

SF110: MENTORED SPIRITUAL FORMATION SYLLABUS

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This two-semester course is designed for extension students who will not be attending the Dallas or Houston campuses. It has four primary goals achieved through four modules: Identity, Community, Integrity, and Fidelity. First, this course challenges students to grasp more fully the reality of our identity in Christ. The *Life Inventory* exercises are the primary resource used in discovering and establishing identity. Second, this course challenges students to discover God's authorship in their lives. The *Life Story* exercises are the primary resource used in guiding students' discovery of the way in which God has formed them through various experiences and relationships.

Third, this course challenges students to examine the personal and corporate implications of sin and grace in their lives. The *Life Change* exercises are the primary resource used in developing integrity. And fourth, this course challenges students to implement their divine design in building up the body of Christ and witnessing to a lost world. The *Life Vision* exercises are the primary resources used for exploring students' vision for a future life of faithfulness. This last module helps focus the remainder of the students' academic experience by providing an opportunity to explore how they might serve the Lord Jesus Christ for a lifetime of effective ministry.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

A. Cognitive

By the end of this course, the student will:

Identity

1. Gain greater insight into their unique identity in Christ,
2. Understand their identity in relation to God, the body of Christ and the world,
3. Honestly appraise their beliefs, practices and virtues,

Community

4. Reflect on the various experiences and relationships in their life,
5. Notice God's presence and activity in their life,
6. Discern particularly formative experiences and relationships in their life story,
7. Identify themes in their life story,

Integrity

8. Examine particular struggles with sin in light of their life story and future ministry,
9. Discern the underlying dynamics of their sin struggles,
10. Notice the effects of sin on self and their relationship with God and others,
11. Understand the means of grace available through God's indwelling Spirit, spiritual practices and the body of believers,

Fidelity

12. Synthesize personal insights from Identity, Community, Integrity and Fidelity modules,
13. Better understand his or her unique contribution within the body of Christ,
14. Identify several potential ministry roles and contexts,
15. Clarify specific action steps to further prepare for potential ministry.

B. Affective

By the end of this course, the student will:

Identity

1. Appreciate their unique makeup in Christ,
2. Appreciate the uniqueness of their Spiritual Mentor,
3. Value the practice of periodic self-examination,
4. Desire growth in their relationship with God and in their spiritual life,

Community

5. Celebrate the unique and faithful way in which God has worked in their life,
6. Value the process of discerning God's unique formative work in their life,
7. Appreciate the importance of presence, trust and authenticity in relationships,
8. Desire to increasingly respond to God's formative work in their life,

Integrity

9. Value the practice of periodic, Spirit-led self-examination (Psalm 139:23-24),
10. Appreciate the practice of confessing their sins one to another (James 5:16),
11. Appreciate authenticity, trust, grace and accountability in spiritual friendships,
12. Increasingly desire the Spirit's scrutiny and transformation of their life,

Fidelity

13. Appreciate the need to identify gifts, strengths, struggles and story in discerning calling,
14. Celebrate the potential means, roles, and contexts through which they can glorify God,
15. Value the need for both carefully attending to the Spirit's direction and personally preparing for future ministry destinations.

C. Behavioral

By the end of this course, the student will:

Identity

1. Honestly engage with and discuss the various *Identity* topics,
2. Create a personal position paper on the theological foundations of identity,
3. Share their position paper with their Spiritual Mentor,

Community

4. Honestly engage with and discuss the various *Life Story* topics,
5. Write a thoughtful and creative presentation of their *Life Story*,
6. Authentically share their *Life Story* with their Spiritual Mentor,

Integrity

7. Honestly consider and discuss personal and corporate implications of sin and grace in their life,
8. Write an authentic and thoughtful *Letter From Your Tempter*,
9. Authentically share their *Letter From Your Tempter* with their Spiritual Mentor,
10. Avail themselves of the means of grace available through God's Spirit, spiritual practices and the body of believers,
11. Write and share a well-considered *Response to Your Tempter*,

Fidelity

12. Prepare a thoughtful and creative presentation of their *Life Vision*,
13. Authentically share their *Life Vision* with their Spiritual Mentor,
14. Cultivate a greater attentiveness to the Spirit's leading in their lives.

III. COURSE TEXTBOOKS

A. Required

Pettit, Paul, ed. *Foundations of Spiritual Formation: A Community Approach to Becoming Like Christ*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2008.

Spiritual Formation: Exploring Identity, Community, Integrity, and Fidelity (Extension Course Version). Available in the course files for this course on DTS Online.

B. Suggested

General Spiritual Formation

Greenman, Jeffrey P. and George Kalantzis, eds. *Life in the Spirit: Spiritual Formation in Theological Perspective*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010.

Jones, Barry. *Dwell: Life with God for the World*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2014.

Mulholland Jr., M. Robert. *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 1993.

Wilhoit, James C. *Spiritual Formation as if the Church Mattered: Growing in Christ through Community*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.

Identity

Bridges, Jerry. *Who Am I?: Identity in Christ*. Adelphi, MD: Cruciform Press, 2012.

Highfield, Ron. *God, Freedom, and Human Dignity: Embracing a God-Centered Identity in a Me-Centered Culture*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013.

Community

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Life Together*. New York: HarperCollins, 1954.

Jordan, Merle R. *Reclaiming Your Story: Family History and Spiritual Growth*. 1st ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999.

Integrity

Kenneson, Philip D. *Life on the Vine: Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit in Christian Community*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 1999.

Lewis, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2001.

Lundgaard, Kris. *The Enemy Within: Straight Talk About the Power and Defeat of Sin*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1998.

Plantinga Jr., Cornelius. *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995.

Wells, David F. *Losing Our Virtue: Why the Church Must Recover Its Moral Vision*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1998.

Fidelity

Guinness, Os. *The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life*. Nashville, TN: W Publishing Group, 2003.

Marshall, Colin, and Tony Payne. *The Trellis and the Vine: The Ministry Mind-Shift that Changes Everything*. Kingsford, Australia: Matthias Media, 2009.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Reading Assignments

1. **Curriculum Weekly Sessions:** Students are expected to carefully read and thoughtfully reflect on the weekly sessions of the course curriculum.
2. **Foundations of Spiritual Formation Readings:** Students are expected to read the following from Pettit's book, *Foundations of Spiritual Formation*:
 - Forward
 - Introduction
 - Chapter 1: Introducing Spiritual Formation
 - Chapter 6: Character and Spiritual Formation
 - Chapter 7: Love and Spiritual Formation
 - Chapter 8: Leadership and Spiritual Formation
 - Chapter 9: Calling and Spiritual Formation
 - Chapter 10: Life Story and Spiritual Formation

3. **Selected Readings:** Students are expected to carefully read and thoughtfully reflect on any other assigned reading for the course (selected articles, handouts, etc.).

The student will submit a **Reading Report** via DTS Online indicating the percentage of reading completed on time by the end of this course.

B. Written Assignments

1. **DISC Personality Assessment:** Students are expected to complete an online personality assessment per the Course Lectures and Assignment Schedule (below). Details and instructions will be provided via DTS Online.
2. **Mentor Meeting Reflections:** Students are expected to reflect on their weekly mentor meetings. They will periodically submit a short summary (approx. 1 paragraph) of their discussion or answer specific questions related to that week's session via DTS Online.
3. **Identity Foundations Position Paper:** Students are expected to write a **3-4 page** paper on the theological and biblical foundations of identity, with an emphasis on the personal and corporate implications of what it means to be "in Christ." Students will present it to their Spiritual Mentor and submit the paper via DTS Online as per the Course Lectures and Assignment Schedule (below).

This paper is a biblical theology with a very personal slant. In addition to what it means to be "in Christ" both individually and corporately, it needs to include elements such as: places other than Christ where the student is tempted to put his/her identity, "false selves" the student tries to present to others, and areas where he/she has had victory in identity issues.

4. **Life Story Overview:** According to the guidelines in the course curriculum, students are expected to write and present their personal *Life Story* to their Spiritual Mentor. Students will submit a **1 page overview chart** of their *Life Story* via DTS Online as per the Course Lectures and Assignment Schedule (below).
5. **Letter From Your Tempter Reflection:** According to the guidelines in the course curriculum, students are expected to write a personal *Letter From Your Tempter* and present it to their Spiritual Mentor. Students will write a **1 page reflection paper** on the experience of writing and sharing their letter and will submit this paper via DTS Online as per the Course Lectures and Assignment Schedule (below).
6. **Response To Your Tempter Reflection:** According to the guidelines in the course curriculum, students are expected to write a well-considered biblical response to the specific issues and charges brought up in the *Letter From Your Tempter* and present it to their Spiritual Mentor. Students will submit a **1 page reflection paper** reflecting on the experience of writing and sharing this response and will submit this paper via DTS Online as per the Course Lectures and Assignment Schedule (below).

7. **Life Vision Overview:** According to the guidelines in the course curriculum, students are expected to create and present their personal *Life Vision* to their Spiritual Mentor. Students will submit a **1 page overview chart** of their *Life Vision* presentation via DTS Online as per the Course Lectures and Assignment Schedule (below).

C. Attendance and Participation

1. **Videos:** Students are expected to carefully watch all required videos included in course content (available at DTS Online) and are responsible to know the material covered in these videos.
2. **Spiritual Mentor Meetings:** Students are required to find a **Spiritual Mentor** with whom they can meet face-to-face for the duration of this course. (Any form of virtual communication cannot be substituted.) Students are expected to meet with their Spiritual Mentor on a **weekly** basis over the course of each semester to discuss weekly readings, reflection questions, and assignments as per the Course Lectures and Assignment Schedule (below). Spiritual Mentors must meet the criteria delineated in the *Guidelines for Selecting a Spiritual Mentor* (available at DTS Online). Students will meet with this same Spiritual Mentor during both semesters (all four modules).
3. **Spiritual Formation Staff Guide Interviews:** Students will be assigned to an **SF Staff Guide** for the duration of this course. Students will participate in several **interviews** (via Skype, telephone, or email correspondence) with their designated SF Staff Guide per the Course Lectures and Assignment Schedule (below).

V. COURSE POLICIES

A. Grading

Credit for this course is a non-academic credit (CR) required on student transcripts. Credit or No-Credit designation will be determined by the SF Staff Guide based on satisfactory completion of all course requirements.

B. Late Assignments

Students will complete all course requirements according to the course schedule. In cases of extreme personal emergency the student should contact their SF Staff Guide as soon as possible to make arrangement for completing the requirements in a timely manner.

C. DTS Online Education: <http://online.dts.edu/>

Dallas Theological Seminary's Online Education website (DTS Online) attempts to replicate the classroom environment with video, slides, and transcripts. It is a custom learning environment where students and faculty engage in theological content, biblical assignments, and community interaction. To login to the DTS Online Education website go to: online.dts.edu. Courses are structured in units (usually 1 to 2 weeks in length) with activities

that include readings, reflections, and submissions. To complete each unit you will need a high-speed Internet connection, Adobe Flash Player, and Microsoft Word.

D. Cheating and Plagiarism

All work submitted for this course should be your own. In accordance with the Student Handbook, cheating and/or plagiarism will result in an automatic zero on the assignment in question. Cheating involves presenting another person’s work as though it were your own. Plagiarism is using words, ideas, or information from a source without giving appropriate credit to that source (in the text, a parenthetical note, or footnote). This refers not only to specific words but also ideas. Even when paraphrasing someone else’s thoughts you must cite your source. When in doubt, use a footnote.

E. Language and Style

All written assignments should be carefully proof-read and written for clarity.

All written assignments should strive for gender-inclusive language. As a gospel-shaped, gospel-centered learning community, we have compelling reasons to think, write, and speak in a way that is inclusive. Consider using “humans,” “persons,” “humanity,” or “humankind,” instead of “man” or “men” when referring to human beings in general. Consider alternating between the use of “he” and “she” as generic pronouns or substituting the use of the plural (“they,” “them,” or “their”) when appropriate.

VI. COURSE SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

DTS Non-Discrimination Policy: DTS does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the operation of any of its programs and activities. To avoid discrimination the student is responsible for informing the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities and the course instructor of any disabling condition that will require modifications.

VII. COURSE LECTURES AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

Unit/Date	Session Topic	Assignments Due
Summer 2015	Initial Interview	Schedule and participate in Initial Interview with your SF Staff Guide and Spiritual Mentor.
Identity: “Who am I?”		
Unit 1: 8/24/15—8/29/15	Introduction to Spiritual Formation Introduction to Identity	Submit Planning Document via DTS Online. Complete “Overview of DTS Online” (at online.dts.edu) if this is your first online course. Download and read the syllabus from DTS

		<p>Online. (Send PDF to your mentor.)</p> <p>Download and print the curriculum from DTS Online. (Send PDF to your mentor.)</p> <p>Download and read “Sanctification in a New Key” by Steve Porter. Then submit your responses to the reflection questions.</p> <p>Submit autobiography via DTS Online.</p> <p>Complete and submit DISC Personality Assessment via DTS Online.</p> <p>Watch videos on DTS Online.</p> <p>Read Preface and Session 1 of curriculum, and complete Reflection Questions.</p>
<p>Unit 2: 8/31/15—9/5/15</p>	<p>The Image of God</p>	<p>Interview #1: Discuss any initial issues or questions with your SF Staff Guide.</p> <p>Read Session 2 and complete Reflection Questions.</p> <p>Read the Forward, Introduction and Chapter 1 of <i>Foundations of Spiritual Formation</i>.</p> <p>*Begin meeting <u>weekly</u> with Spiritual Mentor.</p>
<p>Unit 3: 9/7/15—9/12/15</p>	<p>Design</p>	<p>Read Session 3, complete Reflection Questions and Life Inventory Exercise 1.</p> <p>Read Chapter 8 of <i>Foundations of Spiritual Formation</i>.</p> <p>DTS Online Submission: “Share a Reflection”</p>
<p>Unit 4: 9/14/15—9/19/15</p>	<p>Heritage</p>	<p>Read Session 4, complete Reflection Questions and Life Inventory Exercise 2.</p>
<p>Unit 5: 9/21/15—10/3/15 (2 weeks)</p>	<p>Our Identity in Christ</p>	<p>Read Session 5 and complete Reflection Questions.</p>
	<p>Belief</p>	<p>Read Session 6, complete Reflection Questions and Life Inventory Exercise 3.</p> <p>DTS Online Submission: “False Identities”</p>

Unit 6: 10/5/15—10/10/15	Practice	Read Session 7, complete Reflection Questions and Life Inventory Exercise 4.
Unit 7: 10/12/15—10/17/15	Virtue	Read Session 8, complete Reflection Questions and Life Inventory Exercise 5.
Unit 8: 10/19/15—10/24/15	Identity Foundations	Read Sessions 9 and 10, and complete Life Inventory Exercise 6. Submit <i>Identity Foundations Position</i> paper via DTS Online. Discuss your <i>Identity Foundations Position</i> paper with your Spiritual Mentor. Complete Identity Survey on DTS Online.
Community: “Who are we?”		
Unit 9: 10/26/15—10/31/15	Introduction to Community	Watch videos on DTS Online. Read Session 1 and complete Reflection Questions. Read Chapter 10 of <i>Foundations of Spiritual Formation</i>. DTS Online Submission: “One Anothers”
Unit 10: 11/2/15—11/7/15	God’s Authorship	Read Session 2, complete Reflection Questions and Life Story Exercise 1.
Unit 11: 11/9/15—11/14/15	Experiences and Relationships	Read Session 3, complete Reflection Questions and Life Story Exercise 2. DTS Online Submission: “Significant Experience or Relationship”
Unit 12: 11/16/15—11/21/15	Formative Elements and Themes	Read Session 4, complete Reflection Questions and Life Story Exercises 3 and 4.
	Telling Our Stories	Read Session 5, complete Reflection Questions and Life Story Exercises 5 and 6.
11/23/15—11/27/15	<i>Thanksgiving Break</i>	No assignments.
Unit 13: 11/30/15—12/5/15	Life Story Presentation	Read Session 6, complete Reflection Questions and Life Story Exercise 7. Submit <i>Life Story</i> overview via DTS Online.

		Share <i>Life Story</i> with your Spiritual Mentor.
Unit 14: 12/7/15—12/12/15	Knowing and Being Known	Read Session 7 and complete Reflection Questions.
	Turning Toward Integrity	Read Session 8 and complete Reflection Questions. Complete Identity & Community Assessment on DTS Online. Submit Reading Report via DTS Online. Complete Community Survey on DTS Online. Interview #2: Debrief <i>Life Story</i> and evaluate semester with your SF Staff Guide.
<i>End of Semester</i>		
Integrity: “Implications of sin and grace”		
Unit 15: 1/11/16—1/16/16	Introduction to Integrity	Review syllabus for second half of course from DTS Online. Watch videos on DTS Online. Read Session 1 and complete Reflection Questions.
Unit 16: 1/18/16—1/23/16	Growing in Grace	Read Session 2, complete Reflection Questions and Life Change Exercise 1. *Begin meeting again <u>weekly</u> with your Spiritual Mentor.
Unit 17: 1/25/16—1/30/16	The Flesh	Read Session 3 and complete Reflection Questions. Read Chapter 6 of <i>Foundations of Spiritual Formation</i>.
Unit 18: 2/1/16—2/6/16	The Seven Deadly Sins	Read Session 4, complete Reflection Questions and Life Change Exercise 2. DTS Online Submission: “Seven Deadly Sins”
Unit 19: 2/8/16—2/13/16	A Letter From Your Tempter	Read Sessions 5 and 6, complete Reflection Questions and Life Change Exercise 3.

		Share <i>Letter From Your Tempter</i> with your Spiritual Mentor.
Unit 20: 2/15/16—2/20/16	The Spirit	Read Session 7 and complete Reflection Questions. Submit Reflection Paper on <i>Letter from Your Tempter</i> via DTS Online.
Unit 21: 2/22/16—2/27/16	Fear of the Lord	Read Session 8 and complete Reflection Questions.
Unit 22: 2/29/16—3/5/16	The Fruit of the Spirit	Read Session 9, complete Reflection Questions and Life Change Exercise 4. Read Chapter 7 of <i>Foundations of Spiritual Formation</i>. DTS Online Submission: “Fruit of the Spirit”
Unit 23: 3/7/16—3/12/16	Growing in Integrity	Read Session 10 and complete Reflection Questions.
3/14/16—3/18/16	<i>Spring Break</i>	No assignments.
Unit 24: 3/21/16—3/26/16	A Biblical Response	Read Sessions 11 and 12, complete Reflection Questions and Life Change Exercise 5. Share <i>Response to Your Tempter</i> with your Spiritual Mentor. Submit Reflection Paper on <i>Response to Your Tempter</i> via DTS Online. Complete Integrity Survey on DTS Online.
Fidelity: “A life of faithfulness to Christ”		
Unit 25: 3/28/16—4/2/16	Introduction to Fidelity	Watch videos on DTS Online. Read Session 1, complete Reflection Questions and Life Vision Exercise 1. Read Chapter 9 of <i>Foundations of Spiritual Formation</i>.
	The Keel	Read Session 2, complete Reflection Questions and Life Vision Exercise 2.

Unit 26: 4/4/16—4/16/16 (2 weeks)	Winds and Currents	Read Session 3, complete Reflection Questions.
	Ports of Call	Read Session 4, complete Reflection Questions and Life Vision Exercise 3.
Unit 27: 4/18/16—4/23/16	Bill of Lading	Read Session 5, complete Reflection Questions and Life Vision Exercise 4. DTS Online Submission: “Specific Step”
Unit 28: 4/25/16—4/30/16	Life Vision Presentation	Read Session 6. Submit <i>Life Vision</i> via DTS Online. Share <i>Life Vision</i> with your Spiritual Mentor. Complete Integrity & Fidelity Assessment on DTS Online. Submit Reading Report via DTS Online. Complete Fidelity Survey on DTS Online. Participate in Interview #3: Debrief Reflection on <i>Letter From Your Tempter</i> and your biblical response, debrief <i>Life Vision</i>, and evaluate year with your SF Staff Guide.

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