



BRES 3116: Seeing the Self: Spirituality and the 12 Steps

Tuesday, September 22, 2026

1:00 PM, 2:00 PM, 3:00 PM

McInteer 150

Dr. Kevin Burr, Teacher of Record

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Syllabus

1. Course Description:

This course examines how the psalms function in the life of the ancient Israel, the early church, and the body of Christ today. Read as psalter and prayer book, we will discuss how the psalms shape and proclaim the identities of Messiah Jesus and the Church.

2. Learning Outcomes: By the end of this seminar, you should be able to:

- ☐ Explain how the psalms served ancient Israelites as their hymnal, prayer book, and a book of prophecy looking forward to God's work in the future.
- ☐ Explain how the psalms served the earliest Christians by laying out the prophetic plan of God's decisive work in Jesus.
- ☐ Explain how the psalms serve the Church today by giving voice to our longings for God's presence and expectations for God's work.
- ☐ Write a book review reflecting on the use of the psalms in the Church today (see reading assignment below)
- ☐ Write a personal reflection on two psalms (see below)
- ☐ Write a reflection essay

3. **Reading Assignments:** Ethan C. Jones, *Psalms in an Age of Distraction: Experiencing the Restorative Power of Biblical Poetry* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2024)
4. **All assignments will be submitted on Canvas. Canvas course opens September 21. Last day to submit assignments is Friday October 16.**

Grading

- Submit lecture notes (20%)
- 1000-word book review of *Psalms in an Age of Distraction: Experiencing the Restorative Power of Biblical Poetry* which includes a summary of the book's purpose, discussion of the major topics in the book, and your critical assessment of whether the author effectively met his goals in writing the book. Your review should also demonstrate fluent familiarity with the first three Learning Outcomes listed above. (30%)
- 500-word personal reflection on two of the psalms from the book *Psalms in the Age of Distraction*. This personal reflection should include how the two psalms from the book (Psalms 1; 3; 8; 13; 42; 62; 73; 96; 104; 150) give voice to a spiritually impactful time in your life or resonate with you on your spiritual journey. (30%)
- 500-word reflection essay on your main takeaways from the course including any resolutions you are making personally having read this book and taken this seminar . (20%)

Academic Integrity Policy: Cheating in all its forms is inconsistent with Christian faith and practice and will result in sanctions up to and including dismissal from the class with a failing grade. The use of generative AI tools is not permitted for any assigned work in this class and constitutes a violation of Harding's Academic Integrity Policy.

Assessment: Harding University, since its charter in 1924, has been strongly committed to providing the best resources and environment for the teaching-learning process. The board, administration, faculty, and staff are wholeheartedly committed to full compliance with all Criteria of Accreditation of the Higher Learning Commission as well as standards of many discipline-specific specialty accrediting agencies. The university values continuous, rigorous assessment at every level for its potential to improve student learning and achievement and for its centrality in fulfilling the stated mission of Harding. Thus, a comprehensive assessment program has been developed that includes both the academic units and the administrative and educational support units. Course-specific student learning outcomes contribute to student achievement of program-specific learning outcomes that support student achievement of holistic university learning outcomes. All academic units design annual assessment plans

centered on measuring student achievement of program learning outcomes used to sequentially improve teaching and learning processes. Additionally, a holistic assessment of student achievement of university learning outcomes is coordinated by the university Director of Assessment and Testing used to spur continuous improvement of teaching and learning.

Students with Disabilities: It is the policy for Harding University to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law. Therefore, any student with a *documented disability* condition (e.g. physical, learning, or psychological) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the instructor and the Office of Disability Services and Educational Access at the *beginning* of each semester. If the diagnosis of the disability occurs during the academic year, the student must self-identify with the Office of Disability Services and Educational Access *as soon as possible* in order to get academic accommodations in place for the remainder of the semester. The Office of Disability Services and Educational Access is located in Room 239 in the Student Center, telephone, (501) 279-4019.