

ST. MARY'S ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE
Spring 2018

Saturdays: Jan 27; Feb 3, 10; Mar 3, 10, 17; Apr 7

8:30 am - 1:30 pm

SP/ST609 Spiritual Theology: The Apophatic Way

Dr. John M. Hayes

Course Description: This course is intended to provide an introduction to the practice and history of apophatic spirituality, and an immersion in the works of several writers in the Christian mystical tradition whose writings emphasizes the ineffable unknowability of God: Augustine, Bonaventure, Meister Eckhart, the anonymous author of the Cloud of Unknowing, and John of the Cross.

Course Requirements:

Reading requirements: Total reading assigned will be less than 900 pages.

Writing requirements: Students will write seven one-page reflection papers on their reading (40% of final grade), and one twelve-page research paper (50% of final grade).

Other requirements or activities expected of students and contributing to final grade: Willingness to engage creatively in class discussion and experiential exercises is essential to successful achievement of the goals of this class (10% of final grade).

Required texts:

The Darkness of God: Negativity in Christian Mysticism, (1995), Denys Turner, Cambridge University Press. (ISBN 0-521-64561-1)

Augustine of Hippo, Selected Writings, translation and introduction by Mary T. Clark (1984), Paulist Press. (ISBN 0-8091-2573-0)

Bonaventure: The Soul's Journey Into God, The Tree of Life, The Life of St. Francis, translation and introduction by Ewart Cousins (1978) Paulist Press. (ISBN 0-8091-2121-2)

Meister Eckhart, Selected Writings, translation and selection by Oliver Davies (1994), Penguin Press. (ISBN-10: 0140433430)

The Cloud of Unknowing, with the Book of Privy Counsel, translation by Carmen Acevedo Butcher (2009), Shambala. (ISBN 978-1-59030-622-2)

John of the Cross, Selected Writings, edited with introduction by Kieran Kavanagh (1988), Paulist Press. (ISBN 0-8091-2839-X)