

Module Title:	The Franciscan Sources and the Writings of Francis
Module Code:	435 FSWF
Level:	4
Credit Rating:	20
Duration:	Student Learning Time: 200 hours
Teaching Hours:	40 hours
Academic Responsibility:	Paula Pearce, SFO, MA

Module Aims:

To introduce students to the entire contents, the layout, and title of the three volumes of Francis of Assisi: Early Documents: The Saint, The Founder and the Prophet, and that of Clare of Assisi: Early Documents: The Lady. Students will learn how to use sources through practical tasks and methods of interpretation and exegesis. This module will include a focus on the the writings of Francis in their literary and historical context with the intent of gaining a deeper appreciation of the importance and relevance of Francis for today.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module students should have a working knowledge and some understanding of:

1. The significance of the four volumes for Franciscan Studies and the different literary genres represented in the Franciscan sources
2. Relevant information about the political and economic background of Assisi.
3. The meaning and significance of hagiography, legend, chronicle and specific papal documents.
4. how to read critically the writings of Francis of Assisi including sources used by Francis in his writings
5. The richness of Francis' writings for understanding matters of faith and religious practice and the influence of the movement for church reform
6. An understanding of major concerns of the Church of his day, specifically particular decrees of Lateran Council IV
7. The significance of the writings for the Franciscan movement today

Indicative Module Content:

Students will explore the title, the contents and layout of each volume. They will examine the significance of different types of documents, consider their usefulness for Franciscan studies and learn key terms used in the study of Franciscan sources. They will perform tasks enabling them to adopt a critical and analytical approach to sources, focusing particularly on prologues. They will be introduced to criteria for evaluating significance and usefulness. They will be given a structure for presenting texts appropriately.

Students will also study selected writings of Francis in their historical and literary context so that they can use the writings as a key for accepting, rejecting or clarifying the statements and understandings of his teachings presented in the biographical sources. Specific writings have been selected to demonstrate the variety of genres, the different audiences Francis addressed, the range of sources which Francis drew upon according to recent scholarship, and give deeper insight into the contribution of the work of the saint under the heading of specific themes.

Students will be expected to reflect upon the texts and consider their relevance today.

Learning and Teaching Strategies:

Students will be taught through class lectures, with practical examples to develop confidence in finding and using the material contained in the texts. The module is primarily geared to a lecture/discussion format. In addition to class lectures, students will be given writings for personal reflection, with the option of sharing personal reflections. Secondary sources will be used to highlight the difficulty in classifying the writings and to indicate variety in interpretation of their significance today. Through familiarity with the writings, students will be encouraged to find out which subjects were important to Francis and build up a good understanding of the contribution Francis made to our understanding of both the mysteries of faith and the everyday practice of religion.

Assessment:

Assessment will be in two parts:

Part I

Students will interpret, evaluate and analyse a range of given primary texts in translation amounting to the equivalent of a summative assessment of 2,500 words.

Part II

A 2,500 word essay on related topics

Or

a Presentation equivalent to 2,500 words

Illustrative Bibliography

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|---|--|-------------------------|
| Armstrong, Hellman, Short,
eds. (1999; 2000; 2001) | <i>Francis of Assisi: Early Documents,
Vol 1 The Saint; Vol 2 The
Founder; The Prophet</i> | London, NCP |
| Armstrong, R. Ed. & trans.
(-2006) | <i>Clare of Assisi: Early Documents
The Lady</i> | London, NCP |
| Armstrong, R.J. (1994) | <i>St. Francis of Assisi: Writings for a
Gospel Life.</i> | St Paul's Press |
| Hammond, J.M. ed. (2004) | <i>History, Hagiography and
Hermeneutics in the Early Documents.</i> | London, NCP |
| Matura, T. (2004) | <i>Francis of Assisi: The Message in
His Writings</i> | Franciscan
Institute |
| Nguyen-Van-Khanh , N.
(-1994) | <i>The Teacher of His Heart: Jesus
Christ in the Thought and Writings
of St. Francis</i> | Franciscan
Institute |