STMM 593 SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
Dr. Yolanda Y. Smith
School of Theology and Ministry
Summer 2008

July 14-18, 2008
(M-F) 9:00am-4:20pm

I. **Course Description:**

This course is an exploration of selected issues and topics in Christian education. Attention will be given to the role of spirituality as it emerges through various paradigms of religious education and the implications for spiritual growth, development and the practice of religious education.

II. **Objectives for the Course:**

A. To examine the relationship between spirituality and religious education.
B. To introduce spiritual disciplines as a frame of reference for nurturing spiritual growth and development.
C. To examine the spiritual life of the religious educator and to help participants explore their own sense of spirituality.
D. To introduce five paradigms of religious education and explore the spiritual dimensions of education for each paradigm.
E. To identify sources of spirituality from various perspectives and/or cultures.
F. To envision new approaches to religious education which embody a sense of spirituality.
G. To evaluate the teaching/learning experience.

III. **Course Requirement:**

A. Required Readings
   1. Harris, Maria. Women and Teaching: Themes for Spirituality of Pedagogy. New York: Paulist Press, 1988. (Will read entire book)
   2. Moore, Mary Elizabeth M. Teaching as a Sacramental Act. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2004. (Will read entire book)
   3. Palmer, Parker. The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998. (Will read entire book)
   4. Thompson, Marjorie J. Family the Forming Centers: A Vision of the Role of Family in Spiritual Formation. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1989. (Will read entire book)
   5. Thurman, Howard. Disciplines of the Spirit. Richmond, Ind.: Friends United Press, 1963. (Will read entire book)
   6. Selected Readings
   7. Class Handouts
B. Class Assignments
   1. Active Participation
   2. Opening and Closing Rituals
   3. Journal – Each person will keep a journal reflecting on class readings, discussions, and activities.
   4. Annotated Bibliography and creative presentation of one book
   5. Final Project – In groups each person will develop a 45-minute lesson (to be presented in class) that is grounded in one of the religious education paradigms and seeks to nurture spiritual growth and development. This assignment will include a 5-7 page reflection paper.

IV. **Basis for Evaluation:**

A. Grades from each assignment will be averaged together to determine the final grade.

B. Letter grades have the following meaning: **(A)** represents exemplary work that offers a creative contribution beyond what was given in class, presuming that the contribution is accurate and intelligent; **(A-)** represents excellent work that is creative but does not go beyond the material covered in class; **(B+)** represents work that is very good: assignments are accurate and reflect a complete grasp of the material covered (e.g., complete on matters of central importance not exhaustive in detail); **(B)** represents good work but without creative contribution; **(B-)** represents satisfactory work that is adequate, correct but not complete; **(C level work)** represents work that is acceptable but not fully correct or adequate; **Fail (F)** represents work that is not acceptable or passing.

C. Grades for late assignments will be lowered by 1/3 (e.g., A becomes A-, B+ becomes B etc.)

V. **Assignments to Complete Prior to Class:**

A. Read the required textbooks before class.

- Harris, Maria. Women and Teaching: Themes for a Spirituality of Pedagogy. New York: Paulist Press, 1988 (RIS course packet).
- Moore, Mary Elizabeth M. Teaching as a Sacramental Act. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2004.
- Palmer, Parker. The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998.
- Thompson, Marjorie J. Family the Forming Centers: A Vision of the Role of Family in Spiritual Formation. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1989.
- Thurman, Howard. Disciplines of the Spirit. Richmond, Ind.: Friends United Press, 1963.

B. For each reading assignment students should write a brief summary of the book (no more than 1-2 pages)

1. Identify the major issues and concerns the author is raising
2. Identify questions for clarification
3. Develop at least 2 questions to bring to the class for discussion
4. Describe your overall response to the reading: do you agree/disagree? Why or why not? What are major points of interest? What new revelations does the author raise for contemporary Christian religious education as it relates to spirituality? What do you see as the strengths and challenges of the reading?

Required Texts:

Harris, Maria. Women and Teaching: Themes for a Spirituality of Pedagogy. New York: Paulist Press, 1988 (course packet).

Moore, Mary Elizabeth M. Teaching as a Sacramental Act. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2004.

Palmer, Parker. The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998.

Thompson, Marjorie J. Family the Forming Centers: A Vision of the Role of Family in Spiritual Formation. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1989.

Thurman, Howard. Disciplines of the Spirit. Richmond, Ind.: Friends United Press, 1963.

Selected Readings

Class Handouts

Recommended Supplemental Reading:
(These are just suggestions for additional reading if students are interested)

Banks, Robert. Reenvisioning Theological Education: Exploring A Missional Alternative to Current Models. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999.

Bass, Dorothy C. Ed. Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for A Searching People. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1997.

Bridges, Flora Wilson. Resurrection Song: African American Spirituality. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2001.

Cunningham, Lawrence C. and Keith J. Egan. Christian Spirituality: Themes from the Tradition. New York: Paulist Press, 1996.

Dykstra, Craig. Growing in the Life of Faith: Education and Christian Practices. Louisville: Geneva Press, 1999.

Harley, Julie Ruth. Soul Calling: Breathing Spirit into a Life of Service. Cleveland: United Church Press, 1998.

Miles, Margaret. Practicing Christianity: Practical Perspectives for Embodied Spirituality. New York: Crossroads, 1988.

Palmer, Parker. To Know as We Are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey. New York: Harper Collins, 1983.

Paris, Peter, Jr. The Spirituality of African Peoples. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995.

Stewart, Carlyle Fielding, III. Soul Survivors: An African American Spirituality. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997.

Vennard, Jane E. Praying with Body and Soul: A Way to Intimacy with God. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1998.

Faculty Biography:

Yolanda Y. Smith is Assistant Professor of Christian Education at Yale Divinity School. Her teaching interests include the practice of Christian education with particular attention to the role of the arts, womanist theology, Christian education in the African American experience, and multicultural approaches to Christian education. She is the author of the book *Reclaiming the Spirituals: New Possibilities for African American Christian Education*, which examines the role of the spirituals in teaching the triple heritage (African, African American, and Christian) of African Americans. She has also published a wide range of articles and book chapters, including “I Want to Be Ready! Teaching Christian Education in the African American Experience”; “Olivia Pearl Stokes,”and “Not Just Sunday School! Religious Education in the New Millennium: New Visions for Partnership in Ministry and Theological Education.” Currently she is engaged in a research and writing project, in collaboration with Moses N. Moore, Jr., titled “‘Been in the Storm So Long’: Yale Divinity School and the Black Ministry—One Hundred and Fifty Years of Black Theological Education.” In conjunction with this project, Smith and Moore have co-authored the articles, "Solomon M. Coles: The First Black Student Officially Enrolled in Yale Divinity School" and "From the Archives: The Prophetic Ministry of Henry Hugh Proctor." Professor Smith is a member of the Yale Divinity School Women’s Initiative on Gender, Faith, and Responses to HIV/AIDS in Africa and a board member of the AIDS Interfaith Network, New Haven. She is also a past member of the Advisory Board of the Yale Center for Faith and Culture. An ordained Baptist minister, she has served as an associate minister and minister of evangelism and discipleship in the local church. B.A.E., M.Ed. Arizona State University; M.Div. School of Theology at Virginia Union University; M.A., Ph.D. Claremont School of Theology. (Baptist)