

GROWING DISCIPLES INTENTIONALLY
EMS 505; 2 Credit Hours
Fall 2005
Western Seminary – Portland Campus

Course Instructor:
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**“ . . . ignite people’s passion for God and get out of their way.”
George Barna, 2000**

COURSE INVITATION

You wake up one morning and find yourself in a key leadership role—either as part of a local church pastoral team or on the leadership team of a parachurch organization. For a relatively recent seminary graduate, that’s threatening enough! But then you realize that, within a week, you’ll face several—perhaps many—new believers who need to have their spiritual needs and fresh motivation connected with biblical truth that will transform them. The most pressing question you face at this moment is how to grow these new Christians to maturity; and how to lead them to biblical truth in such a way that they’ll begin to feed *themselves*—long after you have come and gone in their lives.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Christ commands His children to “love God, love people and make disciples” (Mt. 22:37-40; 28:16-20). This course will examine the role of the local church *and* parachurch organizations in facilitating, guiding and nurturing the spiritual growth of believers from infancy through the end of life. The teaching/learning process will be evaluated primarily in terms of intentional growth outcomes in the lives of Christians at all levels of spiritual maturity. 2 hours.

COURSE PURPOSE

To explore the biblical foundations, educational philosophy, and practical methodologies for working with God to bring His children to spiritual maturity.

COURSE GOALS (STUDENT OUTCOMES)

By the conclusion of this course, you should be able to demonstrate knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values and skills that are essential for:

1. Teaching effectively in multiple ministry settings, working both from Scripture to life and from life to Scripture.
2. Training others to develop their God-given capacities for Christ-like character and ministry—including evangelism, spiritual growth, worship, leadership and other essential aspects of the life of a Christian.
3. Evaluating multiple models of disciple-making and selecting one that most clearly represents your personal ministry style, educational philosophy, and vocation.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

1. Reading and Reflecting (24 hours estimated) (27% of final grade)

Required Reading (20 hours) (Reading rate: 30 pages/hour)

Hunt, Josh & Larry Mays. Disciple-Making Teachers: How To Equip Adults for Growth and Action. Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, Inc., 1998. (124 pages)

Barna, George. Growing True Disciples. Ventura, CA: Barna Research Group, Ltd./Issachar Resources, 2000. (138 pages)

Choose One of the Following:

Adsit, Christopher B. Personal Disciple-Making: A Step-by-Step Guide for Leading A Christian From New Birth to Maturity. San Bernardino, CA: Here's Life Publishers, 1988. (378 pages)

Hull, Bill. The Disciple-Making Church. Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1990. (256 pages)

Reflection Papers (5 hours)

On Hunt and Barna, *and* on the third book of your choice, a report will be submitted that includes the following elements:

- a. Synopsis: Summarize the major contributions of the book for the purpose of growing disciples intentionally (3-4 pages);
- b. Personal Reflection: Identify and briefly discuss the relevance of these contributions to your own ministry philosophy and style of teaching/equipping (1-2 pages);
- c. Ministry Application: Identify and explain the relevance and importance of these contributions either to *your* local church or to a parachurch organization that focuses on growing disciples intentionally. If applying the material at the parachurch level, please include one page discussing how this will relate to the local church (2-4 pages).

2. DISC Inventory (2 hours estimated) (2% of final grade)

You will complete the DISC Inventory with the Spiritual Gifts Inventory by *Uniquely You*, available from the Western Seminary Bookstore (503-517-1850; sherryatkins@westernseminary.edu). You should plan to invest at least one hour to take and self-score the inventory. We will invest another hour of class time answering questions that arise from it and discussing your results. Additional discussion may occur between us via email or by telephone outside of regular class sessions. *Due date: October 3.*

3. Class Attendance & Participation (28 hours) (31% of final grade)

Class sessions will be a combination of lecture, question/answer, and small group discussions. Therefore it is essential that you attend and participate fully in each of the seven sessions throughout the semester. Please see the current Western Seminary Catalog (p. 27) for attendance requirements, make-up of missed assignments, medical and family emergencies, etc. Each class session is worth approximately 4.5% of your total grade.

4. Biblical Study of Discipleship (15 hours) (17% of final grade)

You will read through the Gospels and Acts entirely at least three times during this course, and you will submit a 10-page (double-spaced) reflection paper focusing specifically on: the relationship of Jesus to the Twelve; noting how the term “disciple” and its cognates are used; describing the biblical characteristics of both disciplers and disciples; and examining how Jesus’ model was implemented in the church of the first century. *Due date: November 14.*

5. Discipling Practicum (11 hours) (12% of final grade)

Between October 1 and December 12 you will spend an average of 1 hour per week with a disciple of your choosing, preferably in the same local church as you attend (exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis). During the course of these ten weeks, you will: build a relationship with this individual; assess his/her current growth status as a disciple of Christ—utilizing the DISC and Spiritual Gifts inventory or other assessment tools at your disposal; construct a simple plan for your disciple’s growth in Christ; and record his/her progress. You will also submit a 2-page written evaluation of your practicum, indicating assessments, goals, and outcomes during the course of your time together. *Due date: December 12.*

6. Small Group Research & Presentation (10 hours) (11% of final grade)

During the first half of the semester, you will form small groups to research either one of the discipleship models outlined by Barna or another of your choosing (and approved by

your instructor), such as the Navigator 2-7, the Purpose-Driven Church/Life, T-Net, Center for Church-Based Training (CCBT), etc. Small group presentations will be made in class on October 31.

7. Tentative Course Schedule

The class will meet on alternate Monday evenings, from 6:00-10:00 p.m.

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| 9/19 | Personal introductions
Course Introduction & syllabus review
Key Questions for the course
Definitions: “discipleship,” “disciple,” and “discipler”
Models of effective discipleship |
| 10/03 | DISC Inventory review
Discussion of Barna & models of discipleship
Discussion of Hunt & the teaching/learning process
<i>(DISC Inventory due)</i>
<i>(Barna reading & reflection paper due)</i>
<i>(Hunt reading, pages 1-65 due)</i>
<i>(Disciple selection due)</i> |
| 10/17 | Hunt & teaching/learning (continued)
<i>(Hunt, pages 66-124 & reflection paper due)</i> |
| 10/31 | Small group presentations |
| 11/14 | A biblical theology of intentional discipleship
<i>(Discipleship paper due)</i> |
| 11/28 | Discipleship in real time: guest practitioners
Small group discussion: principles for bringing people to spiritual maturity
<i>(Adsit or Hull reading and reflection paper due)</i> |
| 12/12 | Practicum reports
Discussion of course texts
Course review
<i>(Practicum evaluation due)</i> |

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EMS 505 Attendance & Reading Report

Name _____

Box # _____

I completed the following readings on time (give % for each):

_____ % Barna _____ % Hunt _____ % My 3rd choice (Please indicate
author's name and title: _____)

Please place an "x" for each class session attended:

9/19 _____

10/03 _____

10/17 _____

10/31 _____

11/14 _____

11/28 _____

12/12 _____

Please detach (or copy) and return this form to Dr. Epp by 5:00 p.m. December 15.
Thanks!