SPF 5541 COL (Columbus)  
Introduction to Spiritual Formation I: Spiritual Disciplines  
Ashland Theological Seminary  
Fall Semester 2015 Columbus Campus  
Weekends August 28-29, September 25-26, October 23-24  
Friday Evenings, 6-9 PM; Saturdays 8 AM -4 PM  

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bbuckwel@ashland.edu  
Phone: 614.517.8115  

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION  
Introduction to Spiritual Formation (4 hours)  

This course introduces students to the essential dynamics of spiritual formation in its  
individual and corporate dimensions. It invites students to learn about and practice a  
variety of classical spiritual disciplines, with a special focus on prayer, for the purpose of  
formation in Christlikeness in both personal and social contexts. This course is 4 hours  
with two parts of 2 hours each- SPF5541 Spiritual Formation I: Spiritual Disciplines, and  
SPF 5542: Spiritual Formation II: Prayer.  

SPF 5541: Spiritual Formation I: Spiritual Disciplines (2 hours)  
This course introduces students to the nature and processes of spiritual formation,  
drawing upon the ancient monastic traditions and weaving these practices into 21st  
century contemporary culture. It explores spiritual growth as directed by the Holy  
Spiritual through classical disciplines, both personal and communal, of the Christian  
tradition. Students will have the opportunity to practice particular spiritual disciplines for  
growth in personal and social holiness.  

This course is two hours credit and meets weekends with no hybrid online component.  
This course is offered on a pass/fail basis.  

II. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES  
As a result of this course, students will be able to:  

1. Demonstrate understanding of biblical foundations and Christian traditions that inform  
the practice of spiritual disciplines.  

2. Engage in a variety of exercises from the classical spiritual disciplines.  

3. Not assessed in this course.  

4. Not assessed in this course.
5. Practice disciplines that will form in students a solid foundation of spiritual formation and engage a commitment to do justice in both personal and social contexts.

6. Develop practices that will aid students' spiritual growth and formational leadership in the context of their own particular ministries.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Textbooks and Other Materials

**Required:**


**Recommended:**

B. Attendance

According to the *Student Handbook*, attendance at all class sessions is expected unless the professor has been notified in advance and has approved the absence. Students should be on time and should stay through the duration of all classes. Any student missing more than six class hours (2 weeks) will be required to do additional work, receive a lower grade or withdraw from the class at the discretion of the professor.

C. Assignments/ Assessment of Student Learning

**Final Reflection Paper 60%**

Please select three spiritual disciplines from the categories below and practice each discipline for 6 weeks. Then write a fifteen page, double-spaced reflection paper these disciplines, reflecting on your experience and the presence of God. Be sure to include in the paper:

- Relevant material from the textbooks and any outside reading that is helpful.
- An articulation of how you experienced the presence of God through these spiritual disciplines.
- Consider:
What effect does it have upon your daily living?
How could this discipline influence the corporate ministry that you spend the most time in?

This final paper is due October 24\textsuperscript{th}. Papers will be shared in class in small groups. No incompletes or extensions will be given. Grammar and spelling will influence the grading.

**Disciplines for the Journey Inward** (practices of detachment, disengagement):
- Fasting
- Humility
- Lectio Divina
- Solitude
- Study/Meditation
- Poverty and Prayer
- Purity/Chastity
- Daily Examen
- Obedience
- Daily Hours of Prayer (The Prayer Offices)
- Silence/Restraint of Speech
- Simplicity/Frugality
- Sacrifice
- Secrecy/Anonymity
- Lectio Divina

**Disciplines for the Journey Outward** (practices of reaching out, engagement, attachment):
- Celebration
- Confession
- Fellowship
- Generosity
- Obedience
- Prayer
- Service/Work
- Simplicity/Frugality
- Study/Meditation
- Submission
- Truthfulness
- Lectio Divina

Please use inclusive language in written work. You may use either: footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical references to document your paper, following consistently the style you select as presented in the *Ashland Theological Seminary Writing Handbook*.

**Journaling & Prayer Partner 10%**

Students will keep a daily prayer journal for the duration of this class. The journal will be a written or pictorial notebook or a combination of creative arts and written word (poetry, narrative, picture). Two entries of the students’ daily prayer journal will be shared with a prayer partner during the course of this class. The first shared entry will be emailed to the instructor and prayer partner September 16\textsuperscript{th}. The prayer partner will send an email response to the originator of the journal entry (copied to the instructor) by September 25\textsuperscript{th}. The second shared entry will be emailed to the prayer partner and copied to the instructor by October 14\textsuperscript{th}. The prayer partner will send a response email to the originator of the journal entry (copied to the instructor) by October 23\textsuperscript{rd}.

**Rule of Life 10%**

Students will create a Rule of Life for their own personal spiritual formation practice. This Rule of Life will include both private and corporate spiritual disciplines. The first draft of this Rule of Life is due September 26\textsuperscript{th} during the second weekend class. This draft will be reviewed by the instructor. The Final draft of this Rule of Life is
due October 24th, on the final day of class with an annotated reflection on your experience thus far practicing your Rule of Life and your hopes for going forward with this discipline.

**Worship Disciplines 10%**

Students will work in groups to present a worship discipline in class. This ½ hour group experience will draw upon the Biblical, Monastic, European, Feminine or Black experience. The facilitating (presenting) group will lead the remainder of the class through this worship experience. Preparation time for this will be given in class. These experiences of worship will be shared in class on the last day of class, October 24.

**Small Group Discussions 10%**

Participation in class discussions is critical to the process of theological reflection. Each student should come prepared to participate and contribute with readings completed. Students will have an opportunity to practice spiritual disciplines in class in small groups.

**D. Calculation of Grade: Pass/Fail Basis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Percent of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small Group Discussion</td>
<td>1,2,5,6</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journaling &amp; Prayer Partner Response</td>
<td>1,2,5,6</td>
<td>Sept. 16, Oct. 14 Response entry due Sept. 25, Oct. 23</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worship Disciplines</td>
<td>1,2,5,6</td>
<td>Oct. 24</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule of Life</td>
<td>1,2,5,6</td>
<td>First draft due Sept. 26, Final draft due Oct. 24</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Reflection Paper</td>
<td>1,2,5,6</td>
<td>Oct. 24</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IV. Tentative Course Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day #</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Lecture/Topics</th>
<th>Readings/Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekend 1, Session 1</td>
<td>Aug. 28th</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Foster, intro, ch. 1 Maas &amp; O’Donnell chs. 1, 2 and Practicum 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friday Evening</td>
<td>Biblical foundation</td>
<td>Thompson, ch. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Monastic Influence</td>
<td>Maas &amp; O’Donnell chs. 1, 2 and Practicum 2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Silence the heart of discipline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
V. Recommendations for Lifelong Learning

A. Students may engage in spiritual retreats to practice spiritual disciplines in the future.
B. Students may choose to meet regularly with a spiritual director.
C. Students can continue to read resources about spiritual disciplines for future growth.
D. Students may integrate spiritual discipline practices in ministry with others in their future ministry contexts.
E. Students may connect with others serving the ministry of spiritual formation/direction
and retreat ministries through *Hearts on Fire: the Fellowship of United Methodist Spiritual Directors and Retreat Leaders.*

VI. Seminary Guidelines

A. ATS Academic Integrity Policy

Ashland Theological Seminary expects each student to uphold the Seminary’s core value of academic excellence by contributing to an environment that is both challenging and supportive. In such an environment a student will neither seek nor offer improper assistance. All students have an obligation to be forthright in their academic endeavors and to respect ethical standards. The work that one submits for academic evaluation must be one’s own, unless an instructor expressly permits certain types of collaboration. Academic integrity requires that each student will use one’s own capabilities to achieve one’s fullest potential and will neither offer nor accept aid that is not in keeping with regularly accepted standards of academic integrity. Failure to conform to this conduct shall constitute academic dishonesty. The full Academic Integrity Policy statement may be found in the *Student Handbook.*

B. Academic Support Services

If you need assistance with writing projects for your coursework, contact the ATS Academic Support Center. The center provides free sessions with a peer consultant who can help you with all of your concerns about academic support including writing, critical thinking, documentation, reading skills, study skills, test taking skills, time management. Contact the center if you have a question about how to complete your assignment, if you have documentation questions, or if you would like to have your paper evaluated for areas needing improvement. The ATS Academic Support Center can be reached at 419-289-5162 or by e-mail at atswc@ashland.edu.

C. Students with Disabilities

Ashland University makes every effort to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students who have a specific physical, psychiatric or learning disability and require accommodations are encouraged to inform their instructors of their needs early in the semester so that learning needs can be appropriately met. It is the student’s responsibility to document the disability with Disability Services in The Center for Academic Support on the 7th floor of the Ashland University Library, (419) 289-5904.

D. ATS Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>97-100</td>
<td>Superior achievement of course objectives, diligence and originality, high degree of freedom from error, outstanding evidence of ability to utilize course knowledge, initiative expressed in preparing and completing assignments, positive contributions verbalized in class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92-96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Range</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89-91</td>
<td>Good work submitted, commendable achievement of course objectives, some aspects of the course met with excellence, substantial evidence of ability to utilize course material, positive contributions verbalized in class, consistency and thoroughness of work completed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86-88</td>
<td>Acceptable work completed, satisfactory achievement of course objectives, demonstrating at least some ability to utilize course knowledge, satisfactory class contribution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>83-85</td>
<td>Passing but minimal work, marginal achievement of course objectives, poor performance in comprehension of work submitted, inadequate class contributions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>Unacceptable work resulting in failure to receive class credit, inadequacy of work submitted or of performance and attendance in class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>74-76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>71-73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>65-67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 65</td>
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</tbody>
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VII. Selected Bibliography or References


