

Course Syllabus – Min 790 - Spiritual Formation Practice

Katherine Amos
Wake Forest Divinity School
Email : amoske@wfu.edu

We do not have to be passive victims of a world that wants to entertain and distract us. We can make decisions and choices. A spiritual life in the midst of our energy-draining society requires us to take conscious steps to safeguard that inner space where we can keep our eyes fixed on the beauty of Christ.

Henri Nouwen

Course Description:

The foremost purpose of this course is to “take conscious steps to safe guard that inner space where we can keep our eyes fixed on the beauty of Christ”. This course will give students the opportunity to develop experiences and practices that will assist spiritual formation. It is intended to address current spiritual needs or questions that students may have and to offer the opportunity for self-care. This course is also intended to focus on building our relationship with God.

Students will look at specific spiritual disciplines and practice these disciplines through such methods as retreats, spiritual direction, prayer, meditation, study, and use of the “arts”. Students have flexibility in designing the experiences that they believe will meet their current needs.

Course Objectives:

- *To grow in our personal relationship with God
- *To select and practice specific spiritual formation disciplines that have been used through the ages
- *To personally design experiences that meet the needs and desires of the student
- *To use this opportunity to learn about self-care

Course Requirements:

This course is taken for one hour credit and much of the course is designed through the team work of the instructor and the student.

Experience #1 – Individual Spiritual Direction or an
Individual Spiritual Retreat

Note: Permissions to use this material must be obtained directly from the author.

Students will select one of these experiences as a part of the course. Those students selecting “Individual Spiritual Direction” will be asked to attend five sessions of spiritual direction with a director of their choice. The cost of the spiritual direction will be the responsibility of the student.

The second option is to plan an Individual Spiritual Retreat. The individual retreat will be planned by the student with the facilitation of the instructor. The instructor suggests that the retreat be done at a retreat center such as the “Well of Mercy” located near Winston Salem. The retreat should be at least three hours on an evening (or afternoon) and then four hours the following day. (example – Friday evening, 6:30 – 9:30 and Saturday morning, 8:30 – 12:30). The schedule will be at the convenience of the student.

Students will be asked to write a 2-3 page reflection paper about the experience they select. (due at the end of the semester).

Experience #2 – Read a book of the student’s choice that will complement experience #1 and #3. This book should be directly related to the area of spiritual growth that is the student’s focus for this course.

A Bibliography is provided to the student but the student’s choice is not limited to this list of books.

Students will read the book and write a two to three page reflection paper to be completed by the end of the semester.

Experience #3 – Individual Project

Students will design a project that will relate to a current spiritual question, concern, or area of interest. The project may result in an “art” product, could be a list of resources for further study, could be an interview with someone to gain additional insights, or could be a variety of other projects that are of significant interest and use to the student. This project is due at the end of the semester.

Calendar:

This class is scheduled at the convenience of the student and the instructor. The students taking this course will meet twice during the semester as a group with the instructor. The first meeting will be to share their plans for the course and the second will be scheduled at the end of the semester to share their experiences. The instructor and the student will schedule meetings as needed.

Grading:

Note: Permissions to use this material must be obtained directly from the author.

A grade will be given for the class. Experience one will count for 40% of the grade, experience two will count for 20% of the grade, and experience three will count for 40% of the grade.

Evaluation:

A course evaluation will be conducted with each student taking the course. The course and course syllabus will be modified as necessary.

Bibliography Attached

Note: Permissions to use this material must be obtained directly from the author.