

# Western Seminary -- Sacramento Campus

## PRACTICING PRAYER AND OTHER KEY SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

SFS 502M: 2 credit hours

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**Syllabus: Spring 2009**

***Session B: Mar 3 – Apr 25***

**COURSE SCHEDULE:** Mondays: 5:45pm – 9:55pm; Mar. 9, 16, 23, 30; Apr. 6, 13, 20

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Growing more Christ-like in our attitudes and actions can be nurtured through the spiritual disciplines taught by Scripture and practiced by believers throughout the ages. You will learn, from an evangelical perspective, the contribution each activity can make to your spiritual growth and how to enhance your actual practice of these “holy habits.” Extended attention will be given to developing a biblical understanding and practice of prayer. 2 hours.

### COURSE GOALS

Recognizing the importance of the spiritual disciplines in promoting your spiritual growth, this course is designed to enable you to:

- A. understand the contributions that each discipline can make to spiritual growth;
- B. appreciate both the diversity and commonality individuals will demonstrate in their practice of these disciplines;
- C. enhance the practice of these disciplines in your own life, particularly with respect to prayer;
- D. formulate and implement a plan for the future practice of a variety of disciplines in your own life;
- E. appreciate the value of interpersonal support in the cultivation of the disciplined life.

### COURSE CONTRIBUTION TO STATED DEGREE OUTCOMES

Be a person whose Christ-like character is worthy of being emulated, and whose integrity imparts credibility to his/her ministry

gratefully aware of his/her new identity and spiritual sufficiency in Christ (MFM 500)  
motivated by genuine love for God, others and self (SFS 501)

reflects biblical balance and skill in life management, appropriately fulfilling the roles and responsibilities mandated by God (MFM 500; SFS 501, 502; overarching)  
regularly practices spiritual disciplines to facilitate personal transformation and intimate fellowship with the Lord (SFS 502)  
cooperates effectively with God's Spirit in the process of replacing sinful habits with godly virtue (SFS 501, 502)  
fosters healthy interpersonal relationships, including the ability to listen and speak with respect for the feelings and opinions of others (SFS 501)  
thinks and acts ethically in areas of personal, professional and social responsibility (SFS 504)

Be a person who understands his/her optimal role in the furthering of God's purposes

understands his/her unique strengths, weaknesses, and other elements of individuality that can help or hinder personal and ministry effectiveness (MFM 500)  
knows how to combine both formal and informal training to best prepare him/herself for effective entry into ministry (MFM 500)  
has had experience in performing key elements of his/her intended ministry under qualified supervision (MFM 501-4)

Be a person who experiences healthy interdependency and genuine community with other believers

faithfully participates in, and contributes to, the ministry of a local congregation (MFM 501-4; SFS 502)  
recognizes and appreciates the needed contribution of other temperaments, passions, gifts and styles (MFM 500)  
cooperates with other believers in advancing God's kingdom (MFM 500, 501-4; SFS 501, 502)

Be a person with a global vision who thinks, acts and prays strategically

committed to the centrality of worldwide mission in God's redemptive purpose (PTS 504)  
aware of how he/she can further the building of Christ's church worldwide (PTS 504)  
able to inspire missional vision in churches (PTS 504)

Be able to lead and equip a group of people so that God's purposes are efficiently accomplished in and through them

able to do fundamental strategic planning and vision-casting (DMS 506)  
demonstrates appropriate use of authority/influence for servant leadership (DMS 506)  
able to respond appropriately to conflict (DMS 506; MFM 500)  
able to train others to develop their God-given capacities for Christ-like character and ministry (including evangelism, edification, worship, leadership and other essential functions of the Church) (DMS 506; EMS 501)  
able to delegate tasks effectively (DMS 506)

Be a true life-long learner, building upon his/her seminary training

committed to pursuing growth and learning in key areas of need (MFM 500; overarching)  
able to access and manage information (including that available via computer/on-line resources)  
so that it is readily available when needed (overarching)

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

READING (18 hours)

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Click [here](#) to order texts and other products.

### **Required readings (on reserve in the library):**

All course textbooks are available on [Amazon.com](#). You might also want to check out [addall.com](#) to compare prices on new and used books from major online bookstores.

Foster, R., *Celebration of Discipline*, Harper San Francisco, 1998, ISBN: 0060628391  
Stieglitz, G., *Spiritual Disciplines of a CHRISTIAN*, Wine Press Pub., 2005, ISBN: 1579217648  
Sheets, D., *Intercessory Prayer*, Regal Publishing, 1997, ISBN: 0830719008  
Mottola, A., *Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola*, Image Publishing, 1964, ISBN:  
0385024363

### **Recommended reading:**

Whitney, D., *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*  
Ortberg, J., *The Life You've Always Wanted*  
Carson, D. A., *A Call to Spiritual Reformation*  
Willard, D., *Spirit of the Disciplines*

**Each of these books will be read in its entirety. At 45 pages an hour, this reading should take approximately 18 hours. Report the completion of this reading on the form provided. A one page report is due on each book. The paper should have three sections: a brief summary of content of the book; a brief evaluation of the strengths and weakness of the book; a personal interaction, reaction and application of the content of the book.**

**Due:** Foster's book report by the second meeting of class;  
Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius book report by the third class;  
Sheets book report by the fourth meeting of the class;  
Stieglitz book by the final class

### SMALL GROUP (14 hours)

Identify at least 2-3 other people with whom you will meet each week in class during the term to promote mutual spiritual growth. Normally the other member(s) of the group will be fellow students of the same gender, but exceptions to this are possible. Groups will begin meeting in class the first week of class

Each lecture will contain suggested discussion and application questions to help provide some guidance for these meetings. Time should also be set aside for prayer and the sharing of other concerns or personal goals related to spiritual development.

You will submit to the instructor brief evaluations of the progress and effectiveness of the group. **The evaluations of your small group are due one week after the last class session.**

### "PRACTICE OF DISCIPLINES" INTERVIEWS (3 hours)

Conduct a brief (20-40 minute) interview with two people whose spiritual maturity you respect to ask what role the spiritual disciplines play in their spiritual growth. One of these people should be a current/former vocational minister and the other a "lay person." Be sure to ask what disciplines they practice, how they structure their life to find time for this practice, and what suggestions they might offer to someone else seeking to develop greater proficiency in their practice. Summarize each interview in separate one page, papers. This would include their responses and your reflections upon them. **DUE: one week after the last class period.**

### PRACTICE OF THE DISCIPLINES (25+ hours)

Spend approximately 1 hour per day 5 days per week practicing the various disciplines that will be learned in the class. Then write a one-page paper per discipline reflecting upon your experience: What you did; What happened when you practiced these disciplines; Your reaction to this discipline: both good and bad. The paper is due at the beginning of the next class period.

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Course grades will be awarded on a points system.

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Points Possible</i>
Class attendance	25
First small group involvement and evaluations	10
Reading	25
Disciplines interview	5
Personal Disciplines assessment	35

Point Allocation:

A+=100-99, A=98-95, A-=94-93; B+=92-91, B=90-88, B-=87-86; C+=85-84, C=83-81, C-=80-79; D+=78-77, D=76-74, D-=73-70; F=69-0

All assignments are due before the end of the class on the day it meets. Final Assignments will be due two weeks from the date of the final class. Due date extensions will be granted only on the basis of extenuating circumstances, and must be requested in advance of the pertinent due date. Unexcused late (or poor quality) work will result in an appropriate reduction in points earned for that assignment.

## STANDARDS FOR WRITTEN WORK (MLA)

Papers must be written to a near-thesis standard. That is, minimum format standards must be met, as defined below. English grammar, idiom, and spelling must be up to graduate level. Always include a strong introduction paragraph (declare what you intend to show the reader) and conclusion paragraph. Qualities valued include clarity, succinctness, and precision.

This course employs the MLA (Modern Language Association) style guide. The basic elements are:

- Double-spacing, except for block quotes
- Single space block quotes
- Page numbers appear at the upper right on every text page
- Use footnotes rather than paragraph citations
- Footnotes follow a standard format.

Helpful web sites on MLA style include:

- <http://wwold.ccc.commnet.edu/mla>
- <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/index.html>
- [http://www.english.uiuc.edu/cws/wworkshop/writer\\_resources/citation\\_styles/mla/mla.htm](http://www.english.uiuc.edu/cws/wworkshop/writer_resources/citation_styles/mla/mla.htm)

[These websites are expanded and pasted into Western Seminary's "How to Write a Research Paper"]

A good website with footnote/bibliography entries is

<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/>

All work must reflect master's level use of the English language. Plagiarism will result in failure of assignment.

Western Seminary's *How to write a research paper* can be found at:

<http://www.westernseminary.edu/papers/Faculty/WGuideNu.doc>

## CLASS POLICIES

**Cover Page:** To safeguard confidentiality, provide a title page as a cover for all assignments. Include your student mailbox number in the upper right corner of the cover page.

**Attendance and Late Assignments:** Students are expected to attend all class meetings. Students who miss class are responsible for missed work. Unexcused absences and tardiness will impact a student's grade. Students who anticipate an absence should discuss it in advance with the instructor. Students who miss two or more classes will not pass the course **without arranging for additional work with the professor**. Assignments submitted after the due date and time constitutes a drop in the student's letter grade for that assignment.

**Incompletes:** Faculty members determine their own procedures and due dates for the completion of course assignments. The final deadline for submitting all course work is the last day of the semester as noted in the Academic Calendar (p.16). In the case of serious illness, family emergency, or other extenuating circumstances, the instructor may, **if it is initiated by the student**, grant an extension. A temporary notation of "I" (incomplete) is assigned until a final grade can be determined. The maximum extension permissible is six weeks, **with assignments due to the professor for grading on Fri, 5/29/09**. All course assignments not completed by the extended deadline will be given a failing grade. Under no circumstances may this six-week period be extended except by petition and approval of the Administrative Committee.

**Enrichment Students:** Enrichment students are encouraged, but not obligated, to participate in assignments and class discussions. Professors are not obligated to grade participation for these students, but may opt to do so depending on class size.

## **LIBRARY AND INTERNET RESEARCH**

All class assignments with a research element require library research annotated as such in the bibliography. A minimum of two resources must be from a physical library. Note the physical location of each resource as an addendum to each bibliographical entry.

For complete library information including: hours of operation, interlibrary loan, local library resources, etc., please:

- Visit [www.westernseminary.edu](http://www.westernseminary.edu) .
- Click the link "Sacramento Campus" in the left navigation pane.
- Click the link "Library Resources" in the left navigation pane.

### **Reserve Collection**

The library carries all required readings for this course.

### **Print Resources**

Use the Western-Arcade Library catalog to find books and other materials. To search the library collection:

- Visit <http://www.westernseminary.edu/Library/SAC> .
- Click the link "Search the Library Collection Online".

### **Periodical & Research Databases**

As you complete your assignments for this course, don't forget about the resources in the

Western research databases. Remember to evaluate and cite your information too. To access the Western research databases:

- Visit <http://www.westernseminary.edu/Library/SAC> .
- Click the link “Research Databases” from the bottom menu.
- Click the link “Ebsco Host Research Databases”.
- Log in. [**User ID:** westsem / **Password:** seminary]
- Click the link “EBSCOhost Web”.
- Click the database(s) you wish to use. Start with *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*.

To cite your information, consider the following MLA composers:

<http://www.noodletools.com> and <http://www.citationmachine.net>

Western-Arcade Library offers a variety of ministry related software for student use including BibleWorks, Logos Bible Software, and SeminaryLibrary.

### **Course Packs (if applicable)**

To access the course pack(s) for this course:

1. Go to the library homepage: <http://www.westernseminary.edu/Library/SAC>
2. Click the link ‘Course Packs’.

### **Reference and Research Contact Information**

David Holifield, M.A., M.L.S. / (916) 488-3720, ext. 7 / [dholfield@westernseminary.edu](mailto:dholfield@westernseminary.edu)

### **Assignments:**

Week 1: Read Foster book before 1<sup>st</sup> Class

Week 2: Papers on Confession, Holy Spirit and Foster book

Week 3: Papers on Bible Study and Prayer

Week 4: Papers on Sheets book and Biblical Meditation

Week 5: Papers on Service, Worship, Fellowship

Week 6: Papers on Identification, Abstinence and Ignatius of Loyola book

Week 7: Papers on Love, Giving and Stieglitz book

Week 8: Small Group Evaluation, Disciplines Interviews

Spiritual Disciplines of a CHRISTIAN  
Class Outline

- Class 1 Introduction:
- Class 1 Disciplines of Confession: Personal, Group
- Class 1 Disciplines of the Holy Spirit: Guidance, Wisdom
- Class 2 Disciplines of Interaction: Bible Study
- Class 2 Disciplines of Interaction: Prayer
- Class 3 Disciplines of Repetition: Memorization, Meditation
- Class 4 Disciplines of Service: Daily, Christian, Community
- Class 4 Disciplines of Togetherness: Worship
- Class 4 Disciplines of Togetherness: Fellowship
- Class 5 Disciplines of Identification: Baptism, Communion, Witnessing
- Class 5 Disciplines of Abstinence: Fasting, Sleep, Solitude, Silence
- Class 6 Disciplines of Needs: Love
- Class 6 Disciplines of Needs: Giving
- Class 7 Conclusion:

\_\_\_/\_\_\_ (disciplines assessment, prayer paper, reading/attendance report and s.g. eval #2 due)

SFS 502 ABSENCE & READING REPORT

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Box Number \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_% Foster \_\_\_\_% Michael & Norrissey \_\_\_\_% Sheets \_\_\_\_\_% Stieglitz

I attended \_\_\_\_\_ of the class meetings