

Seattle Pacific University
UFDN 1000: Christian Formation–Honors

Autumn 2009, MWF @ 9:30–10:50 am Bertona 6
Instructor: Dr. Richard B. Steele, Professor of Moral and Historical Theology
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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 3:00–5:00 pm & Fridays, 11:00 am–2:00 pm
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University Mission Statement: As a community of learners, SPU seeks to educate and prepare students for service and leadership. We are committed to evangelical Christian faith and values, and to excellence in teaching and scholarship for the intellectual, personal and spiritual growth of students.

School of Theology Mission Statement: The School of Theology at SPU seeks to educate and prepare all our students to engage the culture as thoughtful people. We seek to foster their intellectual, personal, and spiritual growth, and help them master those critical skills and multi-cultural sensitivities needed to understand Christian faith and translate it into practices that change the world.

School of Theology Goals: Within the broad context of these Mission Statements, SOT has established fourteen goals for its various programs. Seven of these are relevant to UFDN 1000. These seven are italicized below. Goal 14, though relevant, is tacit: I will neither teach to it nor assess for it.

1. *Students will gain an informed and reflective faith.*
2. *Students will gain confidence in the Christian faith, “accounting for the hope that is within.” Students will articulate their faith in a winsome and engaging manner, in order to share it with others.*
3. Students will engage others of different beliefs in civil discourse and with a catholic spirit.
4. Students will be able to interpret Scripture deftly and thoughtfully.
5. *Students will shape their lives around Christian character and values.*
6. *Students will understand how the divine revelation of Scripture and the canonical tradition is informed by reason and the experience of the Holy Spirit.*
7. Students will be prepared to engage global and intercultural settings.
8. Students will be prepared to discern, own, and be equipped for their vocation.
9. Students will be able to nurture others in the Christian faith.
10. Students will recognize their membership in the body of Christ, entering into the moral and theological discourse of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.
11. Students will learn and critique different worldviews operative in the world from the perspective of God’s truth.
12. *Students will cultivate personal spiritual disciplines in their lives.*
13. *Students will identify and appreciate historic and contemporary diversity in the global Christian tradition.*
14. *Students will be deeply rooted in the worship and ministry of a local congregation.*

General Description: The SPU Common Curriculum includes a three-course University Foundations sequence: (1) UFDN 1000 Christian Formation, (2) UFDN 2000/3001 Christian Scripture, (3)

UFDN 3100 Christian Theology. SOT works hard to assure that there is much commonality in the different sections of each course, and that the three courses are carefully integrated. Hence, much of what you will do in this course is similar to what students in other sections of UFDN 1000 do, and will prepare you for the two other courses in the UFDN sequence. However, this section is designed for University Scholars: it is also integrated with material that you have studied or will study in your USCH courses and is generally more academically rigorous than other sections of UFDN 1000.

According to the *2009-10 Undergraduate Time Schedule*, this course “introduces the processes and practices of Christian formation, as reflected throughout the history of the Christian church. Christian life is formed by distinctive beliefs, practices, attitudes, and virtues. Every student, regardless of religious background, will engage texts, written and non-written, ancient and modern, that foster these characteristics of the Christian life.” A fuller description of the course is posted on the SOT website (<http://www.spu.edu/depts/theology/undergrad/ufdn-1000.asp>). But note that although our section of the course generally follows the tripartite structure described there, we will study the topics in a different sequence, and our reading list and writing assignments are quite dissimilar.

The premise of the course is that Christian faith—which arises when a person encounters and enters freely into covenant partnership with the Triune God—has three distinct aspects or modalities. First, it is an *experience of the divine presence*. This experience precipitates a wide but very distinctive array of “religious affections,” such as trust, joy, peace, holy sorrow, gratitude and love. Second, Christian faith is *assent to the divine self-revelation* in the history of Israel, the life of the church, and most especially the person and work of Jesus of Nazareth. God’s self-revelation can be articulated in a network or “system” of doctrines, which are summarized in the classic creeds and confessions of the church. Finally, Christian faith involves *obedience to the divine will*. Obedience takes several forms: spiritual discipline (the faithful performance of the means of grace, such as worship, prayer, Scripture study and fasting), moral discipline (obedience to the commandments of God and the ethical precepts of the Christian tradition, and the careful regulation of our personal habits and bodily needs) and vocational discipline (the performance of worthwhile work, service to our needy neighbors, etc.).

The course is divided into three major units, corresponding to these three aspects of Christian faith. During each unit, we will study crucial biblical texts and both classical and contemporary Christian writings that elucidate that aspect of faith. For each unit there will be an online reading test and a 4–6 page paper. Taken as a whole, the assigned readings for the course will expose you to the wide variety of literary genres that Christians have used over the centuries in which to convey their faith: a gospel, a prayer book, a doctrinal exposition, a devotional classic, a spiritual autobiography, an historical novel, etc. And the writing assignments—a spiritual autobiography, a credo or “theological profile,” and a reflection paper on your experience of practicing one of the classical spiritual disciplines—will let you try your own hand at several of these genres.

Instructor’s General Approach: My approach to Christian theology is orthodox, evangelical, ecumenical, and critical. It is *orthodox* because it affirms the main doctrines of the Christian tradition, as embedded in the Bible and codified in the classical creeds of the Christian Church. Yet it seeks to understand those doctrines in light of contemporary thought, science and culture. It is *evangelical* because it affirms that God has acted decisively in human history to save us through the life, passion,

death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, and invites all human beings to appropriate that salvation by sincere and publicly professed faith in him, steadfast obedience to his way of life, and active participation in his Body, the Christian Church. Yet it leaves open the possibility that God may save some persons for Christ's sake through the secret workings of the Holy Spirit even if they lack explicit belief in Jesus as Lord. It is *ecumenical* because it affirms that, within the broadly orthodox and evangelical parameters just mentioned, there are many legitimate institutional embodiments of authentic Christianity, including Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Anglicanism and most Mainline Protestant and Evangelical denominations. Yet it also reflects the distinctive emphases of the Wesleyan-Methodist tradition in which I was raised, such as its stress on the importance of personal piety and disciplined living. Finally, it is *critical* because it assumes that every attempt to formulate Christian truth is time-bound and culture-bound, reflecting the needs, interests, and concerns of God's people in a particular historical, social, and geopolitical context—and hence cannot be the final and definitive formulation. Theology is ceaselessly engaged in both sympathetic critique of past formulations of the faith and in constructive reformulation of the faith in light of the growth of human knowledge and changes in the human condition.

You need not accept my approach to Christian theology—or even be a Christian—to excel in this course, but you must be willing to endure what may seem to be a troubling paradox. For although we seek to understand Christian *Truth*, assuming it to be divinely revealed and logically self-consistent, we do so recognizing the degree to which the sinfulness and limitations of every person and every church body skew our apprehension of the Truth and render every formulation of it tentative and provisional. You must therefore reckon with the relativity of theological science and must expect neither confirmation of your existing religious opinions nor “final answers” from the course or the instructors. You must be willing to look at the gospel from new perspectives with charity and intellectual openness, as well as critical acumen, and to restrain any “apologetic” impulse you may feel to refute those with whom you disagree or to convert those in the class who may not believe as you do.

Teaching Assistant: Ms. Heather Juul, SPU '09 and now studying for her MA in Christian Studies in the SOT Graduate Program, will be the TA for this course. Her email address is juulh@spu.edu. Her telephone number is 1-425-239-9853. Her responsibilities will include:

- Being a role model: showing interest in course content and the process of learning (i.e., attending class, organizing occasional out-of-class events, participating during in-class activities, offering peer input on the importance of course content, etc.
- Being a resource for students regarding learning strategies and academic tasks (i.e., coordinating exam study sessions, peer-editing sessions for papers, tutoring on course content.
- Building relationships with students (i.e., initiating conversations with students, staying in contact with students via email, talking to students about their broader experiences at SPU.
- Providing referrals to campus resources (i.e., discussing student issues regularly with Dr. Steele (anonymity guaranteed!), offering information on resources for academic and personal issues as requested, offering students information on course-related campus events, etc.
- Assisting Dr. Steele with routine class management and occasionally leading classroom activities.

Textbooks: Required for this course are the following works:

- *Book of Common Prayer*, economy edition. Oxford University Press, 2000. 0195287142. Cloth: 1008 pp. \$19.99.
- Endo, Shusaku . *Silence*. Trans. William Johnston. Taplinger Publishing Company, 1980. 0800871863. Paperback: 220 pp. \$11.95.
- Kierkegaard, Søren. *Purity of Heart is to Will One Thing*. Trans. Douglas V. Steere. Harper Perennial, 1956. 0061300047. Paperback: 224 pp. \$15.00
- Lamott, Anne. *Traveling Mercies: Some Thoughts on Faith*. Anchor, 2000. 0385496095. Paperback: 288 pp. \$13.95.
- Thomas Aquinas. *Selected Writings*. Edited by Ralph McInerny. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1999. 9780140436327. Paperback: 841 pp. \$16.00.

Additionally, I recommend the following work as a resource for your praxis reflection paper (see below), but because we will not study it together in class, you are not required to purchase it:

- Foster, Richard J. *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*, 25th anniversary ed. San Francisco: Harper: 1998) 0060628390. Cloth: 256 pp. \$23.95.

Finally, you will need a reliable critical edition of the Bible, preferably one with extensive annotations and other helps. Either of the following editions is acceptable:

- *New Interpreter's Study Bible. New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*. Abingdon Press, 2003. 0687278325. Cloth: 2298 pp. \$45.00.
- *The Discipleship Study Bible. New Revised Standard Version including Apocrypha*. Louisville/London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008. 0664223710. Cloth: 2198 pp. \$39.95.

The SPU Bookstore has stocked enough copies of these books for everyone. But shelf stock is often cleared by mid-quarter, and I strongly advise you to buy them early in the quarter, or at least to reserve copies of those which you intend to buy later. Neither the Bookstore nor the instructor can be held responsible if these texts are no longer in stock after the fourth week of the quarter.

Getting Acquainted: I would like to invite each of you to my office for a 20-minute get-acquainted visit during the first two weeks of the quarter. I will circulate a sign-up sheet on the first day of class and am hereby asking each of you to make an appointment to see me. If none of the suggested time slots work for your schedule, please let me know and we will make other arrangements.

Teaching/Learning Methods: I use a variety of classroom techniques, including lectures, small-group exercises, large-group discussions, on-line discussions, and various audio-visual aids. I often lecture with the aid of illustrated Power Point presentations. These presentations will be posted to the course web site, and you are welcome to download them, both to enhance your understanding of the lectures and to facilitate your study for reading tests and the final exam. I sometimes supplement my lectures with printed handouts, and when I do, I will post Word or PDF files of them to the course website. But please understand that not all the material contained in my PP presentations and handouts will necessarily be discussed in class, nor will all of the material discussed in class or online necessarily be covered in the presentations and/or handouts.

Course Web Site: This course (like every SPU course) is furnished with a Blackboard web site (<http://learn.spu.edu/>), and each of you has been given access to it. This site will be an extremely important bank of resources for us. It includes class announcements, online reading tests, discussion board, grade book, course documents (e.g., the syllabus, the course schedule, PowerPoint lectures, handouts), hyperlinks to web sites relevant to the course, etc. Please check this site often.

Daily Office: Each class begins with a 5-10 minute devotion, using a shortened version of the Office of Daily Morning Prayer: Rite Two and the Contemporary Collects from the *Book of Common Prayer* (pp. 75–102 and 211–261, respectively), as well as the Daily Office Lectionary, beginning with Year 1, Proper 21 (*BCP*, p. 986). I will lead the service during the first few class sessions. Thereafter, students (singly or in pairs) will do so. Leaders are encouraged to supplement the worship resources in the *BCP* with live or recorded music, readings, personal reflections, visuals, etc. This is a voluntary activity. Students will receive 5 points bonus on their Course Engagement Grade (see below) for taking leadership in this activity, but no one will be penalized for *not* doing so.

Day of Common Learning: Wednesday, October 14, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm. This year's distinguished visitor is Dr. Ronald C. White, Fellow at the Huntington Library, Visiting Professor of History at UCLA, and Professor Emeritus of American Religious History at San Francisco Theological Seminary. You are required to attend his lecture at 10:00 am in Royal Brougham Pavilion and at least one of the afternoon breakout sessions. And you are also required to submit a 2-page, single-spaced paper, summarizing and reflecting on what you learned at Dr. White's lecture or the afternoon breakout session that you attended. This paper will be graded with a $\sqrt{+}$, $\sqrt{}$ or $\sqrt{-}$, and the value will contribute to (or detract from) your CEG. **Papers are due on Monday, Oct. 19.** Failure to turn in this paper on time will result in a 10-point penalty to your CEG.

Reading Tests: Three online tests will be given during the course, one for each of the three units. The purpose of these exercises is to test how carefully and thoughtfully you have studied the reading assignments and have reflected on the lectures, class discussions, and on-line discussions. The quizzes will consist of 20-30 objective questions, i.e., multiple choice, multiple answer, fill-in-the-blank, and true/false questions. Blackboard will keep each quiz open for 30-40 minutes, but will automatically close it when the time has elapsed. Be sure to take these tests at an on-campus computer: Blackboard sometimes does not cooperate with off-campus computers. You are on your honor to use no resources, printed or electronic, during these tests. Each test will be worth 5% of your course grade. The schedule for taking these tests is as follows:

- **Test 1 on Sessions 1–10, open b/ Wed., Oct. 21 @ 11:00 am & Fri., Oct. 23 @ 9:15 am**
- **Test 2 on Sessions 11–18, open b/ Mon., Nov. 9 @ 11:00 am & Fri., Nov. 13 @ 9:15 am**
- **Test 3 on Sessions 19–27, open b/ Fri., Dec. 4 @ 11:00 am & Mon., Dec. 7 @ 11:00 pm**

Spiritual Autobiography, due Monday, October 26: In Unit 1, we study the *affective* aspect of faith—the ways in which Christians *experience* God, and the ways in which their experience of God affects their experience of everything else. In connection with this study, you will write a 4–6 page spiritual autobiography, reflecting critically on your own religious experiences and journey to faith. You should reflect on those *people* (parents, pastor, friends, Sunday school teachers), *institutions*

(home congregation, church camp) and/or “*mountaintop experiences*” (mission trips, conferences, life-changing conversations) that have most influenced your spiritual growth. Unlike many academic papers, your autobiography doesn’t need a thesis, but it should have narrative coherence and display what you regard as the central themes of your spiritual life. It should at least answer this question: How did you come to be the person you now are? You may find it helpful to relate your own experience to that of one of the figures we have studied in class, but don’t get carried away by literary analysis. Use those books only insofar as your study of them has given you new insights into yourself or has triggered any crucial memories about your own spiritual maturation. If you are not a Christian, this paper should reflect on whatever your faith or worldview happens to be. For example, if you embrace another world religion (such as Islam or Buddhism), you should reflect on how the beliefs and practices of that tradition have shaped your life. If you do not affirm any particular religion, you should describe your essential worldview, how you came to it, and how it shapes who you are. Either way, attention should still be given to the people, institutions, and experiences that have been of the greatest influence on you. This paper will be worth 15% of your course grade.

The contents of this paper are strictly confidential—that is, between you and me. You are welcome to tell me anything about yourself that has been spiritually formative, whether “good” or “bad.” But I am not trying to exact a “confession” out of you, and although autobiographical candor and detail are rewarded because they help to communicate to me who you are, your grade is not affected one way or the other by your revelation of deep, dark secrets about yourself. It is based, rather, on your ability to convey clearly who you are spiritually and theologically, and how you got that way.

Core Convictions Profile, due Monday, November 16: In Unit 2, we study the *doctrinal* aspect of faith—the convictions that the Christian church holds about the nature and activity of the Triune God. In connection with this study, you will write a 4–6 page paper, in which you will state and defend some of your own core convictions. This paper will be worth 15% of your course grade. In this paper you should answer the following questions, in any order and in any manner that suits you, being as clear, specific and detailed as space permits:

1. A “conviction” is an identity-defining belief, that is, a belief which determines who you are at the core, something for which you live and for which you would willingly make sacrifices. Some people’s core convictions are explicitly religious or spiritual: they involve faith in a personal God. Other people’s core convictions are not explicitly religious or spiritual, and yet such people usually still have a deep sense of what is “really real,” of what matters most in life, of what is of ultimate value in life. So: what are *your* core convictions?
 - a. If you regard yourself as a religious or spiritual person, state what you believe most deeply and passionately about the nature of God (the Divine, the Ultimate).
 - b. If you regard yourself as a non-religious person, state what you regard as the most comprehensive reality that frames or transcends your own existence and describe what you take to be its essential features or attributes.
2. On what is your answer to the previous question based: religious or other authority, personal experience, rational argument, scientific evidence, sacred texts, family background?
3. Are your convictions shaped by your membership in any group, organization, institution, or community, such as a church, synagogue, mosque, meditation group or nature society? If so, identify that group and describe its core convictions, its characteristic ways of expressing

them, and its ways of inculcating them in new members. Why did you join that group? How do you participate in its fellowship and mission, and how is your overall life shaped by your involvement?

4. To what extent and in what ways do your core convictions as described above, whether theological or non-theological, shape your daily life—how you spend your time and money, how you relate to others, how you set and pursue your life’s goals and vocational choices, etc.

Praxis Reflection Paper, due Monday, November 30: In Unit 3, we study the *moral and practical* aspects of faith—how Christians *act* in virtue of their experiences of and beliefs about God. In connection with this study, you will write a 4–6 reflection paper on one of the classic spiritual disciplines, which you will have practiced over the past eight or nine weeks. Any of the twelve disciplines described in Richard J. Foster, *A Celebration of Discipline*, is acceptable. (A copy of Foster is on reserve at the SPU Library, and copies available for purchase at the campus Bookstore.) **By Friday, October 9** you will submit a 1-page, single-spaced **action plan** for this assignment, stating which spiritual discipline you intend to practice and how you plan to record your findings as you go along. If you cannot in good conscience practice any of the classical Christian disciplines, you *must* consult with me about a significant alternative assignment, and must submit along with your action plan a list of at least three reputable, *published* (not online!) resources to guide your reflection and practice of some other method of cultivating the inner life. This paper will be worth 15% of your course grade. It should address the following questions, although it need not do so in a mechanical, eins-zwei-drei manner:

1. Why did you select this discipline?
2. What did you hope to accomplish by practicing it?
3. Did you succeed—or not?
4. How regularly did you practice it?
5. What, if any, problems did you encounter?
6. What did you learn about yourself along the way? About God? About the life of faith?

Paper Format: Each of your papers should have a cover sheet with your name, the course number and title, and the date printed toward the top, and with the bottom half of the page left blank for my comments. The text itself should be type-written or word-processed and furnished with page numbers (centered at the top or bottom of each page except the first) and one-inch margins on all sides. It should be free of spelling and grammatical errors. If you consult printed or web resources, be sure to give complete bibliographical information for them, using standard MLA format as outlined in *The Everyday Writer*. The grade on this paper will be worth 15% of the course grade.

Policy on Inclusive Language: The Christian gospel aims to provide a clear witness to the revelation of God through Jesus Christ. For this reason, the words we choose are influential and significant. Because language related to race, gender, class, and nationality has a particular power to liberate or to marginalize other human beings, our words ought to exhibit the sort of grace-filled sensitivity to human dignity that is part and parcel of the Christian gospel (Ja 3:1-18). In particular, the School of Theology at Seattle Pacific University believes that language about God and people should mirror these biblical truths: that God created both male and female in God’s image (Gen 1:27); that God formed male and female into a working partnership to steward all of

God's creation (Gen 1:28); and that God loves everyone equally without respect to race, gender, class, or nationality; yet all are equally in need of God's forgiveness and equally transformed by God's grace into new creatures because of Jesus Christ (1 Tim 2:3-6). The use of nondiscriminatory language substantiates these truths and fosters a community where "there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for all are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28). The social practices of Seattle Pacific University's Methodist heritage exemplify these biblical truths. Rooted deeply within Methodism is the active participation in the lifting of oppression in any form so as to extend and implement the freedom of the gospel to all whom God has created and seeks to redeem. The record of Wesleyans on behalf of those on the margins is impressive and honorable and should be furthered by the modern offspring of Wesley in word and deed. Therefore, it is the policy of the School of Theology at Seattle Pacific University to use nondiscriminatory language in our syllabi, publications, and communications. (The grammatical particulars about nondiscriminatory language are spelled out in *The Everyday Writer*.) Moreover, when writing and speaking about God, the School of Theology encourages the use of a wide variety of images found in Scripture and the Christian tradition, such as rock, sovereign, light, mother eagle, shepherd, creator, father, and so on. By drawing on the richness of these biblical images, we position ourselves to deepen our understanding of God's manifold attributes more fully and to help form God's multiform people into a more inclusive community.

Policy on Extensions: Extensions for writing assignments will be granted for the same reasons that absences from class are excused (see below). Requests for extensions must be submitted by email at least two days before the scheduled due date. If I decide to grant the extension, I will reply by email. A printed copy of the request and my reply must be attached to the paper when it is submitted. Out of fairness to other students, papers submitted after the deadline will be penalized at the rate of 5 points (slightly more than half a letter grade) per day, unless an extension has been granted. Extensions cannot be granted for the self-evaluation/course integration paper.

Policy on Rewrites: Students who receive a C+ or lower on written assignments may rewrite them, incorporating my suggestions and corrections. The rewrite must be completed within three days after the graded "original" is returned. The graded version and the corrected version must both be turned in for a grade revision to be granted. Grades on rewrites will rarely be raised more than 10 points.

Policy on Posting Papers to Course Website: I encourage you to post your spiritual autobiographies, doctrinal expositions / theological profiles, and praxis reflection papers to the course website. But in view of the highly personal nature of the contents, it seems best neither to reward you for doing so nor to penalize you for not doing so when it comes to calculating your course engagement grade (on which, please see below).

Criteria for Grades on Writing Assignments: The University Scholars program has established the following standards for essays and papers.

A — The three principal characteristics of the A paper are its clear focus, rich content, and scintillating style. Because of its careful organization and detailed development, the A paper imparts a feeling of wholeness and clarity. The content and logic of the paper clearly support the thesis, with plentiful evidence and a consideration of counter-arguments, yet the essay does not include irrele-

vant or tangential material. An excellent paper is also marked by stylistic finesse. The title and opening paragraph are engaging; the transitions are artful rather than mechanical; the phrasing is tight and distinctive; the diction is fresh and concrete; the sentence structure is varied; and the tone and voice enhance the purposes of the paper. Finally, the paper has few, if any, errors in grammar, punctuation, or documentation. It leaves the reader feeling informed or convinced, and eager to reread the piece.

B — The B paper has a clear focus, but its organization and development could be improved. The content of the paper supports the thesis reasonably well. Transitions may be strained or mechanical; paragraphs may lack some supporting detail; specific sub points could be consolidated or changed. Stylistically, the B paper contains an introduction with a clear thesis, some sentence variety, accurate diction, and generally correct mechanics. The writer’s voice may lack distinction, being neither personally engaged nor personally engaging. Complex grammar, punctuation, and details of documentation may be incorrect. On the whole, a B paper offers substantial information with few distractions, but is not especially memorable.

C — The C essay is competent—it meets the assignment and is reasonably well organized. Although the paper has some interesting parts, the interest is not uniformly maintained, and the purpose is not always clear. Significant gaps in reasoning mar the argument. The actual information the paper delivers seems thin and commonplace. Stylistically, the C paper has other shortcomings. The opening paragraph does little to draw the reader in; the final paragraph offers only a perfunctory wrap-up; the essay has jumps rather than transitions; the sentences are not varied in length or structure. The writer’s voice seems stilted. The diction is marred by unnecessary repetition and imprecision, and there are mistakes in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. The C paper, while it gets the job done, lacks both imagination and intellectual rigor.

D — Only in a few places does the D paper find its purpose. Too often it seems an unfocused exercise rather than a convincing argument. While organization may be present in the D paper, it is neither clear nor effective. Ideas are overly vague, little supporting evidence or detail is provided, and serious gaps in logic occur. Sentences are frequently awkward, ambiguous, and marred by serious mechanical errors. Evidence of careful proofreading is nonexistent. The whole piece, in fact, often gives the impression of having been conceived and written in haste.

E — The E paper fails to declare a reason for existing beyond the fact that a teacher has assigned it. Lacking a clear focus or argument, its treatment of the subject is superficial, while its organization and prose are garbled. Mechanical errors are frequent. In short, the ideas, organization, and style fall far below what is acceptable college writing. It leaves the reader tired and confused.

Course Engagement Grade: UFDN 1000 is not only about how Christians of other times and places came to faith and built their lives upon it. It is also about how *you* are coming to faith and building your own life upon it. What you as an individual—and all of us as a group—get out of the course will largely depend on how much of yourself you invest in it. Accordingly, evidence of your “engagement” with course material will be worth 20% of your final grade. When I assess what you have invested in the course, his course, I will take the following factors into consideration:

- Class attendance
- Active participation in classroom discussions
- Active participation in online discussions of course material

- Private conversations with instructor or teaching assistant about course material
- Leading daily office (5 pts. extra credit; no penalty for not doing this; see above)
- Attendance at Day of Common Learning and submission of a short write-up
- Completion of online course evaluation (see below)

In calculating your CEG, I will weigh your attendance against the other five factors taken together. If you do not miss a single class session, but give no other evidence of engagement with you material, you will get an 80 (C+). Every unexcused absence from class will lower this grade by two points. On the other hand, if you participate regularly and thoughtfully in discussions and/or demonstrate your interest in and command of the material in the other above-mentioned ways, you will be rewarded accordingly. I will take attendance at every class session and count the number of your postings to the discussion board, but I will not try to tabulate the number of times you speak in class or to assess the value of your every comment. Valid excuses for missing class include illnesses, personal or family emergencies, and SPU athletic competitions, theatrical performances, and academic field trips or retreats for which I receive a note signed by the faculty member in charge. Absences and tardiness due to on-campus practices and rehearsals are not excused. I do *not* excuse students from class for church-related activities (e.g., mission trips or conferences), work-related activities (e.g., overtime hours or emergency fill-ins for other employees) or non-emergency activities with family or friends (e.g., weddings or vacations). Nor am I about to penalize myself by assigning you extra make-up work that I would have to grade. However, by regularly participating in class discussion and/or sending regular posts to the class discussion board, most students can effectively restore the two points they will lose from their CEG for each class session missed. Please note that I sometimes, though rarely, call on students even if their hands are not raised. Please note further that I have been known to dismiss all students from class who have not read the assignment for the day, and reserve the right to do so at any time. In short, faithful attendance and careful preparation for class are expected.

Classroom Etiquette: I like my classes to be relaxed and informal. Still, a degree of dignity and decorum is necessary for the academic enterprise. I would therefore ask you to observe the following classroom courtesies:

- Be sure you regularly check your campus email (or have items sent to your campus account automatically forwarded to your preferred account) for any messages that I have sent to you personally or to the class as a whole.
- If you must miss a class session, inform me to that effect beforehand if possible, preferably by email.
- Refrain from asking me questions about class issues, grades, assignments, personal matters just before class, when I am trying to collect my thoughts and organize my materials. I will usually be available to answer such questions immediately after class and during my regularly scheduled office hours. Or you may email me at rsteele@spu.edu.
- Arrive on time. But don't cut class simply because you're going to be a few minutes late. Better late than never!
- Class sessions begin with prayer. Even if you are not one who prays, please respect the reverence of those who do by keeping silent.

- Our class activities and discussions will usually be text-centered. So bring your Bible, your *Book of Common Prayer*, and your copy of the reading assignment(s) to class.
- No food in class, unless you have enough to share with everyone. Beverages are okay.
- No sleeping in class!
- No gaming or web-surfing in class! You are welcome to use a laptop computer for note-taking and/or following my PowerPoint presentations. (The latter are online.)
- Switch off your cell phones and beepers during class, unless you have a valid reason for keeping them on (e.g., a sick child at home). If you must make or take a call during class, step outside the classroom.
- UFDN 1000 class time is for UFDN 1000 material only! Don't do homework for other courses during class time.
- During class discussions, please give your full attention to whoever has the floor and refrain from side conversations and activities irrelevant to the course.
- Refrain from verbal abuse of those whose views you disagree with, whether members of the class or authors whom we are studying. In theological inquiry, vigorous critique of ideas must stop short of personal attacks or eschatological condemnations.
- If you must leave class early, inform me at the beginning of class and sit near the door to minimize disruption.
- Guests are welcome in class, but should be introduced personally to me before class begins and to the entire group at the beginning of class.
- Feel free to visit my office unannounced during my stated office hours, but limit other visits to prearranged times. I do enjoy having coffee with students at the SUB and eating lunch with students at Gwinn Commons, but I need several days notice in advance for such meetings. You may secure free meal passes for faculty members from University Services.
- Do not call me at home after 9:00 p.m. or before 6:00 a.m.

Repeated infractions of these courtesies will result in the lowering of your Class Engagement grade. For particularly grievous offenses, such as sleeping or web-surfing on your laptop during class, students may be summarily dismissed from class and/or docked 20 points from their CEG. Additional information about classroom behavior and other protocols of academic life, see the current *SPU Student Handbook*: <http://www.spu.edu/depts/studentlife/studenthdbk.html>.

Final Examination: Tuesday, December 8 @ 8:00–10:00 am: This will test your mastery of the material covered throughout the entire course. You will be responsible for the content of the lectures, the required readings, the in-class discussions, and on-line discussion board. The exam may consist of objective questions and/or essays, and will be worth 20% of your course grade.

Online Course Evaluation: You are expected to complete the online course evaluation at the end of the quarter. You will be notified by email of the dates on which the evaluation form is accessible. After completing the evaluation, you will receive an email acknowledgment. Please *print* this acknowledgment and submit it with your final exam. You will receive a bonus of 5 points on your CEG for doing so and a deduction of 5 points for failing to do so. Do *not* email the acknowledgment form to me, and do *not* send me your evaluation form itself.

Grading Scale for all Assignments:

A	=	100 – 95	=	4.0 – 3.71
A-	=	94.99 – 93	=	3.7 – 3.31
B+	=	92.99 – 91	=	3.3 – 3.01
B	=	90.99 – 85	=	3.0 – 2.71
B-	=	84.99 – 83	=	2.7 – 2.31
C+	=	82.99 – 81	=	2.3 – 2.01
C	=	80.99 – 75	=	2.0 – 1.71
C-	=	74.99 – 73	=	1.7 – 1.31
D+	=	72.99 – 71	=	1.3 – 1.01
D	=	70.99 – 65	=	1.0 – 0.71
E	=	64.99 – 0	=	0.7 – 0.00

Summary of Graded Assignments: Your final grade will be calculated on the basis of your performance on the assignments described above. Grades will be posted in the assessment folder in the course web site. The seven graded assignments are as follows:

Reading Tests: 3 @ 5% each	15%
Spiritual Autobiography	15%
Core Convictions Profile	15%
Praxis Reflection Paper	15%
Course Engagement Grade	20%
Final Examination	<u>20%</u>
<i>Total</i>	100%

Academic Integrity Policy: Students are expected to follow the Standards of Scholarship as stated in the *Undergraduate Catalog* <http://www.spu.edu/acad/UGCatalog/20090/GeneralInfo/policies.asp>. The penalty for any proven or admitted infraction of these standards will be a number grade of 0 on the assignment in question plus a deduction of between 15 and 30 points on the CEG, depending on the circumstances and severity of the infraction. The guidelines for handling any cases of suspected academic dishonesty are spelled out in the same place.

School Closure Policy: SPU will begin classes late or close the campus if weather mandates such a decision. A late start notification indicates that the campus offices and classes will open at 10:00 am. Classes beginning at 8:00 am will be canceled and *9:00 am classes will be held at 10:00 am*. If a chapel is scheduled it will be held as planned for those who don't have 9:00 classes. "Closure" means all classes and offices are closed. The library, dining services and the SUB will be operational on a limited schedule. For information regarding closure call the SPU closure hotline at 206/281-2800 or listen to KIRO 710 AM or KCMS 105.3 FM or TV stations KIRO, KOMO, or KING.

Students with Disabilities: If you have a specific disability that qualifies you for academic accommodations, please contact Disability Support Services in the Center for Learning, Lower Moyer Hall, to make your accommodations request. Once your eligibility has been determined, DSS will send a Disability Verification Letter to your professors indicating what accommodations have been approved. Here is the Center's contact information:

- Phone: (206) 281-2475 TTY: (206) 281-2224 Fax: (206) 286-7348
- Hours: 8:00 am–7:00 pm, Monday thru Thursday. 8:00 am–5:00 pm, Friday
- Email: disabilityservices@spu.edu
- Website: <http://www.spu.edu/depts/cfl/dss/index.asp>

Emergency Evacuation Procedures: In case of emergency (fire, earthquake, hazardous material spillage, bomb threat, etc.), the building must be evacuated with dispatch, according to the direction posted in the classroom. The primary emergency assembly area for classes meeting in the Bertona Classroom Building is the Ross Parking Lot. The secondary assembly area is Wallace Athletic Field. The campus emergency number is **x-2911**.

- Heather will lead the class out of the building to the designated assembly area.
- Dr. Steele will be the last person out of the building, and will take attendance at the assembly area.
- For complete information about the SPU Crisis and Emergency Management Plan see: <http://www.spu.edu/info/emergency/index.asp>.