



Disciple Making through Small Group Ministry DISC5371

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Discipleship and Ministry Leadership Division

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

Mission Statement

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

Purpose of the Course

The purpose of this course is to provide quality theological education for students in the area of disciple making the context of the local church.

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 worshiping 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 2020-2021 academic year the Core Value is *Mission Focus*.

Curriculum Competencies Addressed

This course will address the following curriculum competencies:

1. *Interpersonal Skills*: Understand how to build relationships with other ministry leaders within the local church.
2. *Disciplemaking*: To stimulate church health through mobilizing the church for missions, evangelism, discipleship, and church growth.
3. *Servant Leadership*: Determine how the Senior Pastor, staff members, and lay leaders can serve one another while still providing the appropriate leadership required.
4. *Spiritual and Character Formation*: As a leadership team intentionally “grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ” (Eph. 4:15b, NKJV).

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to engage students in a comprehensive look at strategies, principles, aims, and procedures that facilitate qualitative and quantitative growth of the church (disciple making) through a small group ministry. Students will develop skills in assessing, planning, organizing, leading, and evaluation the ministry of a church which utilizes a small group strategy.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Understand biblical concepts for administration of the small groups in the local church and analyze these administrative practices in terms of a biblical worldview.
2. Students will demonstrate administrative principles and practices to the planning, organizing, leading, and evaluating the small group ministries of the local church.
3. Value the importance of the discipleship mandate given to all believers in Scripture.

Required Readings

The following texts and resources are required reading for class discussions and are to be read in their entirety unless otherwise specified.

Required Texts

Braddy, Ken. *Breathing Life into Sunday School: 12 Essentials to Revive your Most Important Ministry*. Nashville, TN: Lifeway Resources. 2019.

Gladen, Steve. *Small Groups with Purpose: How to Create Healthy Communities*. Grand Rapids, MN: Baker Books, 2013.

Search, Bill. *The Essential Guide for Small Group Leaders*. Carol Stream, IL: Christianity Today. 2017.

Stetzer, Ed and Eric Geiger. *Transformational Groups: Creating a Scorecard For Groups*. Nashville, TN: B & H Books. 2014.

Assigned or Recommended Texts

Boren, Scott. *Making Cell Groups Work: Navigating the Transformation to a Cell Based Church*. Houston, TX: Touch Outreach Ministries. 2002.

- Cole, Neil, *Cultivating a Life for God: Multiplying Disciples Through Life Transformation Groups*. Long Beach, CA: CMA Resources. 2014.
- Comisky, Joel. *2000 Years of Small Groups: A History of Cell Ministry in the Church*. Moreno Valley, CA: CCS Publishing. 2015.
- Dodson, Jonathan K. *Gospel Centered Discipleship*. Wheaton, Ill: Crossway, 2012.
- Early, David and Rod Dempsey. *Disciplemaking Is: How to Live the Great Commission with Passion and Confidence*. Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 2013.
- Ogden, Greg. *Transforming Discipleship*. Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 2003.
- Parr, Steve. *Sunday School that Really Works: A Strategy for Connecting Congregations to Communities*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publishers, 2010.
- Spader, Dann. *4 Chair Discipling: Growing a Movement of Disciple-Makers*. Chicago, Ill: Moody Publishers, 2014.
- Taylor, Allan. *Sunday School in HD*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2009.

Course Teaching Methodology

This course will utilize lecture and interactive discovery-learning format. The following outline presents the course's units framed around Flake's Formula.

Unit 1: Introductions

Unit 2: Overview of Discipleship

Know the Possibilities

Unit 3: Sunday School and Small Groups

Enlarge the Organization

Unit 4: Open or Closed Small Groups

Unit 5: Starting New Groups

Enlist and Train Workers

Unit 6: Leadership Positions and Roles

Unit 7: Training Models & Content

Provide the Space

Unit 8: Evaluating & Utilizing Space

Go After the People

Unit 9: Evangelism through Small Groups

Unit 10: Effective Guest Follow Up Practices

Best Small Group Practices

Unit 11: Creating & Managing Group Experiences

Teaching & Curriculum

Unit 12: Effective Bible Teaching & Curriculum Mapping

Strategic Planning

Unit 13: Christian Education, Discipleship, & Spiritual Formation

Unit 14: Review and Conclusion

Course Units and Assignment Schedule (Subject to Change)

Unit #	Unit Title	Date
1	Introduction	Aug. 25
2	Overview of Discipleship	Sept. 1
	<i>Transformational Groups</i> Annotated Bibliography Due	Sept. 3
3	Sunday School & Small Groups	Sept. 8
4	Open or Closed Small Groups	Sept. 15
	<i>Small Groups with a Purpose</i> Annotated Bibliography Due	Sept. 17
5	Starting New Groups	Sept. 22
6	Leadership Positions & Roles	Sept. 29
	Book Critique Due	Oct. 5
7	Book Critique Presentations; Training Models & Content	Oct. 6
8	Evaluating & Utilizing Space	Oct. 13
	Fall Break	Oct. 20
9	Evangelism through Small Groups	Oct. 27
10	Effective Guest Follow-Up Practices	Nov. 3
	Biblical Research Paper Due	Nov. 5
11	Creating & Managing Group Experiences	Nov. 10
12	Effective Bible Teaching & Curriculum Mapping	Nov. 17
	Thanksgiving Break	Nov. 24
13	Christian Education, Discipleship, & Spiritual Formation	Dec. 1
	Case Study PowerPoint Due	Dec. 3
14	Case Study Presentations & Review	Dec. 8
	Finals Schedule	Dec. 15

****NOTE: The above schedule does not include the quizzes or extra credit paper.**

Assignments and Evaluation Criteria

Assignment 1. Annotated Bibliographies – 10% (5% each)

Create a three to four paragraph single-spaced annotation for two designated texts to meet the reading requirement. Provide the bibliographic citation, the three-four paragraphs, and the page number(s) referenced at the end of the citation. Each annotation, in the last paragraph, should contain your appraisal and considerations on the text not just a synopsis of the text. Following the annotation, indicate whether you read the text in its entirety. You may use parenthetical references.

- *Transformational Groups* – **September 3rd**
- *Small Groups with a Purpose* – **September 17th**

Assignment 2. Book Critiques and Presentations – 10% (Due October 5th)

Students will be assigned a book from the optional list from the required readings. Students will provide a written critique and present findings in class. On the assigned day, turn in a 3-page type-written report on the assigned book. The book review should include the following two components: 1) A one page (double spaced) **content summary** and 2) A two page (single spaced) **reflection summary** of significant ideas (direct quotes or general ideas) from the book. The following should be included with each significant idea: a) the book page number; b) one of the three identified categories below and c) brief reflective personalized comments. A double space between each entry of the list is expected. More guidelines will be provided in class.

1. **AGREEMENT** – Thoughts with which you are in firm agreement; things that make you say “Yes!” or items that inspire you to action in your life and move your spirit.
2. **DISAGREEMENT** – Thoughts in which you find dissonance; areas with which you might disagree.
3. **MORE THOUGHT** – Areas that you want to spend more time thinking about; things that make you wonder; items on which you are not sure what your stance is.

Assignment 3. Quizzes – 10% (2.5 points each)

Four quizzes will be presented in class. The dates and subject matter will be announced at least one week prior to the test date. Quizzes will incorporate readings from the required texts *Breathing Life into Sunday School* and *The Essential Guide for Small Group Leaders*.

Assignment 4. Biblical Research Paper – 20% (Due November 5th)

Create a clear and concise (6-8 page) research paper on small group disciple-making principles derived from Scripture. The paper will consist of a synthesis and analysis of the pertinent literature considering the exegetical themes of discipleship throughout the Bible. Students should discern five to seven fundamental principles for integration in a local church team ministry setting. Students will be prepared to report their research findings to class via PowerPoint presentation. Students’ presentation will be included in the grading of this paper. **Pay close attention to the Assignment Formatting section of this syllabus!**

Assignment Formatting

- Type this assignment according to the NOBTS Style Guide/Turabian format
- All papers must be written in third person and double-spaced
- Use 12-point Times New Roman font
- Use the same number of references as assigned pages
- Use correct spelling and grammar
- Provide appropriate title page, contents page, footnotes, bibliography, and pagination

Assignment 5. Case Study - 25% (Due December 3rd; Presentations made December 5th)

Using the fundamental principles discovered in the **Biblical Research Paper** and the best practices covered in the literature and class presentations, describe a local small group ministry, assess the strengths and weaknesses, and make recommendations for improvements.

1. **Description of Existing Small Group Ministry (5-6 slides)**
2. **Assessment of Strengths and Challenges (5-6 slides)**
3. **Recommendations for Improvements (5-6 slides)**

The Small Group Ministry case study should include diagrams, charts, and bullet points. Envision your presentation being made to a group of church ministry leaders/workers.

Assignment 6. Final Exam – 15% (December 15th)

During the final exam meeting, synthesize content from the course into a personal statement of disciple making through small groups in the local church. Communicate the biblical basis for several vital components of and the organization and development of the small groups. Consideration should be given to both an individual’s personal spiritual formation as well as the role of others in a small group setting.

Classroom Participation/Group Work – 10%

Participation is required for every course session due to the interactive learning format of the course. A positive attitude can only enhance the learning experience. Therefore, for the purposes of this class, a *positive attitude* and *participation* are defined as productive and interactive engagement with classroom presentations and classroom dialogues throughout a full course session. You cannot participate effectively if you are not focused on the subject matter while in the classroom. Consequently, the student is expected:

- To come to class with a constructive point of view, prepared to interact with the readings and resources on the course topic in discussion groups and classroom dialogues.
- To dress appropriately and in accordance with the NOBTS Student Handbook. *This means no flip-flops and no ball caps!*
- To turn off cell phones and to not accept any phone calls during class.
- To use laptops appropriately.

Extra Credit – 5% extra credit

OPTIONAL: Write a three-page text review for a book selection not already required or read for the course. The text selected *must be pre-approved* and at least 150 pages in length. The text review should include a summary, the vital concepts, and your appraisal and considerations on the text. **Due by Dec 7, 2019.**

Course Evaluation

Annotated Bibliography	10%
Exegetical Research Paper	20%
Quizzes	10%
Book Critique and Presentation	10%
Case Study and Presentation	25%
Final Exam	15%
Classroom Participation	10%
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	100%

Course Policies

Late Assignments

Assignments not submitted *on the due dates* are considered late and will be automatically penalized 10% for each date late including weekends. Late assignments will not be accepted one week beyond the original due date, *no exceptions*. **No grades of Incomplete will be issued for this course. If a late assignment is not received, a grade of "F" is automatically earned for the course.**

Grading Scale

Your final grade will be based on your total accumulation of points as indicated under the *Learning Activities and Assessments* section of this syllabus according to the grading scale.

A: 93-100 B: 85-92 C: 77-84 D: 70-76 F: 69 and below

Netiquette

Appropriate Online Behavior: Each student is expected to demonstrate appropriate Christian behavior when working online on Discussion Boards or whenever interaction occurs through web, digital, or other electronic medium. The student is expected to interact with other students in a fashion that will promote learning and respect for the opinions of others in the course. A spirit of Christian charity is always expected in the online environment.

Academic Honesty Policy

All graduate and undergraduate NOBTS students, whether on-campus, internet, or extension center students, are expected to adhere to the highest Christian standard of honesty and integrity when completing academic assignments for all courses in every delivery system format. The Bible provides our standard for academic integrity and honesty. This standard applies whether a student is taking tests, quizzes, exams, writing papers, completing Discussion Boards, or any other course requirement.

Selected Bibliography

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Barrett, Lois. *Building the House Church*. Kitchener: Herald, 1986.

Coleman, Lyman. *Small Group Training Manual*. Littleton, CO: Serendipity, 1991.

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- Getz, Gene A. and Charles R. Swindoll. *The Walk: Growing into the Fullness of Christ*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2000.
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- Hadaway, C. Kirk, Stuart A. Wright, and Francis M. DuBose. *Home Cell Groups and House Churches*. Nashville: Broadman, 1987.
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- _____ and Bill Taylor. *Ten Best Practices To Make Your Sunday School Work*. Nashville: LifeWay, 2001.
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- Long, Jimmy. *Small Group Leaders' Handbook: The Next Generation*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1995.
- Mack, Michael C. *The Synergy Church: A Strategy for Integrating Small Groups and Sunday School*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996.
- Mallory, Sue. *The Equipping Church: Serving Together to Transform Lives*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001.
- Malphurs, Aubrey. *Advanced Strategic Planning: A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1999.
- Mancini, Will. *Church Unique: How Missional Leaders Cast Vision, Capture Culture, and Create Movement*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008
- McBride, Neal F. *How To Build A Small Groups Ministry*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1995.
- McIntosh, Gary. *Make Room for the Boom...or Bust: Six Models for Reaching Three Generations*. Tarrytown, NY: Revell, 1997.
- Mims, Gene. *Kingdom Principles for Church Growth* (rev.). Nashville: LifeWay, 2001.
- Poling, Wayne, ed. *Sunday School Manual*. Nashville: LifeWay Press, 2009.
- Rhodes, David. *Cell Church or Traditional?: Reflections on the Church*. Cambridge: Grove, 1996.

Southern, Richard and Robert Norton. *Cracking Your Congregation's Code*. San Francisco Jossey-Bass, 2001.

Stanley, Andy and Ed Young. *Can We Do That: 24 Innovative Practices that Will Change the Way You Do Church*. Howard Publishing, 2002.

Ver Straten, Charles A. *A Caring Church: Through Shepherding Ministries*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988.

Warren, Rick. *The Purpose-Driven Church: Growth without Compromising Your Message and Mission*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995.

Welch, Bobby H. *Evangelism Through Sunday School: A Journey of Faith*. Nashville: LifeWay, 1997.

White, James Emery. *Rethinking the Church: A Challenge to Creative Redesign in an Age of Transition*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997.