

Course Unit Outline	
Unit Code	S7350
Unit Name	Christian Spiritual Wisdom
Unit Weighting	9
Type of Unit	Specialised
Prerequisites, corequisites or exclusions	Nil
Academic Staff	David Ranson Theol.M (MCD, 1998), PhD (ACU, 2009), Senior Lecturer; Carmel Davis DipOT (Sydney, 1976); BA (Hons) (Macquarie, 1995), PhD (Macquarie, 2001), Lecturer
Curriculum Objectives	This course unit presents a developed and critical survey of the major historical schools of spirituality and prayer within the Western Christian Spiritual Tradition with particular reference to their writers and texts and explores their contribution to their contemporary expression of Christian Spirituality.
Learning Outcomes	At the end of this unit students will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify various genres of spiritual writing 2. Compare a number of primary texts of selected authors whose spiritual works have become “classics” in the Christian Spiritual tradition 3. Distinguish key themes and imagery in the selected texts and determine their sources 4. Explore the theological foundations of the selected authors’ spiritual doctrine, and explore the relationship between the selected texts and their historical and cultural context 5. Restate the wisdom of the selected historical texts into a contemporary context for the benefit of spiritual formation and personal practice
Threshold concept to be acquired in this unit	The intrinsic inter-relationship between spiritual expression and culture
Content	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The notion of classic in Christian Spirituality 2) Research methodology pertinent to ancient spiritual texts 3) Precursors to the Western Spiritual Tradition 4) Texts within the Tradition including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Writings of the Medieval English School: Julian of Norwich and the Cloud of Unknowing • The Carmelite School: Theresa of Avila and John of the Cross • Post Reformation Perspectives • Early Twentieth Century Contributions
Learning Activities	Lectures, Tutorials, Student Presentations
Required Specialist Facilities or Equipment	Nil
Assessment Profile	In this unit, the assessment tasks will involve students: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identifying and explaining the various genres of spiritual writing (e.g. in a seminar presentation) (Outcomes 1 and 2) 2. Research the manner in which a particular theme is developed through a particular school of spiritual writing or by an author within the one school of spirituality (e.g. in a major essay) (Outcomes 2, 3 and 4) 3. Exploring how a theme within an historical perspective in Christian Spirituality might be conveyed to a modern audience for the benefit for their spiritual formation (e.g. in a major essay) (Outcome 5)
Representative References	

In addition to primary and secondary texts of selected schools and writers:

- 1) Casey, Michael. *Towards God: The Western Tradition of Contemplation*. Melbourne: Collins Dove, 1989
- 2) Coon, Lynda L. *Sacred Fictions: Holy women and hagiography in late antiquity*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1997.
- 3) Costello, S. *The Search for Spirituality: Seven Paths within the Catholic Tradition*. Dublin: Liffey, 2003.
- 4) Davis, Carmel. *Mysticism and Space*. Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2008.
- 5) Dreyer, Elizabeth and Mark J. Burrows. *Minding the Spirit: The study of Christian spirituality*. Washington, D.C: John Hopkins University Press, 2003.
- 6) Ellsberg, Robert. *Modern Spiritual Masters: Writings on contemplation and compassion*. Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 2008.
- 7) Hall, C. A. *Learning Theology with the Church Fathers*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 2002.
- 8) Hamilton, B. *Religion in the Medieval West*. Second Edition. London: Hodder, 2003.
- 9) McGinn, Bernard. *The Flowering of Mysticism: Men and women in the new mysticism*. Volume 3 of the *The Presence of God: A history of Western Christian mysticism*. New York: Crossroad, 1998.
- 10) Penrose, M. *Refreshing Water from Ancient Wells*. New York: Paulist Press, 2005.