

MB Biblical Seminary
IS 505 Mentoring/Connecting (1 unit)
Spring 2010
Wed, 5:00-7:00pm, Jan 27, Feb 3, 10, Mar 3, 31, Apr 14, 28
Location: GW Peters room

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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. (ISBN-10: 1587431807)

Rath, Tom. Strengths Finder 2.0. New York: Gallup Press, 2007. (ISBN-10: 159562015X)

Slade, Carole. Form & Style: Research Papers, Reports, Theses. 12th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2003. (ISBN-10: 0618411313)

Other resources helpful for seminary studies:

- Dictionary & Thesaurus
 - Bible Dictionary
 - Dictionary of Theological Terms
 - Writing & Grammar Aids
- Recommendation: Badke, William B. Research Strategies: Finding Your Way Through the Information Fog. 3rd ed. Lincoln: iUniverse, 2008.

Assignments & 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 available 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.

Community Connection:

Each student will participate in a combination of the following (to total 8 hours):

- Chapel (1)
- Common Meal (0.5)
- Global Community Dinner (2)
- Community Prayer (0.5)
- Community Service (1-3)

A one page reflection should be turned in with the worksheet provided (see class website) indicating which connection opportunities the student participated in and how it influenced the student's idea of community and sense of belonging to the MBBS community.

Dissident Discipleship Reflection:

In 3 pages, demonstrate your engagement with *Dissident Discipleship: A Spirituality of Self-Surrender, Love of God, and Love of Neighbor* by David Augsburger by offering a reflection that considers the following questions:

How has Augsburger's idea of the spiritual life as "dissident" and "tripolar" challenged you to think about discipleship? What does or might it look like to embody a life of discipleship in response to the radical call of Jesus Christ? (Be specific.) What do or might you anticipate wrestling with in this kind of life? How do you imagine your seminary journey cultivating this life of discipleship?

Meeting with Instructor:

Each student will schedule a one-on-one meeting with the instructor 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 instructor 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 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). See class website for grading rubric.

The PGP should include:

- 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.
- A reflection on current significant relationships and goals for growth in connection in community (Spheres of relationship: family, church, neighborhood, city, seminary. Kinds of relationships: mentor, peer/mutual, mentee).
- An academic plan created in consultation with the faculty advisor that addresses these goals.

Students will submit the following assignments throughout the semester which will then be used to write the final draft of the PGP.

- During the first class session (Jan 27), students will share their personal stories (8-10 minutes), specifically reflecting on the journey toward seminary and a sense of calling.
- For the third class session (Feb 10), students will complete:
 - Strengths Finder online test (see the book for code & instructions)
 - Wagner-Modified Houts Questionnaire (See class website for attachment)
 - Keirsey Temperament Sorter (<http://www.keirsey.com/sorter/register.aspx>)
 - Similar Minds Jung + Enneagram Test (<http://similarminds.com/embj.html>)
 - One of the following personality tests:
 - Paragon Learning Style Inventory: <http://www.oswego.edu/plsi/taketest.htm>
 - HumanMetrics Jung Typology Test: <http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes1.htm>
 - Personality Test Center Inventory: <http://www.personalitytest.net/cgi-bin/q.pl>
- For the fourth class session (Mar 3), students will complete a personal planning worksheet (see class website).

Point Summary		Grading Scale	
20	Participation	A = 94-100%	C+ = 77-79.9%
20	Community Connection	A- = 90-93.9%	C = 73-76.9%
20	<i>Dissident Discipleship</i> Reflection	B+ = 87-89.9%	C- = 70-72.9%
10	Meeting with Instructor	B = 83-86.9%	F = 0-69.9%
30	<u>Personal Growth Plan</u>	B- = 80-82.9%	
100	Total		
		For complete grading policy, visit: https://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/grading	

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.

January 27	“Welcome to the kitchen” Introduction to the course and mentoring group Due: Sharing personal stories
February 3	“Whole foods & sharp knives” Communicating in an academic context Due: Academic Writing Quiz
February 10	“Inventory, recipes & experimentation” Evaluation of personal gifts, strengths and skills Leadership styles and development Due: Personal assessment assignments
March 3	“If you can’t take the heat...” Navigating difficulties and practicing self-care Due: Personal planning worksheet
March 31	“Taste before you serve” Discipleship as embodied theology Due: <i>Dissident Discipleship</i> Reflection
April 14	“Setting the table” Welcoming the Other in community, family, church and seminary
April 28	“Gathering at the table” Communion: a liturgy of mutual participation Due: Personal Grown Plan (submit electronically by midnight, May 14)

Administrative Details

- Attendance: Prompt and habitual attendance is expected. Class convenes at **5:00pm**; 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 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 become 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.”ⁱ Cheating is defined as “using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, study aids or extended assistance in any academic activity, exercise or exam.”ⁱⁱ Academic dishonesty also includes “aiding and abetting.”ⁱⁱⁱ

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/studentswith-special-needs>.

ⁱ Fresno Pacific University Catalog, pg 86.

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.