Dallas Theological Seminary
Spiritual Formation (A Division of Student Life) (sf@dts.edu)
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SF5201 Reflections on Identity
Fall 2020
All campuses

SPIRITUAL FORMATION 5201: REFLECTIONS ON IDENTITY
SYLLABUS

Please Note: All SF courses will follow DTS' "Fall 2020 Semester Education Plan" (see www.dts.edu for more information). All plans for Fall 2020 are subject to change as the COVID-19 situation develops and in holding with all federal, state, and DTS guidelines at the time.

I.   COURSE DESCRIPTION

The mission of the Spiritual Formation Program at DTS is *helping servant-leaders pursue Christlikeness.* This course challenges students to appreciate the biblical reality of Spiritual formation and to grasp more fully the reality of our identity in Christ both personally and corporately. The *Life Inventory* exercises are the primary resource used in discovering and establishing identity. An adequate understanding of one's identity in relation to God, the body of Christ, self, and the world is presented as a precursor to developing authentic community.

II.   COURSE OBJECTIVES

A. Cognitive

By the end of this course, the students will:

1. Gain a greater knowledge of the biblical foundation for Spiritual formation,
2. Gain a greater knowledge of Christlikeness,
3. Gain greater insight into their unique identity in Christ,
4. Understand their identity in relation to God, the body of Christ, self, and the world,
5. Honestly appraise their beliefs, practices, and virtues.

B. Affective

By the end of this course, the students will:

1. Grow in their desire to be more Christlike,
2. Appreciate their unique makeup in Christ,
3. Value the practice of periodic self-examination,
4. Desire growth in their relationship with God and in their spiritual life.

C. Behavioral

By the end of this course, the students will:

1. Create a prayer, hymn of praise, poem, or artwork reflecting what they have learned about Jesus Christ and themselves,
2. Honestly engage with and discuss the various Identity topics in their SF group,
3. Support and encourage others in their SF group.

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

Highfield, Ron. *God, Freedom & Human Dignity: Embracing a God-Centered Identity in a Me-Centered Culture*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2013.

Pettit, Paul, ed. *Foundations of Spiritual Formation: A Community Approach to Becoming Like Christ.* Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2008. (This book will be used in all SF5100 courses, SF5202, SF5203, and SF5204.)

Spiritual Formation: Identity, Community, Integrity, and Fidelity. This workbook is used for all four SF modules and will be distributed to students.

B. Suggested

Bridges, Jerry. *Who Am I?: Identity in Christ.* Adelphi, MD: Cruciform Press, 2012.

Greenman, Jeffrey P. and George Kalantzis, eds. *Life in the Spirit: Spiritual Formation in Theological Perspective*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2010.

Jones, Barry. *Dwell: Life with God for the World.* Downers Grove: IVP Books, 2014.

Mulholland, M. Robert. *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation.* Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993.

Pentecost, J. Dwight. *Designed to Be Like Him: Understanding God's Plan for Fellowship, Conduct, Conflict, and Maturity*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1966.

Smith, James K. A. *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009.

Smith, James K. A. *You Are What You Love: The Spiritual Power of Habit*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2016.

Wilhoit, James C. *Spiritual Formation as if the Church Mattered: Growing in Christ Through Community*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Reading assignments (25%)

In addition to the course requirements for SF5100-1, students are required to read the following:

1. The following from Pettit's book, *Foundations of Spiritual Formation*:

   ➢ Forward
   ➢ Introduction

> ➤ Chapter 1: Introducing Spiritual Formation

2. Ron Highfield's *God, Freedom & Human Dignity* in order to complete their Reading Response Paper assignment.

3. One of the four Gospels in order to complete their Christlikeness Paper assignment.

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 (50%)**

In addition to the course requirements for SF5100-1, the following written assignments are to be completed:

1. **Reading Response Paper (25%)**—Students are expected to write a **4-5 page paper** in response to their reading of Ron Highfield's *God, Freedom & Human Dignity*. The paper should include these sections: (1) a summary of the argument of the book (1 page), (2) a critical evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the book (1 page), (3) several important quotes that were meaningful and/or helpful to the student, (4) a discussion of the personal implications of the book for the student's own life and ministry (1 page), and (5) a prayer, hymn of praise, poem, or artwork reflecting what the student has learned about God and themselves (1 page). Students will submit their paper via DTS Online as per the Course Lectures and Assignment Schedule (below).

2. **Christlikeness in the Gospel of _____ Paper (25%)**—Students are expected to read *one* of the four Gospels and write a **3-4 page paper** answering the question: What is Christlikeness? In other words, what does the Gospel writer reveal about how Jesus lived, served, and loved? How did he relate to God and others? The paper should include these sections: (1) a summary of Christlikeness from the gospel account (1 page), (2) a definition of Christlikeness based on the gospel account, (3) key passages from the gospel that helped the student in their study, (4) a discussion of the personal implications for the student's own life and ministry (1 page), and (5) a prayer, hymn of praise, poem, or artwork reflecting what the student has learned about Jesus Christ and themselves. Students will submit their paper via DTS Online as per the Course Lectures and Assignment Schedule (below).

C. **Attendance and Participation (25%)**

1. **SF Staff Meetings**—Students are expected to talk with an SF staff representative (in person or by phone) at the beginning and end of the course. These meetings will provide an orientation to the course as well as an opportunity for feedback.

2. Attendance at all scheduled events, including large group class sessions (Class Days and Kickoff) and group agreed-upon retreats and outings is expected. All Spiritual Formation groups will determine a group agreed-upon method of communicating absences with their leader. Please see Class Participation and Absences under Course Policies for additional information (below).

> **Please Note**: Students may miss no more than two classes per semester. More than two absences in any particular semester will result in failure to receive credit on your transcript for that semester and failure to progress with your SF group.

V.   COURSE POLICIES

A. Letter/Numerical Grade Scale

A+	99-100	B+	91-93	C+	83-85	D+	75-77	F	0-69
A	96-98	B	88-90	C	80-82	D	72-74		
A-	94-95	B-	86-87	C-	78-79	D-	70-71		

A+, A = Work of *distinctive* quality
A-, B+, B = Work of *superior* quality
B-, C+, C = Work of *acceptable* quality
C-, D = Work of *inadequate but passing* quality
F = Failure to do minimal work required for a passing grade

B. Late assignments

Students will attempt to complete course requirements according to the course schedule. Please contact the professor if you need an extension.

C. DTS Online Education: http://online.dts.edu/

Dallas Theological Seminary's Online Education website provides course content through videos, slides and transcripts. It is a custom learning environment where students and faculty engage in theological content, biblical assignments and limited 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 does not refer only to specific words but also to 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 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 AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

Date	Session Topic	Assignments Due
10/11/20—10/16/20	Group Session 4: Heritage	**Submit *Reading Response Paper* on Highfield's *God, Freedom & Human Dignity* via DTS Online.**
11/29/20—12/4/20	Group Sessions 9 & 10: Identity Foundations	**Submit *Christlikeness in the Gospel of _____ Paper* via DTS Online.**
12/13/20—12/18/20	Summary & Celebration	**Submit *Reading Report* via DTS Online.** **Submit *Attendance & Participation Report* via DTS Online.**

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