Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary – Charlotte

Course Syllabus

Spiritual Formation for Ministry (MC/SF501)

Dr. Steven Klipowicz, Professor

2015 Class Dates

Tuesdays (9 a.m. – noon)

January 20, 27
February 3, 10, 17, 20
March 3, 10, 17, 31
April 14, 21

Contact Information

Professor of Record

Dr. Steve Klipowicz
704-527-9909 (phone)
704-527-8577 (fax)
sklipowicz@gordonconwell.edu

Course Description:

Spiritual Formation for Ministry (MC/SF501) is a foundational course in the Division of Practical Theology that explores the processes and goals of spiritual formation in the life of the Christian minister, counselor or leader from a multi-disciplinary viewpoint including personal, biblical, theological, psychological, and historical perspectives. The student is introduced to the historic disciplines and practices of the Christian faith that promote intimacy with God and Christ-likeness in character with the goal of fostering ongoing personal vitality essential to ministry and the ability to facilitate spiritual renewal and consistent discipleship in others.

Relationship to Curriculum:

Spiritual Formation for Ministry (MC/SF 501) serves as an appropriate substitute for Dynamics of Spiritual Life (MC/CH 591) in all degree programs. This course can also serve as a ministry option in the Master of Arts in Christian Counseling program. Students in the counseling program should arrange with the professor to develop a bibliography and projects that will correspond with the counseling degree.
Web-Enhanced Features

This course will be utilizing various Internet based learning approaches found on the SAKAI web portal that will be made available to students by the first class weekend. This will include student blogs, discussion boards, online office hours, and other elements of educational support. It will be expected that all students have Internet access.

Course Objectives:

The goal of this course is to develop a foundation for personal spiritual development in the student as a Christian leader in pastoral ministry or other callings. Adequate completion of assignments, projects, readings, and class activities should enable the student to demonstrate the following as objectives:

- Students will develop a personal philosophy of Christian spirituality and faith development that provides a solid biblical and theological rationale for the nature of spiritual life and growth and explains required factors for the cultivation of an intimate relationship with God and Christ-like character in community. This philosophy will be anchored aptly within the context of each student’s own faith tradition and community.

- The student will be able to recount the major streams and spiritualities fostered within the Christian tradition, comparing and contrasting key features demonstrated in a collaborative project and class presentation.

- Students will articulate how their personality influences spiritual orientation and the process of spiritual and character formation.

- Students will learn to review and “exegete “their life narratives reflectively as a journey of faith and interpret life events in light of God’s sovereign purposes for spiritual formation and vocation.

- Students will be able to identify, articulate, and personally incorporate key Christian practices and disciplines of the spiritual life in a personal “rule of life.”

- Students will be able to identify both the primary and secondary elements of spiritual renewal and apply these factors to personal and congregational formation and to evaluating spiritual traditions

- Students will be able to provide a framework for the understanding and practice of spiritual mentoring and engage in a spiritual mentoring relationship during the course.
Students will comprehend the diverse workings of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian and how to facilitate the Spirit’s power and presence in the work of ministry.

Attendance:

Students are required to attend all sessions of the course. Unexcused absenteeism will result in a loss of grade points. If for reason of illness or family death or emergency, please contact Dr. Klipowicz regarding these events to determine appropriate make-up activities. For additional information concerning attendance, consult the Student Handbook requirements and guidelines.

Required Personality Testing

All Master of Divinity students should have completed at the onset of seminary the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). Students should bring copies of this test score to class on February 10. **Students who have not taken this inventory can take it online.** There is a delay in getting scores so students should complete it online before January 30, 2015. **There will be a charge of $20 to take the test.** Students who have completed the MBTI in other contexts should familiarize themselves with their type profiles before the second class.

Directions for taking the test online are posted on the SAKAI website in the Resource section under MBTI Instructions.

MC 501 Required Readings:

The following books are required reading for the class. They should be read in their entirety unless otherwise noted:


Calhoun, Adele, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us.* Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2005. (This is a resource book and is not to be completely read) ISBN-10: 0830833307


**In addition, students will choose one of the following works read it completely as required reading:**


**A signed statement indicating the amount of reading completed in terms of pages or hours (see below) must be submitted at the conclusion of the course.**

**Course Requirements**

Achievements of this course objectives will be measured through a variety of assignments and activities as described below. The successful completion of these activities will require student will spend approximately 135 hours (required Federal government guidelines) devoted to coursework, both in and out of class. The following chart indicates how these hours are distributed across the various course requirements. Descriptions of the assignments are listed below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Assignments</th>
<th>Expected Time Commitment (hrs.)</th>
<th>Student’s Actual Time on Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Readings</td>
<td>45 hrs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Time</td>
<td>30 hrs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Narrative</td>
<td>10 hrs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spiritual Assessment</td>
<td>20 hrs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comparative Spirituality</td>
<td>20 hrs.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Credo</td>
<td>10 hrs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>135 hrs.</td>
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Students should keep a record of time spent on each course-related task, and will submit a final report, as above, with their actual hours spent on each task listed in the last column of the table.

Class Assignments:

Grading for this course will be based upon the following assignments. Students will complete the following projects and exercises and submit them by the identified due date. Grades will be determined by the extent and quality of the work completed. Additional explanations of each project will be provided during the first class session.

**Assignment #1: My Spiritual Journey Narrative (Due February 3)**

A person’s current sense of personal, spiritual, and ministerial identity is a product of one’s journey or story. To truly understand yourself, you need to tell your story and tell it often! Moreover, your story helps you understand and more deeply appreciate how God has in a sovereign manner demonstrated his grace, mercy, providence and provision for you. It also reveals how God used events to develop specific spiritual capacities in you such as an increased ability to pray, care for others, or patiently trust God. This assignment provides the opportunity for you to review your life history in terms of creating a spiritual narrative or autobiography. Your story should provide a view of your relationship to God and His people from your earliest memories to the present.

Your narrative text should be at least 8 pages long (double spaced). Your narrative should be chronological and sequential. It should identify and discuss the following points of your life:

- Heritage: What geographical, ethnic, family features, or history influenced your journey with God?
- Acts and Scenes: How can you divide your life in turns of phases and seasons with God?
- Cast of Characters: What relationships played a key role in influencing you for or against God?
- Mountain Tops: What times or experiences made you feel closest to God and why?
- Turning Points: What incidences were pivotal in your story with God?
• Crucibles: At which points of your story did you find yourself suffering? How did this suffering influence your relationship with God? Your understanding of yourself?

This assignment should be completed and brought to class on February 3. It will be worth a maximum of 50 points and will be assessed according to the following criteria:

• Quality and clarity of writing
• Ability to identify and analyze events of life from a spiritual and theological perspective identifying key formative influences in your personal formation

Assignment #2: Personal Spiritual Assessment: Using the format suggested by Adele Calhoun (p. 256-263), conduct a Spiritual Growth assessment on the 7 areas of your spiritual life. Meet three times with someone you spiritually respect to serve as a spiritual advisor to discuss your assessment. During your first meeting with the advisor discuss your assessment. Based upon your conversation, choose three specific spiritual exercises or disciplines to further your growth in each area. Over a six week period during the semester, focus on one discipline every two weeks.

Create a personal blog on the SAKAI website to act as a spiritual growth journal in which you daily reflect upon your spiritual experiences with the three practices. You should explain why you chose each discipline and provide a regular reflection on your experience with the chosen discipline. You should submit at a minimum 20 blog entries.

A final written report of 5-6 pages should be submitted by May 4, 2015. The report will include the following:

• A summary of your spiritual assessment on the Seven Areas in Calhoun (1 page)
• A summary of your discussions with your spiritual mentor or advisor (1 page)
• An evaluation of the spiritual disciplines/practices you chose in terms of their influence upon your life (2 pages) in light of your personality preferences (Mulholland, Invitation to a Journey)
• A one page “Rule of Life” for the coming school year developed as a result of your spiritual practices and spiritual conversations (1-2 pages). Guidelines for the Rule of Life are presented in the required textbook by Stephen Macchia and will be discussed during the course.

The assignment will be worth up to 100 points based upon your ability to complete all elements of the assignment, the extent and depth of your Blog reflections on your spiritual journey this summer using specific disciplines, and the ability to develop a sustainable Rule of Life for the next year.

Assignment #3: Comparative Spirituality Paper: For this assignment, you will work in teams of 4-5 students. Choose from the following list, one approach, tradition or school of Christian Spirituality for each member in the group to research. One of the
schools must be the Desert Fathers. Each group member will be responsible to research a type of spirituality and develop a 3-4 page summary. The summary should include the following:

- A short historical sketch of the tradition of spirituality.
- A description of the approach using Simon Chan’s theological model of the material criteria for a spiritual theology and other theological principles (p. 15 – 102)

Every member should share the written summary with the rest of the work group. After all the reports are distributed and read, the group should meet for a working session. This joint session can be a live meeting or can be conducted online or in a phone conference. Sometime will be provided in the class sessions for meeting. The joint session should include the following:

1. A verbal report from each member of his or her research findings (see above).
2. A discussion between team members analyzing these traditions by comparing and contrasting the various schools or approaches to spirituality
3. An evaluation of each approach in terms of its ability to sustain primary and secondary aspects of spiritual renewal (Richard Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*) in contemporary North American church culture.

As an outcome of this group research and deliberation, the following will be required from each group:

1. A 12-15 page report summarizing your group’s research, analysis, and evaluation. This should include a brief survey of the traditions and perspectives from Chan and Lovelace. This will be due on August 31, 2012. One report per group.
2. Preparing a group presentation for the final class on April 21 (25 -30 minutes).

This project will be worth up to 100 points per group member. It will be awarded based upon the quality of the group’s research, its ability to critically analyze and evaluate each tradition or approach according to the frameworks required (Chan and Lovelace), and the ability to present the results in cogent writing and a clear class presentation.

**Schools or Approaches to Spirituality**

- Desert Fathers (required)
- Benedictine Monastic Spirituality
- Jesuit Spirituality (Ignatian)
- Classic Pentecostalism
- Deeper Life (Keswick and Miles Stanford’s Green Letters)
- Word of Faith teachings (Kenyon, Hagin, and Copeland)
- Wesleyan Formation
- Para-church (Campus Crusade or Navigators)
- Greek Orthodox Spirituality
Assignment #4: Philosophy of Spiritual Formation: Using Lovelace, Chan, Smith, Calhoun, Benner, Nouwen and the other readings and lectures of the class, develop a concise Philosophy of Spiritual Formation. This statement should summarize in a concise form your philosophy of spiritual vitality and formation in terms of what is spiritual intimacy and vitality, how is it fostered or diminished, how people change and how can it be discerned or evaluated. This statement should be 4-5 pages long and should include both individual and corporate dimensions of spiritual formation.

This project will be worth up to **50 points** depending upon the quality of your Credo and the insightfulness and sustainability of the suggestions for personal and congregational formation and renewal. The Philosophy should evidence awareness of course readings and lecture materials using these resources for support of the positions reflected in your statement. The project will be due **May 4, 2015**.

**All work for this course will be due no later than May 4, 2015.** Any extensions beyond this date must be determined and approved by the Registrar who will consult with the professor.

**Grading:**

Grades for the course will be determined by performance on the above exercises and projects. Students can achieve a total of 300 points from courses assignments with the following grade scale and assignment weighting:

**Scoring Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>270 – 300</td>
<td>A-/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>239 – 269</td>
<td>B-/B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>208 – 238</td>
<td>C-/C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>177 – 207</td>
<td>D-/D+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Completion of all course readings is worth 20 points. This has already been factored into the grade. For example, completion of 50% of the reading will result in a loss of 10 points.**
All assignments are expected to be written on the level of graduate education. Incorrect grammar, spelling mistakes, and other indications of poor writing will result in the loss of grade points. Make sure you proof read your work before submitting it.

Course Schedule:

1. January 20, 2015

*The Spiritual Heart of Ministry*

Read before class:

Benner: Chapter 1  
Lovelace: Chapters 1 and 2

- Make plans to take the Meyers-Briggs Profile online this week, if needed.  
- Begin working on your Spiritual Journey Narrative (Due February 3).

2. January 27, 2015

*Evangelical Dynamics of Formation*

Read before class:

Chan: Chapter 1  
Nouwen: Entire Book  
Mulholland: Chapters 1-4  
Lovelace: Chapters 3-4

- Continue working on your narrative to submit on February 3.

3. February 3, 2015

*The Power of the Call*

Read before class:

Chan: Chapter 2 -3  
Smith: Chapter 1

- Bring your Personal Spiritual Narrative to class this week.  
- Bring Meyers-Briggs Profile on February 10  
- Sharing personal narratives
4. February 10, 2015

Personal Contours of Formation

Read before class:

Mulholland: Chapters 5 -7
Chan: Chapters 3 -4
Lovelace: Chapter 5

- Bring Meyers Briggs Profile to class.
- Begin thinking of topic for your Comparative Spirituality Report
- Sharing personal narratives

5. February 17, 2015

Saint – Making I

Read before class:

Smith: Chapter 2 -3
Mulholland: Chapters 8 -10
Chan: Chapters 6 -7

- Take Spiritual Assessment in Calhoun and schedule first meeting with spiritual friend/mentor.

6. February 24, 2015

Saint-Making II

Read before class:

Smith: Chapters 4 -5
Chan: Chapter 8 – 9

- Begin blogging on SAKAI


Rule of Life

Read before class:
8. March 10, 2015

Relational Dimensions of Formation

Read before class:

Benner: Chapters 2 – 6
Chan: Chapter 5, 12
Mulholland: Chapters 12 -13

- Project Group Meeting: Bring your initial research on your project to class

9. March 17, 2015

Life and Ministry in the Spirit

Read before class:

Lovelace: Chapters 5 -7

10. March 31, 2015

Discernment, Intercession, and Revival

Read before class

Lovelace: Chapters 8 -10

11. April 14, 2015

Spiritual Warfare

Read before class:

Chan: Chapter 11

12. April 21, 2015

Student Reports on Comparative Spirituality
General Bibliography


**Historical**


**Word**


**Prayer**


**Reflection**


Reflection: Spiritual Direction and Disciple-Building


**Community**


**Ministerial Formation and Development**


Boa, Kenneth, *Conformed to His Image.* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001).


Mulholland, M. Robert, Jr. *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation.* (InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL, 1993).


**Ministerial Identity**


Piper, John. Brothers, *We are NOT Professionals*. (Broadman and Holman, Nashville, TN, 2002).
