

 AMBROSE UNIVERSITY	Course Title:	Fall 2017
	Course ID: CS 660	
	Exploring the Dream Experience in Christian Spirituality	Prerequisite: none Credits: 3

MODULE FORMAT CLASS

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates
Days:	Mon. Nov. 6 - Fri. Nov. 10/17	Instructor:	Charles Nienkirchen, PhD	First day of classes: Mon. Nov. 6
Time:	9:00 am-4:00 pm	Email:	charles.nienkirchen@gmail.com	Last day to add/drop, or change to audit: 4 pm, Nov. 6
Room:	TBA	Phone:	403/410-2000 ext. 5905	Last day to request revised exam: n/a
Lab/Tutorial:	n/a	Office:	L2069	Last day to withdraw from course: 3 pm, Thurs. Nov. 9
Office Hours:	by appointment	Office Hours:	by appointment	Last day to apply for coursework extension: Fri. Dec. 22
Final Exam:	n/a			Last day of classes: Fri. Nov. 10

Course Description

This course surveys the significance and understanding of the dream experience in both the eastern and western Christian traditions. Special attention is given to the role of the dream in the spiritual journeys of prominent Christians, the dream and the death experience, as well as developing a Christian approach to dream interpretation. Students gain an appreciation for the value of the dream within a Christian worldview, as well as how to integrate dream interpretation with an understanding of one's own spiritual journey. Limited enrollment (20 persons).

Historians have generally ignored achievements originating from nocturnal inspiration, perhaps because the sleeping third of our lives is spent in a passive posture, not actively manipulating the external environment. Nevertheless, dreams have had a dramatic influence on almost every important aspect of our culture and history. Dream images have expanded our artistic, musical, and literary horizons, spurred generals to conquer empires, and led to inventions and industrial products that have revolutionized science and society. Dreams have also given us a basis for believing that there is a nonmaterial component to our existence which is not interrupted by physical death.

Robert Van De Castle, *Our Dreaming Mind*. (1994): 10-11.

The Christian church has been of two minds about dreams. The church has either taken dreams seriously as vehicles of God's revelations to humans or dismissed them as figments of the imagination, physical reactions to food eaten the night before, or visions given by the devil to seduce worthy people away from God. In its early years, the church vacillated between seeking respectability and drawing on its prophetic and mystical heritage. When church leaders sought respectability, they would push concerns with mystical elements, including dreams, off to the side in order to appear stable and mainstream. When they attended to the church's prophetic and mystical heritage, the church was relegated to the margins of society. This tension has remained in the church until the present day and, presumably will remain into the foreseeable future.

Geoff Nelson, *Dreaming in Church: Dream Work as a Spiritual Practice for Christians*. (2016): 65-66.

Expected Learning Outcomes

It is the aim of the course that students acquire the following:

1. an appreciation of the nature/significance of the dream experience in the biblical literature by examining selected dream texts in the OT and NT;

2. a comprehension of the historical perspectives on the dream experience within the eastern and western Christian traditions;
3. knowledge of the role and significance of the dream experience in the lives of individuals from diverse Christian traditions and time periods;
4. a capacity to reflect on the relevance of and guidelines for integrating the dream experience with his/her own spiritual journey;
5. an introductory proficiency in the use of dreamwork techniques applied to his/her own dream experience in a dreamography.

Textbooks

1. Russ Parker, *Healing Dreams: Their Power and Purpose in your Spiritual Life*. (SPCK Classic/2013)
2. Kelly Bulkeley, *Big Dreams: The Science of Dreaming and the Origins of Religion*. (Oxford University Press/2016).
3. Philip RussH. Wiebe, *Visions and Appearances of Jesus*. (Leafwood Publishers/2014).
4. J. Allan Hobson, *Dreaming: A Very Short Introduction*. (Oxford University Press/2003).
5. Steve W. Lockley & Russell G. Foster, *Sleep: A Very Short Introduction*. (Oxford University Press/2012).

Course Schedule

Day 1 A Personal Odyssey in Dreaming / Dreaming and the Scriptures

The 'Sin' of Dream Interpretation

Day 2 Dreams in the Eastern Christian Tradition

Dreams in the Western Christian Tradition

Day 3 Dreams in the Western Christian Tradition (cont'd)

Dream Vignettes of Prominent Christians

Day 4 Dream Vignettes (cont'd)

Dreams / Visions and the Death Experience

Day 5 Dreams and the Spiritual Journey

Requirements:

Prior to the course

The student should read:

Steven W. Lockley & Russell G. Foster, *Sleep: A Very Short Introduction*.

J. Allan Hobson, *Dreaming: A Very short Introduction*.

and watch online: the PBS Nova documentary-'*What are Dreams?*' at <https://vimeo.com/50488042>

A. a *dreamography* (10-12 pages) (30% of the final grade), the structure/content of which will be discussed in class

OR

a *research paper* (**approximately 10-12 pages**) (**30% of the final grade**) not including bibliography on some dimension of ‘Christian dreaming’ (subject to be chosen in consultation with the professor with respect for the student’s disciplinary interests). The paper needs to develop a thesis in response to a critical question raised, follow an acceptable scholarly format and include a bibliography with a minimum of 20 entries including books, monographs and peer reviewed journal articles.

B. a *review/response paper* (6-8 pages) on Parker, *Healing Dreams* which includes the following:

1. a summary of the thesis of the book and its relationship to the title/subtitle (3 marks);
 2. an identification of 3 critical issues raised by the book with respect to a ‘Christian’ view of dreaming. Think ‘within’ and ‘beyond’ the book (6 marks);
 3. a discussion of the strengths / weaknesses of the book (be specific!) (8 marks);
 4. a reflection on the theological / experimental/overall value of the book (3 marks);
- (20% of final grade)**

The title of this assignment is *Healing Dreams: A Guided Book Review*

C. a *review/response paper* (6-8 pages) on Bulkeley, *Big Dreams* which includes the following:

1. a summary of the thesis of the book and its relationship to the title/subtitle (3 marks);
 2. an indepth discussion of the development of the thesis (5 marks);
 3. an identification of the strengths / weaknesses of the book (be specific!) (8 marks);
 4. a reflection on the implications of the book for a ‘Christian worldview’ (4 marks);
- (20% of final grade)**

The title of this assignment is *Big Dreams: A Guided Book Review*

D. a *reading report* on 4 peer-reviewed scholarly articles of the students choice on dreaming (**20% of final grade**) which includes:

1. a complete bibliographical citation at the beginning of each report;
2. a summary of the thesis of each article; (1 mark)
3. a brief discussion of the main themes/ideas developed in each article; (2 marks)
4. an identification of at least 3 subjects which require further consideration/study on your part and why. (2 marks)

The title of this assignment is *A Reading Report: Scholarly Articles*

Note: if you are in doubt as to whether or not the article you have chosen is eligible for review, please consult with the instructor for approval so as not to run the risk of having an article disqualified when being graded! The articles chosen need to demonstrate a disciplinary spread of subjects so as to prevent a reduction of the grade.

E. an *assessment* of the value of Wiebe, *Visions and Appearances of Jesus* (2 pages) (10% of the final grade) in terms of your understanding of the dream/vision experience within a Christian perspective.

The title of this assignment is *Visions and Appearances of Jesus: An Assessment*

DUE DATE FOR ALL ASSIGNMENTS: Friday Jan. 26th/2018. No extensions will be given except in the case of extenuating circumstances to be determined by the instructor. All assignments must be completed and submitted to be eligible to receive a passing grade for the course.

Please submit all assignments in hard copy to the instructor.

Attendance:

Any student who is absent for more than one day in the course is not eligible to pass the course unless in the case of VERY extenuating circumstances which must be approved by the instructor

Grade Summary:

The available letters for course grades are as follows:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>
A+ (96-100)	
A (91-95)	Excellent
A- (86-90)	
B+ (82-85)	
B (75-81)	Good
B- (72-74)	
C+ (68-71)	
C (63-67)	Satisfactory
C- (60-62)	
D+ (56-59)	
D (50-55)	Minimal Pass
F (<50)	Failure

Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system. Printed grade sheets are not mailed out.

Other:

Selected Bibliography

Adams, Kate. "Voices in My Dreams: Children's Interpretation of Auditory Messages in Divine Dreams," *Dreaming* 15 (3) (2005): 195-204).

Adams, Kate et al. *Dreams and Spirituality: A Handbook for Ministry, Spiritual Direction and Counselling.* (Canterbury/2015).

Albertini, Tamara. 'Dreams, Visions, and Nightmares in Islam: From the Prophet Muhammad to the Fundamentalist Mindset,' in *Dreams and Visions: An Interdisciplinary Enquiry.* (Brill/2010): 167-82.

Bar, Jessica. *Willing to Know God: Dreamers and Visionaries in the Later Middle Ages.* (Ohio State University/2010).

- Barrett, D. 'Through a glass darkly: images of the dead in dreams,' *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying* 24 (2) (1991/1992): 97-109.
- Bevington, David. 'Dream and Vision in Shakespeare's Plays,' in *Dreams and Visions: An Interdisciplinary Enquiry*. (Brill/2010).
- Black, Joshua et al. 'Dreams of the Deceased: Can Themes be Reliably Coded?' *International Journal of Dream Research* 9 (2) (Oct. 2016): 110-14.
- Bloom, Harold. *Omens of Millenium: The Gnosis of Angels, Dreams and Resurrection*. (Riverhead/1996).
- Bovon, Francois. 'These Christians Who Dream: The Authority of Dreams in the First Centuries of Christianity,' in *Studies in Early Christianity*. (Mohr Siebeck/2003): 144-62.
- Bramer, Paul. 'Dreamwork in Spiritual Direction,' *The Covenant Quarterly* 70 (1-2) (Feb.-Mar. 2012): 73-84.
- Brueggeman, Walter. 'The Power of Dreams in the Bible: Holy Intrusion,' *Christian Century* 122 (2005): 28-31.
- Buck, Alice E. 'The Evolution and Function of the Dream.' *Journal of Religion and Psychological Research* 6 (1) (Jan. 1983): 23-46; 6 (2) (Apr. 1983): 94-117; 6 (3) (July 1983): 181-205.
- Bulkeley, Kelly. *The Wilderness of Dreams: Exploring the Religious Meaning of Dreams in Modern Western Culture*. (SUNY/1994).
- _____. *Spiritual Dreaming: A Cross-cultural and Historical Journey*. (Paulist/1995).
- _____, ed. *Among All These Dreamers: Essays on Dreaming and Modern Society*. (SUNY/1996).
- _____. *Visions of the Night: Dreams, Religion and Psychology*. (SUNY/1999).
- _____. *Transforming Dreams: Learning Spiritual Lessons from Dreams You Never Forget*. 1st ed. (Wiley/2000).
- _____. *Dreams of Healing: Transforming Nightmares into Visions of Hope*. (Paulist/2003).
- _____. *Dreaming the World's Religions: A Comparative History*. (New York University/2008).
- _____. 'The Religious Content of Dreams: A New Scientific Foundation,' *Pastoral Psychology* 58 (2008): 91-106.
- _____. 'Mystical Dreaming: Patterns in Form, Content and Meaning,' *Dreaming* 19 (2009): 30-41.
- _____, ed. *Dreams: A Reader on the Religious, Cultural, and Psychological Dimensions of Dreaming*. (Palgrave/2001)
- _____. 'Religious Worship and Dream Recall: New Results from a Survey of American Adults,' *Pastoral Psychology* 63 (2) (Apr. 2014): 123-32.
- _____. *Big Dreams: The Science of Dreaming and the Origins of Religion*. (Oxford University/2016).
- Bulkeley, Kelly and Patricia M. Buckley, *Children's Dreams: Understanding the Most Memorable Dreams and Nightmares of Childhood*. (Rowman and Littlefield/2012).
- Carr, D. M. *From D to Q: A Study of Early Jewish Interpretations of Solomon's Dream at Gibeon*. (SBL/1991).
- Chiel, Hillel J. 'Joseph, the Master of Dreams,' *Tradition* 39 (1) (Spring 2005): 5-20.

Cohen, Leonardo. 'Visions and Dreams: An Avenue for Ethiopians' Conversion to Catholicism at the Beginning of the Seventeenth Century,' *Journal of Religion in Africa* 39 (1) (2009): 4-29.

Costache, Doru. 'Stances on Sleep and Dreaming in the Athanasian Corpus,' *Phronema* 31 (1) (2016): 1-24.

Covitz, Joel. *Visions of the Night: A Study of Jewish Dream Interpretation*. (Shambhala/1990).

Cox Miller, Patricia. "'A Dubious Twilight': Reflections on Dreams in Patristic Literature," *Church History* 55 (1986): 153-64.

_____. *Dreams in Late Antiquity: Studies in the Imagination of a Culture*. (Princeton University/1997).

_____. 'Dreaming the Body: An Aesthetics of Asceticism,' in *Aesceticism*. (Oxford University/1998): 281-300.

Crook, R. Lyon and C. Wimmer. 'Spirituality and Dreamwork in Counselling: Clients' Experiences,' *Pastoral Psychology* 54 (1) 2005): 35-45.

Davis, Patricia M. 'Dreams and Visions in the Anglo-saxon Conversion,' *Dreaming* 15 (2) (June 2005): 75-88.

_____. 'The Weaning of Perpetua: Female Embodiment and Spiritual Growth Metaphor in the Dream of an Early Christian Martyr,' *Dreaming* 15 (4) (Dec. 2005): 261-70.

Davis, Patricia M. and Lewis R. Rambo. 'Conversion Dreams in Christianity and Islam,' in *Dreaming in Christianity and Islam: Culture, Conflict and Creativity*. (Rutgers University/2009): 175-87.

Davis, T. L. And C. E Hill, 'Spiritual and Nonspiritual Approaches to Dreamwork: Effects on Clients' Wellbeing,' *The Journal of Counselling and Development* 83 (2005): 492-503.

Delaney, Gayle. *Living Your Dreams: The Classic Bestseller on Becoming Your Own Dream Expert*. (Harper/1996).

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Doyle, Tom. *Dreams and Visions: Is Jesus Awakening the Muslim World?* (Thomas Nelson/2012)

Garfield, Patricia. *The Dream Messenger: How Dreams of the Departed Bring Healing Gifts*. (Simon & Schuster/1997).

_____. *The Universal Dream Key: The 12 Most Common Dream Themes Around the World*. (Cliff Street/2001).

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Graf, Fritz. 'Dangerous Dreaming: The Christian Transformation of Dream Incubation,' *Archiv fur Religionsgeschichte* 15 (1) (Mar. 2014): 117-42.

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- Hesz, Agnes. 'Hidden Messages – Dreams of the Dead as Indirect Communication,' in *Expressions of Belief*. (Equinox/2012): 140-60.
- Hobson, J. Allan. *Dreaming: A Very Short Introduction*. (Oxford University/2003).
- Holmes, Barbara. *Dreaming*. (Fortress/2012).
- Hoss, Robert. 'The Role of Dreams in Psychological Maintenance and Growth,' in *Dreams and Spirituality: A Handbook for Ministry, Spiritual Direction and Counselling*. (Canterbury/2015): 37-57.
- Howe, A.T. 'Dream Interpretation in Spiritual Guidance,' *The Journal of Pastoral Care* XL (3) (1986): 262-72.
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- _____. 'Dreams as Revelations: Food for Theological and Philosophical Thought,' in *Dreams and Spirituality: A Handbook for Ministry, Spiritual Direction and Counselling*. (Canterbury/2015): 3-15.
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- Parker, Russ. *Healing Dreams: Their Power and Purpose in your Spiritual Life*. (SPCK/2013).
- _____. *Visions in the Night: Hearing God in your Dreams*. (SPCK/2013).
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- Pirson, Ron. 'The Sun, the Moon and Eleven Stars: An Interpretation of Joseph's Second Dream,' in *Studies in the Book of Genesis*. (Leuven University/2001): 561-68.
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- Shulman, David and Guy S. Strousma, eds. *Dream Cultures: Explorations in the Comparative History of Dreaming*. (Oxford University/1999), especially ch. 10 'Dreams and Visions in Early Christian Discourse'.
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- Sullivan, K. *Recurring Dreams: A Journey to Wholeness*. (Crossing/1998).
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- Van Deusen, ed. *Dreams and Visions: An Interdisciplinary Inquiry*. (Brill/2010).
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- Wisniewski, Robert. 'Looking for Dreams and talking with Martyrs: The Internal Roots of Christian Incubation,' *Studia Patristica* (Peeters/2013): 203-08.
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Ambrose University Academic Policies:

Communication

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions. If students do not wish to use their Ambrose accounts, they will need to forward all messages from the Ambrose account to another personal account.

Registration

During the **Registration Revision Period** students may enter a course without permission, change the designation of any class from credit to audit and /or voluntary withdraw from a course without financial or academic penalty or record. Courses should be added or dropped on the student portal by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees.

Students intending to withdraw from a course after the Registration Revision Period must apply to the Office of the Registrar by submitting a "Request to Withdraw from a Course" form or by sending an email to the Registrar's Office by the **Withdrawal Deadline**; please consult the List of Important Dates on the my.ambrose.edu website. Students will not receive a tuition refund for courses from which they withdraw after the Registration Revision period. A grade of "W" will appear on their transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

Exam Scheduling

Students, who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a Revised Examination Request form to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; 2) the student has three final exams within three consecutive exam time blocks; 3) the scheduled final exam slot conflicts with an exam at another institution; 4) extenuating circumstances. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Electronic Etiquette

Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to use electronics for purposes unrelated to the course during a class session. Turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops should be used for class-related purposes only. Do not use iPods, MP3 players, or headphones. Do not text, read, or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. Some professors will not allow the use of any electronic devices in class. The professor has the right to disallow the student to use a laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a course Extension from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."

Appeal of Grade

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Registrar's Office in writing and providing the basis for appeal within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Note: Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.