Dr. Veta Goler  
409 Cosby  
404/270-5473  
vgorer@spelman.edu

Class meets Mondays 6 to 8:40 pm, Fine Arts 206  
Office hours: Monday 4-5, Tuesday 1-3,  
or by appointment

Art when really understood is the province of every human being. It is  
simply a question of doing things, anything, well.  
—Robert Henri

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course introduces students to the world of contemplative practices (such as  
meditation and journaling), to artists who create through inward-focused processes,  
and to the art they produce. Both practical, hands-on learning experiences and analytic  
learning experiences will enable students to experiment with their own creativity as  
they explore artistic processes and learn about and experience contemplative practices.  
CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICES AND THE ARTS fulfills the divisional Arts core  
requirement for all students.

COURSE GOALS
My hope is that CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICES AND THE ARTS will help you develop the  
ability to approach learning holistically—with both intuitive/heart-centered and  
intellectual ways of knowing—and to apply holistic learning in other areas of study.  
The goals of the course are to:
1) introduce you to various contemplative practices—with an emphasis on meditation  
and journaling,
2) increase your understanding of artists who work with contemplative practices,
3) expose you to art created contemplatively and art with spiritual themes,
4) encourage you to explore your own creativity in various art forms, and
5) empower you to develop a means of presenting yourself, your experiences, and your  
analyses and understandings in a variety of creative formats.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
Upon successful completion of the requirements of this course, you will be able to:
- utilize meditation, journaling and other contemplative practices effectively;
- articulate ideas and communicate meaning through practiced use of language and  
voice—in written, oral and multimedia forms;
- identify and discuss artists working in various genres who create contemplatively  
and/or incorporate spiritual themes in their work;
- reflect on and articulate your understanding and analysis of artistic products and  
creative projects done contemplatively;
- pursue creative acts of expression and discovery informed by diverse ways of knowing  
about the world;
- develop an electronic presentation of your experiences, reflective processes, creative  
projects and learning.

FOURTH HOUR JUSTIFICATION
This four-credit course meets for only three contact hours each week. To complete the  
contact hours and provide the rigor of a four-credit course, additional learning will take  
place in out-of-class assignments, practices, and experiences.
I include this quote because I view the learning process as an interactive endeavor in which you and I both have responsibilities. My role is to prepare assignments and facilitate class activities that I believe will be effective in the learning process, to evaluate your work in a timely manner, and to create a safe space in which everyone can be who she (or he) is and freely contribute to the class. Your role in the learning process is to complete assignments on time, attend class sessions and out-of-class events, and share your thoughts, knowledge and questions—substantively—in discussions and activities.

This is not a time to live without a practice. It is a time when all of us will need the most faithful, self-generated enthusiasm (enthusiasm: to be filled with god) in order to survive in human fashion. Whether we reach this inner state of recognized divinity through prayer, meditation, dancing, swimming, walking, feeding the hungry or enriching the impoverished is immaterial. We will be doubly bereft without some form of practice that connects us, in a caring way, to what begins to feel like a dissolving world.

—Alice Walker

The requirements for this course include:

1. **Meditation and Journaling Practices**: regular practices of meditation and Morning Pages (described in *The Artist’s Way*) along with a Journal and a Meditation Log.

You will be meditating and engaging in other contemplative practices within and outside of class, and reflecting on and tracking your practices. In your private Journal (for your eyes only), you will write Morning Pages at least three times each week. You should also bring your Journal to class, as you will be expected to write down your experiences of meditating and doing other contemplative practices in class.

In addition, you will meditate for at least 15 minutes every day and will track your meditations, noting dates and lengths—along with any experiences you care to share with me—in an online Meditation Log, which I will read. I will review your Meditation Log twice during the semester. I encourage you to write down private thoughts about your meditation experiences in your Journal, which only you will see.

I also encourage you to write in your Journal your reactions to various course activities and experiences, your responses to performances, the gallery visit, the Hahn Woods visit, and Moodle reflections, as well as any other related thoughts you have. Keeping notes about these will help you with your various reflection papers and with your Digital Narrative project.
2. **Moodle Reflections**: postings of your responses to prompts based on *The Artist’s Way* and other readings and experiences, as well as occasional responses to classmates’ postings. You will post a substantive entry (of at least 300 words) by 11 pm each Thursday and Sunday.

3. **Arts Viewing Experiences**: attendance at three on-campus performances—the NBAF production of *Doxology Ring Shout*, the Drama and Dance production of *Shakespeare In the Park*, and Spelman Dance Theatre’s fall concert—and a visit to the current exhibit of the Spelman Museum of Fine Art, *Brides of Anansi: Fiber and Contemporary Art*. You will submit extended Reflections postings for each on Moodle.

4. **Contemplative Arts and Research Explorations**: participation in all in-class contemplative arts experiences, two out-of-class "Artist Dates" and a Digital Sabbath experience—with extended Reflections on these—and research for creative projects.

5. **An Observation Paper (3-5 pages)**, in which you write about your experiences of the hour-long observation exercise and the museum exhibit, and any insights that arose.

6. **Two Reflection Papers (3-5 pages each)**, one on your meditation and Morning Pages practices and one on your experiences of contemplative computing.

7. **A Creativity Project**, in which you use contemplative practice to create a work of art (in any genre). You will work on the piece over the semester and will perform or present it during the final exam period, on Monday, December 8, 6 to 8 pm. If needed, you should be able to photograph or record the completed work for presentation to the class, and if you like, inclusion in your Digital Narrative. I encourage you to document your process of creation in your Journal as you will also write a two-page paper discussing your approach, practices, goals, and experience of creating.

8. **A Digital Narrative**: such as a webpage, Facebook page, or blog (on the blogging website of your choice—Blogger, Wordpress, Wix, etc.) or a video and screen capture project (with Camtasia or other software), that tracks your experience and understanding of "the contemplative" over the course of the semester. You will complete the project in several steps, a paragraph of your idea, a draft, and the final project, which you will present in class on Monday, December 1.

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**REQUIRED TEXTS & A NOTE ABOUT READINGS**


I will post additional required readings about contemplative practice—in general and specifically related to various topics—on Moodle for you to read. These readings are taken from some of the texts listed in the "Other Resources of Interest" section.
ARTIST FOR A SEMESTER

Although we will be learning about professional artists and their work this semester, I believe that you will get the most from this course by approaching it as if you are an artist for a semester. Some of you are artists—you’re musicians or poets or sculptors or dancers—and may be majoring in an art form. Others of you may not consider yourselves to be artists and may be majoring in a “non-art” discipline. I love the Robert Henri quote at the beginning of the syllabus because it means that all of us can be artists if we bring our passion and skill to our efforts. So, I invite you to think of your major discipline—or whatever focus of study or activity you choose—as your art. See how you can apply some of the concepts and contemplative practices to deepen your experience of your chosen art form.

This is an absolute necessity for anybody today. You must have a room, or a certain hour or so a day, where you don’t know what was in the newspapers that morning, you don’t know who your friends are, you don’t know what you owe anybody, you don’t know what anybody owes you. This is a place where you can simply experience and bring forth what you are and what you might be. This is the place of creative incubation. At first you may find that nothing happens there. But if you have a sacred place and use it, something eventually will happen.

—Joseph Campbell

COURSE POLICIES

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<td>a course that meets only once a week. Therefore,</td>
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<td>two absences will lower your participation grade</td>
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<td>by one letter. Three absences will lower it an</td>
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<td>additional letter. If you miss four or more classes, you</td>
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<td>will have earned a grade of zero for participation—20% of your grade. Also, habitual tardiness will not be tolerated. Two tardies equal one absence.</td>
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A Note about Lateness

I have structured class sessions so that we learn contemplatively as we learn about contemplative practices and the arts. Because all aspects of the class contribute to deepening awareness and knowledge, it is important that you arrive in time to participate in everything we do. If you happen to arrive for class during meditation, please wait quietly outside the door until it is opened. I encourage you to use this time to bring yourself fully present for class by doing some simple stretches or deep breathing exercises.

All written assignments are to be submitted on the class Moodle site—papers, via Turnitin links. Grades for late assignments will be lowered one letter for each day late. Assignments received more than 72 hours after they are due will receive grades of zero.

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I was never drawn to participate in sacred dance classes. I feared my irreverence, cynicism, and snobbery. Little did I realize that my problem was linguistic. Sacred dancing is redundant.

—Deborah Haynes

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Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

As you might imagine, a class focusing on contemplative practices can seem at odds with the technology that is such an important part of our lives. Our technological devices encourage us to spread our attention and contemplative practices help us to focus. You will see that Pang's book is designed to help us use electronic devices contemplatively. Your attention and presence are important and expected during this class. So I am asking that you set aside some typical ways of being during our class sessions.

First, please turn your cell phone off—not to "vibrate," which is still audible—and place it out of sight before you come to class. A ringing or vibrating cell phone will equal a tardy. We will have a pause in the middle of the class, where you may check in with others, if needed.

Next, please let me know if you are reading your books electronically. If so, you may use your laptop, iPad or cell phone in class. But, if it appears that you are texting, checking email or Facebook, or are focusing somewhere other than this class, you will lose the privilege of using technological devices in class for the rest of the semester.

Finally, studies show that students who take notes on their laptops do less well than those who taken notes by hand. IJS...

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Academic Integrity (from Spelman College Bulletin)

At the heart of Spelman College's mission is academic excellence, along with the development of intellectual, ethical and leadership qualities. These goals can only flourish in an institutional environment where every member of the College affirms honesty, trust, and mutual respect. All members of the academic community of Spelman College are expected to understand and follow the basic standards of honesty and integrity, upholding a commitment to high ethical standards. Students are expected to read and abide by the Spelman College Code of Conduct (see the Spelman College Student Handbook) and are expected to behave as mature and responsible members of the Spelman College academic community. Students are expected to follow ethical standards in their personal conduct and in their behavior towards other members of the community. They are expected to observe basic honesty in their work, words, ideas, and actions. Failure to do so is a violation of the Spelman College Academic Integrity Policy.
STUDENT DISABILITIES
Spelman College is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs. If you have a documented disability (or think you may have a disability) and, as a result, need a reasonable accommodation to participate in class, complete course requirements, or benefit from the College’s programs or services, you should contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) as soon as possible. To receive any academic accommodation, you must be appropriately registered with ODS. The ODS works with students confidentially and does not disclose any disability-related information without their permission. ODS serves as a clearinghouse on disability issues and works in partnership with faculty and all other student service offices. For further information about services for students with disabilities, please contact the ODS at 404-270-5289 (voice), located in MacVicar Hall, Room 106.

OTHER RESOURCES OF INTEREST
**COURSE OUTLINE — DAN 209 CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICES AND THE ARTS — FALL 2014**

*Course content may vary from this syllabus to meet the needs of this particular class. I will notify you in class if this is the case.*

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
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<th>Topic</th>
<th>To Prepare for Class</th>
<th>What's Due</th>
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| 1    | 8/25  | Introductions; What is Contemplative Practice?; Setting up a Meditation Practice | - Barbezat & Bush (Moodle)  
- Pang "Introduction"  
- Piver pages 3-15, 103-109  
- Avoiding Plagiarism (Moodle) | - Reflections: 11 pm Thurs; 11 pm Sun.  
*Readings due 8/28* | - Meditation: Goler (Moodle) |
| 2    | 9/1   | **Labor Day Holiday — NO CLASS, but work continues**  
Moodle Reflection Focus: Entering into Practice | - Pang chap. 1  
- Cameron "Basic Tools" (9-24) | - Reflections: 11 pm Thurs; 11 pm Sun.  
*Prompt posted 9/2* | - Start Morning Pages  
- Continue meditating |
| 3    | 9/8   | Why Do Contemplative Practice?; More Practices; Course Intention  
Moodle Reflection Focus: Safety | - Pang chap. 2  
- Piver "Shamatha"  
- Cameron chap. 1 |   | - Meditation: Shamatha (Moodle)  
- Observation Exercise 9/9-15  
- Doxology Ring Shout 9/13 and 14 |
| 4    | 9/15  | Contemplative Computing and Research (Jordan Moore visits); Labyrinth  
Moodle Reflection Focus: Identity | - Labyrinth readings (Moodle)  
- Pang chap. 5  
- Cameron chap. 2 | - Reflections: 11 pm Thurs; 11 pm Sun. | - Brides of Anansi Museum Exhibit 9/16-21 |
| 5    | 9/22  | Contemplative Practice and Dance: Dianne McIntyre  
Moodle Reflection Focus: Integrity | - Goler lecture (Moodle)  
- Pang chap. 6  
- Piver “Vipassana”  
- Cameron chap. 3 | - Reflections: 11 pm Thurs; 11 pm Sun.  
- Letter to McIntyre | - Meditation: Vipassana (Moodle)  
- Artist Date 9/23-29 |
| 6    | 9/29  | Contemplative Practice and Visual Artists: Missionary Mary Proctor and Minnie Evans  
Moodle Reflection Focus: Possibility | - Proctor and Evans readings and videos (Moodle)  
- Pang chap. 7  
- Cameron chap. 4 | - Reflections: 11 pm Thurs; 11 pm Sun.  
- Contemplative Collage | - Digital Sabbath 9/30-10/5  
- Shakespeare in the Park 10/2-5 |
| 7    | 10/6  | Contemplative Practice and Music: Alice Coltrane  
Moodle Reflection Focus: Power | - Coltrane readings (Moodle)  
- Piver "Zazen"  
- Cameron chap. 5  
- Pang chap. 8 | - Observation Paper (10/10)  
- Meditation Logs and Reflections (10/12) | - Meditation: Zazen (Moodle) |
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| 8    | 10/13   | **FALL BREAK — NO CLASS, but work continues**                       | -Cameron chap. 6                                                      | -**Reflections:** 11 pm Thurs.  
**Prompt posted 10/15**            | -Homecoming                        |
|      |         | Moodle Reflection Focus: Abundance                                   |                                                                       |                                                                            |                                      |
| 9    | 10/20   | Contemplative Visual Art Experience                                 | -Mandala Readings (Moodle)  
-Piver “Metta”  
-Cameron chap. 7 | -**Reflections:** 11 pm Thurs.; 11 pm Sun.  
-Creativity Project idea (Wed. 10/22) | -Meditation: Metta (Moodle)  
-Nature Field Trip: Hahn Woods 10/26 |
|      |         | Moodle Reflection Focus: Connection                                 |                                                                       |                                                                            |                                      |
| 10   | 10/27   | Silence as Contemplative Practice                                   | - Smith, Tippett, and Iyer pieces (Moodle)  
-Cameron chap. 9 | -**Reflections:** 11 pm Thurs.; 11 pm Sun.  
-Homecoming                        |                                      |
|      |         | Moodle Reflection Focus: Compassion                                 |                                                                       |                                                                            |                                      |
| 11   | 11/3    | Contemplative Practice and Writing                                  | -Walker essay (Moodle)  
-Piver “Tonglen”  
-Cameron chap. 8 | -Digital Narrative idea (11/4)  
-Homecoming                        | -Meditation: Tonglen (Moodle)  
-Artist Date 11/4-10  
—VOTE—                              |
|      |         | Moodle Reflection Focus: Strength                                   |                                                                       |                                                                            |                                      |
| 12   | 11/10   | Mind and Body Together: Contemplative Movement, Drawing and Thinking | -Reading TBA (Moodle)  
-Cameron chap. 10 | -Conscious Computing Paper (11/12)  
-**Reflections:** 11 pm Thurs.; 11 pm Sun.  
-Homecoming                        |                                      |
|      |         | Moodle Reflection Focus: Self-Protection                            |                                                                       |                                                                            |                                      |
| 13   | 11/17   | Contemplative Seeing and Listening                                  | -Ziegler and Francis pieces (Moodle)  
-Piver "Healing"  
-Cameron chap. 11 | -Digital Narrative Draft (in class)  
-**Reflections:** 11 pm Thurs.; 11 pm Sun.  
-Homecoming                        | -Meditation: Healing (Moodle)  
-Spelman Dance Theatre 11/20-23                                         |
|      |         | Moodle Reflection Focus: Autonomy                                   |                                                                       |                                                                            |                                      |
| 14   | 11/24   | Contemplative Practice and Daily Life                               | -Mindful Eating essay (Moodle)  
-Cameron chap. 12 | -Meditation/Morning Pages Paper (11/25)  
-Happy Thanksgiving!           |                                      |
|      |         | Moodle Reflection Focus: Faith                                      |                                                                       |                                                                            |                                      |
| 15   | 12/1    | Digital Narrative Presentations; Course Wrap-Up                    | -Kempton essay (Moodle)  
-Cameron chap. 12 | -Completed Digital Narrative  
-**Reflections:** 6 pm Mon. 12/1 | -Completed Digital Narrative  
-Meditation Logs all due Mon. 12/8 |
|      |         | Moodle Reflection Focus: Intention vs. Experience                   |                                                                       |                                                                            |                                      |
| 16   | Mon. 6-8 pm | Creativity Project Presentations                              |                                                                       |                                                                            |                                      |
|      | 12/8    |                                                                            |                                                                       |                                                                            |                                      |