



DISC 5170-05 Introduction to Spiritual Formation
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Division of Pastoral Ministry
Fall 2019

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Mission Statement

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

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 department.

The core value focus for this academic year is Spiritual Vitality.

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.

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 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. A life-long intentional devotional discipline for lifelong spiritual growth and benefit to the kingdom of God.
 - b. A meaningful and maturing relationship with God.
 - c. Christian community in a small group setting.
 - d. 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.
 - Lead small discipleship groups.
4. Have an appropriate perception as how to lead small discipleship groups.

Course Teaching Methodology

The course will involve the following methodologies:

Methodology will include reading/reflection on a text in the field through participation in class/group discussions; intense periods of personal spiritual preparation through the accountable exercising of various habits, practices, and disciplines; discernment and enlistment of, as well as time spent with an accountability partner; reflection and journaling of the journey; and the use of an integration paper to capture the various exercises, ideas, etc., reflecting on God's involvement in it all.

Textbooks

Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life, rev., by Donald S. Whitney, NavPress, 2014.

Course Requirements

1. The learner will follow a reading schedule (below) for reading the textbook and to be able to participate in a group discussion each week, assuming leadership for the group discussions at least once during the semester. Each week, EACH STUDENT will submit discussion questions for use in class concerning the assigned chapter. The questions will be submitted on the Blackboard Discussion Forum for the assigned chapter that week. At least one question should be submitted by each student concerning the content of each chapter. Also, at least ONE question should be submitted related to the application of the chapter to life situations. Questions should be submitted to the Discussion Board by each Wednesday at 5:00 PM before the class period in which the chapters will be discussed. If a student fails to submit the required questions by the date and time due, the number of questions due for the next class period will double. The person leading discussion that week will also call on persons not submitting questions for "special input." Class members will each have an opportunity to lead one or more class sessions and are responsible for printing off the questions and distributing them to class members (unless choosing another way to cover the material.) Students may also add additional questions for the week they lead the class discussion.

2. On the date assigned each student will lead the discussion of the week's assigned reading. The student will see that the discussion moves along and that essential components of the chapter are discussed.
3. Spiritual Retreat- Plan and execute a one day spiritual retreat for yourself. It must consist of at least four hours of uninterrupted time away from your home, office, church, or place of employment. At least one week prior to your retreat submit a brief outline of what you intend to do during this time. The retreat must be completed by the end of the fall break. Be prepared to discuss your retreat in class on Oct. 24. If the retreat is not completed by the end of fall break then the retreat will need to be 8 hours in length.
4. The learner will experiment with selected disciplines each week beginning early in September and continuing throughout the semester. The student will be expected to have a regular time of Scripture reading and prayer. Students may be called on occasionally to share about their practice of their quiet time.
5. The learner will participate in group life, not only through the group discussions, but also by giving attention to prayer needs emerging and shared throughout the semester. Group members should grow to share requests, report answers/updates, and be available to the Holy Spirit to speak words of encouragement, instruction, challenge or rebuke into the lives of others. Proper participation entails a commitment to attend class. If the student must be out he or she should contact the instructor well before class time.
6. Spiritual Disciplines. Keep a journal for at least two weeks during the semester, journaling at least five times per week. Experiment with at least four other spiritual disciplines during the semester and journal about this (separate from the two weeks of journaling). Your journal will remain private.
7. Write a three-page, double-spaced 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. Reflect on your activity in various disciplines. The assignment is due on Thursday, Dec. 5 in class.

Evaluation of Grade

This experience is a pass/fail course. Grades will be determined by participation in the reading, submission of discussion questions, discussions, prayer experiences, provision of an accountability partner statement, experimentation with various spiritual disciplines, and completion/submission of the integration paper. Repeated failure to submit assignments will result in a failing grade. The final grade decision will be made by the professor.

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.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes. Absence of more than 3 hours will result in a failing grade. Three tardies will be considered as one hour's absence.

In the event that the normal NOBTS schedule is impacted due to a natural event or epidemic go to the seminary website for information. Our class will continue through our Blackboard site. Please note announcements and assignments on the Blackboard site in the event one or more of our classes is cancelled.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Each student is responsible for the academic integrity of his/her work. The following are examples of violations of academic integrity: cheating on an exam, plagiarism, turning in work done by someone else, and submitting a paper which has been submitted in another class. These and other violations of academic integrity may result in failure of the course.

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.

Class Schedule Thursday 1:00-1:50 (Class Meets at Professor’s Home, 4221 Seminary PL.)

Aug. 22- First Class
Aug. 29- Whitney, chap. 1
Sept. 5- Whitney, chaps. 2
Sept. 12- Whitney, chap. 3
Sept. 19- Whitney, chap. 4
Sept. 26- Whitney, chap. 5
Oct. 3- Whitney, chap. 6
Oct. 10- Whitney, chap. 7
Oct. 17- Fall Break
Oct. 24- Whitney, chap. 8
Oct. 31- Whitney, chap. 9
Nov. 7- Whitney, chap. 10
Nov. 14- Whitney, chap. 11
Nov. 21- Thanksgiving Break
Nov. 28- Whitney, chap. 12
Dec. 5- Whitney, chap. 13

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BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard Learning Management System NOBTS.Blackboard.com.

ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email for general technical questions/support requests.

504.816.8180 - Call for any technical questions/support requests.

www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

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