

University of Dubuque Theological Seminary

IN722 Disciple Formation 4: Immersed in the Story

Spring 2024 - Online and Residential

.5 credit; letter grade

Rev. Dr. Susan Forshey; sforshey@dbq.edu



Course Description

In Disciple Formation 4, students will define and discuss strategies and challenges to the role of vocational holiness, in light of their formation as Christian disciples and ministers. Students will demonstrate their application of course content in their own lives and ministry through established methods of theological reflection, such as journaling; inquiry-based learning; and open and guided discussion in small groups facilitated by the instructor, either online or residentially. Students will formulate a rule of life incorporating practices of discipleship and self-care. Disciple Formation 4 is required for Master of Divinity students. Prerequisites include IN521 and IN522, the August Residential retreat (or suitable equivalent approved by the instructor), and IN721.

Course Learning Objectives

Through active participation in the Disciple Formation series, students will develop the capacity to:

- List, describe, and explain examples of Christian practices used within the Christian traditions for the formation of disciples toward loving others and loving God. (Remember, Understand)
- Describe role of self-care in the life of a disciple and minister. (Understand)
- Demonstrate specific practices, such as journaling, theological reflection, scripture study, prayer, art and music reflection, self-reflection. (Apply)
- Experiment with practices and evaluate their formative impact on their love of God and love of others. (Analyze, Evaluate)
- Formulate a rule of life which incorporates specific discipling practices regularly into their lives. (Create)

In addition, through active participation in IN722, students will develop the capacity to:

- Define the role of holiness within their specific Christian tradition and practice. (Remember)
- List, describe, and explain God's work of holiness in the life of a disciple and minister. (Remember, Understand).
- Evaluate their own activities, practices, and behaviors in light of God's work of grace. (Evaluate)
- Formulate a rule of life which incorporates practices to nurture the work of God's grace and self-care. (Create)

M. Div. Curricular Goals (Program Learning Objectives)

- Nurture habits and disciplines of study, prayer, and reflection that increase their love of God and neighbor and shape their personal and professional lives.
- Be formed by, live in, and minister out of Scripture and the historical and theological tradition of the Church.
- Educate and equip individuals and congregations to live and minister joyfully and faithfully as part of their own denomination and the ecumenical church.
- Integrate theology and practice in all areas of life and ministry.

M.A.M.D. Curricular Goal

- Adopt spiritual practices that nurture their personal lives as faithful disciples and witnesses.

Required Texts

Susan R. Pitchford. *The Sacred Gaze: Contemplation and the Healing of the Self*. ISBN: 978-0814635681

Course Requirements and Grading

The challenge in ministry and life is learning how to prioritize space for God and discipleship practices--practices which are mostly invisible, unrewarded, and often, seemingly unnecessary. Regularly engaging the course materials and practices can build a habit of making space for God. This course uses a *covenant grading* approach in order to focus on the *consistent* practice of spiritual disciplines over time, rather than making a judgment about the *quality* of practice. It gives you the choice and visible responsibility for completing course discipleship practices. **All students will complete the common practices and commit to a path.** Different seasons require different amounts and sets of practices. God loves you no matter what! **Please decide which path you will be pursuing by January 22 and email me**, sforshey@dbq.edu.

Common Requirements for All Students:

- Keep in regular contact with your small group.
- Complete all practices for week 2 including Journal #2 and Rule of Life Review (100 words), due January 29.
- Book Summary (500 words), *The Sacred Gaze* by Susan Pitchford, due March 11.
- Complete all practices for week 9 including Journal #7, due March 25.
- Book Summary (500 words), *Under the Unpredictable Plant*, due April 22.
- Write a *Spring Semester Review* (300 words) due April 22.
- Designate an intentional time and place for listening and responding to God. *It is encouraged to use the work of this course as the practices for that time with God.*
- Regular engagement on-line for distance students or attendance in class for residential students. **Lack of online participation (small group posts, journals, opening and engaging online materials) for three consecutive weeks** is grounds for failing the course, unless prior permission has been requested and received from the instructor. If you are opt to take your allotted weeks away from practices, please remain actively engaged with your small group by posting and checking in.
- Regular participation in a worshiping community; campus students - regular participation in UDS prayer and/or chapel opportunities.

Additional requirements

Path 1 (90% of the material or A)

- Complete all common requirements for the course.
- Complete at least 7 weeks of practices, as posted on Moodle--Readings, videos, music, forums, activities.
- Write 4 journals (300 words) which place your life into reflective dialogue with the readings.

Path 2 (80% of the material or B)

- Complete all common requirements for the course.
- Complete 6 weeks of practices, as posted on Moodle--Readings, videos, music, forums, activities.
- Write 3 journals (300 words) which place your life into reflective dialogue with the readings for the week.

Path 3 (70% of the material or C)

- Complete all common requirements for the course.
- Complete 5 weeks of practices, as posted on Moodle--Readings, videos, music, forums, activities.
- Write 2 journals (300 words) which place your life into reflective dialogue with the readings for the week.

Path 4 (60% of the material or D)

- Complete all common requirements for the course.
- Complete at least 4 weeks of practices, as posted on Moodle--Readings, videos, music, forums, activities.

Assignment Policy: If an assignment needs to be turned in late, please let me know the situation prior to the due date. Unexcused late journals/assignments will not be accepted. Do the assignment "well enough" for the current circumstances you find yourself in.

Attendance and Online Engagement Policy: **Lack of engagement online for three consecutive weeks or more may lead to course failure.** Please let me know if an unforeseen circumstance prevents you from participating on-line.

About the Readings: The content of this course may bring up personal struggles best worked through with a recovery group, pastoral counselor, therapist, or spiritual director. Please contact me if you need a referral or help discerning the most faithful next step.

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Week	Week Dates	Scripture	Reading	Due
1	Jan 16-22	Genesis 1:1-2:4a		Grade Path Due; Journal #1, due Jan 23
2	Jan 23-Jan 29	Genesis 7:1-5, 11-18; 8:6-18; 9:8-13	Resiliency reading (pdf): Chapter 4: "The Elevated Stressors of a Novice Practitioner" from <i>The Resilient Practitioner: Burnout and Compassion Fatigue Prevention and Self-Care Strategies for the Helping Profession</i> Thomas M. Skovholt, Michelle Trotter-Mathison	Skovolt Indicator Rule of Life Review and Journal #2 Due January 30 (required)
3	Jan 30-Feb 5	Genesis 22:1-18	Pitchford, chapters 1-2	Journal #3, due Feb 6
4	Feb 6-Feb 12	Exodus 14:10-31; 15:20-21	Pitchford, chapters 3-4	Journal #4, due Feb 13
5	Feb 13-Feb 19	Isaiah 55:1-11	Pitchford, chapters 5-6	Journal #5, due Feb 20
6	Feb 20-Feb 26	Reading Days		
7	Feb 27-Mar 4	Ezekiel 36:24-28	Pitchford, chapters 7-8	Journal #6, due Mar 6
8	Mar 5-Mar 11	Ezekiel 37:1-14	Pitchford, chapters 9-10	Book Summary - (required) The Sacred Gaze Due March 13
9	Mar 12-Mar 18	Zephaniah 3:14-20	Chapters 1, 6 and 9 - <i>The Trauma-Sensitive Classroom: Building Resilience with Compassionate Teaching</i> , Patricia Jennings, W. W. Norton & Company, 2018.	Journal #7, due Mar 20 (required)
10	Mar 19-Mar 25	Book of Jonah	Peterson, Intro & Section 1 (pdf)	
11	Mar 26-Apr 1	Holy Week/Easter Break		
12	Apr 2-Apr 8		Peterson, Section 2 (pdf); Peterson, Section 3, selections (PDF)	
13	Apr 9-Apr 15		Peterson, Section 4 (pdf);	Journal #8, Due April 17.
14	Apr 16-Apr 22	Psalms 139	Peterson, Section 5 (pdf)	Book Summary (required): Under the Unpredictable Plant Due April 22
	Semester Review Due April 22	Semester Review (required): Reflect on your semester Rule, and evaluate your participation in the course (reading the texts, engaging the material), and small group participation. How has God called you deeper into relationship? What have been obstacles? Where is God calling you to focus next in your personal discipleship? (300 words). Due April 22.		

ADA Compliance Statement

Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have a documented disability. Please notify Dr. Forshey during the first week of class of any accommodations needed for the course. Late notification may cause the requested accommodations to be unavailable. Confidentiality of all requests will be maintained. All requested accommodations must be approved through the Academic Success Center, 2nd floor Myers Library (563-589-3262 or ASC@dbq.edu).

Title IX and Jeanne Clery Act Policy Information:

Title IX: The University of Dubuque is committed to providing a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free of discrimination on the basis of sex; which includes all forms of sexual misconduct. More information may be found at <https://www.dbq.edu/AboutUD/TitleIX/>

Jeanne Clery Act: The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act requires the distribution of an Annual Security Report and Annual Fire Safety Report to all current faculty, staff, and students and notice of its availability to prospective students, faculty, and staff no later than October 1st of each year. More information may be found at <https://www.dbq.edu/SafetySecurity/JeanneCleryAct/>