

**School for New Learning
DePaul University
Course Syllabus:
IN 307 Advanced Elective Seminar: Spirituality, Culture, and Technology
Fall Quarter 2009**

1. General Information

Faculty: Kevin Buckley, M.A.
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Phone: 312-362-8544

Location: Naperville Campus

Time: Tuesdays, September 15-November 24, 2009, 6:30 - 9:30 PM.
Please hold November 24 in case an earlier session is cancelled.

I will be available at the Naperville campus for pre-arranged meetings before class on Tuesdays. I am also generally available 10 AM - 5 PM Mondays and Fridays at the Loop campus. Other times for meetings can be arranged at our mutual convenience.

Credit Hours: 4 (two competencies) or 2 (one competence)

2. Course Description and Faculty Biographical Sketch

How does our experience of family, the economy, and political life affect our understanding of who we are as individuals and as members of society? How does technology influence our understanding of what it means to be human? Is spirituality something that one “does” after giving up on organized religion? Is a spiritual life possible in a culture dominated by consumerism? What myths underlie the spiritual paths that appeal to many contemporary Americans? This course will address the relationship of social institutions to spirituality, the relationship of spirituality to work, and the impact of “technological thinking” on our important relationships. As an advanced elective seminar, the course will consider several ways of communicating our understandings of the truth about cultural phenomena.

After working in both for-profit and non-profit settings for more than twenty years, Kevin Buckley earned an M.A. in Liberal Studies from DePaul University where his research addressed the role of institutions in mediating between the individual and society. He has been an academic advisor at the Loop campus since September 2000. He has taught the following SNL courses “Making Difficult Decisions - Moral Life in Modern Culture,” “Advanced Elective Seminar: Spirituality, Culture, and Technology,” “Work and the Modern Self,” “Spiritualities of Work” (FDIS) and “College Writing.” He has also conducted adult continuing education programs about spirituality at the Newberry Library and Loyola University’s Institute of Pastoral Studies.

3. Competencies

- E1.** Can describe the impact of modern values on perceptions of the self, society, nature, and the sources of meaning in our lives.

You will consider how certain characteristics of modern culture have influenced how we view ourselves and our important relationships with other people, with nature, and with the sources of meaning in our lives.

- E2.** Can apply two or more ways of knowing to the study of a major cultural institution or phenomenon.

You will describe the assumptions, potential benefits, and possible pitfalls of different approaches to knowledge about cultural institutions and phenomena. You will then analyze how these approaches to knowledge can be used to address the family, an industry or profession, or other cultural institutions or phenomena.

As an advanced elective seminar, this course will emphasize the role of analytic and synthetic thinking in the demonstration of these competencies. Completion of Research Seminar or Major Seminar is a prerequisite for an advanced elective seminar.

4. Learning Experience

Classroom learning strategies include brief presentations on key concepts, viewing of videotaped material, in-class writing exercises, structured class discussions of the assigned reading, and small-group discussions of mini-cases that illustrate course concepts.

Required readings:

- Thomas Moore, *Care of the Soul: A Guide for Cultivating Depth and Sacredness in Everyday Life*
- John Rury's essay on experience, which may be found in Foundations of Adult Learning materials
- "A Secular Humanist Declaration" (1980), which is available on the Internet
- Handout materials for use in class or for reading outside of class.
- One article from an academic journal that is pertinent to course content (to be identified during the seminar).

Attendance and participation: Classroom presentations, discussions, mini-case discussion and exercises provide information and opportunities for application of course content that are not provided in the reading assignments. Therefore, consistent attendance is expected. If you must miss class, please take notify me before that date or within one day after the class. It is your responsibility to obtain notes from another class member when you have missed a class. Since almost half of your grade is based on classroom participation, it is

Advanced Elective Seminar: Spirituality, Culture, and Technology
Course Syllabus

important that you complete classroom exercises that you missed because of an absence. Handout material distributed in class will be made available at the course Blackboard site at <http://oll.depaul.edu/>.

5. Outcomes

At the end of this seminar, you should be able to:

- identify at least six characteristics of modern culture
- discuss impact of modern values in how modern Americans view themselves, experience community, and relate to nature and to whatever they consider to be ultimate reality
- discuss the impact of social institutions on how modern Americans view themselves, experience community, and relate to nature and to whatever they consider to be ultimate reality
- discuss the impact of technology on how modern Americans view themselves, experience community, and relate to nature and to whatever they consider to be ultimate reality
- describe the assumptions that underlie the use of personal reflection on experience, scientific research, and traditional cultural narratives to communicate the truth about cultural institutions and phenomena
- discuss the potential benefits and possible limitations associated with the use of personal reflection on experience, scientific research, and imaginative discourse to communicate the truth about cultural institutions and phenomena.

6. Evidence That You Will Submit

You will demonstrate an ability to apply seminar concepts and themes:

- during discussions of:
 - the assigned reading
 - videotaped material
- through classroom exercises.

For the E1 competence, you will submit two short papers at different points during the quarter. You may substitute a classroom presentation in place of the final E1 paper for *partial* demonstration of the E1 competence.

For the E2 competence, you will submit three short papers at different points during the quarter.

Other papers that will be submitted by everyone in the course include:

- two one-page papers based on course readings that will be due the second and third sessions of the course
- a reflection of about one to two pages on your learning in the course that will be due one week after the final session of the course.

Advanced Elective Seminar: Spirituality, Culture, and Technology
Course Syllabus

I will abide by the University's guidelines on academic integrity (see policy in addenda below). Please note that the DePaul Student Handbook defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following: (a) The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or in part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's. (b) Copying of any source in whole or in part with only minor changes in wording or syntax even with acknowledgement. (c) Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment which has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency. (d) The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.

Plagiarism will result in a failure of the assignment or possibly of the course.

7. Criteria for Assessment

About 40% of your grade will reflect the quality of your participation in class, and thus, absence from class or a pattern of tardiness may affect the final grade. The criteria for class participation and written exercises will include the extent to which you reference your classroom participation to specific content in the course readings, to other reading, to previous classroom discussions, or to your own life experience. Simply expressing your opinion is not considered a demonstration of the competence.

My assessment of your classroom participation will also include the following criteria: attentiveness, oral communication skills, preparedness, and collaborative learning in the form of respect for the perspectives and experience that other students bring to their study of written course materials. Cell phone use that interferes with classroom learning experience may have a negative impact on my assessment of your classroom participation.

My assessment of all written work will consider whether you have:

- submitted the paper by the due date or, in the case of a notified absence, within twenty-four hours of the class that was missed
- used an appropriate academic format including double-spacing with one- to one-and-one-half inch margins and 12-point typeface
- included an appropriate introduction identifying the topic and describing the scope and purpose of your paper,
- demonstrated a college-level mastery of Standard English word usage and grammatical conventions, including sentence structure, punctuation, and subject-pronoun and subject-verb agreement.

Competence-specific writing will also be evaluated in regard to whether your paper:

- includes multiple parenthetical references to quoted or paraphrased material

Advanced Elective Seminar: Spirituality, Culture, and Technology
Course Syllabus

- when pertinent, cites the reading appropriately at the end of each paper using the correct MLA or APA format.

Competence-specific writing will contribute about 50% to your grade for each competence. In addition to the criteria noted above, criteria for the E1 competence will address whether your writing:

- discusses a specific theme that is pertinent to the role of modern values in defining the self
- includes important references to the discussion of the theme in *Care of the Soul* and other course readings
- addresses the impact of one or more *characteristics of modern culture* such as:
 - reason or rationality as contrasted with revelation, imagination, or emotions
 - emphasis on problem-solving (and the loss of a sense of mystery)
 - concern for efficiency,
 - individualism (priority of the individual over community),
 - a commitment to universal benevolence
 - moral and technological progress.

In addition to the writing criteria noted above, criteria for the E2 competence will address whether your writing:

- addresses the following the approaches to knowledge and meaning:
 - reflection on personal experience
 - observable, quantifiable research
 - myth and other imaginative discourse
- describes:
 - the assumptions that underlie these ways of communicating knowledge,
 - potential benefits of use of personal experience, scientific research, and social narratives to communicate knowledge
 - possible pitfalls associated with each of these ways of communicating knowledge.

The one- to two-page reflection on your learning, which you will submit at the end of the quarter, will address your ability to synthesize important seminar themes and concepts. This paper will contribute about 10% to your grade.

Selection of grading on a pass-fail basis must be received by the deadline listed in the DePaul University Academic Calendar. Students who commit to taking the course Pass/Fail cannot switch back to a letter grade.

See the Addenda, below, for the policy guiding requests for a grade of "incomplete" for the quarter. In order to qualify for the IN grade, a student must have regularly attended class and must have completed at least the "E1" written assignment due October 20 and the "E2" written assignments due October 12 and 27.

Students are strongly advised to review the university deadlines for withdrawal without tuition refund and the implications for financial aid and grades.

Advanced Elective Seminar: Spirituality, Culture, and Technology
Course Syllabus

7. Tentative Class Schedule

The following topics are tentative and may be adjusted.

#1) September 15, 2008

Overview of the course: content and expectations

Technological thinking and practice

The culture of modernity

Characteristics of the E1 and E2 competencies

Reading for the second session: *Care of the Soul*, "Introduction," Chapter One, "Honoring Symptoms as a Voice of the Soul."

#2) September 22, 2008

Techne as art, skill and statecraft; technology: traditional and modern

The "self" in modern culture

Writing for the E1 competence

Reading: Chapter Two, "The Myth of Family and Childhood" and the essay by John L. Rury on learning and experience in Foundations of Adult Learning materials.

#3) September 29, 2008

"The" family as myth and as social institution

Personal narratives as sources of understanding

Imaginative discourse as a source of understanding

Writing for the E2 competence

Reading: Chapter Three, "Self-love and Its Myth: Narcissus and Narcissism," and Four, "Love's Initiations Also, "A Secular Humanist Declaration" (1980), which is available on the Internet, Introduction, Paragraphs 1, 4, 6, 7, and 8.

#4) October 6, 2008

Individualism as a "modern" value

Critical inquiry as a source of understanding

Spirituality and community

Reading: Chapters Five, "Jealousy and Envy: Healing Poisons" and Six, "The Soul and Power"

#5) October 13, 2008

Spiritualities and moralities

Spiritualities and divinities

Spirituality and the exercise of power

Reading: *Care of the Soul*, Chapters Seven, "Gifts of Depression" and Eight, "The Body's Poetics of Illness."

#6) October 20, 2008

The impact of modern values on our perceptions of pain and death

Quantitative, observable scientific research as a source of knowledge about the world

The therapeutic purpose

Advanced Elective Seminar: Spirituality, Culture, and Technology
Course Syllabus

Reading: Chapter Nine, “The Economics of Soul: Work, Money, Failure, and Creativity”
and an article from an academic journal (details to be provided)

#7) October 27, 2008

Spirituality and place

Spirituality and work

Creating and consuming

Reading: Chapter Ten, “The Need for Myth, Ritual, and a Spiritual Life.”

#8) November 3, 2008

Ritual and technological thinking

Spirituality as retreat from the modern world

Traditional myth and other imaginative discourse

Reading: Chapter Eleven, “Wedding Spirituality and Soul.”

#9) November 10, 2008

Perceptions of the self, society, nature, and ultimate reality

Transcendence and the ways of knowing

The social and political dimensions of spirituality

Reading: Chapters Twelve, “Beauty and the Reanimation of Things” and Thirteen, “The Sacred Arts of Life.”

#10) November 17, 2008

Beauty and (ir)rationality

Spirituality and cosmos

Spirituality, technology, and the world’s suffering

Optional E1 presentations

Please hold November 24 in case an earlier session is cancelled.

Writing:

- Due September 22, 2009: two one-page papers (details to be discussed during the first session)
 - Due September 29, 2000: two one-page papers (details to be discussed)
 - Competence-specific writing (details to be discussed)
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|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>E1:</i> | <i>E2:</i> |
| Four-page papers due: | Three-page papers due: |
| - October 20 | - October 13 |
| - November 17 | - October 27 |
| (or a classroom presentation) | - November 24 (by email) |
- Email submission by November 24: a one- to two-page reflection on your learning in the course (details to be provided during the course)
 - (Optional) a revision of your first E2 paper on November 3.

Advanced Elective Seminar: Spirituality, Culture, and Technology Course Syllabus

The maximum points for any papers or make-up writing submitted after November 24 will be the equivalent for a C- for the assignment or for the session for which make-up work is submitted.

For the DePaul University policies relating to work that is incomplete at the end of the quarter, please see below.

Addenda

DePaul University Academic Integrity Policy

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

DePaul University Incomplete Policy

Undergraduate and graduate students have two quarters to complete an incomplete. At the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) following the term in which the incomplete grade was assigned, remaining incompletes will automatically convert to "F" grades. In the case of the Law School incompletes must be completed by the end of the semester following the one in which the incomplete was assigned. Ordinarily no incomplete grade may be completed after the grace period has expired. Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee. This policy applies to undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

The SNL student who wishes to receive the grade of IN must formally request in writing that the instructor issue this grade. This request must be made before the end of the quarter in which the student is enrolled in a course.

For Students Who Need Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter, preferably within the first week of class, and make sure you have contacted:

- PLuS Program (for LD, AD/HD) at 773-325-4239 in the Schmidt Academic Center, room 220 or;
- The Office for Students with Disabilities (for all other disabilities) at 773-325-7290, DePaul University Student Center, room 307.

Chronic Illness Initiative

The Chronic Illness Initiative (CII) provides access to higher education for students disabled by chronic illnesses that unpredictably increase and decrease in severity such as chronic fatigue syndrome, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus or illnesses requiring frequent hospitalizations. At SNL, staff and faculty are compassionate and committed to helping CII students achieve their educational goals. Contact CII at CII@depaul.edu.

Writing Help

For help with organizing your ideas, grammar, citing sources, avoiding plagiarism, sample SNL assignments and much more, see the [Writing Guide for SNL Students](http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/index.html) at <http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/index.html>. For on-campus and online tutoring, see the [DePaul University Writing Centers](http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/) at <http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/>.