

# ENGLISH 275: Spiritual Autobiographies

FALL 2018

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**Class Location:** L2084  
**Class Time:** W/F 2:30-3:45 pm  
**Office Location:** L2069  
**Office Hours:** T/Th 1-2 pm

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## Texts:

- Augustine. *Confessions*. Translated by Henry Chadwick, Oxford, 2008.
- Equiano, Olaudah. *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*. Edited by Angelo Costanzo, Broadview, 2004.
- Kempe, Margery. *The Book of Margery Kempe*. Translated by Anthony Bale, Oxford, 2015.
- Lewis, C.S. *Surprised by Joy*. Harper Collins, 1955.
- Weil, Simone. *Waiting for God*. Translated by Emma Craufurd, Harper & Row, 1973. (Online: <https://www.docdroid.net/o5cFukn/weil-waiting-for-god.pdf>)
- One additional text TBD

## Course Description:

An introduction through their own writings to the spiritual pilgrimages of several significant figures in the history of the church, this course also examines many of the key problems, such as the role of memory and the relation of fact to fiction, in the autobiographical genre. Representative works include Augustine's *Confessions*, Bunyan's *Grace Abounding*, as well as writings by anonymous saints of the Orthodox tradition and a variety of contemporary autobiographies.

## Learning Outcomes:

Diligent students will:

- become familiar with a variety of texts within the diverse Spiritual Autobiography genre
- know and be able to speak intelligently about the conventions that have defined this genre in different times and places
- practice close-reading in order to elucidate the intentions of a given author
- consider the role of memory and the relation of fact to fiction in the genre of Spiritual Autobiography
- develop skills related to working with others and to orally presenting materials in a compelling fashion
- further develop the skills required for academic writing

## Course Requirements:

- Professionalism: I prefer that you address me by my title, Professor or Dr. In turn, I will address you respectfully by your preferred name.
- Put your **phones** away! **Laptops**, too, are a source of distraction, and I prefer not to have them in my classroom. If you think you need your laptop, you are free to come talk to me to make your case for its usefulness.
- Readings must be completed before the class for which they are assigned (obviously!).
- Always bring a hardcopy of the assigned readings to class.

- In addition to the assigned readings, you are responsible for the content of all lectures on the religious, historical, and literary backgrounds of these readings.
- Any student who misses more than eight class sessions will automatically fail the course.
- Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date specified in hard copy and via Moodle (where applicable). Extensions may be granted on assignments in exceptional circumstances, but these must be arranged for in advance.
- The late penalty for assignments is one refined letter grade per class day late. Moreover, late assignments may be graded later than on-time submissions.
- All assignments must be submitted to receive a passing course grade.
- The most current version of this syllabus will always be available on Moodle. You are responsible for any changes to it announced in class.

### Course Evaluation:

#### *Participation – 10%*

Participation is your visible engagement with the class and the texts: look alert, ask questions, share your thoughts, and visit the professor’s office to discuss the course material and your work. Participation requires regular attendance: skip classes and your grade will suffer.

#### *“Pears” Assignment – 5%*

You will write a 2-page ‘autobiographical’ exploration of a critical and possibly symbolic episode in your life. Details to follow.

#### *Short Essay – 20%*

You will write a short essay (5-6 pages) on one (or more) of the texts assigned in the course. Details to follow.

#### *Midterm examination – 20%*

You will write a midterm exam consisting of quotation-based and paragraph-answer questions about the texts we have read.

#### *Group Presentation – 20%*

In groups of two, three, or four, you will read a Spiritual Autobiography of your (collective) choice and then present on that text to the class. Details to follow.

#### *Final examination – 25%*

The final exam will be comprehensive of the entire course. You will write it on **Thursday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 9 am-12 pm, in Airhart.**

### Grading Scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description	Letter Grade	Percentage	Description
A+	96-100	Excellent	C+	68-71	Satisfactory
A	91-95	Excellent	C	63-67	Satisfactory
A-	86-90	Excellent	C-	60-62	Satisfactory
B+	82-85	Good	D+	56-59	Poor
B	75-81	Good	D	50-55	Minimum Pass
B-	72-74	Good	F	0-49	Failure

Because of the nature of the Alpha 4.00 system, there can be no uniform University-wide conversion scale. The relationship between raw scores (e.g. percentages) and the resultant letter grade will depend on the nature of the course and the instructor’s assessment of the level of each class, compared to similar classes taught previously.

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

## Course Schedule:

Date	Dates	Reading	Assignment
<b>Sept.</b>			
5		Introductions	
7	354-430	Augustine, <i>Confessions</i> (Books 1-3)	
12		Augustine, <i>Confessions</i> (Books 4-6)	
14		Augustine, <i>Confessions</i> (Books 7-9)	
16		Last day to add/drop with tuition refund	
19		Augustine, <i>Confessions</i>	
21	c.1373-1438	Kempe, <i>The Book of Margery Kempe</i> (Proem, Chs. 1-7, 9-11, 13, 16, 19)	
26		Kempe, <i>The Book of Margery Kempe</i> (Chs. 23-24, 28-29, 33, 36, 38, 48, 56, 64-68)	"Pears" Assignment due
28		Kempe, <i>The Book of Margery Kempe</i> (Chs. 75-81, 88-89)	
<b>Oct.</b>			
3		Spiritual Emphasis Day	No Classes
5	1745-1797	Equiano, <i>The Interesting Narrative</i> (pp. 41-91)	
10		Equiano, <i>The Interesting Narrative</i> (pp. 93-145)	
12		Equiano, <i>The Interesting Narrative</i> (pp. 148-209)	<b>Kempe Short Essay Due</b>
17		Equiano, <i>The Interesting Narrative</i> (pp. 210-253)	
19		No Readings	<i>Midterm Exam</i>
22		Last day to request revised time for final exam	
24	1898-1963	Lewis, <i>Surprised by Joy</i> (pp. xi-66)	
26		Lewis, <i>Surprised by Joy</i> (pp. 67-142)	
31		Lewis, <i>Surprised by Joy</i> (pp. 143-222)	<b>Equiano Short Essay Due</b>
<b>Nov.</b>			
2		Lewis, <i>Surprised by Joy</i> (pp. 223-291)	
7		Fall Reading Week	No Classes
9		Fall Reading Week	No Classes
12		Last day to withdraw from courses without academic penalty	
14	1909-1943	Weil, <i>Waiting for God</i> (pp. vii-xi, 43-60)	
16		Weil, <i>Waiting for God</i> (pp. 61-83)	<b>Lewis Short Essay Due</b>
21		Weil, <i>Waiting for God</i> (pp. 84-101)	
23		No Readings	<i>Group Presentations</i>
28		No Readings	<i>Group Presentations</i>
30		No Readings	<i>Group Presentations</i>
<b>Dec.</b>			
5		No Readings	<i>Group Presentations</i>
7		Conclusions	

## **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](mailto: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. 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.