The following syllabus is the teaching and learning guide for the last time this course was taught. It will give you a good idea of the descriptions of the course, how it was taught, the reading, the papers and other assignments, the intended outcomes, and the workload. By examining this syllabus and others, you will be able to form an impression of what graduate theological education at Phillips Theological Seminary requires of students.

Due to periodic curriculum revisions, course names and/or numbers may be different on this syllabus than what the name and/or number of the current offered course may be.

This syllabus is provided for your information only. The faculty reserves the right to revise the curriculum, and each professor reserves the right to decide how best to meet the learning goals of the curriculum. Therefore, the following syllabus is an historical artifact rather than a promise of how the course will be taught in the future, or that the course will be taught again.

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Spirituality: The Sacrament of the Moment
CD 610.14 Fall 2011
Pat Hoerth, Instructor

Office Hours: By appointment
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Format: This course meets in two seven-hour sessions: September 17 (from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) at the PTS Tabbernee Conference Center, and from October 29 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Turtle Rock Farm, near Billings, OK. In addition, there are weekly readings, weekly Blackboard postings and weekly reflection assignments.

You will be given driving directions and encouraged to carpool, if possible, to Turtle Rock Farm, which is about 1 1/2 hours from PTS. To find out more about the work of Turtle Rock Farm: www.turtlerockfarmretreat.com and www.turtlerockfarm.wordpress.com

Purpose of the Course:
This class is an experience of reflection on spirituality and ministry, with opportunities to focus on how the spiritual life inspires, supports and affects the work of ministry in the church and community and to consider how to conceive of practical work specifically, as spiritual work, through the lens of living in the sacrament of the moment.

Objectives of the Course:
To experience personal support in spiritual growth.
To build community among members of the class
To become aware of and understand the spiritual practice of living in the moment as a perspective for the spiritual life, as an individual and in community

Required Texts
The Naked Now. Learning to See as the Mystics See by Richard Rohr

On Reserve in PTS Library
You are Here by Thich Nhat Hanh (Assignments are chapters one and five)

EReserves on Blackboard (under Content tab)
The Practice of the Presence of God, by Brother Lawrence
The Sacrament of the Present Moment, by Jean-Pierre de Caussade
Living Presence by Kabir Edmund Helminski

Other resources:
Leap Before You Look; 72 Shortcuts for Getting out of your Mind and Into the Moment by Arjuna Ardagh.
Course Requirements:
Class attendance is crucial; there is no way to make it up. Only one hour of absence will be allowed for a grade of A in the class. PTS attendance policy reads: “Class attendance and participation are important. Any student who misses 20 percent or more of the class contact hours for a course, for any reason, cannot pass or successfully audit that course. The intention of the policy is not to be punitive, but to recognize that students should retake courses for credit if they miss a significant number of the class contact hours.” You cannot pass this class with 3 or more hours of absence.

Participation in class discussions and Blackboard postings is vital, because every class member is teacher and learner.
Investment in the subject is critical. Each person in the class is expected to take the subject of living in the moment seriously and choose to be challenged in her/his prayer life and life style.

All assignments shall be completed and turned in by the dates due.
Assignments will only be accepted after the due date with permission from the instructor.
All written work must be typed and double-spaced. All students are expected to have access to a computer with email and internet capabilities.

Grades
Final grades are based on class participation, including Blackboard postings as well as on your attitude toward the class process and assignments. You will not be graded on your spirituality.
To receive an A: No more than one hour of absence, regardless of reason.
Complete all reading, writing and posting assignments
Demonstrate a willingness to invest in the subject of living in the sacrament of the moment
A grade less than A will be determined by the instructor’s judgment if the expectations listed above are not fulfilled.

Habitual tardiness on assignments, lack of participation, or an uncooperative attitude can lower your grade. If you need to turn in an assignment late and/or know you will be late to class or need to leave early, please notify me ahead of time.

Personal Reflection Papers
+ are designed to elicit personal responses and theological reflections
+ are not research papers or assessments of the authors’ work. Search yourself and discover what inside you is responding to the author’s writing.
+ are subjective – about your thoughts and feelings in your own words, in reflection on how this assignment impacts your relationship with and/or perceptions of God, humanity, creation and your concept of ministry. The papers
tell me who you are and where you are in your spiritual journey, as if we are in conversation.
+ go into depth; reflect the soul level
+ less intellectual, more spiritual, emotional
+ have no right or wrong things to say but there is a right way to say what you say: your personal thoughts and feelings and ownership of those.

*When preparing to write a reflection paper, consider:*  
+ What feelings did you have while reading or participating in the assignment?  
+ What was the thing the author said or that happened in your reflection that most grabbed you?  
+ Where did your mind take you in relationship to something in the assignment?  
+ What in the assignment brought you to a different way of thinking or feeling about a particular issue?

If you want to write a poem, draw something, create a sculpture, plan a discipline, take a photograph or in some way respond in a different kind of creative process rather than writing a reflection, please feel free to do so. Include an interpretation of the created piece. You must be able to email the work (in the case of a three-dimensional piece, email a photo of it and bring the original piece to the next class meeting.)

If I perceive a particular paper to be other than a “personal reflection” paper, I may ask you to work on the assignment again in a timely manner. Working again on a paper will not result in a penalty for your grade, but not resubmitting the paper will count as not having done the assignment in the first place.

Late reflection papers or creations will only be accepted with prior approval. Late assignments, even with permission, may affect your grade.

*Inclusive Language*  
Please see the student handbook for the seminary’s inclusive language policy. Please do not use any gender for humans or God exclusively. All people need to hear that they are created in the image of God.

**Assignments**

*Email or call the first week of class if you want to set up a time to talk about the expectations for this class. If you have any questions, be sure to let me know.*

**Weekly assignments:**  
1. A weekly reading  
2. A weekly spiritual practice from the assignment for that week.  
3. A reflection on *both* the reading *and* the practice. Options for the form your reflection and response takes each week, (except the first and last weeks:)*
a 1 ½ to 2 page personal and theological reflection paper OR
a creative reflection, with a short explanation of your creation OR
a combination of the two. Include a short description of your practice
at the beginning of your reflection.

Email your written reflection or creative work to instructor by 6 p.m.
each Saturday at pathoerth@gmail.com If you have created a three-
dimensional piece, email a photo of it, along with your explanation, and
bring the original to the next class gathering.

PLEASE NOTE: Attach the paper as a Google document or cut and paste
the paper into the email. I cannot open docx attachments.

4. Two short weekly postings on Blackboard:
The instructor will start a thread by late in the week that asks a question
related to the reading and/or practice. Respond, in a sentence or two, to the
question. Then respond to someone else’s initial posting. Those are the two
required weekly postings; feel free to continue the dialogue as much as you like.

A week for this class is Sunday to Saturday.

Reading assignments are in the text, The Naked Now; Learning to See as the
Mystics See, by Richard Rohr; You are Here (chapters one and five) by Thich
Nhat Hanh on reserve in the PTS library and chapter selections found on the
class page on Blackboard, under “Content.”

Please plan to practice the spiritual exercise for three to five days each
week, so that you can reflect on it in a paper due each Saturday evening.
Also, plan to have read the reading assignment so that you can post on
Blackboard by the end of the week and also reflect on it in the reflection
paper.

Saturday, August 27
Introductions – Go to Blackboard and post a message introducing yourself to the
others in the class. Tell us:
your name
your interest in this class
what you think it would mean for you to live in the moment
reflect on how you imagine living in the moment to be a spiritual discipline.

Week ending Saturday, September 3
1. This week’s reading is Brother Lawrence’s The Practice of the Presence
   of God, Letters 2-5, 8-9 (On Blackboard)
2. Spiritual Exercise for the week (try to practice 3-5 days): “Stop.”
   In the midst of your day, especially when there seem to be many things to
do, stop.
   Stop moving, stop talking, stop doing what you are doing—and feel.
   Hold your body in the same position.
   Feel this moment just as it is.
   Hear the sounds.
Notice the sensations in the body. 
Notice the speed and texture of your thoughts. 
Remain like this for 60 seconds. 
Be mindful: The world around you continues, even without your involvement. 
Who are you now, outside of the game? 
Now continue with your day. 
(Repeat several times during the day.)

3. Post your response to this week’s question about the reading and/or practice on Blackboard and respond to one of your classmates’ responses. All postings are due by 6 p.m. Sept. 3.

4. Write a reflection paper or make another creative response to the reading and the experience of the practice. (See section in syllabus on Personal Reflection Papers: When preparing to write a reflection paper. Email to instructor by 6 p.m. Sept. 3.

Week ending Saturday, September 10
1. Read Chapter One in the Thich Nhat Hanh text: “Happiness and Peace are Possible” (On Reserve in library)

2. Spiritual Practice
   Set aside 10 minutes at the same time three to five days this week. (ie. First thing in the morning, mid-day, end of the day.) (You could also practice this twice a day, 10 minutes each time.)
   Find a place where you will not be interrupted. If necessary, let others know you need to not be interrupted for ten minutes. Turn off all phones.
   Simply be aware of your in-breath as you breathe in and your out-breath as you breathe out.
   As you breathe in, say to yourself: “Breathing in, I know that I am breathing in.” As you breathe out, say to yourself: “Breathing out, I know that I am breathing out.” (See page two of TNH text.)
   When a thought enters or you become distracted, simply return your attention to your in-breath and out-breath and say the words to yourself.

3. Post your response to this week’s question about the reading and/or practice on Blackboard and respond to one of your classmates’ responses. Postings are due by 6 p.m. Sept. 10.

4. Write a reflection paper or make another creative response to the reading and the experience of the practice. (See section in syllabus on Personal Reflection Papers: When preparing to write a reflection paper. Email to instructor by 6 p.m. Sept. 10.

Week ending September 17 (Class meeting)
1. Read Chapter One “The Gift is Already Given” (pages 15-24) in the Rohr text.

2. Spiritual Exercise: “Slow Down”
   In the midst of any activity during the day—raising a cup of coffee or tea to your lips, reaching out to answer the
phone—continue doing exactly as you have been doing, but slow down your movements. Move at a quarter of the usual speed, or even less. Become aware of the minute details involved: the movements of individual muscles, the thoughts and feelings that accompany each action. Practice in this way for several minutes, then continue with your day. Repeat a few times each day.

3. Post your response to this week’s question about the reading and/or practice on Blackboard and respond to one of your classmates’ responses. Postings are due by 6 p.m. **Friday, Sept. 16**

4. Write a reflection paper or make another creative response to the reading and the experience of the practice. *(See section in syllabus on Personal Reflection Papers)* Bring it to class on **Saturday, September 17**.

5. Class meeting – Bring a lunch. We will share lunch as part of our class.

**Week ending September 24**

1. Read Chapter 10 “What About Jesus?” (pages 67-83) in the Rohr text.

2. Spiritual Exercise: “Choose Depth”
   As you go about your day, notice the things you want. Ice cream. Coffee. A new electronic gadget. New clothes. Notice the things with which you become preoccupied. *Do they like me? How do I look? Are we there yet? Why did he say that?* Stop to ask yourself: In this moment now, am I pursuing fleeting pleasure, or am I seeking greater depth? When you ask yourself this question, discover how you could choose depth over pleasure. Perhaps you have the ice cream or coffee or perhaps you choose again. Perhaps you continue the gossip you’ve been involved in or perhaps you ask a deeper question. For a few days this week, whenever you remember, choose depth over fleeting pleasure.

3. Post your response to this week’s question about the reading and/or practice on Blackboard and respond to one of your classmates’ responses. Postings are due by 6 p.m. September 24.

4. Write a reflection paper or make another creative response to the reading and the experience of the practice. *(See section in syllabus on Personal Reflection Papers)* Postings are due by 6 p.m. Sept. 24.

**Week Ending October 1**

1. Read in deCaussade’s “The Sacrament of the Present Moment” chapters one and two: “How God Speaks to Us...” and “How to Arrive at the State of Self-Surrender...” *(On Blackboard)*

3. Post your response to this week’s question about the reading and/or practice on Blackboard and respond to one of your classmates’ responses. Postings are due by 6 p.m. October 1.

4. Write a reflection paper or make another creative response to the reading and the experience of the practice. (See section in syllabus on Personal Reflection Papers) Postings are due by 6 p.m. October 1.

Week Ending October 8

1. Read chapter 13, “Things Too Good to be True,” in Rohr text and chapter 5, “Perfect Faith,” in the de Caussade text. (On Blackboard)

2. Spiritual Exercise: Continue practicing the “The Welling Up Exercise” in Appendix 5 in the Rohr text.

3. Post your response to this week’s question about the reading and/or practice on Blackboard and respond to one of your classmates’ responses. Postings are due by 6 p.m. October 8.

4. Write a reflection paper or make another creative response to the reading and the experience of the practice. (See section in syllabus on Personal Reflection Papers) Postings are due by 6 p.m. October 8.

Concentrated Course Week – October 10-15

October 17-22

During Concentrated Course weeks, continue with the spiritual exercises: one you found especially helpful or one you want to spend more time with; for instance, being mindful of your breath 10 minutes a day or several times a day. You are not required to post on Blackboard or write a reflection paper.

Week Ending October 29

1. Read Chapters 17-18 in Rohr Text and Chapter 5 in Thich Nhat Hanh’s “Cultivating True Love.”

2. Spiritual Exercise: This week, once a day, practice the spiritual exercise in Thich Nhat Hanh’s “Cultivating True Love” chapter (pages 92-95) that cultivates True Love:
   - Be mindful of your in-breath and out-breath for two or three minutes.
   - (“Breathing in, I know that I am breathing in.” “Breathing out, I know that I am breathing out.”)
   - Then go to the person you love with a smile and say: “Dear one, I am here for you.”
   - Another time during the day, become aware of your breathing and then say to your loved one: “Dear one, I know that you are here, alive, and that makes me very happy.”
   - This week, if the person you love is suffering, become present, through the awareness of your breathing, and then say to your loved one: “Dear one, I know that you are suffering. That’s why I’m here for you.”
   - This week, when your loved one does something that causes you to suffer, become mindful of your breath for a few moments and then go to the person and say: “Dear one, I am suffering, I need your help.” Or, “Dear one, I
am suffering, I need your help. I need you to explain to me why you did this thing to me.” Or, “Dear one, I am suffering, I want you to help me. Explain why you said that to me.”

3. Post your response to this week’s question about the reading and/or practice on Blackboard and respond to one of your classmates’ responses. Postings are due by 6 p.m. October 29.

4. Write a reflection paper or make another creative response to the reading and the experience of the practice. (See section in syllabus on Personal Reflection Papers) Postings are due by 6 p.m. October 29.

Week Ending November 5
1. Read Helminski, Living Presence “Soul Work” and “Listening Within” (On Blackboard)

2. Spiritual Exercise
   Take some time to reflect: Who have you defined yourself to be?
   Write your answers on paper. (Not to be turned in.)
   For instance, I’m a teacher. I’m intelligent. I’m middle class. I’m uneducated. I’m a liberal. I’m an extrovert.
   You may want to spend a couple periods over a couple of days to complete this list.
   Now, spend a couple of periods over a couple days going down the list and for each statement ask yourself: “If I stopped defining myself in this way, would I still exist?”
   For instance, “If I were no longer a teacher, would I still exist?”
   “If I no longer thought of myself as a father, would I still be here?”
   “If I no longer defined myself as an extrovert, would I still exist?”
   Take your time to work through all the labels you have given yourself. And find out if any of them can really define or contain you. When all the labels have been cast aside, discover what remains.

3. Post your response to this week’s question about the reading and/or practice on Blackboard and respond to one of your classmates’ responses. Postings are due by 6 p.m. November 5.

4. Write a reflection paper or make another creative response to the reading and the experience of the practice. (See section in syllabus on Personal Reflection Papers) Postings are due by 6 p.m. Nov. 5.

Week Ending November 12
1. Read Helminski’s Living Presence “Gathering the Fragmented Self” and “Emancipation from Fear” (on Blackboard)

2. Spiritual Exercise: Centering Prayer
   Practice once or twice a day.
   Begin by sitting, relaxed, with eyes closed.
   Set aside a specific amount of time, preferably 20 minutes.
   Allow your heart to open toward the Divine/Sacred/Holy.
State or pray your intention. State your intention to be totally open to God. Or pray your intention: “Into your hands I commend my spirit” or perhaps, “O God, I am here; O God, You are here.” Choose a sacred word to use to call you back to your intention when thoughts occur. It might be “Abba,” “Peace,” “Return,” “Be still.” When a thought occurs, use the word to call you back to your openness of heart to God.

Every thought is an opportunity to turn your attention back to the presence of God.

At some point during a session, you may not need the word any more; you may not be attracted to thinking any more.

After 20 minutes, simply go on with your day.

3. Post your response to this week’s question about the reading and/or practice on Blackboard and respond to one of your classmates’ responses. Postings are due by 6 p.m. November 12.

4. Write a reflection paper or make another creative response to the reading and the experience of the practice. (See section in syllabus on Personal Reflection Papers) Postings are due by 6 p.m. Nov. 12.

Week Ending November 19

1. Read in Helminski’s Living Presence “Die Before you Die” and “What We Love We Become” (On Blackboard)

2. Spiritual Exercise: Continue with centering prayer

3. Post your response to this week’s question about the reading and/or practice on Blackboard and respond to one of your classmates’ responses. Postings are due by 6 p.m. November 19.

4. Write a reflection paper or make another creative response to the reading and the experience of the practice. (See section in syllabus on Personal Reflection Papers) Postings are due by 6 p.m. Nov. 19.

Thanksgiving Recess – November 21-26

Continue with centering prayer. You do not need to post or write a reflection paper.

Week Ending December 3

1. Read from Rohr text: pages 146-149 in Chapter 20 and Chapter 22.

2. Spiritual Exercise: Welcoming Prayer

   This is a three-part prayer to be used during the week when there is a moment of stress, anxiety, depression, upset.

   Focus and Sink In

   Gently become aware of your body and your interior state. Don’t try to change it; just be present to it.

   Welcome

   Welcome the sensations, the feelings. “Just for now, I welcome everything that comes to me in this moment because I know it is for my healing. I welcome all thoughts, feelings, emotions, people, situations and conditions.”
Let Go
Then, just for now, for this moment, let go:
“I let go of my desire for security.”
“I let go of my desire for approval.”
“I let go of my desire for control.”
“I let go of my desire to change any situation, condition, person or myself.”
“I open to the love and presence of God and the healing action and grace within.”

3. Post your response to this week’s question about the reading and/or practice on Blackboard and respond to one of your classmates’ responses. Postings are due by 6 p.m. December 3.

4. Write a reflection paper or make another creative response to the reading and the experience of the practice. (See section in syllabus on Personal Reflection Papers) Postings are due by 6 p.m. December 3.

Week Ending December 10
1. Final posting: Post a paragraph or two on Blackboard regarding how your new awareness of living in the sacrament of the moment has made or will make changes in your lifestyle, and a paragraph or two regarding how you now understand living in the moment to be a spiritual discipline.

Final Reflection Paper: Write a paper reflecting on your personal experience as a result of the readings and spiritual practices this semester. What had the most impact? How were you affected? What will you carry forward into your life? What will be the challenges of living in the moment and what do you expect to put in place to meet those challenges? Due at 6 p.m. December 10.

Some weekly spiritual exercises are taken from the book *Leap Before You Look; 72 Shortcuts for getting out of your mind and Into the Moment*, by Arjuna Ardagh. The Centering Prayer and Welcoming Prayer are taken from Cynthia Bourgeault's book, *Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening*. 