

## **SPIRITUAL FORMATION 100-1 (IDENTITY) SYLLABUS**

*For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son,  
in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. (Romans 8:29 ESV)*

### **I. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course challenges students 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, self, the Body of Christ and the world is presented as a precursor to developing authentic community.

**Please Note:** Because students participate with the *same group during four consecutive semesters*, they should plan their schedules so they can meet during the section for which they registered (the same day and at the same time each semester).

### **II. COURSE OBJECTIVES**

#### **A. Cognitive**

By the end of this course, the students will:

1. Gain greater insight into their unique identity in Christ,
2. Understand their identity in relation to God, self, the Body of Christ and the world,
3. Honestly appraise their beliefs, practices and virtues.

#### **B. Affective**

By the end of this course, the students will:

1. Appreciate their unique makeup in Christ,
2. Appreciate the uniqueness of each individual in the group,
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. Honestly engage with and discuss the various Identity topics,
2. Create a personal position paper on the theological foundations of Identity,
3. Share their position paper with their Spiritual Formation group,
4. Support and encourage others in their Spiritual Formation 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

Pettit, Paul, ed. *Foundations of Spiritual Formation: A Community Approach to Becoming Like Christ*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2008. (This book will also be used in the SF100-2, SF100-3, and SF100-4 courses.)

*Spiritual Formation: Identity, Community, Integrity, and Fidelity*. This workbook is used for all four SF modules and will be distributed to students on Class Day 1 per the Course Lectures and Assignment Schedule (below).

#### 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.

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

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.

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

\_\_\_\_\_. *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

Students are expected to read and reflect on the weekly sessions of the course curriculum in order to participate fully in group discussions. Students are expected to read the Forward, Introduction and Chapters 1 and 8 of *Foundations of Spiritual Formation* as per the Course Lectures and Assignment Schedule (below).

## B. Written Assignments

1. **Personality Assessment**—Students are expected to complete an online personality assessment per the Course Lectures and Assignment Schedule (below). Details and instructions will be provided via DTS Online.
2. **Identity Position Paper**—Students are expected to write a 3-5 page paper on the theological and biblical foundations of identity, with an emphasis on the personal and corporate implications of what it means to be “in Christ.” Students will email the paper to their leader and present it to their Spiritual Formation group.

This paper is a biblical theology with a very personal slant. In addition to what it means to be “in Christ” both individually and corporately, it could include elements such as: places other than Christ where the student is tempted to put his/her identity (false identities), “false selves” the student tries to present to others and areas where he/she has had victory in identity issues.

## C. Attendance and Participation

Attendance at all scheduled events, including large group class sessions (Class Days, 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:** Due to the nature of building community, please miss no more than two group times per semester. More than two absences in any particular semester will result in failure to receive credit on your transcript for that course and failure to progress with your SF group.

## V. COURSE POLICIES

### A. Grading

Credit for this course is a non-academic credit (CR), required on student transcripts. Credit or No-Credit designation will be determined by the EML Department based on satisfactory completion of *all four semesters* of course requirements.

### B. Class Participation

Students are expected to read the weekly sessions and complete any assignments in preparation for each group meeting. All work must be completed prior to the session in which it will be discussed. As prescribed in the syllabus, presentation of projects to the group is expected. Assignments and due dates are listed in the syllabus.

### C. Absences

Absences and attendance will be recorded by the Spiritual Formation Leader. Attendance will be recorded at both large class sessions (Class Days and Kickoff) and small group sessions. Attendance requirements follow the attendance policy in the DTS Student Handbook, which

states: Absences should be taken only for important and necessary reasons. In addition, three tardies are equal to one absence.

**D. 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](http://online.dts.edu). Courses are structured in units (usually 1 to 2 weeks in length) with activities that include readings, reflections and submissions. To complete each unit you will need a high-speed Internet connection, Adobe Flash Player and Microsoft Word.

Students will receive an email from DTS Online before the semester with instructions on how to log in for this course.

**E. Late Assignments**

Students will complete course requirements according to the course schedule. In cases of extreme personal emergency the student should contact their Spiritual Formation Leader as soon as possible to make arrangement for completing the requirements in a timely manner.

**F. 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 parenthetical 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.

**G. Language and Style**

All written assignments should be carefully proof-read and consistently follow Turabian style where appropriate.

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.

**H. Use of Electronics**

To promote group participation and avoid distraction, the use of electronic equipment, including cell phones, audio or video players, or recording devices, is prohibited (with the exception of making project presentations).

## 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
8/27/18—9/1/18	Getting Started: DTS Online Assignments	<p><b>Read SF100-1 Identity syllabus.</b></p> <p><b>Update Biographical Information on CampusNet (<a href="https://campus.dts.edu/">https://campus.dts.edu/</a>).</b></p> <p><b>Submit Autobiography via DTS Online.</b></p> <p><b>Submit DiSC Personality Assessment via DTS Online.</b></p>
9/8/18	<p><b>Kickoff</b></p> <p>(Spouses signed up for the Couple's groups are expected to attend the Kickoff as well.)</p>	<p>Attend Kickoff. Meet your SF Group Leader and members. (Unfortunately, we are unable to provide childcare at this event. Parents will need to arrange for childcare during this time.)</p> <p><b>Submit SF Expectations via DTS Online.</b></p>
9/17/18—9/22/18	Group Session 1: Introduction to <i>Identity</i>	<p>Read Session 1 and complete Reflection Questions.</p> <p><b>Read the Forward, Introduction and Chapter 1 of <i>Foundations of Spiritual Formation</i>.</b></p>
9/24/18—9/29/18	Group Session 2: The Image of God	<p>Read Session 2 and complete Reflection Questions.</p>
10/1/18—10/6/18	Group Session 3: Design	<p>Read Session 3, complete Reflection Questions and Life Inventory Exercise 1.</p>
10/8/18—10/13/18	Group Session 4: Heritage	<p>Read Session 4, complete Reflection Questions and Life Inventory Exercise 2.</p>
10/15/18—10/20/18	Group Session 5: Our Identity in Christ	<p>Read Session 5 and complete Reflection Questions.</p> <p><b>Preview Session 9 and begin thinking about your Identity Position Presentation (Life Inventory Exercise 6).</b></p>
10/22/18—10/27/18	Group Session 6: Belief	<p>Read Session 6, complete Reflection Questions and Life Inventory Exercise 3.</p>
10/29/18—11/3/18	Group Session 7: Practice	<p>Read Session 7, complete Reflection Questions and Life Inventory Exercise 4.</p> <p><b>Read Chapter 8 of <i>Foundations of Spiritual Formation</i>.</b></p>
11/5/18—11/10/18	Group Session 8: Virtue	<p>Read Session 8, complete Reflection Questions and Life Inventory Exercise 5.</p>

11/12/18—11/16/18	Reading Week	No SF this week. (Catch up on reading.)
11/19/18—11/23/18	Thanksgiving	No SF this week. (Enjoy some rest.)
11/26/18—12/1/18	Group Session 9: Identity Foundations	<p>Read Session 9 and complete Life Inventory Exercise 6. Be prepared to share your Identity Foundations Position paper with your group.</p> <p>Arrive on time to your group session. Be prepared to listen attentively, encourage, and pray for the presenters.</p> <p><b>Email your Identity Foundations Position paper to your SF Leader.</b></p>
12/3/18—12/8/18	Group Session 10: Identity Foundations	Arrive on time to your group session. Be prepared to listen attentively, encourage and pray for the presenters.
12/10/18—12/15/18	Summary & Celebration	Plan and organize a time of evaluation and celebration to bring closure to this semester's SF group experience.

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