



DISC 5170 Introduction to Spiritual Formation

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Division of Church Ministry

Summer 2021 Online

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Mission Statement

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

Core Value Focus

The seminary has five core values.

- 1. Doctrinal Integrity:** Knowing that the Bible is the Word of God, we believe it, teach it, proclaim it, and submit to it. This course addresses Doctrinal Integrity specifically by preparing students to grow in understanding and interpreting of the Bible.
- 2. Spiritual Vitality:** We are a worshiping community emphasizing both personal spirituality and gathering together as a Seminary family for the praise and adoration of God and instruction in His Word. Spiritual Vitality is addressed by reminding students that a dynamic relationship with God is vital for effective ministry.
- 3. 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. This course addresses Mission Focus by helping students understand the biblical foundations for fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments.
- 4. 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. Characteristic Excellence is addressed by preparing students to excel in their ability to interpret Scripture, which is foundational to effective ministry.
- 5. Servant Leadership:** We follow the model of Jesus and exert leadership and influence through the nurture and encouragement of those around us. Servant Leadership is modeled by classroom deportment.

The core value focus for this academic year is *Mission Focus*.

Curriculum Competencies

NOBTS faculty members realize that all ministers need to develop specific competencies if they are going to have an effective ministry. To increase the likelihood of NOBTS graduates having an effective ministry, the faculty developed a competency-based curriculum after identifying seven essential competencies necessary for effective ministry. All graduates are expected to have at least a minimum level of competency in all of the following areas:

- 1. Biblical Exposition:** to interpret and communicate the Bible accurately.
- 2. Christian Theological Heritage:** To understand and interpret Christian theological heritage and Baptist polity for the church.

3. **Disciple Making:** To stimulate church health through mobilizing the church for missions, evangelism, discipleship, and church growth.
4. **Interpersonal Skills:** To perform pastoral care effectively, with skills in communication and conflict management.
5. **Servant Leadership:** To serve churches effectively through team ministry.
6. **Spiritual and Character Formation:** To provide moral leadership by modeling and mentoring Christian character and devotion.
7. **Worship Leadership:** To facilitate worship effectively.

This course addresses all curriculum competencies.

Course Description

This course is a pass-fail experience in a faculty led learning context. Students in the course will meet weekly for accountability, mentoring, discussion, and spiritual formation by participating in and leading weekly meetings. Students will comprehend a variety of Christian devotional practices by completing specific assignments on basic spiritual disciplines. This course is designed to be taken during a student's first semester. This course is available in a mentoring format.

Student Learning Outcomes

In order to provide moral leadership by modeling and mentoring Christian character and devotion and in order to stimulate church health through mobilizing the church for discipleship, the student, by the end of the course should:

1. Comprehend the following concepts:
 - 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.
 - Christian devotional practices or disciplines.
2. Have a positive response to the following concepts:
 - A life-long intentional devotional discipline for lifelong spiritual growth and benefit to the kingdom of God.
 - A meaningful and maturing relationship with God.
 - Christian community in a small group setting.
 - A personal commitment to basic devotional practices.
3. Be able to, with the help of resources, accomplish the following tasks:
 - Develop a plan for personal discipleship and assist others to develop a personal discipleship plan.
 - Practice appropriate disciplines of the Christian faith.
4. Have an appropriate perception as how to lead small discipleship groups.

Course Teaching Methodology

The course will involve the following methodologies: reading/reflection on texts in the field through participation in class/group discussions; individual study and practice of spiritual disciplines; and reflection and journaling of individual student spiritual journey.

Textbook

- Foster, Richard J. *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth, Special Anniversary Edition*. San Francisco, CA: HarperOne, 2018. (ISBN: 9780062803887)

*NOTE: The expanded edition is required for this course because of the included study guide for meeting with the assigned mentor on a weekly basis.

Course Requirements

1. Complete all units and participate in all online discussions. Discussions will be based on the weekly reading outlined in the individual units. Discussion board posts will be graded on your thoughtfulness in engaging the textbooks and related topics. Your responses to your classmates' posts will be graded on your interaction with their statements or questions. Although length is not the primary emphasis of the posts or responses, you should write a sufficient amount to demonstrate adequate thoughtfulness.

Post the first discussion thread on the week you are assigned as your Discussion Group Leader and respond to at least one other classmate's post that week. The other weeks you should read the assigned chapter and respond to a minimum of two posts by fellow classmates in your assigned group.

2. In Week 1, each student is to post a personal introduction via the Discussion Thread connected to Week 1. Each student is also to comment on two classmates' introductory thread.
3. Read the assigned textbook and additional class material while also facilitating one class discussion of an assigned chapter. Each student will be assigned a unit in which he or she will lead and facilitate the discussion via the discussion board for that specific unit.
4. Keep an electronic journal of your spiritual journey throughout the course and complete the assignments given by the professor for the spiritual journal. The journal is to include your thoughts/reflections about your spiritual journey. The student is to journal via the Blackboard Journal 3-5 times weekly with a paragraph (3-5 sentences) minimum each entry. The journal will not be read by the professor or other students but only briefly checked for completion. The completed journal is due the final week of class, Week 8.
5. Memorize and recite assigned Bible verses according to the specifications in the units. The student is to video himself or herself reciting from memory the assigned Bible verse. The student is then to upload the video to YouTube and follow the instructions to post the link of the video in the appropriate unit on Blackboard. The verses and units in which they are due are outlined below.
6. The student must select an accountability partner, who is the same gender and who can challenge the student spiritually. The student will meet with the accountability partner for a minimum of thirty minutes per week beginning in Week 2. The student will submit a signed statement in Week 2 identifying the accountability partner.
7. Write a three-page reflection paper at the end of the semester. The assignment is due in Week 8. A rubric for the assignment can be found at the end of the syllabus.

Evaluation of Grade

The course is offered on a pass/fail basis as follows:

Discussion Board Participation	20 %
Discussion Board Unit Leadership	15%
Journal	20%
Scripture Memorization Videos	15%
Accountability Statement	15 %
Reflection Paper	15 %

Technical Assistance

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. Selfserve@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
2. BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard Learning Management System NOBTS.Blackboard.com.
3. ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email for general technical questions/support requests.
4. www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

Help for Writing Papers at “The Write Stuff”

NOBTS maintains a Writing Center designed to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help in becoming a better writer.

Plagiarism on Written Assignments

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

Course Schedule

Week 1 5/31	Unit 1 – Reading, Syllabus Review Personal Profile Post Scripture Memorization
Week 2 6/7	Units 2-3 - Reading, Discussion Board on Ch.1-2 Scripture Memorization Accountability Partner Statement Due
Week 3 6/14	Units 4-5 - Reading, Discussion Board on Ch. 3-4 Scripture Memorization
Week 4 6/21	Units 6-7 - Reading, Discussion Board on Ch. 5-6 Scripture Memorization
Week 5 6/28	Units 8-9 - Reading, Discussion Board on Ch. 7-8 Scripture Memorization
Week 6 7/5	Units 10-11 - Reading, Discussion Board on Ch. 9-10 Scripture Memorization

Week 7 7/12	Units 12-13 - Reading, Discussion Board on Ch.11-12 Scripture Memorization
Week 8 7/19	Unit 14 - Reading, Discussion Board on Ch. 13 Scripture Memorization Journal Due Reflection Paper Due Wednesday, 7/22

Memory Verses

Gal. 2:20	Week 1
Phil. 3:10	Week 2
Rom. 12:1-2	Week 3
Jos. 1:8	Week 4
Phil. 4:6-7	Week 5
Heb. 10:24-25	Week 6
Mt. 28:18-20	Week 7
Col. 3:17	Week 8

Course Reminders

1. Academic misconduct including but not limited to plagiarism, cheating, or unacceptable conduct may result in failure of the course and disciplinary action by the seminary as outlined in the student handbook.
2. Failure of a computer, printer, or other electronic devices used to compose or print class assignments will not be accepted as a reason for late work.
3. Members of the course are expected to treat the professor and each other with respect in their conversation and conduct. If not, appropriate action may be taken based on seminary policies.

**RUBRIC FOR GRADING A SUMMATIVE PROJECT – REFLECTION PAPER
IN THE COURSE DISC5170: SPIRITUAL FORMATION**

Assignment Description:

Write a three-page reflection paper at the end of the semester. The reflection paper is a first-person synopsis of a personal spiritual formation and discipleship plan relating to the importance of spiritual maturity and spiritual disciplines. The student should write about their perception of meeting in small groups for Christian community and the role of spiritual disciplines/devotional practices such as journaling, scripture memorization, and prayer.

Element	SLOs	Inadequate (1 PT)	BASIC (2PTS)	COMPETENT (3 PTS)	GOOD (4 PTS)	EXCELLENT (5 PTS)	POINTS
UNDERSTANDING	Understand the basic marks of personal spiritual disciplines, spiritual growth and discipleship.	Shows an inadequate understanding of personal disciplines, spiritual growth and discipleship.	Shows a minimal understanding of personal disciplines, spiritual growth and discipleship.	Shows an adequate understanding of personal disciplines, spiritual growth and discipleship. Student lists and explains one or two spiritual disciplines.	Shows a good understanding of personal disciplines, spiritual growth and discipleship. Student lists and explains three spiritual disciplines.	Shows an exemplary understanding of personal disciplines, spiritual growth and discipleship. Student lists and explains four spiritual disciplines.	
APPLICATION	Develop a positive response to lifelong spiritual growth through the practice of spiritual disciplines.	Makes poor application to respond to lifelong spiritual growth through spiritual disciplines	Makes minimal application to respond to lifelong spiritual growth through spiritual disciplines	Makes one practical applications to respond to lifelong spiritual growth through spiritual disciplines.	Makes two applications to respond to lifelong spiritual growth through spiritual disciplines.	Makes three practical application to respond to lifelong spiritual growth through spiritual disciplines.	
COMMUNICATION	Express in writing a personal discipleship plan and lead others in spiritual disciplines within a small group setting.	Used none or an incoherent expression that fails to communicate a plan to help others grow spiritually.	Use of an inconsistent expression that fails to communicate a plan to help others grow spiritually.	Limited expressions that communicate a competent plan to help others grow spiritually by valuing relationships.	Used more than one expression that communicate a good plan to help others grow spiritually by valuing relationships.	Used two or more expressions that communicate an exemplary plan to help others grow spiritually by valuing relationships.	<u>Aver. Score</u>

Scale: 0-1 = Inadequate _____ 1-2 = Basic _____ 2-3 = Competent _____ 3-4 = Good _____ 4-5 = Excellent _____

Instructor: _____

Semester _____ **Teaching Venue** _____

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