

# Syllabus

## HTS 140: History of New Thought & Unity

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### Instructor

**Rev. Shirley Knight**

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### Course Description

Who are we and where did we come from? What was happening in America that led to the rise of New Thought? How is Unity related to mysticism, Transcendentalism, Christian Science and other New Thought roots and branches? Which early Unity teachings are emphasized today and which are not? What is the Unity movement? (Combines three former classes: History of New Thought, Background of New Thought and Development of the Unity Movement.)

### Course Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, learners will be able to:

- Explain New Thought and provide basics about how it is similar to and different from other views of spirituality.
- Identify some of the key people and major events in the development of New Thought and Unity.
- Summarize the history of the Unity organization.

### Primary Resources

- Braden, Charles S. *Spirits in Rebellion: The Rise and Development of New Thought*. Dallas, TX: Southern Methodist University, 1963. (Handouts)
- Hicks, Mark. *Background of New Thought*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Austin, TX: TruthUnity, 2013, accessed January 21, 2017, <http://www.truthunity.net/courses/mark-hicks/background-of-new-thought>.
- Vahle, Neal. *The Unity Movement: Its Evolution and Spiritual Teachings*. Philadelphia, PA: Templeton Press, 2002.

### Recommended Resources

- Larson, Martin A. *New Thought Religion: A Philosophy for Health, Happiness, and Prosperity*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1985.
- Moncrieff, April. *The Principles of New Thought: Tracing Spiritual Truth from The Source to The Soul*. Camarillo, CA: DeVorss Publications, 2013.
- Shepherd, Thomas. *Friends in High Places*. Unity Village, MO: Unity Books, 1985.

### Progress Evaluation

- **S: Satisfactory** = 75 - 100%
- **NC: No Credit** = 0 - 74%

Other possibilities:

- **AU: Audit** – student is not seeking credentialing (no assignments required).
- **I: Incomplete** – waiting for completion of one or more assignments. Given by approval of the Instructor due to urgent and unusual circumstance in the life of the participant

## Module 1: The Rise of New Thought

Monday, July 20

### Module Learning Objectives

By the end of the class, learners will be able to:

- Articulate a basic understanding of how New Thought fits into human history.
- Identify early influences on the New Thought movement.
- Explain what New Thought is.

### Module 1: Learning Assignments

#### Reading

- Charles Braden: *Spirits in Rebellion: The Rise & Development of New Thought* (Handout)
  - Introduction
  - Chapter 1 “What is New Thought?”

#### Recommended Reading

- Charles Braden: *Spirits in Rebellion: The Rise & Development of New Thought* (Handout) Chapter 2 “Sources of New Thought”
- Mark Hicks: *Background of New Thought*  
<http://www.truthunity.net/lessons/mark-hicks/background-of-new-thought/defining-new-thought> Class 1: Defining New Thought – Class 3: New Thought Pioneers

## Module 2: The Beginning of the Unity Movement

Tuesday, July 21

### Module Learning Objectives

By the end of the class, learners will be able to:

- Articulate Myrtle and Charles Fillmores' history.
- Articulate early Unity teachings.
- Explain how science, healing and New Thought are related.

### Module 2: Learning Assignments

#### Reading(s)

- Neal Vahle: *The Unity Movement: Its Evolution and Spiritual Teachings*
  - Intro [xiii-xviii]
  - Intro of part 1 [1-4]
  - Chap 1: 5-14 & 25-32
  - Chap 2: 33-47 & 67-70

## Module 3: The New Thought Family Tree

Wednesday, July 22

### Module Learning Objectives

By the end of the class, learners will be able to:

- Identify New Thought branches.
- Provide basic information about how New Thought developed into different organizations.

### Module 3: Learning Assignments

#### Reading

- Mark Hicks: *Background of New Thought*
  - <http://www.truthunity.net/lessons/mark-hicks/background-of-new-thought/new-thought-family-tree>
  - <http://www.truthunity.net/lessons/mark-hicks/background-of-new-thought/new-thought-branches> New Thought Branches, Chapters 4 and 5

### Other Resources

- Anderson, Ferne. “Emma Curtis Hopkins: Biographical Sketch” [especially Relationship with Mary Baker Eddy and Role as Teacher]. [http://www.emmacurtishopkins.com/Who\\_is\\_Emma.html](http://www.emmacurtishopkins.com/Who_is_Emma.html)
- Divine Science Federal International. “The Early History of Divine [Science.](#)” <http://www.divinesciencefederation.org/our-teaching/founders/>
- “Founder of Religious Science” <http://religiousscience.us/holmes.htm>
- “The life of Mary Baker Eddy” [especially Adulthood and Major [Accomplishments.](#)] <http://www.marybakereddylibrary.org/mary-baker-eddy/the-life-of-mary-baker-eddy/>

## Module 4: The Evolution of Unity

Thursday, July 23

### Module Learning Objectives

By the end of the class, learners will be able to:

- Identify some of Lowell Fillmore’s contributions to the movement.
- Summarize how Unity grew, organized, demonstrated and publicized its principles.

### Module 4: Learning Assignments

#### Reading(s)

- Neal Vahle: *The Unity Movement: Its Evolution and Spiritual Teachings*
  - Chapter 4 [Lowell], 95-110, 153-166
  - Wee Wisdom, 166-170
  - Chapter 7 [Rickert]
  - Chapter 8: Royal, 201-204
  - Rosemary Fillmore Rhea, 204-206
  - Chapter 9 [Silent Unity] 207-212, 227-237
  - Daily Word, 251-255
  - Chapter 10 [Education] 256-263, 269-275, 279-288

#### Video(s)

Watch the 1926 silent movie: <http://www.truthunity.net/video/unity-school-of-christianity-in-1926>

## Module 5: “The Future of Unity and New Thought”

Friday, July 24

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### Module Learning Objectives

By the end of the class, learners will be able to:

- Summarize the achievements and disappointments of Unity and the New Thought movement.
- Understand the difference between UWH and UWM, UWSI and the Urban School.
- Consider the future of New Thought and Unity.

### Module 5: Learning Assignments

#### Reading(s)

- Neal Vahle: *The Unity Movement: Its Evolution and Spiritual Teachings*
  - Chapter 16: All [Perspectives on Unity]
  - Chapter 17: All [Future of Unity]

#### Websites

<http://www.unity.org/>

<https://www.unityworldwideministries.org/>

# History of New Thought & Unity – Instructor Guide

Discussion and test questions

Videos and websites

## Module 1 – What is New Thought?

### Discussion:

- How does New Thought differ from the religion or spiritual movement you experienced in childhood?

### Quiz/Test:

- Based on the reading, explain, in your own words, one common belief that can be found in New Thought. [Your answer is not expected to be thorough nor exhaustive, after all this is only the first week of the course!]
- Identify a question you would like answered, or an idea you would like explored by the end of the course.

### Website Links & Information:

<http://www.newthoughthistory.org/page1/index.html>

- This is a very cool mind-map of the history of New Thought
- This course explores the following areas, which you can show the students:
  - Ancient Wisdom: Philo
    - Indirectly: First World Parliament, Swami Vivekananda
    - Myrtle and Charles Fillmore attended parliament to listen to Vivekananda
    - Unity Archives says there's no other information about their trip
  - Mind-Cure Movement: PP Quimby, etc., Thomas Troward, etc.
    - Course doesn't discuss Troward, but many of the people under this link
    - Quimby -> Eddy -> *Emma Curtis Hopkins* -> Fillmores & others in course
  - Progressive Christianity: Swedenborg, Eckhart, Origen
  - Transcendentalism: Emerson, etc. [Holmes, Fillmores]

### Sources: What is New Thought?

- Charles Braden: introduction & chapter 1
- April Moncrief: introduction
- <https://parliamentofreligions.org/parliament/new-chicago-1893/new-chicago-1893>
  - note: the Fillmores don't appear to be in any of the pictures
- <https://www.britannica.com/event/New-Thought>
- <http://www.religionfacts.com/new-thought>
- <http://www.newthoughtwisdom.com/about-new-thought.html>
- Martin A. Larson, *New Thought Religion: A philosophy for health, happiness, and prosperity*

## Module 2 – Wholeness: The Beginning of Unity

### Discussion:

- Charles Fillmore developed many beliefs that significantly influenced the creation of Unity. Identify one of those beliefs and explain why you think it was important.
- **Quiz/Test:** In a lecture metaphysician E.B. Weeks said “I am a child of God, therefore I do not inherit sickness.” How did this phrase impact Myrtle’s beliefs about herself and humanity?

**Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-az2qWtRnE>

### Topics:

- Healing vs. wholeness
- Myrtle’s story
- Ordination <http://www.unity.org/resources/charles-fillmore/chronologies>
- Winged Globe <http://www.unity.org/archives/articles/winged-globe>  
<http://firstlegend.info/3rivers/thewingedsolardisk.html>  
<http://egyptian-gods.org/egyptian-symbols-winged-sun/>
- The Dedication and Covenant of Charles and Myrtle Fillmore

## Module 3 - The Quest for Wholeness

### Discussion:

- Which belief about wholeness has been most influential to your exploration of New Thought?

### Quiz/Test:

- Why was the desire for wholeness such a critical catalyst to the development of New Thought? Include contributions from two people’s lives [other than the Fillmores] in your answer.

### Topics:

- Stories about other NT leaders & NT movements
  - Mark Hicks: chapters 15-20, 25 & 27
  - Charles Braden: chapter 10
- Mary Baker Eddy
  - <https://www.marybakereddylibrary.org/mary-baker-eddy/the-life-of-mary-baker-eddy/>
- Emma Curtis Hopkins [http://www.emmacurtishopkins.com/Who\\_is\\_Emma.html](http://www.emmacurtishopkins.com/Who_is_Emma.html)
- Malinda Cramer & Nona Brooks

- Annie Rix Militz
- Ernest Holmes

## Module 4 - History of Mind-Cure

### Discussion:

- Which of the scientific understandings of healing was most surprising to you?

### Quiz/Test:

- Moncrieff discusses the “power of right thought.” What contributions did Quimby and Evans make to this concept of right thought?

### Topics:

- April Moncrieff: chapter 10: Power of Right Thought, Spoken Word, Stillness, Spirit
- Mind-cure
- Isaac Newton, Anton Mesmer, Armand-Marie-Jacques, James Braid
  - Martin A. Larson: *New Thought Religion: A Philosophy for Health, Happiness, and Prosperity*
- Anton Mesmer
- Phineas Parkhurst Quimby
  - <http://www.phineasquimby.com>
  - <http://www.phineasquimby.com/biography.html>
- Warren Felt Evans <http://warrenfeltevans.wwwhubs.com/>

## Module 5 - Principles of New Thought: The Nature of God x

### Discussion:

- While Traditional and Unity Christianity differ in their approaches and methods, what are some of the similarities?

### Quiz/Test:

- In chapter 1, Moncrieff identifies several distinctions between Traditional and Unity Christianity. Explain one of those distinctions and, using this week’s readings, trace its philosophical history.

### Topics:



- Transcendentalist movement:
  - <http://www.ushistory.org/us/26f.asp>
  - <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/transcendentalism/>
- Plato: Shepherd, chapter 1
- Philo: Shepherd, chapter 1
- Meister Eckhart: Shepherd, chapter 6
- Emanuel Swedenborg: Larson: *New Thought Religion*
- Ralph Waldo Emerson: Shepherd, chapter 9
- <https://www.britannica.com/event/New-Thought>
- <http://www.newthoughtcsl.org/history>

## Module 6 - Principles of New Thought: Relationship Between God & Humanity

### Discussion:

- What lesson, person and/or event first helped you understand your divinity?

### Quiz/Test:

- Using the course material and readings, explain and trace the philosophical history of the second basic principle of Unity: We are spiritual beings. The spirit of God lives within each person; therefore, all people are inherently good.

### Topics:

- Born again/born anew – salvation: Moncrief, chapters 5 & 6
- Unity: 3-fold nature of humanity, 3 phases of mind
- Origen: Shepherd, chapter 2
- Hegel: Shepherd, chapter 8
- Ralph Waldo Emerson: Shepherd, chapter 9

## Module 7 - Principles of New Thought: Prayer, Intuition & Mysticism

### Discussion:

- What role does intuition and/or mysticism play in your life?

### Quiz/Test:

- Write a short prayer on a subject of your choice.
- Using the readings for this course, identify and explain the New Thought principles that are embedded in your prayer.

**Videos:**

- <https://www.truthunity.net/audio/charles-fillmore-the-lords-prayer>
- <https://www.truthunity.net/audio/myrtle-fillmore-the-prayer-of-faith>

**Topics:**

- Prayer, intuition, mysticism as discussed in Revealing Word
- Difference between traditional Christian prayer & New Thought prayer
- Unity 5-step prayer process
- Religious Science Spiritual Mind Treatment:
  - <http://csl.org/en/build-a-prayer>
  - [http://www.scienceofminduk.org/what\\_spiritual\\_mind\\_treatment.html](http://www.scienceofminduk.org/what_spiritual_mind_treatment.html)
- Oneness
- William of Ockham & intuition
  - <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Occams-razor>
  - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occam%27s\\_razor#Ockham](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occam%27s_razor#Ockham)

## Module 8 – Mission of Unity: Part 1

**Discussion:**

- Call Silent Unity and share your experience, as you are comfortable. If you've called Silent Unity before, please call again. Note: Be honest in your post; you are not expected to report only positive experiences. Silent Unity: 800 NOW-PRAY [669-7729]
- When you've done this, if you desire, you can use either the email or the app: silentunity.org

**Quiz/Test:**

- Why is affirmative prayer believed to be more effective than other types of prayer?
- Write an affirmation that you can use in your life. [Note: the affirmation **will not** be graded.]

**Video:**

<http://www.unity.org/archives/articles/sons-charles-and-myrtle-fillmore> [sons]  
[no sound]

**Topics:**

- Silent Unity
  - <http://www.unity.org/prayer/about-silent-unity>
  - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xf7a9ps\\_9jM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xf7a9ps_9jM)
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nEqLy7uD6R4>
  - <http://www.unity.org/wdop> [World Day of Prayer]
- Lowell Page Fillmore: Neal Vahle, *Lowell Fillmore: The Unsung Hero*

- Prosperity Banks
- Waldo Rickert Fillmore
  - Architecture at Unity Village
- John Royal Fillmore
  - Wee Wisdom

## Module 9 – Mission of Unity: Part 2

### Discussion:

- What is one of your impressions of Unity in the 1920s?
- Compare it with your impressions of Unity almost 100 years later.

### Quiz/Test:

- Why is affirmative prayer believed to be more effective than other types of prayer?
- Create an affirmation that you can use in your life. [Note: the affirmation **will not** be graded.]

### Topics:

- Reflections on the 1926 silent movie:
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fwZxsDMhER4>
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07-qWHauWb8>
- Periodicals
  - Modern Thought -> Christian Thought -> Thought -> Unity
  - Unity Daily Word -> Daily Word
    - braille, cassette, CD
  - Wee Wisdom
  - Youth -> Progress -> YOU -> Progress
  - The Christian Business Man -> Christian Business -> Good Business -> New
- WOQ [Unity radio station]
  - <http://www.route56.com/radio/kc/woq.html>
  - <http://www.unity.org/archives/articles/unity-and-radio> [no sound]
- Television [Rosemary Fillmore Rhea]
  - A Word from Unity: <http://www.unity.org/archives/articles/unity-and-the-word>
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Wwhtyt0yvc>
  - Select from:
    - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UbogCd6fURw>
    - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GjRwOm0Oy1g>
    - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8LFsyvRGjU>
    - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ir8Wrm8oO4>
    - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jsEwQhRPPB4>
  - others are also available on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

- unity.fm:
  - <http://www.unity.fm/AboutUnityFM>
- education
  - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p-Qwl9\\_SYlg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p-Qwl9_SYlg)

## **Module 10 - The Future of Unity & New Thought**

### **Discussion:**

- What do you think the next step should be for Unity?
- What role will you take to help make this happen?

### **Quiz/Test:**

- What is your overall evaluation of New Thought and the Unity movement? What/where was it most successful and what/where does success still need to be developed?

### **Topics:**

- Challenges for Unity & New Thought: Vahle, chapters 16 & 17
- What can each individual do to help Unity move forward?