

MB Biblical Seminary  
IS 505 Mentoring/Connecting (1 unit)  
Fall 2009  
Group #1, Thursdays 12:00-2:00pm  
Group #2, Thursdays 4:00-6:00pm  
Location: GW Peters room

Michelle Ferguson  
mferguson@mbseminary.edu  
559-452-1723 (office)  
916-804-3602 (cell)  
Office hours: by appointment

### Course Description

The Seminary is committed to learning through mentoring relationships. Students are involved in a mentoring relationship with a faculty member and fellow students. Mentoring relationships and groups are the context for theological reflection on ministry, the integration of theory and practice, the discernment of gifts for ministry, and the evaluation of personal and ministry strengths and weaknesses. The formal structure for these relationships is Mentoring/Connecting. All incoming degree program students are expected to enroll in Mentoring/Connecting in their first semester.

Through group and one-on-one meetings with the mentor, and peer contacts the student is introduced to seminary life. Important issues addressed include a basic understanding of Anabaptism, introduction to the core values of the seminary, an experience of community life, and personal concerns raised by the student.

This course is intended to help students grow personally through developing strong interpersonal relationships and fostering reflection on issues related to personal, spiritual and academic growth. It is also intended to provide resources designed to guide students in developing their Personal Growth Plan. It seeks to explore within a large and small group setting what it means to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, your mind and your soul.”

### Course Objectives

1. To assist students in making a successful entry into seminary life.
2. To create relationships which can offer support and help hold one on course.
3. To create a setting where students can integrate their classroom learning with personal issues.
4. To provide student and mentor with information about the student’s personality profile, growth needs, characteristics and ministry orientation.
5. To develop the academic skills necessary for successful completion of seminary studies.
6. To create a Personal Growth Plan, one part of the student’s Performance Assessment Catalog.

### Desired Outcomes

After this course, students should:

- demonstrate commitment to live as a disciple of Jesus in Christian community,
- articulate commitment to a biblical theological Christian perspective,
- interpret diverse cultural contexts of ministry using theological perspectives integrated with social scientific approaches by learning to know other students from different backgrounds and experiences.

## Resources

Augsburger, David. Dissident Discipleship: A Spirituality of Self-Surrender, Love of God, and Love of Neighbor. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006.

Badke, William B. Research Strategies: Finding Your Way Through the Information Fog. 3rd ed. Lincoln: iUniverse, 2008.

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Complete (online) <https://www.mbticomplete.com/en/index.aspx>

Slade, Carole. Form & Style: Research Papers, Reports, Theses. 12th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2003.

Choose one MBTI resource preferably from <http://www.myersbriggs.org/type-use-for-everyday-life/>.

Other resources helpful for seminary studies:

- Dictionary
- Thesaurus
- Bible Dictionary
- Dictionary of Theological Terms
- Writing & Grammar Aids

The instructor can provide recommendations. Also speak to your advisor for suggestions.

## Assignments and Assessment Tools

Participation: Attendance and active participation is a critical part of the process of connecting within the seminary community and engaging in self-reflection and personal growth. Alternative work will be assigned to make up missed discussion and interaction for one absence. More than one absence will result in a reduced grade (10% of total grade). More than two absences will result in failure of the course.

Retreat Experience: The Fall retreat on September 25-27 includes students, faculty and staff and provides an opportunity for connecting within the seminary community. Attendance is required. Students with a schedule conflict should discuss it with the instructor within the first two weeks of class.

Augsburger text assignments:

Notes – In each class session, the instructor will hand out a “notes” page. Students will complete it in preparation for class discussion and the reflection paper at the conclusion of the Augsburger text.

Reflection – Students will write a 2-3 page reflection after reading *Dissident Discipleship* exploring a question provided by the instructor (details will be provided at a later time).

Meeting with mentor: A one-on-one conversation between each student and the mentor will be scheduled during the second half of the course to review the student’s experience in the course and the seminary and discuss issues the student has identified for inclusion in the Personal Growth Plan. The mentor will serve as a listener to the student’s personal/spiritual experience in the current semester, and provide some feedback about class participation and coursework.

Personal Growth Plan (PGP): The purpose of this assignment is to create a self-evaluative living document that provides a map for growth during the Seminary experience tailored to individual goals, strengths and weaknesses that helps students take ownership of their curricular choices. It is the culmination of the course as students draw together the varied experiences from the class. In 4-5 pages, the PGP needs to show thoughtful reflection and include both immediate and long term goals. The PGP will be reviewed midway through the student’s academic career. The final product and evaluation of

growth will take place in the Ministry Discernment process, and will also be included in the student's Performance Assessment Catalog (PAC).

The Personal Growth Plan should include (but is not necessarily limited to):

- A theological reflection on one's personal spiritual story, including spiritual and personal growth goals.
- A statement of vocational goals and their relationship to calling, gifts, strengths and personality type.  
(Use the results from the spiritual gifts inventory, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, and in class discussion on strengths/talents).
- Reflection on current significant relationships and goals for growth in connection in community (family, church, neighborhood, city, seminary, etc.). Also include any mentoring/coaching interactions that you are or hope to participate in.
- Ministry, community service, and leadership goals.
- An academic plan created that addresses these goals.  
(This plan needs to be created in consultation with the faculty advisor).

Point Summary	<u>Grading Scale</u>	
25 Participation	A = 94-100%	C+ = 77-79.9%
15 Hartland Experience	A- = 90-93.9%	C = 73-76.9%
20 Notes & Reflection, Augsburg text	B+ = 87-89.9%	C- = 70-72.9%
10 Meeting with Mentor	B = 83-86.9%	F = 0-69.9%
<u>30 Personal Growth Plan</u>	B- = 80-82.9%	
100 Total	For complete grading policy, visit <a href="http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/grading">http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/grading</a> .	

### Course Plan

*We will be using a metaphor of preparing and serving a meal to guide our reflection and discussion. Please engage this metaphor as much or as little as is helpful for you in considering each class session topic.*

- August 27 "Welcome to the kitchen"  
Introduction & SLT Fall Kickoff BBQ
- September 3 "Whole foods & sharp knives"  
Orientation to academic resources: library, research and databases  
Introduction to academic communication
- Read Badke: Preface, "Welcome to the Information Fog", "Taking Charge", "Database Searching with Keywords and Heirarchies"  
Read Augsburg: Introduction, "The Practice of Radical Attachment"
- September 17 "Taking inventory"  
Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Results, Spiritual Gifts Assessment Findings
- Complete: Myer's Briggs Type Indicator online.  
Read Badke: "Metadata and the Power of Controlled Vocabularies", "Library Catalogs and Journal Databases"  
Read Augsburg: "The Practice of Stubborn Loyalty", "The Practice of Tenacious Serenity"

- October 1      “Recipes & experimentation”  
Strengths, weaknesses and leadership development
- Read Badke: “Internet Research”, “Other Resources and Case Studies in Research”  
Read Augsburg: “The Practice of Habitual Humility”, “The Practice of Resolute Non-Violence”
- October 22     “If you can’t take the heat...”  
Navigating difficulties and practicing self-care
- Read Badke: “Learning How to Read for Research”, “Organizing Your Resources to Write your Paper”  
Read Augsburg: “The Practice of Concrete Service”, “The Practice of Authentic Witness”
- November 5    “Taste before you serve”  
Discipleship as embodied theology
- Read Badke: “Tips on Research Writing”, Appendices  
Read Augsburg: “The Practice of Subversive Spirituality”, Appendices  
Due: Augsburg notes
- November 19   “Setting the table”  
Welcoming the Other in community, family, church and seminary
- Due: Augsburg reflection
- December 3    “Gathering at the table”  
Communion: a liturgy of mutual participation
- Due: Personal Growth Plan

### Administrative Details

- Attendance - Prompt and habitual attendance is expected. Class convenes at **TIME**; tardiness is disruptive to the class. MBBS policy states: Class participation is one of the most significant parts of the shared learning experience at MB Biblical Seminary. Any student who misses more than 25% of the class time in a course may have their grade reduced by a full letter grade and may be at risk for failing the course. Exceptions to this policy may be considered because of medical or family emergencies. All exceptions must be approved by both the faculty member and the Academic Dean.
- Participation - This class is designed for active participation. Elements necessary to make this happen include attendance, preparation, and attentiveness. Readings assigned for each class period are to be done in advance in order to facilitate discussion. Cell phones are to be turned off during class. If you need to come to class late or leave early please let the instructor know in advance.
- Manual of Style – All papers should adhere to either the Chicago, APA or MLA style. The official manual of style for written work at MBBS is Carole Slade’s *Form and Style: Research Papers, Reports and Theses*. Papers with numerous formatting, spelling or grammar errors will receive a reduced grade or be handed back for rewriting. Students should becoming familiar with and use whatever style is

appropriate to their program of study (i.e. MA-MFCC students use APA, all others use Chicago and/or MLA). The Society of Biblical Literature has a handbook of style. Students interested in it can obtain a free download of the Student Supplement for the SBL Handbook of Style at <http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/publishingwithsbl.aspx>.

- Late Assignments – Late work will not be accepted unless an arrangement has been made with the instructor before the due date. Arrangements for turning in late work will only be made for special circumstances.
- Extension Requests – MBBS policy allows students to request an extension in a course. Students must make the request to the instructor before the last day of the semester. If the extension is granted, coursework will be due to the instructor by January 31. For the complete extension policy, visit <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/extension-incomplete-grade>.
- Grade Raises – No grade raise requests will be granted in this course. If a student is in danger of failing the course, the instructor is available to assist the student during the course of the semester. Students who attend and participate in class regularly should not struggle to pass the course.
- Academic Integrity/Honesty: Everyone who participates in the educational process at MBBS is expected to pursue honesty and integrity in all aspects of their academic work. This means avoiding plagiarism and cheating. Plagiarism is defined as “representing the writings, works or images of another as one’s own, or copying materials from a resource without proper citation.”<sup>i</sup> Cheating is defined as “using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, study aids or extended assistance in any academic activity, exercise or exam.”<sup>ii</sup> Academic dishonesty also includes “aiding and abetting.”<sup>iii</sup>

Cases of academic dishonesty are first handled between the instructor and student, and if not resolved in a manner agreeable to both instructor and student, are taken to the Academic Dean and/or the Academic Committee. Depending upon the severity of the case, consequences may range from partial credit after work is redone to dismissal from the seminary. For the complete academic integrity policy, visit: <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/cheating-and-plagiarism>.

- Disabilities: Students with disabilities are eligible for reasonable accommodations in their academic work in all classes. In order to receive assistance, the student with a disability must make an appointment with the Dean of Students & Enrollment, Valerie Rempel, to assess the disability and review any appropriate documentation. Once an accommodation plan has been agreed upon by student and Dean, the instructor will receive a copy and work with the student according to the plan. For more information, visit <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/student-services/students-with-special-needs>.

---

<sup>i</sup> Fresno Pacific University Catalog, pg 86.

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid.