. W. Edington, ed. *We Shall Be Changed: Questions for the Post-Pandemic Church*. Church Publishing, 2020.
- Giles, Cheryl A. and Willa B. Miller, editors. *The Arts of Contemplative Care: Pioneering Voices in Buddhist Chaplaincy and Pastoral Work*. Wisdom Publications, 2012. ISBN: 0861716647.
- Joshi, Khayti Y. *White Christian Privilege: The Illusion of Religious Equality in America*. NYU Press, 2021. ISBN 978147982004
- Mabry, John R., ed. *Spiritual Guidance Across Religions: A Sourcebook for Spiritual Directors and Other Professionals Providing Counsel to People of Differing Faith Traditions*. SkyLight Paths, 2014. ISBN: 1594735468.
- Patel, Eboo. *Interfaith Leadership: A Primer*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2016. 9780807033623
- Peace, Jennifer Howe, Or N. Rose and Gregory Mobley, editors. *My Neighbor's Faith: Stories of Interreligious Encounter, Growth, and Transformation*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2012. ISBN: 1570759588.
- Roberts, Stephen B. ed. *Professional Spiritual & Pastoral Care: A Practical Clergy and Chaplain's Handbook*. Skylight Paths, 2012. ISBN: 1594733120.
- Schipani, Daniel S. editor. *Multifaith Views in Spiritual Care*. Pandora Press, 2013. ISBN: 9781926599304.
- Swain, Storm. *Trauma and Transformation at Ground Zero: A Pastoral Theology*. Fortress Press, 2011. ISBN: 0800698053.
- Whyte, David. *Consolations: The Solace, Nourishment and Underlying Meaning of Everyday Words*. Langley, WA: Many Rivers Press, 2014.
- Zayn al-'Abidin ('Ali ibn al-Husayn). *The Psalms of Islam: Al-Shifat al-Kamilat al-Sajjadiha*, tr, William C. Chittick. The Muhammadi Trust, 1988.