SPF 5540: Introduction to Spiritual Formation  
ASHLAND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY – Columbus or Cleveland Campus  
Spring 2020 (January 7 – May 7, 2019)  
Meeting Three Weekends
Dates: January 31 & February 1, February 21 & 22, April 3 & 4
Time: Fridays 6:00PM-9:00PM, Saturdays 8:00AM-4:00PM

Required Zoom meetings:
Tuesday January 14th from 6:00 – 8:00 pm ET,
Monday March 16th from 6:00 – 8:00 pm ET

Meeting ONE Saturday:
April 25th  Time: 8:00 am – 4:00 pm ET
Rev. Dr. Brenda Buckwell
bbuckwel@ashland.edu AND brenda@livingstreamsflowingwater.com
614.517.8115

I. Course Description
This course introduces students to the nature and processes of spiritual formation and its goal of the formation of believers into the image of Christ for the sake of the church and the world. Students will practice a variety of individual and corporate spiritual disciplines, with an in-depth focus on prayer, for growth in personal and social holiness.

Format of Course:
This full semester class meets three times online and four weekends on-site at Columbus or Cleveland campus – the site will be determined by the greatest number of students from either Columbus or Cleveland. The non-on-site students will connect virtually through zoom. This class will include:

- Readings and reflection papers to be completed before attending the respective weekend classes.
- First Virtual Class meeting on zoom for orientation and to set up your RULE OF LIFE for this semester, Tuesday January 14th from 6:00 – 8:00 pm ET
- During class time students will:
  - Experience various prayers, both classical and contemporary.
  - Discuss the spiritual discipline of Rule of Life
  - Honor and Discuss the Washington book prayer reflection papers.
  - Discussions on African American/ Black Spirituality
- Practice three approved disciplines for Rule of Life assessment beginning January 2nd
- Zoom class March 16, 2020 at 6:00 pm for Mid-Semester check in for the Rule of Life project.
- A research paper on three spiritual disciplines, different than those practiced for your Rule of Life

II. Student Learning Outcomes
This course format consistently meets the same quality, assessment, learning outcomes and requirements of the traditional semester course format.

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

1. Not assessed in this course.
2. Establish communal and personal disciplines that nourish Christian spiritual and moral formation.
   a. Articulate the biblical, theological, historical and moral foundations for Christian spiritual formation.
   b. Reflect on a variety of exercises from the classical spiritual disciplines, especially prayer for personal life and ministry vocation
c. Develop practices that will aid in students’ spiritual growth in their personal and ministry contexts.

3. Not assessed in this course.
4. No assessed in this course.
5. Not assessed in this course.
6. Not assessed in this course.

III. Course Requirements
   A. (Required) Textbooks and Other Materials


   Recommended:


   A. 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, audit or withdraw from the class, or be penalized otherwise at the discretion of the professor.
B. Assignments

1. Research Paper 40%

Please select three spiritual disciplines from the categories below. You need a combination of classic and contemporary disciplines. Write a 10 -11 page, double-spaced, with regular 1-inch margins. This is an academic research paper. Approval of your three spiritual disciplines must be secured through email with the instructor February 10, 2020.

The paper will be divided into three sections, one section for each discipline. For each discipline include:

- ¾ research for each prayer discipline: this includes biblical, theological and historical experience of early Christians.

- ¼ Theological practical reflection on each discipline. What effect could each discipline make for God’s Kingdom coming upon earth?) *This is a theological reflection as well as a practical application.*

- Relevant material from the textbooks and other outside reading material supporting research of the spiritual disciplines. *You must have at least 10 different sources.*

  *Only one may be from the Internet.* The student may use two textbooks, that leaves 7 research books needed.

- Citation must be used for each direct quote. In body citations follow the format (author’s last name publication date, page number). Quotes over 45 words in length must be indented and single spaced. Only directed quoted material can be listed in the bibliography.

This research paper is **due Monday April 27, 2020 at 8:00 am.** No incompletes or extensions will be given. Grammar and spelling will influence the grading. **Please send the paper as a Word.doc through the blackboard.** Paper will be submitted online for grading. *For every day late, the student’s grade will be reduced by one letter grade.*

**Classic Disciplines:**
- Fasting
- Sabbath
- Lectio Divina
- Confession
- Daily Hours of Prayer (The Prayer Offices)
- Breath Prayer
- Midrash Storytelling

**Contemporary Disciplines:**
- Rosary/ praying with beads
- Confession
- Fellowship/hospitality
- Praying in Color
- Audio Divina
- Visio Divina

• The research aspect
of all three of these is Lectio Divina. This could be with movie clips, icons, pictures, photography, nature. This is gaining a contemplative view of life, non-dualistic.

If you choose to practice and research a discipline not listed, it must be approved by the instructor. Please use inclusive language in written work. Follow all guidelines as presented in the Ashland Theological Seminary Writing Handbook.

2. Rule of Life 30% (10 pages)

Students will create a Rule of Life for his/her own personal spiritual formation practice. Please note there are THREE progressive due dates for this project.

a. Draft for approval of disciplines via email by Monday January 21st by 8:00 am.

b. Mid-Semester check-in, email draft by 8:00 am. Monday March 16th. This is emailed directly to the instructor AND zoom meeting Monday March 16th 6:00 pm to discuss process thus far.

c. Final project due, Monday May 4, 2020 at 8:00 am.

Please select three spiritual disciplines from the categories above and practice each discipline for the next 15 weeks, for the duration of this class. These are DIFFERENT spiritual disciplines than the ones for the student’s research paper.

• The first draft outline of this Rule of Life is due Tuesday January 21st. Please send as a Word.doc to brenda@livingstreamsflowingwater.com AND bbuckwel@ashland.edu This first draft will include:

  1. What three disciplines you are committing to practice.
  2. How often you plan to practice each discipline, where, how and if necessary, with whom will you do this. Please be specific. (example: Monday, Wednesday, Friday Lectio Divina for 30 minutes are 6:00 am, Tuesday, Thursday Silence for 30 minutes at 6:00 am, Saturday Photo pilgrimage from 9-11.)
  3. What process you will use for each discipline.
  4. Why you are drawn to this discipline.
  5. What your hypothesis is about how each discipline will impact your life and ministry.

• A mid semester check in on this Rule of Life assessment is due March 16, 2020 at 8:00 am ET via email sent to brenda@livingstreamsflowingwater.com AND bbuckwel@Ashland.edu AND this will be discussed on zoom, March 16th at 6:00 pm. This is to include your progress made thus far in expanded awareness of God through your practice. A few ideas to consider including:

  • Your actual frequency of practice for each discipline
  • Notations on the differences each discipline makes in you, in relationship to others and in relationship to God.
  • What trends are you noticing?
  • What if any, roadblocks have you encountered?
  • How have you adjusted your practice to overcome these roadblocks?
  • How you are holding yourself accountable to these disciplines.
- The Final narrative version of your Rule of Life is due **May 4, 2020 at 8:00 am**, email your final version of your Rule of Life to the instructor as a Word.doc at brenda@livingstreamsflowingwater.com AND bbuckwel@ashland.edu

**A sample of a completed Rule of Life is on the blackboard.**

There are three distinct parts to your Rule of Life:

1. **Short Biblical foundation for each specific discipline.** You will do this for each discipline you are practicing for your Rule. (a paragraph or two at the most). This biblical foundation sets the groundwork for your practice. If you use any quotes for this section, please cite source. A Rule of Life is about your experience of practicing these disciplines for the duration of this class. This is NOT a research paper, although to set the biblical foundation you may need research and citation of sources. The student will need theological resources for point #3. For these few resources you will need a bibliography.

2. Give an **annotated** reflection on your experience for each discipline you are practicing for your Rule. (¾ for each discipline, maybe more)
   a. **Why were you drawn to this specific discipline?**
   b. **How were you experiencing this discipline prior to this course?**
   c. In your experience, since beginning regularly to practice this spiritual discipline: **What has shifted in you thus far with each practice?**
      • How have you noticed the presence and whispers of God’s word, or if you haven’t noticed God’s presence what was that like for you? How did this shift from before doing this spiritual discipline?
      • Where you able to remain faithful to the practice of each discipline? Why or why not? How has this changed since beginning this Rule?
      • How did your experience and your hypothesis match?
   d. How has the practice effected and affected your private personal life? How has this changed from the beginning of class to the end of this project?
   e. What influence has this discipline had on your ministry life? How has this changed from the beginning of class to the end of this project?

3. **Theologically what have your experienced with each discipline?**

4. **What are your hopes for going forward with this discipline, projected out over the next 6 – 12 months?** (a concluding paragraph)

*No incompletes or extensions will be given. Grammar and spelling will influence the grading. For every day late, the student’s grade will be reduced by one letter grade.*

3. **6 Two-page written reflections on the Washington prayers.** (15%)
This is one reflection paper from each part of the book, that totals 6 reflection papers. Please write out the prayer you are reflecting on at the top of your page. Following the verbatim prayer, then begin your reflection which includes contextualization, biblical, and theological perspectives and African/Black Spirituality themes. Please read this book as a prayer honoring those that have lived and loved God before us in history, with a heart looking forward toward the potential influence of these prayers in our current historical period. Please email your papers to instructor at brenda@livingstreamsflowingwater.com AND bbuckwel@ashland.edu. Come prepared to discuss your paper.

For example: One prayer reflection from part 1, 1 prayer reflection from part 2, 1 prayer reflection from part 3 etc. for each section. These will be discussed in class. Papers are not be read but the student will present the concepts.


4. At-home leadership presentation (15%)
The student will lead a spiritual discipline / prayer practice for at least one hour in the student’s ministry context. Please prepare a 3-page annotated teaching lesson plan due February 17th. Send as a word.doc to brenda@livingstreamsflowingwater.com AND bbuckwel@ashland.edu. Instructor will review and make suggestions.

1. This is 3-page lesson plan includes:
   a. What you are teaching. Name the prayer practice.
   b. To whom you will teach.
   c. Where you are holding the small group experience.
   d. Why you will teach this to this specific group.
   e. How you will teach. [This is both information (explanation of the prayer practice) and formation (at least 30 minutes to lead the experience)].
   f. This is a point by point lesson plan of what you will say on each part of the lesson plan. For an example of how to lead the small group see EXAMPLE below.

2. Once the lesson plan is approved, then students may schedule and implement small group leadership at home to lead a group through the experience.

3. Following completion of your leadership for this small group:
   a. Write an additional two-page reflection of your experience of leadership. This is ADDED to the 3-page lesson plan as you actually presented it with any modifications from previous submission.
   b. The leadership reflection after presenting includes but not limited to:
      i. What worked well.
      ii. What didn’t work.
      iii. What do you name as success of this experience?
      iv. What would you improve upon next time?
      v. The total paper length is 5 pages. DUE Monday March 30, 2020

EXAMPLE of a small group lesson plan:
• Have a group of participants numbering 6-12.
• The duration of the assignment is 1 hour
• Your prayer experience should include:
  o Simple Opening Ritual
  o Check-in Time
  o Group Focus – your teaching time (information) and (formation) your actual experience
  o Sharing Reflections and Response
  o Process Review
  o Closing Ritual

(This order is modified for small group experiences from: Prechtel, Daniel L. 2012. Where Two or Three Are Gathered: Spiritual Direction for Small Groups. Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing. page. 37.)

D. Calculation of Grade and Connection of Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Percent of Final Grade</th>
<th>Assignment Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Washington (6) Two-page reflection papers</td>
<td>2 a,b</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>February 22\textsuperscript{nd} at 8:00 am ET. April 4\textsuperscript{th} at 8:00 am April 25\textsuperscript{th} at 8:00 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching outline reflection for at home assignment</td>
<td>2 a,b,c,</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Teaching lesson plan due (3 pages) February 17\textsuperscript{th} After completion of teaching assignment final 5-page paper due March 30\textsuperscript{th}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule of Life Assessment</td>
<td>2 a,b,c,</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>1. Written draft due January 21\textsuperscript{th}</td>
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<td>2. Written Mid semester check-in March 16\textsuperscript{th} 8:00 am</td>
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<td>3. Zoom wisdom sharing March 16\textsuperscript{th} 6:00 pm.</td>
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<td>4. FINAL Narration Assessment DUE May 4\textsuperscript{th} at 8:00 am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research and Reflection Paper</td>
<td>2 a,b,c</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Topic approval by February 10\textsuperscript{th} PAPER DUE April 27\textsuperscript{th} by 8:00 am</td>
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VI. Tentative Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day#</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Lecture/Topics</th>
<th>Readings/Assignments</th>
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| Week 1  | January 13-17 | **TUESDAY**  
**January 14th at 6:00 PM**  
**REQUIRED ZOOM** | Orientation, review syllabus. Set up for Rule of Life  
Zoom conference video class. Check blackboard for links. |  |
|---------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| Week 2  | January 20-25 | No class  
Martin Luther King Day | Prepare for weekend class. Begin practicing your three spiritual disciplines for your Rule of Life  
Assignment Due:  
Rule of Life draft Jan 21st  
Begin practicing disciplines once approved. |  |
| Week 3  | Weekend ONE  
January 31  
Friday Evening | January 31 – February 1  
Weekend one | Check in for questions on the three spiritual disciplines for the Rule of Life Assessment  
“Laying the Foundation”  
Introduction to Spiritual disciplines and prayer. Biblical foundation, Simple prayer, prayer of the forsaken, prayer of tears.  
Prayer experience: *Daily Examen*  
Class Discussion | **Readings**  
Photocopies from Maas ch 11, practicum 11  
Thompson, Introduction & ch. 1  
Foster, *Prayer*, intro, Chaps 1-4.  
Washington Introduction, Calhoun pages through 17.  
**Assignments:**  
Extra credit brief 3-page reflection on Martin Luther and the stages of awakening number of |
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>February 3- 7</td>
<td>Reading and practicing spiritual disciplines for Rule of Life. Begin discernment for research paper.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>February 10 – 15</td>
<td>Reading and practicing spiritual disciplines for Rule of Life. Preparing Washington Paper sections 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td><strong>Assignment Due:</strong> Approval of research paper three disciplines. Send email with 1.2.3. no further explanation required. Feb. 10th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>February 17 – February 22</td>
<td>“Becoming: Learning to Savor” Humility, Prayer of the Heart, Video Richard Rohr <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ULPINGy2SQU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ULPINGy2SQU</a></td>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong> Foster, chs 11, 12, 14 Thompson ch 7 Calhoun selections <strong>Assignments:</strong> 1. DUE Feb 17th Teaching Lesson plan at 8:00 am 2. Extra credit reflection paper on Richard Rohr video. Points 1. All extra credit work due before April 25th.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekend Two Friday evening</td>
<td>Class meets Friday February 21</td>
<td>Class Discussion All reading material Prayer Experience: Daily Examen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>February 17- 22nd</td>
<td>“A Light Shinning in Darkness” Simplicity, Solitude,</td>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong> Thompson ch 5 Calhoun Part 3 pages 99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday morning</td>
<td>Class meets Saturday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Events</td>
<td>Discussions and Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
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<td><strong>Readings:</strong> Thompson, chs.4, 9 <strong>Assignments:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekend two</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
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<td>February 24 – 28 Reading and practicing spiritual disciplines for Rule of Life. Practice other three disciplines for research paper this week one time a piece. Working on At home small group teaching.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
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<td>March 2 - March 6 Readings and Research. Practice disciplines for Rule of Life. Host teaching small group.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>Readings</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>March 9 – March 13</td>
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| 10   | March 16 – March 20 | Readings and Research. Practice disciplines for Rule of Life. Mid-semester check-in |  |  | Assignments Due: 
Mid-Semester Rule of Life check in WRITTEN 
Due March 16th at 8:00 am 
Rule of Life wisdom sharing ZOOM class 
March 16th at 6:00 pm |
| 11   | March 23 – March 27 | Washington Papers Practicing Rule of Life. Research paper: complete research |  |  |  |
| 12   | March 30 – April 4 | “Companions for the Journey” Guidance, Celebration, Rule of Life, Other Disciplines, Spirituality in the African American Prayer Tradition Class Discussion Prayer Experience: Trinitarian blessing and creative arts prayers. | Foster, *Prayer*, chs. 16, 17,18 |  |  |
| 12   | April 3 | Weekend three Class meets Friday | Thompson, chs. 8 
Calhoun Part 4 |  |  |
| 12   | April 4th | Saturday Morning Teaching lesson plan with leadership reflection |  | Assignment Due: 
1. March 30 Assignment Due Teaching lesson plan with leadership reflection |  |
| 12   | April 4th | March 30 Assignment Due Teaching lesson plan with leadership reflection | Foster, *Prayer*, chs. 19, 20, 21 | Weekend Readings: 
Thompson, chapter 3 
Washington 3 & 4 |  |
| 12   | April 4th | Class meets Saturday April 4 | Thompson, chapter 3, 20, 21 | Assignments Due: 
1. Washington papers sections 3 & 4 
At 8:00 am through email. |  |
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Week</th>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Assignments/Due Dates</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 12 Saturday Afternoon</td>
<td>March 30 – April 4</td>
<td>Class meets Saturday April 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Discussion Groups “Integration Spiritual Disciplines and Prayer in Contextual Ministry” Moving Upward Intimacy in Prayer Class Discussion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Readings: Thompson, chs.4, 9 Calhoun, selections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>April 6 – April 10</td>
<td>EASTER BREAK April 9 &amp; 10</td>
<td>Reading and practicing spiritual disciplines for Rule of Life. Prepare Washington reflection papers for part 5 &amp; 6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>April 13 – April 17</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading and practicing spiritual disciplines for Rule of Life. Complete research paper. Begin writing research paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 15 Saturday morning Weekend 4</td>
<td>April 20 – April 25</td>
<td>Final Class meeting April 25&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Contemporary spiritual disciplines for the 21&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; century. Discussion final Research paper Willard teaching video</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 15 Saturday afternoon</td>
<td>April 20 – April 25</td>
<td>Final rap up discussion Review of all readings</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 16</td>
<td>April 27 – May 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Conclusion of writing research paper. Assignment Due: Research paper DUE Monday April 27&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; at 8:00 am</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Week finals | May 4 – May 7  
---|---
Any Rewrites for Research paper Due | Assignment Due: Rewrites for research paper DUE May 4th

V. Recommendations for Lifelong Learning
1. Consider a silent prayer retreat.
2. Participate in a small group for prayer.
3. Continue to read resources on prayer and particular traditions of prayer.
4. Meet regularly with a Spiritual Director. To find a spiritual director go to Spiritual Directors International at [www.sdiworld.org](http://www.sdiworld.org) or [www.livingstreamsflowingwater.com](http://www.livingstreamsflowingwater.com)
5. Take one hour a day for prayer, one Sabbath Day a month for prayer and one Sabbath Week a year for retreat with a praying community.

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. 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 and doctoral qualified Consultants can advise you online or in person.

To schedule an appointment, visit Writing Center Online and select “Seminary Writing Center” from the drop down schedule menu.

C. Accessibility Resources and Accommodations
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 the Student Accessibility Center at 419-289-5904, or send an email to dservices@ashland.edu. The Student Accessibility Center office and the course instructor will work together in order to establish accommodations and to meet your learning needs.

D. ATS Grading Scale

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Description</th>
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1
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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</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>3.7</td>
<td>92-96</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>3.3</td>
<td>89-91</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>3.0</td>
<td>86-88</td>
<td>Passing but minimal work, marginal achievement of course objectives, poor performance in comprehension of work submitted, inadequate class contributions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>83-85</td>
<td>Unacceptable work resulting in failure to receive class credit, inadequacy of work submitted or of performance and attendance in class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>80-82</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
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<td>C-</td>
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<td>D-</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<td>Below 65</td>
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VII. Selected Bibliography or References


