

COURSE TITLE: SPIRITUAL EXERCISES RGP3212/6212YS (single credit course)
PROFESSOR: Dr. Geoffrey B. (Monty) Williams, S.J.
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1. PREREQUISITES: None, though some personal experience of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola -- not necessary -- would be an asset.

2. COURSE DESCRIPTION: The course introduces the student to the dynamics of grace presented in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, situating the Exercises both in their historical context and within its interpretations in contemporary culture.

The goal of this course is 1. to prepare a student to engage in the role of directing the spiritual exercises 2. to allow the student to understand the dynamics of these exercises 3. to see the underlying anthropology and theology of these exercises.

3. STUDENTS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING THIS COURSE BE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE THE FOLLOWING LEARNING OUTCOMES.

(A) IN RESPECT OF GENERAL ACADEMIC SKILLS For both the BD and AD students: The ability to focus and to express oneself, orally and in written form, succinctly, clearly, and accurately. In addition the AD students will be able to show facility in interdisciplinary studies IN RESPECT OF THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTENT OF ONE OR MORE

THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINES. For the BD the student will be able to draw connections between spirituality and soteriology, grace, anthropology, and ecclesiology. AD students can be expected to do this at a higher and more sophisticated degree as they integrate their backgrounds of other theological and cultural perspectives into an interdisciplinary understanding of the Exercises

IN RESPECT OF PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION.

For BD students the ability to read one's life within the narrative of God's Divine Mercy as shown in the life of Christ using the perspective of the Exercises. For AD students a more nuanced reading of the BD competence plus being able to see, understand and articulate how the dynamics of grace operates in their personal lives and in their communities today and invites them to a more committed response

(D) IN RESPECT OF MINISTERIAL AND PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

For the BD student the basic skills to offer simple spiritual direction and discernment. For the AD student more sophisticated tools for spiritual direction and discernment in institutional settings, such as a parish, a spirituality centre, or seminary.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND SOURCES:

The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius by Louis J. Puhl, S.J. (online resource)

Or

The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius by George E. Ganss, S.J.

The film: As It Is In Heaven (can be borrowed from Video Stores, University Film Collection or from Regis College Library.)

OPTIONAL TEXTS

Understanding the Spiritual Exercises by Michael Ivens, S.J. (Gracewing, 1998)

The Gift of Spiritual Intimacy by Monty Williams (Novalis, 2009)

The Way of The Faithful by Monty Williams (Novalis, 2017)

For Basic Degree Students: 6800 word essays; class participation and presentations

These papers are 800 words in length and are written in a formal academic manner with a thesis statement, coherent paragraphs and footnoted references. Students will be assessed on their ability to write mature formal essays. These essays are designed to allow the student to follow a particular interest or question that arose from the class presentations. Five of the papers will be on the material of classes 4, 5, 6,7,10. The 6th paper allows the student to follow a topic of personal interest in the area of the Exercises. These papers are each worth 15% of the total mark. Class participation is worth 10%.

For those taking the course at the Advanced Degree level there will be 4, 4 page papers of 1000 words each, plus a longer paper of 16-20 pages on focused topic which incorporates references to other theological disciplines, and interdisciplinary perspectives along with active and involved class participation. The 4 short papers, based on classes 4,5,6,7, are worth 40% of the final mark; the major paper 40% of the final mark; and class participation is worth 20%

THE FOLLOWING TOPICS WILL BE CONSIDERED:

Class 1: Intro. To Ignatian spirituality in a historical and contemporary context

Class 2: A basic overview of the dynamics of grace presented in the Exercises

Class 3: Ignatian techniques and perspectives for being disposed to, and co-operating with grace: the Examen and Rules for Discernment

Class 4: First Week: Discovering one is loved

Class 5: Second Week: Learning to love as one has been loved

Class 6: Third Week: Living a love which goes beyond the conscriptions of sin

Class 7: Fourth Week: A creative love forming community

Class 08: The Principle and Foundation + The Contemplation Disposing One to Love

Class 09: Applications of Ignatian spirituality to contemporary issues and " interreligious dialogue:

Class 10: Ignatian techniques of Discernment

Class 11: As It Is In Heaven: a film which displays the characteristics of Ignatian spirituality

Class 12: The role and characteristics of the spiritual director

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Online resources for the Spiritual Exercises.

There are many online resources for the Ignition Exercises, and these can be easily found by using an internet search.

example:

The website of the Creighton University Online Ministries, has been highly recommended by many people. We also like the format and the functionality. The heart of this work is an innovative 34-week retreat, an adaptation of the format that Ignatius counselled. The creators call it *A Retreat for Everyday Life*. There is an interactive function on the site. You can make your retreat with or without a director. You also have the option of joining a group that is doing a retreat at the same time, and can share your experiences as a kind of peer direction. Of all the online presentations, Creighton University had by far the most real-time human support.