SF110: MENTORED SPIRITUAL FORMATION SYLLABUS

For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. (Romans 8:29 ESV)

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The mission of the Spiritual Formation Program at DTS is helping servant-leaders pursue Christlikeness. This two-semester course is designed for extension students who will not be attending the Dallas, Houston, or DC campuses. It has four primary goals achieved through the following four modules: Identity, Community, Integrity and Fidelity. First, this course challenges students through the Life Inventory exercises to grasp more fully the reality of our identity in Christ. Second, through the Life Story exercises this course challenges students to discover the triune God’s authorship in their lives—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 through the Life Change exercises. And fourth, through the Life Vision exercises this course challenges students to live a life of faithfulness by implementing their divine design in building up the Body of Christ and witnessing to a lost world. 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**
   Gain greater insight into their unique identity in Christ; understand their identity in relation to God, the Body of Christ, and the world; honestly appraise their beliefs, practices, and virtues,

   **Community**
   Reflect on the various experiences and relationships in their life; notice God’s presence and activity in their life; discern particularly formative experiences and relationships in their life story; identify themes in their life story,

   **Integrity**
   Examine particular struggles with sin in light of their life story and future ministry; discern the underlying dynamics of their sin struggles; notice the effects of sin on self and their relationship with God and others; understand the means of grace available through God’s indwelling Spirit, Spiritual practices, and the body of believers,

   **Fidelity**
   Synthesize personal insights from the Identity, Community, Integrity, and Fidelity modules; better understand his or her unique contribution within the Body of Christ; identify several potential ministry roles and contexts; clarify specific action steps to further prepare for potential ministry.
B. **Affective:** By the end of this course, the student will:

*Identity*

Appreciate their unique makeup in Christ; appreciate the uniqueness of their Spiritual Mentor; value the practice of periodic self-examination; desire growth in their relationship with God and in their Spiritual life,

*Community*

Celebrate the unique and faithful way in which God has worked in their life; value the process of discerning God’s unique formative work in their life; appreciate the importance of presence, trust, and authenticity in relationships; desire to increasingly respond to God’s formative work in their life,

*Integrity*

Value the practice of periodic, Spirit-led self-examination (Psalm 139:23-24); appreciate the practice of confessing their sins one to another (James 5:16); appreciate authenticity, trust, grace, and accountability in Spiritual friendships; increasingly desire the Spirit’s scrutiny and transformation of their life,

*Fidelity*

Appreciate the need to identify gifts, strengths, struggles, and story in discerning calling; celebrate the potential means, roles, and contexts through which they can glorify God; 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*

Honestly engage with and discuss the various Identity topics; create a personal position paper on the theological foundations of identity; share their position paper with their Spiritual Mentor,

*Community*

Honestly engage with and discuss the various Life Story topics; write a thoughtful and creative presentation of their Life Story; authentically share their Life Story with their Spiritual Mentor,

*Integrity*

Honestly consider and discuss personal and corporate implications of sin and grace in their life; write an authentic and thoughtful Letter From Your Tempter; authentically share their Letter From Your Tempter with their Spiritual Mentor; avail themselves of the means of grace available through God’s Spirit, Spiritual practices, and the body of believers; write and share with their mentor a well-considered Response to Your Tempter,

*Fidelity*

Prepare a thoughtful and creative presentation of their Life Vision; authentically share their Life Vision with their Spiritual Mentor; cultivate a greater attentiveness to the Spirit’s leading in their life.
III. COURSE TEXTBOOKS

The selection of textbooks does not necessarily imply the professor’s endorsement of the views of the authors. Textbooks are selected for their perceived value in helping meet the course goals and objectives. As graduate students you are expected to read and interact with texts critically and learn from both those with whom you agree and those with whom you do not.

A. Required


*SF100 Spiritual Formation Curriculum: Identity, Community, Integrity, and Fidelity.* Available as a PDF in the DTS Online course files for this course.

B. Suggested

**General Spiritual Formation**


**Identity**


**Community**


**Integrity**


Program: SF110 Mentored Spiritual Formation

Fidelity

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. The Mark of the Christian: Students are expected to read this classic by Francis A. Schaeffer.

4. Memorization (Optional): Students are encouraged to memorize Philippians 2:1-11. Once memorized, they can recite it to their mentor, spouse, or friend.

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 (Online Submissions): 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. Due dates for these “online submissions” are listed in the Course Lectures and Assignment Schedule (below).

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 (1) what it means to be “in Christ” both individually and corporately, it needs to include elements such as (2) places other than Christ where the student is tempted to put his/her identity, (3) “false identities” the student tries to present to others, and (4) 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 and Response Reflection**: According to the guidelines in the course curriculum, students are expected to write (1) a personal *Letter From Your Tempter* and (2) a well-considered biblical *Response to Your Tempter* to the specific issues and charges brought up in the *Letter From Your Tempter*. They will present both to their Spiritual Mentor. Students will write a 1 page reflection paper on the experience of writing and sharing both letters and will submit this reflection via DTS Online as per the Course Lectures and Assignment Schedule (below). (Students do not need to submit their actual *Letter From Your Tempter* or *Response to Your Tempter*.)

6. **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 watch all required videos included in course content (available at DTS Online).

2. **Spiritual Mentor Meetings**: Students are required to find a **Spiritual Mentor** of the same gender 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 in the SF110 Planning Document).
Students will meet with this same Spiritual Mentor during both semesters (all four modules).

3. **Small Group:** Students are **required** to participate in a small group in their local church during their two semesters of SF110. This could be a life group, community group, Bible Study Fellowship, Sunday School class, etc.

4. **Spiritual Formation Staff Guide:** Students will be assigned an SF Staff Guide for the duration of this course. The staff guide will serve as their contact for the course, a grader, and help with any student-mentor issues that may arise.

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 should try and complete all course requirements according to the course schedule. In cases of personal emergency the student should contact their SF Staff Guide to make arrangements for completing assignments in a timely manner.

C. **DTS Online Education** (http://online.dts.edu/): Dallas Theological Seminary’s Online Education website (DTS Online or Canvas) provides content through 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.

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 parenthetic 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 & ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit/Date</th>
<th>Session Topic</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
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<tr>
<td>Identity: “Who am I?”</td>
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| Unit 1: 8/26/19—8/30/19     | Introduction to Spiritual Formation| ❑ 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 Online. (Send PDF to your mentor.)  
❑ Download the curriculum from DTS Online. (Send PDF to your mentor.)  
❑ Download and read “Sanctification in a New Key” by Steve Porter. |
| Unit 2: 9/3/19—9/6/19        | Introduction to Identity           | ❑ Submit short autobiography via DTS Online.  
❑ Complete and submit DISC Personality Assessment via DTS Online.  
❑ Watch videos on DTS Online.  
Read Preface and Session 1 of curriculum, and complete Reflection Questions.  
*Begin meeting weekly with Spiritual Mentor.* |
| Unit 3: 9/9/19—9/13/19       | The Image of God                  | Interview #1 (if necessary): Discuss any initial questions or concerns with your SF Staff Guide.  
Read Session 2 and complete Reflection Questions.  
Read the Forward, Introduction, and Chapter 1 of *Foundations of Spiritual Formation.* |
| Unit 4: 9/16/19—9/20/19      | Design                             | Read Session 3, complete Reflection Questions and Life Inventory Exercise 1.  
Read Chapter 8 of *Foundations of Spiritual Formation.* |
|                             | Heritage                           | Read Session 4, complete Reflection Questions and Life Inventory Exercise 2. |
| Unit 5: 9/23/19—9/27/19      | Our Identity in Christ            | Read Session 5 and complete Reflection Questions. |
| Unit 6: 9/30/19—10/4/19      | Belief                             | Read Session 6, complete Reflection Questions and Life Inventory Exercise 3.  
❑ DTS Online Submission: “False Identities” |
**Unit 7:** 10/7/19—10/11/19  
**Practice**  
Read Session 7, complete Reflection Questions and Life Inventory Exercise 4.

**Unit 8:** 10/14/19—10/18/19  
**Virtue**  
Read Session 8, complete Reflection Questions and Life Inventory Exercise 5.

**Unit 9:** 10/21/19—10/25/19  
**Identity Foundations**  
Read Sessions 9 and 10, and complete Life Inventory Exercise 6.  
- Read and discuss your *Identity Foundations Position* paper with your Spiritual Mentor.  
- Submit reflection on *Identity Foundations Position* paper via DTS Online.  
- Complete Identity Survey on DTS Online.

**Community: “Who are we?”**

**Unit 10:** 10/28/19—11/1/19  
**Introduction to Community**  
- Watch videos on DTS Online.  
- Read Session 1 and complete Reflection Questions.  
- Read Chapter 10 of *Foundations of Spiritual Formation*.  
- DTS Online Submission: “One Anothers”

**Unit 11:** 11/4/19—11/8/19  
(1 week)  
**God’s Authorship**  
Read Session 2, complete Reflection Questions and Life Story Exercise 1.  
**Experiences and Relationships**  
Read Session 3, complete Reflection Questions and Life Story Exercise 2.

**Unit 12:** 11/11/19—11/15/19  
(1 week)  
**Formative Elements and Themes**  
Read Session 4, complete Reflection Questions and Life Story Exercises 3 and 4.  
**Telling & Hearing Our Stories**  
Read Session 5, complete Reflection Questions and Life Story Exercises 5 and 6.

11/18/19—11/22/19  
**Reading Week**  
No assignments. (Catch up on reading.)

11/25/19—11/29/19  
**Thanksgiving**  
No assignments. (Enjoy some rest.)

**Unit 13:** 12/2/19—12/6/19  
**Life Story Presentation**  
Read Sessions 6-7, complete Reflection Questions and Life Story Exercise 7.  
- Share *Life Story* with your Spiritual Mentor.  
- Submit *Life Story* overview via DTS Online.

**Unit 14:** 12/9/19—12/13/19  
(1 week)  
**Knowing and Being Known**  
Read Session 8 and complete Reflection Questions.  
**Turning Toward Integrity**  
Read Session 9 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 (if necessary): Debrief *Life Story* and evaluate semester with your SF Staff Guide.

*End of Semester*
| Unit 15: 1/13/20—1/17/20 | Introduction to Integrity | - Review syllabus for second half of course.  
- Watch videos on DTS Online.  
Read Session 1 and complete Reflection Questions. |
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| Unit 16: 1/21/20—1/24/20 | Growing in Grace | - Read Session 2, complete Reflection Questions and Life Change Exercise 1.  
\*Begin meeting weekly with Spiritual Mentor.* |
| Unit 17: 1/27/20—1/31/20 | The Flesh | - Read Session 3 and complete Reflection Questions.  
Read Chapter 6 of *Foundations of Spiritual Formation.* |
| Unit 18: 2/3/20—2/7/20 | The Seven Deadly Sins | - Read Session 4, complete Reflection Questions and Life Change Exercise 2.  
- DTS Online Submission: “Seven Deadly Sins” |
| Unit 19: 2/10/20—2/14/20 | A Letter From Your Tempter | - Read Sessions 5 and 6, complete Reflection Questions and Life Change Exercise 3.  
- Share Letter From Your Tempter with your Spiritual Mentor. |
| Unit 20: 2/17/20—2/21/20 | The Spirit | - Read Session 7 and complete Reflection Questions. |
| Unit 21: 2/24/20—2/28/20 | Fear of the Lord | - Read Session 8 and complete Reflection Questions. |
Read Chapter 7 of *Foundations of Spiritual Formation.*  
- DTS Online Submission: “Fruit of the Spirit” |
| Unit 23: 3/16/20—3/20/20 | Growing in Integrity | - Read Session 10 and complete Reflection Questions. |
- Share Response to Your Tempter with your Spiritual Mentor.  
- Submit Reflection Paper on both Letter from Your Tempter and Response to Your Tempter via DTS Online.  
- Complete Integrity Survey on DTS Online. |

**Fidelity: “A life of faithfulness to Christ”**

Read Preface, Session 1, complete Reflection Questions and Life Vision Exercise 1. |
| Unit 26: 4/6/20—4/9/20 | The Keel  
*Christ is risen from the dead!*  
(*Good Friday*: April 10, 2020) | Read Chapter 9 of *Foundations of Spiritual Formation*.  
Read Session 2, complete Reflection Questions and Life Vision Exercise 2. |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Unit 27: 4/13/20—4/17/20 (1 week) | Winds and Currents  
Voice of Experience & Ports of Call | Read Session 3, complete Reflection Questions.  
Read Sessions 4 and 5, complete Reflection Questions and Life Vision Exercise 3.  
- Watch Dr. Burns’ Chapel: “Faith in Sight”  
- DTS Online Submission: Dr. Burns’ Chapel |
| Unit 28: 4/20/20—4/24/20 | Bill of Lading  
All coursework for spring and summer grads due 4/24 by 4:30 pm. | Read Session 6, complete Reflection Questions and Life Vision Exercise 4.  
- DTS Online Submission: “One Step”  
- Watch Dr. Swindoll’s Chapel: “Modeling the Role of a Servant” |
- Share *Life Vision* with your Spiritual Mentor.  
- Submit *Life Vision* via DTS Online.  
- Complete Integrity & Fidelity Assessment on DTS Online.  
- Submit Reading Report via DTS Online.  
- Complete Fidelity Survey on DTS Online.  
- DTS Online Submission: “The Mark”  
Participate in Interview #3: Debrief Reflection on *Letter From Your Tempter* and your biblical response, debrief *Life Vision* and evaluate year with your SF Staff Guide. |

*End of Semester*

Revised 6/12/2019