

CRE 5501 Forming the People of God

Ashland Theological Seminary

Summer Semester 2017

Ashland Campus

June 26-July1, 2017

Monday-Friday: 8:30 am-4:00pm; Saturday: 8:30am-1:30pm

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*****ASSIGNMENT ALERT: READING AND WRITTEN WORK ARE DUE ON THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS, MONDAY, JUNE 26, 2017*****

I. Course Description

This course explores the biblical and theological principles and processes for making disciples in the local church. Attention will be given to how the Christian leader can be a forming and transforming agent for discipleship in the community of faith. Skills related to teaching and leading a small group Bible study will be addressed. Educational and developmental theory will be consulted in pursuit of course aims.

A. Further Description

This course is concerned with investigating and addressing two main questions. The first is **“How are disciples made in the context of the local church?”** The second is **“What can pastors and Christian leaders do to be a force for making disciples in the context of the local church?”** All class activities will revolve around the concerns that emerge from these two questions.

B. Course Construction and Classroom Culture

This course will involve lecture by the professor in which he identifies and exposes ideas related to disciple-making in the context of the local church. Robust conversation and respectful questioning is welcome in the context of lecture. The class will also, be at times, conducted as a seminar, relying on students’ critical reading and interaction with the texts, and thoughtful reflection regarding church ministry. The course will also at times function as an experiential laboratory for ministry in which student and teacher will practice ministry skills relative to the ministry of making disciples. Group and intrapersonal reflective exercises will also be a part of this course.

This course has been designed with most course assignments due either before or after the class meetings so that students are able to focus on the content and experiences of the classes. The course structure has been purposely constructed so that students are able to experience the week of learning engagement with fellow students and professor in a context that is less hectic and relaxed.

C. Class Presence, Ministry, and Technology

A foundational component in ministry in any setting is to be truly present with those to whom one is ministering. A ministry in the name of Jesus is one in which the minister is fully present

i.e. attending to others with all senses. We remember that Jesus' ministry was characterized by being meaningfully "with" others (Matthew 1:23 "...and they will call Him Immanuel"—which means—"God with us"; John 1:14 "and He became flesh and dwelt among us"). Since Jesus is our model and guide in ministry, and since the ministry of those taking class in seminary is to be a student, then one is expected to be fully present to her/his teacher and student colleagues during class sessions.

Technological devices, such as laptop computers, ipads, and smart-phones can be useful in accomplishing important learning tasks and have potential for improving the interactions between human beings, yet they also have the potential to harm human interaction and obstruct learning. For instance, in the classroom the above mentioned devices can function as a distraction from an important presentation or conversation taking place especially when previously mentioned devices are connected to the internet. Students can become so fascinated with the content on their computer that they fail to be fully present to the teacher and their fellow students. Each student is therefore urged to practice full presence with others in class, regarding it as a ministerial-spiritual act, as well as an act of etiquette and civility. Plainly put, it is rude to engage in prolonged fixation on the internet or other content on one's technological device during class. Furthermore, any student observed spending prolonged time detached from the class life through the kind of technological distraction described above can expect to receive a substantial reduction in her/his course participation grade. This reduction can come without notice.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

As a result of this course, students will be able to:

- 1. Demonstrate critical and faithful interpretation and responsible use of Scripture in appropriate ministry and professional settings**
2. Not assessed in this course
3. Not assessed in this course
- 4. Demonstrate critical theological reflection that is biblically faithful, historically grounded, contextually relevant, and integrated with life and ministry**
5. Not assessed in this course
- 6. Exhibit effective ministry skill sets related to intended areas of service**

III. Course Requirements

A. Textbooks

Required:

Bass, Dorothy C., *Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997. ISBN: 0-7879-0336-1

Ford, Kevin G. *Transforming Church: Bringing Out the Good to Get to Great*. Carol Stream, Ill.: SaltRiver, 2007. ISBN: 978-4143-0893-7

Kinghorn, Kenneth Cain. *Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts: A Personal Inventory Method*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984. ISBN: 0-310-75061-x

Newton, Gary. *Heart-Deep Teaching: Engaging Students for Transformed Lives*. Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2012. ISBN: 978-0-8054-4776-7

Highly Recommended:

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich, *Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Faith in Community*. San Francisco: HarperCollins Publishers, 1954.
ISBN-13: 9780060608521

Coleman, Robert, *The Master Plan of Evangelism, Second Edition*. Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing Group, 2010. ISBN-13: 9780800788087

Crabb, Larry. *Becoming a True Spiritual Community*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999.
ISBN: 0-8499-1884

B. Attendance

According to the student handbook, attendance at all class sessions is expected unless the professor has been notified in advance. Students should be on time and should stay through the duration of all classes. Any student missing the equivalent of six class hours will be required to do additional work, receive a lower grade or withdraw from the class, or be penalized otherwise at the discretion of the professor.

C. Assignments/Assessment of Student Learning

Note: Some assignments are due at the start of the first class on Monday, June 26. Some assignments are due during the week of classes. And some assignments are due by August 10, 2017.

1. Reading *Transforming Church: Bringing Out the Good to Get to Great*, Kevin G. Ford.

Each student is required to read the entire book by the end of the course. It is highly recommended that each student complete the reading of the book by Tuesday, June 27 for maximum learning impact. It is also highly recommended that the student be prepared to discuss the content of the book when the book is the focus of learning during the course of the week of classes.

2. Book Review of *Heart-Deep Teaching*, Gary Newton. Each student will read the book *Heart-Deep Teaching* and will write a book review of it which will include the following elements: 1) A summary of the book's content, 2) A section entitled "3 of the Author's Ideas that Most Impacted Me". 3) Share one idea or practice from the book that you desire to implement in your teaching ministry. **This reading and paper is due on Wednesday, June 28. Please submit this paper in hard copy (paper) form.**

3. Teaching a Lesson in Class. Each student may choose to design and teach a Bible “lessonette” in class utilizing principles of teaching that are presented through class lecture and course readings. The following elements will need to be present in each presentation.

- a. A 12 to 15 minute presentation
- b. Bible truth with application
- c. Statement of purpose
- d. Learning objectives/outcomes for the session
- e. A determination of what age category you are attempting to teach (e.g. elementary children, high school students, middle adults)

These teaching presentations are scheduled for **the final two days of the course-- Friday, June 30 and Saturday, July 1**. More information will be given in class about these teaching sessions, so that the student will know exactly how to prepare for the assignment.

Each student will need to submit a document including the following 3 things at the time of his/her teaching presentation: 1) A synopsis of the lesson, 2) A brief statement of the purpose of the lesson, and 3) the learning objectives/outcomes for the lesson. **Please submit this document on the day of your teaching in hard copy (paper) form.**

4. Reading *Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People*, Dorothy C. Bass, Editor. Each student will read the entire book. Each student should read Chapter one, and two other chapters of choice, in preparation for class on Wednesday, June 28. You may read the remainder of the book following the week of classes if you so desire (no later than August 10).

5. Reflective-Summative Examination/Exercise. Near the completion of the week of classes each student will reflect on their learning in a guided writing experience. This experience will involve thinking imaginatively about how she/he might implement and embody important ideas from the course in their ministry life in the church. This exercise will be turned in to the professor for analysis and comment. **Please submit this assignment in hard copy (paper) form.**

6. “Practices” Project. Foundational to the construction and sustenance of any disciple-making Christian community is the conscious exercise of relational practices that reflect the ethos of Jesus by the persons who make up such a community. Christian leaders must identify, promote, initiate, and enact Christian practices that will build community and make disciples, if such disciple-making communities are to be constructed. Therefore, in consultation with the professor, each student is to identify a Christian practice that she/he would like to enact in his/her home church, para-church context, or home and initiate it, promote it, and enact it over at least a 3 week period in his/her community of faith. This practice will naturally involve others in the Christian community and will seek to make disciples and build community. Each student upon completing the practice project will write a 4-5 page paper describing what was done. The paper will have 5 sections as follows: 1) Rationale and Purpose of the Practice, 2) Report of the Practice Enactment, 3) Biblical Foundation for the Practice, 4) Theological Reflections Regarding the Practice, and 5) Ministerial Observations and Reflections Regarding the Practice.

Each student will submit her/his Practice Report paper electronically to the professor by August 10, 2017.

It is reasonable that a course on disciple-making and Christian community formation actually involve attempting to do formative relational practices and not just strategize and theologize about them. Therefore, in this course we seek to undertake the risky and messy work of trying to actually practice ministry in context. Attempting to do this kind of practical ministry work in an academic course will require flexibility, imagination, and negotiation. As professor, I promise to engender a class culture that isn't brittle and rigid as we attempt these practical assignments. During the week of classes we will spend time discussing this project and I expect to take a little time for each student individually to discuss imaginatively possible practice projects during the week.

We will be leaning on *Practicing Our Faith* by Dorothy Bass to stimulate our thinking about possible practice projects. Therefore, I urge you to “thumb” through her book prior to the start of the course to get some ideas about possible practice projects. Here are some possible areas out of which practices may emerge:

Hospitality (ex. Writing cards to new people in church in a small group or taking a pie to welcome guests)

Testimony (ex. Initiating a service of giving testimonies of faith at church)

Honoring the Body (ex. Fasting and prayer group, exercise group, prayer and walking group)

Singing (ex. singing as part of the Bible study)

Scripture (ex. lectio divina group)

Serving (ex. identifying elderly who need work done in their yard and do it for them with your group)

The above are just a few examples of the possibilities regarding practices that could be implemented.

I urge you to see this assignment not only as an academic assignment, but also as an opportunity to build Christ's community in the communities that you are a part, and to practice ministry by assisting in making disciples of Jesus. I urge you to pray that the Holy Spirit would place on your mind, and in your heart, just the right practice that will be a blessing to you and your community.

7. “The 5 most important things I learned” Paper. After having read the **Ford and Bass** books, each student will select one of those books to write about. Specifically, each student will identify the 5 most important ideas to her/him from their chosen book and briefly discuss those ideas imagining their use in the context of the local church. Each student's writing should result in the construction of a 4-5 page paper. The student should submit the paper electronically to the professor by August 10, 2017.

8. GOING DEEPER: Optional reading for maximum personal impact. I highly recommend that you secure and read Robert Coleman's classic text, *The Masterplan of Evangelism* which specifically deals with Jesus' methodology and practices for making disciples. It is my intention to feature it for a significant part of a class. You are not required to read the text, however, it is a small text. It is easy to read. And it is a treasure. So, if you can find the time—please read it.

D. Calculation of Grade and Connection of Learning Outcomes

Assignment	Learning Outcomes	Percentage of Final Grade
Heart-Deep Teaching Reading and Book Review	4	20%
“5 Best Ideas” Reading and Paper	4	15%
Teaching Lessonette	1,4,6	25%
“Practices” Project and Report Paper	1,4,6	25%
Reflective, Summative Exercise/Examination	1,4	15%

IV. Course Schedule

Class#	Date	Lecture/Topic	Readings/Assignments/Activities
0	Before 6/26	Readings in <i>Teaching and Leading, and Catalyzing</i> in the Church in preparation for the Class Meetings	Read <i>Heart-Deep Teaching</i> and write Book review per directions; Read <i>Transforming Church</i> in preparation for the week of classes for maximum learning impact
1	6/26	Course Foundations; Biblical Foundations of discipleship and disciple-making; Spiritual Gifts Inventory; Jesus’ methodology of making disciples considered.	Read as desired from <i>Transforming Church</i> and <i>Practicing Our Faith</i> ; Bring to class the booklet, <i>Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts</i> . Note: Do not complete the inventory prior to class... simply bring it to class in preparation of a class exercise.
2	6/27	Jesus’ Methodology of making disciples considered (cont.); Disciple-making and Soteriological considerations; Spiritual Formation Practices in the Church	Continue Reading from <i>Transforming Church</i> (if not yet completed) and <i>Practicing Our Faith</i> as desired. Come to class ready to participate fully in the lectures, conversations, and exercises planned for the class that day.
3	6/28	Introduction to Pastoral Action for Making Disciples: Focus on Teaching in the church and Learning Styles. Consideration of Sue Nilson Kibbey’s “Ministry Leadership Components”. Group Bible Study Method Explained and Experienced.	Bring to class your book, <i>Heart-Deep Teaching</i> as well as your book review paper and be ready to have a conversation about the contents of the book. Your book review is due today! Discussion of S.N. Kibbey’s “Ministry Leadership Components” and Kevin Ford’s <i>Transforming Church</i> (time permitting).
4	6/29	Pastoral Action for making Disciples—Focus on Catalyzing; Spiritual Formation Practices Considered—Emphasis on Hospitality and Eating as Spiritual Acts	Continue Required Readings as desired; Come to class and enter meaningfully into the discussions, lectures, and exercises. Bring <i>Practicing Our Faith</i> to class and be ready to have a conversation stimulated by Chapters 1, 3, and 4

5 Friday	6/30	Pastoral Action for making Disciples: Catalyzing, Modeling, Organizing; Focus on Spiritual Formation Practices Post Class assignment; Ideological Foundations for a Christian Growth Outcomes: Metaphysical, Epistemological, and Axiological,	“Practices” Project Consideration; Imagination and Discussion about what you might do for your Practices Project. Reflective-Summative Exercise/Examination Continue reading from the course textbooks as desired.
6 Saturday	7/1	Teaching the Lessonettes, Student Generated Questions and Discussion; Review of Important Ideas; Closing Rituals	Teaching of lessonettes by students; Meaningful participation with your student colleagues; Closing Conversations; Ritual Participation
00	Post-Class (August 10)	All Readings to be completed; “5 Best Ideas Paper” Due; “Practices” Completed and Report Due	All Course Assignments Due By August 10, 2017

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE ADDITIONAL NOTES:

- 1. The above schedule is tentative and may be adjusted in service of the aims of the course.**
- 2. Because of the week-long intensive structure of the course and its immersive character it is advisable that students stay on or near the Ashland campus so that they are able to devote as much energy and attention to the week of class meetings as is possible. Note: While this is advised it is not required.**
- 3. Lunch. We will take an hour lunch break every day—and we will typically aim for noon to 1:00 pm to be that hour. We may plan, as part of the curricular experience, a lunch or dinner meal together during the course of the week. If such is planned, students will be informed prior to the start of the course.**
- 4. Course Length. While the class meetings are only from Monday, June 26 to Saturday, July 1, 2017 this course should be understood to begin prior to the first meeting when it is advisable to engage in readings and writing a paper and following the week of classes, specifically until August 10, 2017, when the final assignments are due.**
- 5. Assignment Submission. Please note that some assignments are to be submitted to the professor in hard copy (paper) form and some are to be submitted electronically to the professor’s email address.**

V. Recommendations for Lifelong Learning

The Society of Professors of Christian Education (SPCE) is an academic guild devoted to the development of persons to lead in fields related to Christian education and discipleship ministries in the local church, institutions of higher education, and parachurch organizations. The *SPCE* sponsors an annual conference (usually held in October) where important matters related to Christian discipleship are discussed. This conference is open to all interested in the practice and promotion of Christian ministry. It would be an ideal event to attend annually to receive professional and spiritual support. Information about the *SPCE* can be found at www.spceonline.org. *SPCE* also publishes a journal twice a year entitled *Christian Education Journal*. It contains both scholarly articles and practical-professional pieces on a wide range of subjects related to Christian Education and Discipleship. Subscribing to this journal could be an important resource in professional development and spiritual enrichment.

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 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. Seminary Writing Consultation Service

The Seminary Writing Consultation Service can help you brainstorm, draft, and revise your writing assignments in your graduate seminary classes. Masters-Qualified consultants can advise you online or in person. Email your request for assistance swc_group@ashland.edu. Include the following information: Your name, course # & professor's name, a brief description of the assignment, and the timeline. For more information visit:
<http://seminary.ashland.edu/services/student-services/seminary-writing-consultation-services>

C. Students with Disabilities.

It is Ashland University's goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on a disability, please contact Disability Services **419- 289-5904** or send an email to dservices@ashland.edu. The Disability Services Office and the course instructor will work together in order to establish accommodations and to meet your learning needs.

D. ATS Grading Scale

Grade	Percent	Description
A	97-100	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.
A-	92-96	
B+	89-91	
B	86-88	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.
B-	83-85	
C+	80-82	
C	77-79	Acceptable work completed, satisfactory achievement of course objectives, demonstrating at least some ability to utilize course knowledge, satisfactory class contribution.
C-	74-76	
D+	71-73	
D	68-70	Passing but minimal work, marginal achievement of course objectives, poor performance in comprehension of work submitted, inadequate class contributions.
D-	65-67	
F	Below 65	Unacceptable work resulting in failure to receive class credit, inadequacy of work submitted or of performance and attendance in class.

VII. Selected Bibliography or References

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich, *Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Faith in Community*. San Francisco: HarperCollins Publishers, 1954.
ISBN-13: 9780060608521

Coleman, Robert, *The Master Plan of Evangelism, Second Edition*. Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing Group, 2010. ISBN-13: 9780800788087

Crabb, Larry. *Becoming a True Spiritual Community*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999.
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Eims, Leroy. *The Lost Art of Disciple-making*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978. ISBN: 0-310-37281-x

Habermas, Ronald T. *Introduction to Christian Education and Formation*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing, 2008. ISBN: 978-0-310-274261

Gorman, Julie A. *Community that is Christian: A Handbook on Small Groups, Second Ed.* Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2002. ISBN: 978-0801091452

Jones, Toby. *The Way of Jesus: Re-Forming Spiritual Communities in a Post-Church Age*. Eugene, Oregon: Resource Publications, 2010. ISBN: 978-1-60899-152-5

Kerr, Hugh T. and Mulder, John M. editors, *Famous Conversions: The Christian Experience*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1983. ISBN: 0-8028-4065-5

McLaren, Brian. *A New Kind of Christianity: Ten Questions that are Transforming the Faith*. San Francisco: HarperOne, 2010. ISBN: 978-0061853982

Moots, Paul. *Becoming Barnabas: The Ministry of Encouragement*. Herndon, Virginia: Alban Institute, 2004. ISBN: 1-56699-293-1

Pagitt, Doug. *Church Re-Imagined: The Spiritual Formation of People in Communities of Faith*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing Co., 2005. ISBN: 978-0-31026975-5

Palmer, Parker. *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for Your Voice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999. ISBN: 0-7879-4735-0