

Course ID:	Course Title:	Fall 2020
PT501	Personal Formation & Development	Prerequisite: None
		Credits: 3/Pass/Fail

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates	
Days:	Thursdays	Instructor:	Mark Buchanan, BFA, MACS	First day of this class:	Thurs, Sept 10
Time:	6:45-9:45 PM	Email:	mbuchanan@ambrose.edu	Last day to add/drop, or change to audit:	Sun, Sept 20
Room:	A2131	Phone:	403-410-2000, ext 7907	Last day to request revised final exam:	NA
Lab/Tutorial:	None	Office:	L2071	Last day to withdraw from course w/o academic penalty:	Fri, Nov 20
		Office Hours:	By Appt. (mostly Zoom)	Last day to apply for coursework extension:	Mon, Nov 23
Final Exam:	None			Last day of this class:	Thurs, Dec 10

Course Description

This course helps the student develop a rule of life that fits their personality, season of life, and unique situation. It explores the nature and goal of spiritual formation, as well examines our rich inheritance of spiritual practices from Scripture and church history. The student will also be asked to undertake an intensive study of one biblical or historical figure in light of that individual's spiritual formation (and, if warranted, deformation). Overall, the emphasis will be on the student cultivating increasing Christ-likeness expressed through their God-given personality.

Expected Learning Outcomes

You should gain from this course an ability to:

1. articulate your current sense of who you are and the ways God is or might be calling you;
2. understand spiritual, personal, and character (SPC) formation in light of who you are and the ways God is or might be calling you;
3. understand SPC formation in light of biblical theology, classic historical spiritual disciplines, and the Rule of Life;
4. develop a regimen and rhythm of SPC practices - a Rule of Life - matched to who you are and the ways God is or might be calling you and fitted to the ways God has made you;
5. understand and address the deep-rooted behaviors and beliefs that keep you from flourishing.

Required Textbooks

- Ruth Haley Barton, *Sacred Rhythms*

- David Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself*
- Stephen Macchia, *Crafting a Rule of Life*

Highly Recommended Textbooks

- Joan Chittister, *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily*
- Belden Lane, *The Solace of Fierce Landscapes*
- Ken Shigematsu, *God in My Everything*
- Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy*

Course History

PT501 has been part of the core curriculum at Ambrose Seminary for many years and became part of my yearly course load when I joined the faculty in 2013. It dovetails with one of my primary and longstanding concerns: *How do we join in the Spirit's work to draw us into Christ's own fellowship with the Father?* This concern was at the heart of my pastoral ministry from 1995 to 2103, and has occupied much of my written work since 2001. It continues to engage my energies and capture my imagination as a professor. PT501 has become a “signature” course for me, one I teach out of who I am.

Course Design

This course is built around two core convictions. The first is that the Triune God has “made his home” with us (John 14:23) and that he invites us to abide – or make our home – with him. Christ has joined us to the company of the three-in-one God. The second conviction is that it takes wisdom, practice, patience, endurance, and a community of other Christ-followers, both living and dead, to get even half good at this.

To this end, we will seek to be such a community – or a *cummunitas*, a group who did not choose each other but who find ourselves in the company of one another - as we explore the ways men and women throughout the ages have dwelt with God, and together seek wisdom for our own lives.

Course Schedule

The following is a *tentative* outline (also note: the order may change):

Sept	10	Introduction: The Movements of the Heart & The Rule of Life
	17	A Prayer-rich Life (with Cheryl Buchanan)
	24	Discerning & Living a Call
Oct	1	Desire & Self-Denial & Emotionally Healthy Spirituality (EHS) – see Moodle for link
	8	Understanding & Applying the Enneagram (with Cheryl Buchanan) – see Moodle for link
	15	A Word-soaked Life
	22	Forgiveness & Reconciliation
	29	Work & Rest
Nov	5	Thanks & Worship
	12	NO CLASS: Reading & Modular Week
	19	Community & Solitude + Class Presentations
	26	Friendship & Mentorship + Class Presentations
Dec	3	Generosity & Frugality + Class Presentations
	10	Finishing Well

Requirements

1. *Formation Assignment (Expected Learning Outcomes 1, 2 &/or 3)*

a. Explore your current sense of call, and evaluate your current formative practices in light of this, especially with an eye to what practices you may need for the future. 1000 words (follow format guidelines below).

Or

b. Examine one NT letter and reflect on the connection between the content of that letter and the life and vocation of its author - for example, what is the relationship between the Apostle Paul's life and calling and his letter to the Philippians, or between 1 Peter and Peter's own story of following Jesus? 1000 words (follow format guidelines below).

Or

c. Explore a single classical spiritual practice (i.e., fasting, solitude, Scripture meditation, alms giving, etc.) and give a brief account of its biblical foundation and its history within the church, as well as discuss its benefits, possible drawbacks, and your own practice or intended engagement with this discipline, with some reflection on how it might benefit you in your calling. 1000 words (follow format guidelines below).

Or

d. Watch 1 or 2 of the movies listed in the filmography (or any other relevant movie – please talk over with instructor) and write a reflection on what each depicts about SPC formation, good or bad. 1000 words (follow format guidelines below).

Or

e. Pitch me an idea....

Due: Wednesday, September 30, 5 PM. Worth 15 % of total evaluation

2. *A Rule of Life (Expected Learning Outcomes 1 through 5, especially 4)*

Develop a Rule of Life (RoL) - a plan of spiritually formative practices and rhythms keyed to your personality, season of life, and sense of call, and cultural/social location. Put the RoL in chart form, and then write up 2-3 pages of annotation about why these practices matter to you and how you plan to integrate and implement them. Use the Macchia textbook as a guide. This assignment is to be part of your **Personal Growth Portfolio (PGP)**.

Due: Wednesday, November 18, 5 PM; Worth 20 % of total evaluation

3. *Biblical Character Study with Course Material Integration & Class Presentation (Expected Learning Outcomes 1 through 5)*

Explore one biblical or historical person (please discuss with the instructor before proceeding - **and please start your study early in the semester**) with a focus on that person's spiritual formation and vocation (and/or deformation). Be mindful of the implications for your own life. Integrate themes from the course lectures, readings, discussions, and from your own life experience. Present your work in a medium of your choosing – essay, drama, story, video, some art form, etc. If you choose to write a paper, make it 2000 words (follow format guidelines below). We will use a portion of the classes on **November 19, 26** and **December 3** for each student or student team to give a 5-minute presentation on *the core of their research*.

You can, if you choose, collaborate with 1 to 3 other PT501 students on this assignment.

Due: Wednesday, December 9, 5 PM; Worth 25 % of total evaluation

4. *Reading Summaries (Expected Learning Outcomes 1 through 4)*

Write a 25-50 word summary of each book or monograph you read (required texts *must be included*) and a 15-25 word summary of each article or essay. Include the number of pages you read of each work.

NOTE: reading must be a minimum of 800 pages total.

Due: Wednesday, Dec 9, 5 PM; Worth 15 % of total evaluation

5. *Attendance and Participation (Expected Learning Outcomes 1 through 5)*

Since in this course students are evaluated on the evidence of their engagement with the ideas and practices discussed throughout, full attendance and participation is expected. Any student who misses more than two classes without adequate reason will automatically fall to a P2 level (see “Grade Summary” below), and any student who misses more than three classes without adequate reason will automatically fail. Adequate reasons for missing class include: serious illness, a life or family crisis, and a travel emergency, and in some cases commitments made before the student registered for the course. Inadequate reasons include: general tiredness, life’s little bumps, poor time management (so perhaps skipping class to work on an assignment coming due), and commitments made after the student enrolled in the course.

Worth 25 % of total evaluation

Course Evaluation

Assignment #	Details	Due date	% of evaluation
# 1a-e	Formation paper	Sept 30, 5 PM	15%
# 2	Rule of Life	Nov 18, 5 PM	20%
# 3	Character Study	Dec 9, 5 PM	25%
# 4	Reading Summaries	Dec 9, 5 PM	15%
# 5	Attendance & Participation	Throughout	25%

Submission of Assignments & Formatting Policy

Please submit all assignment **in Word format only (NO pdfs)** electronically through Moodle on or before the due date (no later than 5 PM on due date). **INCLUDE** your first and last name at the **BEGINNING** of the file name as well as the assignment name – i.e., SallyJonesFormationAssignmentb.doc

All papers must:

- Use 1.5 spacing.
- Use *Times New Roman, Arial* or *Garamond* 12-point font.
- Be numbered.
- Cite sources properly. **NOTE:** The student can use his/her preferred style (e.g. Kate Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers*, or *The Chicago Manual of Style*), but must remain consistent throughout the entire paper.
- Use inclusive language. The student is encouraged to avoid the consistent use of masculine terminology in reference to people in the general sense. For example, prefer using the terms

“humanity” or “people” or “humankind” over the terms “man” or “mankind” when referring to the human race.

- Include a title page.

Late Policy

Only under extraordinary circumstances (i.e., a life or family crisis, a severe and prolonged illness, etc.; poor time management does not count as a life crisis) will I grant an extension. **All requests for extension must be submitted to me in writing on or before the assignment’s due date.** Otherwise, any submissions received later than 5 PM on the due date will be deemed late and receive an F.

PLEASE DO NOT ASK FOR AN EXCEPTION TO THIS POLICY.

Grade Summary

This course is graded on a pass/fail basis. The reason is that this course attempts to gauge, not the student’s academic prowess, but his or her commitment to and engagement in their own formation. Though none of the assignments receives a letter grade, **all must be completed on time** (there are no extensions for any of the assignments, except under the conditions outlined under “Late Policy”) and must demonstrate clear evidence of thoughtfulness, reflection, effort, and personal application.

There are four levels of *internal* evaluation (meaning I will indicate on your work one of the four categories, *but the registrar will only record Pass or Fail in your transcript*):

- P1 = handed in on time and demonstrating thoughtful and effortful engagement (this is the traditional B+ to A+ range).
- P2 = handed in on time but demonstrating haste, sloppiness, and/or superficial engagement (this is the traditional C- to B- range).
- F1 = not handed in on time or showing little evidence of engagement (this is the traditional D).
- F2 = no work completed or work that is unacceptable (this is the traditional F).

Select Bibliography

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- _____. *Sacred Rhythms: Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2006.
- _____. *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership: Seeking God in the Crucible of Ministry*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2012.
- Benner, David. *The Gift of Being Yourself: The Sacred Call to Self-Discovery*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2004.
- _____. *Soulful Spirituality: Becoming Fully Alive & Deeply Human*. Ada, MI: Brazos Press, 2011.
- Buchanan, Mark. *God Walk: Moving at the Speed of Your Soul*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2020.
- _____. *Hidden in Plain Sight: The Secret of More*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2007.
- _____. *The Holy Wild: Trusting in the Character of God*. Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah, 2003. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010.
- _____. *Spiritual Rhythm: Being with Jesus Every Season of Your Soul*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010.

- _____. *The Rest of God: Restoring Your Soul by Restoring Sabbath*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2006.
- _____. *Your God is Too Safe: Rediscovering the Wonder of a God You Can't Control*. Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah, 2001.
- Chittister, Joan. *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily: Living the Rule of St. Benedict Today*. San Francisco, CA: HarperOne, 2009.
- Crouch, Andy. *Playing God: Redeeming the Gift of Power*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2013.
- _____. *Strong & Weak: Embracing a Life of Love, Risk & True Flourishing*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2016.
- Dirks, Morris. *Forming the Leader's Soul: An Invitation to Spiritual Direction*. Portland, OR: Soul Formation, 2013.
- Duhigg, Charles. *The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life & Business*. Toronto, ON: Anchor Canada, 2012.
- Edwards, Gene. *A Tale of Three Kings: A Study in Brokenness*. Nashville, TN: Tyndale, 1992.
- Ekblad, Bob. *Reading the Bible with the Damned*. Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2005.
- Foster, Richard. *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*. San Francisco, CA: HarperOne, 1988.
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- _____. *Prayer: Finding the Hearts True Home*. San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins, 2009.
- Guinness, Os. *The Call: Finding & Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2003.
- Heschel, Abraham J. *The Sabbath*. New York, NY: FSG Adult, 2005.
- Herriot, Trevor. *The Road is How: A Prairie Pilgrimage through Nature, Desire & Soul*. Toronto, ON: Harper Perennial, 2014.
- Keller, Timothy. *The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God*. New York, NY: Dutton Adult, 2011.
- Lane, Belden C. *Landscapes of the Sacred: Geography & Narrative in American Spirituality*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University, Press, 2001.
- _____. *The Solace of Fierce Landscapes: Exploring Desert & Mountain Spirituality*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Macchia, Stephen. *Crafting a Rule of Life: An Invitation to the Well-Ordered Way*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2012.
- _____. *Broken & Whole: A Leader's Path to Spiritual Transformation*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2016.
- Maté, Gabor. *When the Body Says No: The Costs of Hidden Stress*. New York, NY: Random House, 2004.
- Nouwen, Henri. *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership*. New York, NY: CrossRoads Publishing, 1992.
- _____. *The Genesee Diary: Report from a Trappist Monastery*. New York, NY: Image Publishing, 2013.
- _____. *The Return of the Prodigal: A Story of Homecoming*. New York, NY: Image, 1994.
- _____. *Spiritual Formation: Following the Movements of the Spirit*. New York, NY: HarperOne, 2010.

- _____. *The Way of the Heart: Connecting to God through Prayer, Wisdom & Silence*. New York, NY: Ballantine Books, 2003.
- _____. *The Wounded Healer: Ministry in Contemporary Society*. New York, NY: Image, 1979.
- Palmer, Parker. *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2007.
- _____. *A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey Toward an Undivided Life*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2009.
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- _____. *Survival Guide for the Soul: How to Flourish Spiritually in a World the Pressures Us to Achieve*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018.
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- _____. *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives*. San Francisco, CA: HarperOne, 1999.
- William, Rowan. *Being Christian: Baptism, Bible, Eucharist, Prayer*. Grand Rapids, Ill: Eerdmans, 2014.
- _____. *Being Disciples: Essentials of the Christian Life*. Grand Rapids, Ill: Eerdmans, 2016.
- _____. *Being Human: Bodies, Minds, Persons*. Grand Rapids, Ill: Eerdmans, 2018.

Select Filmography (WARNING: language and content advisory for most films):

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood | Hostiles |
| The Apostle | Into the Wild |
| Arrival | Intouchables |
| Avatar | Lion |
| Babette’s Feast | Magnolia |
| The Big Kahuna | The Mission |
| Chariots of Fire | Same Kind of Different as Me |
| Dead Man Walking | The Seventh Seal |
| The Elephant Man | Shadowlands |
| Fearless | Silence |
| Fences | Schindler’s List |
| Fight Club | Stalker |
| Groundhog Day | The Straight Story |
| Hacksaw Ridge | Won’t You Be My Neighbor? |
| Her | 7 Days in Entebbe |

Ambrose University Academic Policies:

Communication

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student’s responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor’s instrument for notifying students of important matters (cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions. If students do not wish to use their Ambrose accounts, they will need to forward all messages from the Ambrose account to another personal account.

Registration

During the **Registration Revision Period** students may enter a course without permission, change the designation of any class from credit to audit and /or voluntary withdraw from a course without financial or academic penalty or record. Courses should be added or dropped on the student portal by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees.

Students intending to withdraw from a course after the Registration Revision Period must apply to the Office of the Registrar by submitting a “Request to Withdraw from a Course” form or by sending an email to the Registrar’s Office by the **Withdrawal Deadline**; please consult the List of Important Dates on the my.ambrose.edu website. Students will not receive a tuition refund for courses from which they withdraw after the Registration Revision period. A grade of “W” will appear on their transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

Exam Scheduling

Students, who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a Revised Examination Request form to the Registrar’s Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Requests

will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; 2) the student has three final exams within three consecutive exam time blocks; 3) the scheduled final exam slot conflicts with an exam at another institution; 4) extenuating circumstances. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Electronic Etiquette

Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to use electronics for purposes unrelated to the course during a class session. Turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops should be used for class-related purposes only. Do not use iPods, MP3 players, or headphones. Do not text, read, or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. Some professors will not allow the use of any electronic devices in class. The professor has the right to disallow the student to use a laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a course Extension from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."

Appeal of Grade

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Registrar's Office in writing and providing the basis for appeal within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas,

words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Note: Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.