

Friday @ the Center: May 19, 2006

Theology Mini-Courses

Register now to take up to three theology mini-courses on the SPU Foundations courses. In our attempts to facilitate faithful learning in our classrooms, it is important that we are aware of the foundational concepts and beliefs on which our university curriculum rests. Contact Becky Crook (bcrook@spu.edu) to register for any of the courses listed below. Each course will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. All reading material, coffee and lunch, and a \$100 stipend will be provided. **Registration deadlines: June 5** (for June Courses), **August 7** (for September courses). Priority registration to full-time faculty, but adjunct faculty are welcome to register to attend if space allows.

Monday, June 19

UFDN 1000: Christian Formation, led by Jeff Keuss and Bob Drov Dahl

Tuesday, June 20

UFDN 2000: Christian Scriptures, led by Rob Wall and Dave Nienhuis

Wednesday, June 21

UFDN 3100: Christian Theology, led by Rick Steele and Doug Koskela

Tuesday, September 5

UFDN 1000: Christian Formation, led by Jeff Keuss and Sara Koenig

Wednesday, September 6

UFDN 2000: Christian Scriptures, led by Dave Nienhuis and Sara Koenig

Thursday, September 7

UFDN 3100: Christian Theology, led by Rick Steele and Priscilla Pope-Levison

Teaching Tip: Students' Mistaken Self Perceptions

A recent essay in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* by David Dunning, professor of psychology at Cornell, reports on research establishing the extent to which students are poor judges of their knowledge and skills. Students tend to overestimate their abilities even when they are trying to evaluate themselves honestly. Dunning notes, "Evidence points out just how unaware incompetent people are of their shortcomings. When we give students tests of logic, grammar, and interpreting others' body language, those performing at the bottom usually think they are doing better than a majority of their peers. Similarly students who have done badly on a college exam typically think they did well." The paradox is that when people are incompetent at something, they are often also incompetent to judge their own competence. Dunning suggests four approaches that faculty might take to this common problem: 1) Discontinue standard educational practices that promote overconfidence, such as intense training sessions or drills that promote a rapid acquisition of a skill that is not retained. Instead, use distributed training spaced out over time. (i.e., many tests that cumulatively build rather than a midterm and final). 2) Provide explicit opportunities for students to test themselves (i.e., self-tests). 3) Ask students to compare how they handle a task with how other people handle the same task (metacognition activities), and 4) Require students to solicit feedback from their peers. Believe it or not, peer evaluations are closer to teachers' evaluations than self-evaluations. (David Dunning, "Not Knowing Thyself," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 5 May 2006: B24.

Don't Forget . . .

To remind suitable students to attend the Fulbright Information Session on Tuesday, May 23, from 5 until 6, Library Seminar Room.

Faculty In-service: **Who are SPU students?** Monday, May 5, 9 a.m., undergraduate faculty in Upper Gwinn, graduate faculty in Library Seminar Room.



Susan

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