

Wesley Theological Seminary
Course of Study
August on-line and September 16-17, 2016

CS 123 - Formation and Discipleship

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OBJECTIVE:

This course grounds the student in the theology and core practices of personal and congregational formation and discipleship

GOALS:

1. Articulate a theological basis for the Wesleyan emphasis on spiritual disciplines and practice them as means of grace.
2. Explain and implement the General Rules and the practices of small groups in a congregation.
3. Educate and resource a congregation in the disciplines Christian formation.
4. Organize congregations to help people discern their callings and gifts for ministry.

COURSE MATERIALS:

To obtain textbooks or view the list go to **My Wesley** on the website (<https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/MyWesley>) and click on the button that says "Textbooks" From there select your program (Course of Study Summer Intensive), then select your course number. You may order books on-line directly from our e-store.

You may also order your books from Cokesbury or any other bookseller or borrow from friends.

Required Texts

1. Matthaiei, Sondra Higgins. *Formation in the Faith: The Congregational Ministry of Making Disciples*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008.
2. Thompson, Marjorie J. *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995.

Supplemental Texts

1. Everist, Norma Cook. *Church as Learning Community: A Comprehensive Guide to Christian Education*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002.
2. Seymour, Jack. *Teaching the Way of Jesus: Educating Christians for Faithful Living*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2014.
3. Wimberly, Anne Streaty and Evelyn L. Parker. *In Search of Wisdom: Faith Formation in the Black Church*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Introductions & Class Covenant Assignment- Due: Monday, August 1 by Midnight

A. In 700-1,000 words tell us who you are, your vocation/call story, your ministry setting etc. Give us an idea of who you are and where you are so that we can all be in community together and better understand your future comments and posts.

B. Post a picture of yourself, your church, or the area where you will be working from throughout the week. You can post one picture or many. We are building community, so whatever you feel inclined to share is welcomed.

C. Be sure to write your thoughts and commitments for our class covenant. I want to be sure that as we build this community, we all feel welcome to be open, honest, respectful and vulnerable. This covenant will be our guide to online discussions and responses as well as our in class discussions as well.

2. Initial Congregational Assessment: Due Thursday, August 4th

-With your congregation in mind answer questions from *Formation in the Faith* pg 109- 116.

3. Online “Thinking, Reflecting, Acting” & Follow-up Post: Due every Monday by Midnight

- See each week for specific response details.

4. Online Response Posts: Due every Thursday by Midnight

- Respond to at least 2 classmates posts

- Responses should:

A. Note something in the post that was helpful, new and/or insightful for you

B. Note something that the post made you think of, imagine or re-consider

C. At least 150-200 words per response

5. Selected Chapter Presentation: Due: Friday, September 16th (for class)

-You are to select 1 chapter from any one of the three supplemental texts to present on. You should:

A. Read the chapter you choose

B. Write a 1-page summary (500-700 words) of the chapter with 3 follow-up questions that allow for thinking and reflecting for the class

6. Cajita (sacred box) & Action Plan: Due

Saturday, September 17th (for class)

-Answer questions from FIF pg 109-116.

-Based on the readings, initial congregational assessment, and class discussions make a realistic action plan using S.M.A.R.T. goals that can be implemented in your congregation.

-Read pages 76-80 in Laura Rendon’s work (on blackboard) about Cajitas (sacred boxes) and create one of your own based on your congregation. (See black board for more instructions) 1,000- 1,500 word count minimum

COURSE SCHEDULE

August (Online Work)

During this month you will read the entire book of *Formation in the Faith: The Congregational Ministry of Making Disciples (FIF)* by Sondra Higgins Matthaei.

Each week will coincide with a chapter from the book with “Thinking, Reflecting, Acting” questions throughout and follow-up questions at the end.

Each MONDAY by MIDNIGHT you should have read the given chapters and post your **900-1,000 word** response to the “Thinking, Reflecting, Acting” questions and the follow up questions. Both of these should be in the same post with titles (titles should include the chapter you are responding to), noting when you are switching from “Thinking, Reflecting, Acting” to the “Follow-up Questions.” See each week for specific response details. (See Paper format details in the Course policies & Requests section at the end of the syllabus)

Each THURSDAY by MIDNIGHT you should read and **respond to two classmates posts**. These responses should be **a least 150-200 words each**. These responses should be in response to your classmates’ posts.

What questions did their post bring up for you?

Did it help you see things in a new way?

Note something in the post that was helpful, new and/or insightful for you.

Note something that the post made you think of, imagine or re-consider.

Take some time and care in this, as I am sure you would want someone to take time and care in the questions and comments they leave on your post. Also be sure to read what people write about your own posts and feel free to respond to questions, comments, or thoughts as you please.

WEEK 1 - INTRODUCTIONS

Monday, August 1

- Introduction & Class Covenant Assignment Due

Thursday, August 4

- Submit Initial Congregational Assessment
- Read classmates introductions & Class Covenant

WEEK 2 - RELATIONSHIP & MEANING

Monday, August 8

Read: Formation in Faith (FIF) Introduction & Ch. 1

- **“Thinking, Reflecting, Acting” Questions**
 - Pick 1 question from each “Thinking, Reflecting, Acting Questions Box
 - There are 4 boxes and there should be 4 responses - Pg 5, 7, 9, 12
- **Follow- up Questions**

-Choose 2 questions from “Personal Experience in the Church” to answer p16

Thursday, August 11

- Respond to at least 2 classmates

WEEK 3 - FORMING FAITH & SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Monday, August 15

Read: FIF Ch.2

- **“Thinking, Reflecting, Acting Questions**
-Pick 1 question from each “Thinking, Reflecting, Acting Questions Box
-There are 3 boxes there should be 3 responses - Pg 22, 29, 35,
- **Follow- up Questions**
-Choose 2 questions from “Other Suggestions for Reflecting and Planning”
page 37

Read: FIF Ch.3

- **“Thinking, Reflecting, Acting” Questions**
-Pick 1 question from each “Thinking, Reflecting, Acting Questions Box
-There are 3 boxes there should be 3 responses - Pg 43, 50, 54
- **Follow- up Questions**
-Do exercise #2 from “Other Suggestions for Reflecting and Planning” p61

Thursday, August 18

- Respond to at least 2 classmates

WEEK 4 – CHRISTIAN FAITH FORMATION & BECOMING BREAD

Monday, August 22

Read: FIF Ch. 4 pg 63-91

- **“Thinking, Reflecting, Acting Questions**
-Pick 1 question from each “Thinking, Reflecting, Acting Questions Box
-There are 4 boxes there should be 4 responses - Pg 66, 68, 73, 75
- **Follow- up Questions**
-Read and give your thoughts on question #6 from “Other Suggestions for
Reflecting and Planning” p91

Read: FIF Ch. 5 pg 93-107

- **Follow- up Questions p107**
-Read and give your thoughts on questions #1 & 2 from “Other Suggestions
for Reflecting and Planning” p91

Thursday, August 25

- Respond to at least 2 classmates

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16 – EXPLORING PRACTICES

Read: Soul Feast Intro & Ch. 1-5 and your personal chapter from one of the three supplemental texts

Due: Chapter Presentations Due

Engaging & Participating in Different Practices

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17 – GATHERING WISDOM

Read: Soul Feast Ch. 6-9

Due: Cajita (sacred box) & Action Plan
Gathering Congregational Wisdom

GRADING:

The instructor assumes that everyone in the class is capable of the work required to receive a “B” grade for each assignment. The following interpretations of the meaning of each grade have been developed to help class members review their work to identify strengths and problems.

“B” means that the basic elements of the assignment have been faithfully included, the argument is internally coherent, and clearly articulated.

“B+” means the assignment is also well crafted

“A-” means that the assignment is not only well crafted, but it also probes the issues with considerable insight.

“A” means the assignment is well crafted, reveals considerable insight, and moves beyond the range of the student’s prior knowledge to begin to construct new perspectives and meanings for the subject. In other words, it shows the student’s imagination at work; it has a creative edge.

“C+” means that the assignment lacks clarity or focus, tends to reveal more the writer’s opinions than the results of the writer’s analysis, and lacks reflective insight into the issues being discussed.

“C” means that the assignment does not move beyond the reporting of information from readings and/or class discussions to engaging them with issues being discussed; it may indicate inappropriate or misuse of data and readings.

“C-” means that despite some moments of focused discussion and insight, major gaps exist in the development of the argument or discussion.

“F” means the individual needs to contact me immediately.

REQUIRMENTS & EVALUATION

Participation	15%
Introduction Post & Pictures	10%
Initial Congregational Assessment	15%
Online “Thinking, Reflecting, Acting” & Follow-up Posts	15%
Online Response Posts	15%
Selected Chapter Presentation	15%
Congregational Assessment & Action Plan	15%

COURSE POLICIES & REQUESTS

Absences

Students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive promptly, both in person and online. Please communicate with the instructor about anticipated and unforeseen absences. Unexcused absences will affect the Participation grade.

*If you miss a class, you are responsible for getting the information you missed.

Inclusive Language

In both oral and written contributions to the course, students are expected to be conscious of the power of language in theology. Inclusive respects both gender and racial diversity, and students should demonstrate awareness that language about persons and God expresses values and impacts theological ideas in the details of race and gender connotations. Both gender and race are socially-constructed categories, and changing language is part of bringing justice to theological discourse.

Late Assignments

At the discretion of the instructor, assignments turned in after the deadline will be subject to a five point penalty, equivalent to half a grade.

Paper Formatting

1. Entire Document

- Double spaced
- 12 point font –Times New Roman
- 1 inch margins
- black ink

2. On the First Page

- Your name, date, and course title
- Title of the assignment

3. References

-Use footnotes or in text citations according to Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is regarded as a serious offense and will result in substantial penalties, including the possibility of academic dismissal. The instructor regards the following as a form of plagiarism or dishonesty:

- Copying from another student's paper
- Giving or receiving unauthorized assistance to or from another student during an examination
- Using unauthorized material during an examination
- Borrowing or presenting as one's own (i.e. without proper attribution) the composition or ideas of another

Please refer to your Wesley Student Handbook (on-line) for more information about Wesley's academic policies or contact Course of Study office 202-885-8688.