

DRAFT SYLLABUS

34 507 Spiritual Direction/Companionship

Fall Semester, 2017

Thursday, 2:30 – 5:30pm

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Course Description

Explores biblical texts, historical traditions, and modern approaches to the art of spiritual direction/guidance and its place in the church today; relationship of spiritual direction to counseling, therapy, and mentoring. No prerequisite.

Course Outcomes

This is an introductory course and is devoted to an exploration of the history, theology, and practice of spiritual direction. This is not a practicum course and while the course could contribute to certification in spiritual direction, it does not adequately prepare students to practice as spiritual directors. Therefore, the student should not expect to practice spiritual direction in class, nor should the student assume that successful completion of the course certifies the student to serve as a spiritual director.

What students can expect to leave class with is:

- ❖ A basic outline of the history of spiritual direction
- ❖ The variety of ways in which direction is understood and deployed
- ❖ The necessary theological framework for understanding and evaluating the practice of spiritual direction
- ❖ An introduction to the practice of spiritual direction and some of the major tools deployed in this ministry
- ❖ A core understanding of the differences between spiritual direction, pastoral counseling, and therapy

- ❖ A basic awareness of the ethical and vocational obligations of the director
- ❖ An introduction to the ways in which diversity shapes the direction process
- ❖ A knowledge of the ways in which a basic understanding of spiritual direction can shape other ministries

Texts

Barry, William A. and Connolly, William J. *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*. 2nd edition. New York: Harper One, 2009. (ISBN: 9780061652639 \$11.31)

Empereur, James. *Spiritual Direction and the Gay Person*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 1998. (ISBN: 082641107X \$25.95)

Fischer, Kathleen. *Women at the Well: Feminist Perspectives on Spiritual Direction*. Manawah: Paulist Press, 1989. (ISBN: 0809130181 \$12.95)

Please note: The prices listed above are as posted at Amazon.com and in paperback. All three texts have been widely used and are available in other forms and at other prices.

Assessment

Attendance & Participation

Given the nature of the course material, attendance is essential. Students are expected to prepare and participate in class discussions. Taking notes will be indispensable in performing the other assignments.

Reading Journal

Each student will be required to keep a reading journal. One entry for each class session is required and each entry should be a minimum of one page (typewritten). The entry should record items from the reading that provoked questions or insights and the student should plan to bring her / his journal to class in order to contribute to in-class discussion of the readings. The journal, in its entirety is due the last day of class. There are 12 entries and should be submitted as a single document with each entry clearly labeled. The journal must be complete and conform to the requirements in order to receive credit. 15% of the assessment will be devoted to the journal.

Integrative Essays

Each student will be required to complete two integrative essays. Each essay will address a question drawn from the material and students will be expected to respond, drawing in an integrative fashion on the reading and class material. The essays should not quote material from either source at length, but students will be required to demonstrate a familiarity with the reading and course material (citing the relevant author, title, and page numbers or dates).

Each essay must be between 6 and 8 pages in length (typewritten, double-spaced, one inch margins, 12 point font). The essays should draw critically and thoughtfully from the material, but advance an argument, not simply summarize, list, or report on what was heard or read. N.B.: The language "critically and thoughtfully" is chosen intentionally here. These are analytical essays and language involving how the student "feels" about the material is not germane. Note, too, that these assignments will only be manageable if students remain current in their reading and actively participate in the class. 85% of the assessment is devoted to the student's work on these essays.

Classroom Expectations

During class, the use of cell phones is strictly prohibited.

Students may use computers to take notes. Answering emails and internet browsing are prohibited. Such activities will distract from participation in class and inhibit the student's ability to complete assignments effectively.

Recording devices are prohibited.

Students for whom English is not a second language will be expected to submit their work on the date due and have an additional week to submit an edited version of their work.

The grade given for assignments that are late will be docked 3 points for each day or part of the day that the assignment is late. All assignments are due at class time on the date designated in the calendar.

Taking notes will be essential to this class, both as a means of integrating the material and as a means of incorporating classroom discussion into the assignments. The instructor will not be posting lecture content or outlines.

Calendar and Assignments

September 7	Introduction to the Class and the Syllabus / History of Spiritual Direction Reading for this session: Barry-Connolly, chapter 1
September 14	History of Spiritual Direction Continued Reading for this session: Barry-Connolly, chapter 2
September 21	Theology and Spiritual Direction Reading for this session: Barry-Connolly, chapter 3
September 28	Images and Understandings of God in Spiritual Direction Reading for this session: Barry-Connolly, chapter 4
October 5	Theological Anthropology in Spiritual Direction Barry-Connolly, chapter 5
October 12	The Redemptive Journey in Spiritual Direction Reading for this session: Barry-Connolly, chapter 6
October 19	Divine Providence in Spiritual Direction Reading for this session: Barry-Connolly, chapter 6 Mid-term Integrative Essay due at class time.
October 26	No Class: Reading Day
November 2	Discernment and Spiritual Direction Reading for this session: Barry-Connolly, chapter 7
November 9	Charting Progress in Spiritual Direction Reading for this session: Barry-Connolly, chapter 8

- November 16 Diversity and Difference in Spiritual Direction
- Reading for this session: Empereur, *Spiritual Direction and the Gay Person*; Barry-Connolly, chapter 9
- November 23: No Class, Thanksgiving Holiday
- November 30 Diversity and Difference in Spiritual Direction
- Reading for this session: Empereur, *Spiritual Direction and the Gay Person*; Fischer, *Women at the Well*; Barry-Connolly, chapter 10
- December 7 Listening and Other Skills in Spiritual Direction
- Reading for this session: Handouts; Barry-Connolly, chapter 11 and conclusion
- December 14 Boundaries and Ethical Issues in Spiritual Direction

Final Integrative Essay and Completed Journal due at 9am on Thursday, December 21.