

## **884 - Principles of Spiritual Direction**

### **SYLLABUS**

**Revised 12/08/2012 for Spring/Fall 2013**

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is available as a distance-learning course. It is designed with a broad perspective toward spiritual growth, spiritual direction and companionship as seen through the lens of several religious traditions and inclusive of many spiritual paths. It addresses the journey of those who choose to explore spiritual life. Drawing upon sacred literature, spiritual and historical interpretations and the insights of traditional and contemporary spiritual writers, students examine their relationship with the Sacred. This course emphasizes the transforming power of spirituality in individuals and community.

#### **FACULTY AND CONTACT INFORMATION**

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#### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

##### **Students will:**

- Understand the process of spiritual direction and the role of relationship with the Sacred from various spiritual traditions.
- Learn the role, focus, and approach of the spiritual director/companion in the process of spiritual direction/companionship.
- Value the central importance of the relationship between spiritual director and directee as essential elements of the transformative process.
- Understand the richness of the contemporary state of spiritual direction and cooperation worldwide among faith traditions in this field of spirituality.
- Become familiar with ethical guidelines developed for spiritual directors/companions.
- Develop one's own personal way of being a spiritual director/companion with others.

##### **Required Materials:**

1. Edwards, Tilden. Spiritual Director Spiritual Companion: Guide to Tending the Soul, Paulist Press, 2001. Available at on-line bookstores.
2. Liebert, Elizabeth, Changing Life Patterns: Adult Development in Spiritual Direction, Chalice Press, 2006. Available at on-line bookstores.
3. Ruffing, Janet. Spiritual Direction: Beyond the Beginnings, Paulist Press, 2000. Available at on-line bookstores.
4. Winchell Silver, Anne, Trustworthy Connections: Interpersonal Issues in Spiritual Direction, Cowley, 2003. Available at on-line bookstores.  
(Ethical issues and the Code of Ethics of Spiritual Directors International)

##### **Suggested Supplemental Texts:**

Barry, William, & Connolly, William, The Practice of Spiritual Direction,

- Harper Collins, 2009
- Buechner, Frederick, The Sacred Journey, Harper and Row, 1982
- Conn, Walter, The Desiring Self: Rooting Pastoral Counseling and Spiritual Direction in Self-Transcendence, Paulist Press, 1998
- Easwaran, Eknath, God Makes the River to Flow: Sacred Literature of the World, Nilgiri Press, 2003
- Kornfield, Jack, A Path With Heart: A Guide Through the Perils and Promises of Spiritual Life, Bantam Books, 1993 (Buddhist tradition)
- May, Gerald, The Awakened Heart: Opening Yourself in the Love You Need, Harper Collins, 1991
- Phillips, Susan, Illuminating the Art of Spiritual Direction, Morehouse Publishing, 2008
- Shield, Benjamin, Richard Carlson, Eds., For The Love of God: Handbook For the Spirit, New World Library, 1997
- Vest, Norvene, Ed., Tending the Holy: Spiritual Direction Across Traditions, Morehouse Publishing, 2003. Available at on-line bookstores.
- Wagner, Nick, Ed., Spiritual Direction in Context, Morehouse Publishing, 2006. Available at on-line bookstores.

**See also Spiritual Directors International Website: [sdiworld.org](http://sdiworld.org)**

#### **TIME COMMITMENT**

The time commitment for a course can only be estimated and depends on the students abilities and approach to the work. For the 20 weeks of the semester, this course will require an average of six hours per week. See Outline of Assignment below.

#### **PLAN OF ACTION**

1. Contact the Instructor by email. Assignment dates will be emailed to you.
2. Obtain the required textbooks and other materials.
3. Read the Syllabus, Outline of Assignments, and clarify any questions you have on your individual plan of action for the course. A phone contact with instructor will help.
4. Submit all of your assignments and attend all telephone conferences according to the Assignment Schedule. Contact the instructor if there are problems with this.

#### **FACULTY STUDENT COMMUNICATIONS**

Frequent email communications between student and instructor should continue throughout the course. The phone conferences create an important collegial forum for sharing ideas. E-mail questions about schedules, credits, course content, and assignments to the instructor. All written assignments and conference calls are supervised by the instructor. Periodic telephone interaction, when required, is at the student's expense and can be arranged through email contact.

**Faculty-Student Communications Policy**

- Faculty and students are to keep one other informed if unable to communicate by E-mail or phone due to traveling or other extenuating circumstances.
- After the initial contact is made via an E-mail message, wait for three days for a response. If you have not received a response, retransmit your email and make telephone contact. Make sure to leave a voice message.
- If you have not received a response after two additional days, redirect your transmission to the Dean of Faculty and Academics. That means send the E-mail again and copy the Dean of Faculty and Academics on your E-mail. Make sure the transmission includes previous communication efforts.
- Any further action will be determined on an individual basis together with the Dean of Faculty and Academics.

**ASSIGNMENT FORMATS:**

- All written assignments must be **Microsoft Word** documents sent by email as attached files.
- All papers should be **double-spaced**.
- **FONT:** 12 pt.
- **E-MAIL SUBJECT LINE:** Always include your name and the Assignment number in the subject line of your E-mail and on the title page of your assigned papers.
- **END NOTES:** All referenced material must be cited using endnotes. Include the Author's name, the publication name, the publisher, the date of publication, and the page number.
- **FILE NAME: When you “save” your document,** please use the following format to name your Word file. The name of the document you attach to your e-mail should be in the following format:

**File Name for 881-Assignment #1 -Jane Smith:**

**SmithJ\_881#1.doc.** When the assignment file is returned it will be re-named:  
**SmithJ\_881#1\_NK.doc.**

**OUTLINE OF ASSIGNMENTS**

(Approximate minimum number of pages to read and write is listed. Reading of entire texts is often beneficial. The required texts provide the key information on the 3 assignments. Add other texts as you see fit. It is OK to write a bit more, if necessary).

Assignment #1: Scholarly paper with personal reflections: Read 4 required texts.	
Write 12 pages, including notes and references.....	20%
Conference Call #1: 1 Hour.....	13%
Assignment #2: Scholarly paper with personal reflections: Read 4 required texts.	
Write 12 pages, including notes and references.....	20%
Conference Call #2: 1 Hour.....	13%
Assignment #3: Scholarly paper with personal reflections: Read 4 required texts.	
Write 12 pages, including notes and references.....	20%
Conference Call #3: 1 Hour.....	13%

NOTE: The **Three 1 hour Conference Calls** that are one week after each Assignment are **mandatory**. Students and instructor will discuss and share on the assignment during the call. Students pay their own phone charges for this call. Specific details and times are listed in the Assignment Schedule. It is sometimes more feasible economically to obtain a calling card with which to make these calls. Calling cards often have long distance rates much lower than local phone companies.

### **ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES**

Assignments are based on a 20 Week Semester. Spring Semester begins the second Monday of March and Fall Semester begins the second Monday of September. (See Website Calendar for Specific Dates). Assignments dates will be given to you by instructor.

Assignment #1 (Personal Identity of Spiritual Director/Companion)

Assignment #2 (The Issues of the Directee)

Assignment #3 (Relationship Issues between Director/Companion and Directee)

### **PHONE CONFERENCES**

3 Phone Conferences are required during the course that will include instructor and students.

Each phone conference will be generally one week after an assignment is due.

Instructor will email you one week beforehand the details of the conference call with:

Phone Number to call

Access Code

Scheduled Times, with day, date, time, and time zone.

### **DETAILS OF ASSIGNMENTS**

In history, we humans have tried to come to understand the interplay of three elements: a)our personal human experience, deep within each one of us, b)our communal experience, through traditions of faith and culture, and c)written texts(scripture), often sacred, holding key elements that preserve our deepest values and truths. It is in the “trialogue” of integrating these three that we reach our fullest harmonization, fulfillment, and transcendence. I hope that this course will help you in a triologue of your personal life experience, texts, and relationships, especially within the context of spiritual direction. You will be introduced to texts that are based on the thoughts of those who want to share their own reflections and integration, often from traditions that may differ from your own. My goal for you is that you develop your own personal synthesis as a spiritual director. I encourage you to take what you find helpful, look beyond the elements that you may disagree with, and sift out the valuable nuggets of wisdom that you can take in the elaboration of your own personal integration.

### **ASSIGNMENT #1**

**Required Texts and/or Materials:** Edwards, Liebert, Ruffing, Winchell Silver.

**Description:** In reading Edwards, Vest, Ruffing, Wagner, and any other readings you find helpful, develop your own personal understanding of the identity and role of the spiritual director/companion.

**Goals of Assignment #1:** It is my hope that this course will help focus you on developing your personal experience as a spiritual director/companion. Reading and reflecting on the required

texts, and choosing some of the recommended readings, in dialogue with your own experience, should help you become a more intentional, free, and effective spiritual director/companion to others.

#### ASSIGNMENT #2

**Required Texts and/or Materials:** Edwards, Liebert, Ruffing, Winchell Silver.

**Description:** In reading Edwards, Vest, Wagner, Ruffing, and any other readings and personal experience you find helpful, describe your understanding of the developmental and personal issues of the directee in the spiritual direction/companionship process.

**Goals of Assignment #2:** I would like this course also to help you focus on the other, your directee, and come to know the other's experience in an empathic way, as if seeing from the directee's perspective. Through the use of empathy, your own experience as being guided by another, and required texts and other texts that you have found helpful in your life, you can reflect on the needs for spiritual growth of the directee.

#### ASSIGNMENT #3

**Required Texts and/or Materials:** Edwards, Liebert, Ruffing, Winchell Silver.

**Description:** In reading Edwards, Wagner, Vest, Ruffing, and any other readings and personal experience you find helpful, develop your own understanding of the relationship between spiritual director and directee and its effects on the spiritual direction/companionship process.

**Goals of Assignment #3:** The goal of this question is to invite you to reflect on the interpersonal relationship between you and directee, again using your own experience in working with others, reading texts, learning some basic skills and when to use them.

**GRADING:** Part of the grade is based on how clearly and creatively you *interpret* the assignment. Scholarly Papers: an "A" is assigned to work that is exceptionally clear, well organized, and contains original thought. A "B" is assigned to papers that are not exceptional but that are well written and indicate an adequate understanding of the material. I encourage you to enrich your paper with some references to your own personal experience of the issues involved in the assignment.

**Conference Calls:** There are three conference calls during the semester. The preparation for these calls based on the assignments and the participation in the conferences is a very important aspect of the grading. You will receive a grade on your papers. The instructor's final course grade will take into account the learning that is evident in the composite of those papers plus an assessment of the Conference Call preparation and participation.

**Grade of Honors:** We encourage students to strive for honors in all that they do. However a grade of Honors is reserved for work that significantly exceeds the level of excellence required for an "A" or "B". It might be thought of as an A++!

**Grade of Unsatisfactory:** Students who fail to adequately satisfy the requirements or who do not demonstrate graduate level competency in the course will receive an Unsatisfactory grade. An Unsatisfactory grade in a Core course will require re-enrollment in the course.

**FINAL ASSIGNMENT:**

You will receive a course evaluation form at the end of the Semester  
Complete and return the form.

You will receive notification of your final course grades only after you have submitted an evaluation  
for this and all other courses you have *completed* this semester.

Students who plan to take an *Incomplete* in a course must wait until *finishing* the course before filling  
out the form.