

DISC5170 Spiritual Formation I

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Division of Pastoral Ministries

Jacksonville Extension

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Seminary Mission Statement

The mission of the 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.

Purpose of the Course, Core Value Focus, and Curriculum Competencies Addressed

The purpose of this course is to provide quality theological education for students in the discipline of pastoral ministries. The core value focus of the seminary this year will emphasize **Mission Focus**. This course will specifically address the competencies of interpersonal skills, servant leadership, spiritual and character formation, and disciple making.

Course Description

This is the first of two semester-long, pass-fail experiences in a faculty-mentored group. The group will meet for discussion, accountability, mentoring, and spiritual formation in the company of others. It will include specific assignments from a variety of Christian devotional practices. This course is designed to be taken during a student's first fall semester.

Student Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, the student will:

1. Grow in his/her biblical understanding of spiritual maturation (i.e., what is commonly referred to as *discipleship*).
2. Be challenged to develop a strong personal commitment to a lifestyle of discipleship.
3. Develop skills in leading discipleship groups and consider such groups as a part of the discipleship strategy of a local Church ministry.

Course Methods

Methodology will include but is not limited to class lecture, student presentations, sub-group debriefing sessions, dialogue with professor, and personal preparation through the accountable exercising of spiritual habits, practices, and disciplines. Conferences with the instructor are invited and may be accomplished via telephone, e-mail, or personal visits. Even informal conferences can stimulate learning and application of course principles and concepts

Course Textbook

The following textbook is **required** (will be cited in various class lectures and/or used in assignments):

Ortberg, John. *The Life You've Always Wanted: Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002.

The following textbook is *suggested* reading:

Tozer, A.W. *The Pursuit of God: The Human Thirst for the the Divine*. Camp Hill, PA: Wing Spread Publishers, 2006.

Course Requirements

The student is required to:

1. Read the required textbook as assigned by the professor and experiment with spiritual disciplines throughout the semester.
2. Journal regularly (no less than three-four days a week), recording her/his spiritual journey throughout this course. The journal will be the student's sole property and will NOT be turned into faculty. The student will be asked to provide **a typed and signed statement as to the fulfillment of this course expectation (due Dec. 14, 2015 at the beginning of the class session)**. The student will utilize the journal material in the reflection paper.
3. Contribute to all class discussions, small group discussions, and lead a class discussion of one chapter in Ortberg (as assigned by the professor).
4. Dialogue and pray with and for other students in a supportive environment of community and accountability.
5. Write and submit a typed **three- to four-page** (double-spaced) **reflection paper** including the student's personal evaluation of the **strengths, weaknesses, and goals** concerning his/her spiritual journey. In a final section of the paper, include and explain **at least one major point of impact** that this semester's course has had on your personal discipleship. A cover page is to be used, but do not include an intervening blank page or binder. **DUE DATE: December 14, 2015** (beginning of the class session).

Course Evaluation

This experience is a **pass/fail** course. Grades will be determined by the **TOTAL COMPLETION OF:**

1. Reading textbook and experimenting with spiritual disciplines.
2. Statement of completion of spiritual journal.
3. Class participation and assigned session leadership.
4. Reflection paper.

Additional Requirements

1. For our group to function well and achieve the course objectives, we must respect one another. This means each member should give the following and expect the following from other students:
 - a. **Respect**. Whether we agree or disagree, we will respect one another.
 - b. **Confidentiality**. Unless permission is explicitly given, what is shared in class will stay in class.
 - c. **Freedom/Openness**. Each member must be open to sharing their feelings once they are comfortable with the group.
2. Preparation is minimal but key. Each student should **read the assigned material** and **journal** their thoughts throughout the week and bring their journal to class so that they can have a shareable record of what they felt and thought during that time as they walked with Christ.
3. The course is offered on a pass/fail basis. Apart from completing the reflection paper and journaling, each student will be graded according to how they prepared for class, participated in

discussions, and conducted themselves according to the expectations listed in number 1 above.

Course Schedule

Session	Date	Special Topic / Assignment due <i>(Listed reading should be completed PRIOR to the class meeting in order to enhance discussion during the session)</i>
1	8/31	Introduction & Overview
2	9/14	Chapter 1: "We Shall Morph Indeed": The Hope of Transformation
3	9/28	Chapter 2: Surprised by Change: The Goal of Spiritual Life
4	10/12	Chapter 3: Training vs. Trying: The Truth About Spiritual Disciplines
5	10/26	Chapter 4: A "Dee Dah Day": The Practice of Celebration
6	11/9	Chapter 5: An Unhurried Life: The Practice of "Slowing"
7	11/30	Chapter 6: Interrupting Heaven: The Practice of Prayer
8	12/14	STATEMENT OF JOURNAL COMPLETION DUE REFLECTION PAPER DUE Chapter 7: "Appropriate Smallness": The Practice of Servanthood

*** SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT PROFESSOR'S DISCRETION ***

Selected Bibliography

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- Biehl, Bobb. *Mentoring: Confidence in Finding a Mentor and Becoming One*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1996.
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *The Cost of Discipleship*. Translated by R.H. Fuller. 2d rev. ed. New York: Macmillan, 1963.
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- Houston, James. *The Mentored Life: From Individualism to Personhood*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2001.
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