

Canadian Theological Seminary
PT 645 Spiritual Direction in the Twenty First Century
Winter 2006

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Course outcomes

1. Students will understand the history and nature of spiritual direction, its role in the church and its distinction from contemporary counselling.
2. Students will be able to describe spiritual direction from within various traditions of the Christian faith.
3. Students will construct a rule of life for their own spiritual journey as a basis for receiving spiritual direction.
4. Students will gain skill in giving and receiving spiritual guidance.
5. Students will gain skill in evaluating spiritual guidance, both their own and that of others.

Course Evaluation

Participation 20%

Evaluation of Spiritual Direction experience 50%

Book reviews 30%

Textbooks

Required

Moon, Gary W. and David G. Benner, eds. *Spiritual Direction and the Care of Souls: A Guide to Christian Approaches and Practices*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press. 2004.

Course Requirements

Participation

Because of the nature of the relational nature of the class and subject matter, attendance and participation at all class sessions, out-of-class sessions and student-to-student sessions is mandatory.

Students will attend and write a reflection paper on the subject matter given at the CTS winter retreat, Jan.22-24, by Dr. Charles Nienkirchen on the subject "The Essence of Christian Spirituality."

Students should expect to plan out of class time into their weekly schedule in order to complete the course.

Spiritual Friendship Experience

Students will participate in and offer a written evaluation of a semester-long weekly encounter of spiritual friendship between themselves and another class participant. Guidelines for this encounter will be given separately. Part of the requirements for this experience will include the keeping of a regular journal which will provide an account of the student's experience of prayer through the semester. This journal becomes the basis of sharing in the spiritual friendship experience.

Book Reviews

1. Students will fully read and digest the course text and will write a reflection paper which will deal with the nature of spiritual direction from two standpoints, a) a comparison and contrast of spiritual direction and psychotherapy on the one hand, and pastoral counselling on the other. b) a comparison and contrast of spiritual direction from the standpoint of the various Christian traditions represented in the text.

2. Students will write two book reviews, each dealing with three books from the reading list. (Related substitute books are permissible with consultation with the professors.)

Each book review will contain

1. A review of the contents of each book, expressing the particular perspective or point-of-view of the authors.
2. A comparison and contrast of the major points of agreement or divergence among the three authors chosen.
3. An extended statement of the impact of the reading on the life and attitudes and expected ministry of the student.

Proposed Class Schedule

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| January | 16: Course introduction, syllabus, direction module guidelines 23: Intentional spirituality and the Rule of Life, Basic Spiritual Direction 30: What is Spiritual Direction? |
| February | 6: The nature of a spiritual direction relationship 13: Knowing and listening well, Theological worlds 27: Discernment and spiritual direction |
| March | 6: TBA 13: Tools and skills for spiritual direction 20: cont'd 27: TBA |
| April | 3: Traditions of Spiritual Direction 10: Spiritual Direction and pastoral ministry 17 : The spiritual friendship experience: an accounting |