

# PT211/CH311 Howard Thurman Spring 2010

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*Tuesdays 8:30-11:20 A.M.*

*Room L1*

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## **Course Description & Pedagogical Strategy**

This course will survey the life and ministry of Rev. Dr. Howard Thurman. It will critically inspect his theological foundations, his theological formation, his particular theology (with particular emphasis on his views of God, Jesus, mysticism, homiletical theology, and liturgical theology), the practice of that theology, the pivotal points of his ministry, and his positive contributions to race relations, religious studies, ecumenism, and interfaith dialogue. Also, this course will investigate the historical significance of Rev. Thurman's ministry with particular attention given to the periods of the Social Gospel, the Great Depression, World War II, and the Civil Rights Movement. The course seeks to increase the student's learning through multiple methods: class discussion of readings and lectures, exploration of spiritual disciplines, extemporaneous exercises, written assignments, and experiencing and analyzing Thurman via video and audio mediums.

## **Inclusivity**

All genders, races, classes, denominations and cultures are welcomed to and included in this course. The readings for this class originate from women and men of various ethnicities and Christian traditions.

## **Attendance and Participation**

Enrollment in this course assumes regular attendance, participation in all class activities and discussions, and the completion of all assignments in a timely manner. Assignments are due on the specified date. Late work will only be accepted with severe penalty: a deduction of one letter grade for each day the assignment is late.

## **Grades**

A – Excellent: demonstration of superior scholarship in homiletical analysis, exegesis, structure, and delivery; comprehension and use of class texts in all assignments; thoughtful consideration, address and application of homiletical critique from instructor and peers; completion of assignments on time

B – Above Average: better quality than average work; details of assignments met and completed on time; relevant and accurate use of course concepts and critique (from instructor and peers); all major and minor goals of the course are fulfilled

C – Minimum Standard: average work; all major goals of the course are fulfilled, but most minor ones are not; many of the details of the assignment are met; some course concepts are integrated into the work

D – Substandard but passing: below average work; only a few major goals are met; little preparation is evident; work reflects little or no use of assigned texts or course concepts

F – Failure: unsatisfactory work; no major goals are reached; no use of course concepts or readings in assignments; no display of comprehension of course content

For the METHESCO grading policy, see METHESCO's Academic Catalogue (p.24).

### **Required Readings**

- Thurman, Howard. *Deep is the Hunger: Meditations for Apostles of Sensitiveness*. Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1951.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Disciplines of the Spirit*. Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Growing Edge*. Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1956.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *With Head and Heart: The Autobiography of Howard Thurman*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1979.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Jesus and the Disinherited*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1976.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Luminous Darkness: A Personal Interpretation of the Anatomy of Segregation and the Ground of Hope*. Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1965.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Mysticism and the Experience of Love*. Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill, 1961.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Search for Common Ground: An Inquiry into the Basis of Man's Experience of Community*. Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1971.
- Fluker, Walter E. *They Looked for a City: A Comparative Analysis of the Ideal of Community in the Thought of Howard Thurman and Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: University Press of America, 1989.
- Pollard, III, Alton B. *Mysticism and Social Change: The Social Witness of Howard Thurman*. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Studies in Religion, Culture, and Social Development, vol. 2. New York: Peter Lang, 1992.
- Smith, Jr., Luther E. *The Mystic as Prophet*. Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1991.
- Broussard, Albert S. *Black San Francisco: The Struggle for Racial Equality in the West, 1900-1954*. Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1993.
- Chapman, Mark L. *Christianity on Trial: African-American Religious Thought Before and After Black Power*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996.
- Dorrien, Gary. *The Making of American Liberal Theology: Idealism, Realism, and Modernity 1900-1950*.

## Supplemental Readings

Thurman, Howard. *Footprints of a Dream: The Story of The Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Deep River and the Negro Spiritual Speaks of Life and Death*. Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1975.

Boulware, Marcus H. *The Oratory of Negro Leaders: 1900-1968*. Westport, CT: Negro Universities Press, 1969.

Cauthen, Kenneth. *The Impact of American Religious Liberalism*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1962.

Johnson, Alonzo. *Good News for the Disinherited: Howard Thurman on Jesus of Nazareth and Human Liberation*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1997.

Lincoln, C. Eric and Mamiya, Lawrence H. *The Black Church in the African American Experience*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1990.

Sernett, Milton C., ed. *African American Religious History: A Documentary Witness*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1999.

Takaki, Ronald. *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*. Rev. ed. New York: Back Bay Books, 2008.

## Course Requirements/Expectations

1. Class Participation: involves prompt attendance, preparation, participation, and completion of assigned readings and projects by the chosen date. (10%)
2. Critical Reflection Papers: 4-5 page written reflections on the assigned text(s) that not only display evidence of the student's reading but also critiques the work of the author and answers how the student will integrate the ideas into her/his ministerial vocation. (25%)
3. Class Devotion: design a 10-15 min. devotional moment based on one of the meditations from Thurman's *Deep is the Hunger* that includes one or more of the following - quiet meditation, spoken prayer, music (sung or played), reading of sacred texts, display of art, or movement (15%)
4. Final Paper Proposal: submit a topic/preliminary thesis, outline, and sample bibliography for the course's final paper. (5%)
5. Final Paper: 20-25 page research paper that critically examines an aspect of Thurman's historical, theological or social significance. Be sure to use pertinent source material from Thurman and Thurman scholarship. The paper should include bibliography, footnotes/endnotes following the Kate Turabian style. The paper will be presented orally. Prior to this presentation, the researcher must submit her or his paper to a selected classmate, who will respond to the paper in class. (35%)
6. Response to a Final Paper: 2-3 page written reflection on the final paper of a selected classmate that includes the strengths, weaknesses and potential of that paper's position. This response will be presented orally and should generate healthy discussion. (10%)

**\*\* Those students in CH311 must perform items #2, #4, #5, and #6 cumulatively and from a historical perspective. Each of the critical reflection papers should build on the other, and the final paper should include an amalgamation of those papers' ideas (not the papers themselves) to support the argument of the final paper.**

## Course Outline

Feb. 2	Introduction, Overview of Syllabus
Feb. 9	Thurman's Early Years: Florida, Morehouse, Rochester <i>With Head and Heart</i> pp.1-61, Smith ch.1-2, Dorrien ch.2, 5-6 <b>Life of the Spirit Paper Due</b>
Feb. 16	Thurman's Ministry Part 1: Oberlin, Haverford, Atlanta, Washington D.C. <i>WHH</i> pp.63-100, Dorrien ch.7
Feb. 23	Thurman's Ministry Part 2: India, San Francisco, Boston <i>WHH</i> pp.101-270, Dorrien ch.8, Chapman Part 1, <i>Footprints</i> (optional) <b>WHH Reflection Paper Due</b>
March 2	Thurman's Theology Smith ch.3-4, <i>Deep River</i> (optional)
March 9	Thurman's "Jesus-ology" <i>Jesus and the Disinherited</i> <b>Thurman Theology Reflection Paper Due</b>
March 16	The Divine Encounter Part 1: Mysticism and Spiritual Disciplines <i>Disciplines of the Spirit</i> , Smith ch.5-6, <i>Mysticism and the Experience of Love</i> (sharepoint)
March 23	The Divine Encounter Part 2: Worship and Preaching Massey essay (sharepoint), <i>The Growing Edge</i> <b>Final Paper Proposal Due</b>
March 30	<b>No Class – Holy Week Break</b>
April 6	<b>No Class – Spring Break</b>
April 13	Thurman's Social Witness Part 1: The Luminous Darkness <i>The Luminous Darkness</i> , Chapman Part 2, Broussard reading (sharepoint)
April 20	Thurman's Social Witness Part 2: Creative Encounter in Common Ground <i>The Search for Common Ground</i> , <i>The Creative Encounter</i> , [Pollard/Fluker] <b>Final Papers Due to Respondents</b>
April 27	<b>Student Presentations</b>

May 4	<b>Student Presentations</b> <b>Final Papers Due</b> <b>Responses to Final Papers Due</b>
May 11	Closing Reflections, Evaluations