



Spiritual Formation 1 DISC5170

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Christian Education Division

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The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church.

Purpose of the Course

The purpose of this course is to develop Christian leaders who model and mentor others in Christ-like character.

Core Value Focus

Doctrinal Integrity – Knowing that the Bible is the Word of God, we believe it, teach it, proclaim it, and submit to it. The doctrinal statements used in our evaluations are our Articles of Religious Belief and the Baptist Faith and Message Statement.

Spiritual Vitality – We are a worshipping community, with both personal spirituality and gathering together as a Seminary for the praise and adoration of God and instruction in His Word.

Mission Focus – We are not here merely to get an education or to give one. We are here to change the world by fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

Characteristic Excellence – What we do, we do to the utmost of our abilities and resources as a testimony to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Servant Leadership – We follow the model of Jesus and exert leadership and influence through the nurture and encouragement of those around us.

Annually, the President will designate a core value that will become the focus of pedagogy for the year. For the 2014-2015 academic year that Core Value is *Spiritual Vitality*.

Curriculum Competencies Addressed

The student will interface with the following curriculum competencies:

1. *Biblical exposition*: Scripture reading and study is at the heart of this course.
2. *Effective servant leadership*: Effective servant leaders have an intimate walk with Christ.

3. *Interpersonal relationships*: Students relate to others through mentoring/accountability.
4. *Disciple making*: Disciple-makers must model a true love for God and others.
5. *Spiritual and character formation*: Personal spiritual formation activities are exercised.

Course Description

This course is the first of two semester-long pass-fail experiences in a faculty-mentored group. The group will meet for accountability, mentoring, discussion, and spiritual formation in the company of others.

Learning Objectives

DISC 5170 students will:

1. Examine and discuss a biblical understanding of spiritual maturation:
 - The marks of a disciple as something beyond the point of salvation.
 - Effective methods of becoming a disciple and of making disciples.
 - The relationship between spiritual maturity and spiritual disciplines.
 - Lead a discussion of one spiritual formation topic.
2. Exercise various spiritual disciplines:
 - A life-long intentional devotional discipline for lifelong spiritual growth and benefit to the kingdom of God.
 - A meaningful and maturing relationship with God, including journaling.
 - Christian community in a small group setting.
 - A personal commitment to basic devotional practices.
3. Evaluate their personal spiritual formation strengths and weaknesses:
 - The utilization of evaluative tools in personal, small group, and larger communities.
 - Develop a personal reflection paper of strengths, weaknesses and goals.

Required Readings

The following text is required reading for class discussions and is to be read in its entirety unless otherwise specified.

Required Texts

Ortberg, John. *The Life You've Always Wanted: Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002. ISBN: 0-310-24695-4

Course Teaching Methodology

Methodology will include reading/reflection on a text in the field through participation in group discussions; intense periods of personal spiritual preparation through the accountable exercising of various habits, practices, and disciplines; discernment, enlistment, and time spent with an accountability partner; reflection and journaling of the journey and the use of an integration paper to capture the various exercises, ideas, etc.; and reflect on God's involvement throughout the journey.

Assignments and Evaluation Criteria

The student is required to:

1. **Read the textbook** as assigned by the professor and experiment with spiritual disciplines throughout the semester.
2. **Journal regularly**, recording her/his spiritual journey throughout this course. The journal will be the student's sole property and will NOT be turned into faculty. The student will be asked to provide **a typed and signed statement as to the fulfillment of this course expectation**. The student will utilize the journal material in the reflection paper. **DUE DATE: December 1, 2014.**
3. The learner will **identify and enlist an accountability partner** who meets the requirements of "full of grace, wisdom, and the Holy Spirit." The partner should be at least one step ahead of the learner along the spiritual quest and should not be a spouse or classmate. The learner will meet with the accountability partner for at least 30 minutes a week **beginning the week of September 9 and continuing through November 24**. The learner will **provide a statement identifying said partner for the professor on September 8, 2014. In addition, the learner will provide a Statement of Completion from his/her accountability partner on December 1, 2014.**
4. **Contribute to all class discussions**, small group discussions, and **lead 30-40 minute class discussion (not a lecture)** of one chapter from the Ortberg textbook (as assigned by the professor).
5. **Dialogue and pray with and for other students** in a supportive environment of community and accountability.
6. **Write and submit a typed three- to five-page** (double-spaced, first-person) **reflection paper**. In a final section of the paper, include and explain **at least one major point of impact** that this semester's course has had on your personal discipleship. In addition, **a statement of completion signed by the student and their accountability partner** concerning item 3 should be included. A cover page is to be used, but do not include an intervening blank page or binder. **DUE DATE: December 1, 2014.**

Course Policies

1. For our group to function well and achieve the course objectives, we must respect one another. This means each member should give the following and expect the following from other students:
 - a. **Respect**. Whether we agree or disagree, we will respect one another.
 - b. **Confidentiality**. Unless permission is explicitly given, what is shared in class will stay in class.
 - c. **Freedom/Openness**. Each member must be open to sharing their feelings once they are comfortable with the group.
2. Preparation is minimal but key. Each student should **read the assigned material and journal** their thoughts throughout the week and bring their journal to class so that they can have a shareable record of what they felt and thought during that time as they walked with Christ.
3. The course is offered on a **pass/fail** basis. Apart from completing the reflection paper and journaling, each student will be graded according to how they prepared for class and how they conducted themselves according to the expectations listed above.

Course Schedule

Session	Date	Special Topic / Assignment due <i>(Listed reading should be completed PRIOR to the class meeting in order to enhance discussion during the session)</i>
1	8/25	Introduction & Overview
2	9/8	Accountability Partner Statement due Chapter 1: “We Shall Morph Indeed”: <i>The Hope of Transformation</i> Chapter 2: Surprised by Change: <i>The Goal of Spiritual Life</i>
3	9/22	Chapter 3: Training vs. Trying: <i>The Truth About Spiritual Disciplines</i> Chapter 4: A “Dee Dah Day”: <i>The Practice of Celebration</i>
4	10/6	Chapter 5: An Unhurried Life: <i>The Practice of “Slowing”</i> Chapter 6: Interrupting Heaven: <i>The Practice of Prayer</i>
5	10/20	Chapter 7: “Appropriate Smallness”: <i>The Practice of Servanthood</i> Chapter 8: Life Beyond Regret: <i>The Practice of Confession</i>
6	11/3	Chapter 9: The Guided Life: <i>Receiving Guidance from the Holy Spirit</i> Chapter 10: A Life of Freedom: <i>The Practice of Secrecy</i>
7	11/17	Chapter 11: An Undivided Life: <i>The Practice of Reflection on Scripture</i> Chapter 12: Life with a Well-ordered Heart: <i>Developing Your Own “Rule of Life”</i>
8	12/1	Reflection Paper due Journal Statement due Accountability Statement of Completion due Chapter 13: A Life of Endurance: <i>The Experience of Suffering</i>

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