

Wesley Theological Seminary
Course of Study
Summer Intensive Term 2 (July 22 – August 1, 2019)

COS 123: Formation and Discipleship

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Please read this study guide carefully. Everyone will have one assignment due by June 1 submitted via Blackboard and one assignment due on the first day of class, also submitted via Blackboard.

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 a 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 of Christian formation.
4. Organize congregations to help people discern their callings and gifts for ministry.

TEXTBOOKS:

To obtain textbooks or view the list go to **My Wesley** on the website and click on the button that says “Textbooks.” From there, select your program (Course of Study Summer Intensive), then select the 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:

Matthei, Sondra Higgins, *Formation in Faith: The Congregational Ministry of Making Disciples* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2008). ISBN 978-0-687-64973-0

Thompson, Marjorie J., *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995) ISBN 0-664-25548-5

Supplemental Texts:

Schnase, Robert, *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations (Revised and Updated)* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2018) ISBN 978-1-5018-5887-1

The two supplemental texts by Barbara Bruce (below) both discuss the theory of multiple intelligences; one applies the theory to teaching adults, the other to teaching children. It is not necessary to read both – please pick the age group which you feel least comfortable teaching, and read that book.

Bruce, Barbara, *7 Ways of Teaching the Bible to Adults: Using Our Multiple Intelligences to Build Faith* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2000) ISBN 978-0-687-09084-6

Bruce, Barbara, *7 Ways of Teaching the Bible to Children* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996) ISBN 0-687-02068-9

ON-LINE ASSIGNMENTS:

Written assignments should be 10 pages in length, double spaced with one inch margins and 12 point font (Times New Roman or Century Schoolbook).

Assignment Part 1, due June 1, posted to Blackboard

- Read Matthei, Sondra Higgins, *Formation in Faith: The Congregational Ministry of Making Disciples*.
 - o **On the first page, please include your name, date, course name and number.**
 - o Answer the question on page 16 under “Personal Experience in the Church.” (2 pages)
 - o Complete the table on page 17. (1 page)
 - o In your own words, summarize and contrast the different models of how people grow in faith explained in chapter 2. Which of these best fits with your personal experience? How might these models assist you in designing a program for Christian formation in your congregation? (1-2 pages)
 - o With your congregation in mind, answer questions from Formation in Faith, pages 109-116. (5-6 pages)

Assignment Part 2, due the first day of class, posted to Blackboard

- Read Thompson, Marjorie J., *Soul Feast*
- Please note that question 2 (below) requires you to practice an unfamiliar spiritual discipline for at least a week before writing about it. Give yourself time to complete the assignment.
 - o **On the first page, please include your name, date, course name and number.**

- In Chapter 1, Thompson writes about the factors contributing to spiritual hunger in our time. Which of these factors do you see at work in your congregation and community? What other factors do you see contributing to spiritual hunger? (1-2 pages)
- Pick one of the spiritual disciplines explored by Thompson. Please pick a discipline that is new to you, or the one that is the least familiar. Spend at least one week intentionally practicing it and write a reflection on your experience. Did you experience the discipline as a means of grace? In what ways? How might you introduce this discipline to a congregation? (3-4 pages)
- Reflecting on the chapter “Intentional Faith Development” in Robert Schnase’s book *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*, write a proposal on a possible new spiritual formation practice or opportunity for your congregation. Include such things as: who would be the target audience, what would be the goal of the practice/opportunity, when would it be offered, what curriculum would be used, how would you determine its effectiveness, etc. (4 pages)

GRADING:

Check Grading –

Check+ This indicates 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.

Check This indicates that the basic elements of the assignment have been faithfully included and the argument is internally coherent and clearly articulated.

Check- This indicates that the assignment was not turned in on time, lacks clarity or focus and lacks reflective insight into the issues being discussed.

Full 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 that 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.

"D" means the individual needs to contact me.

"F" means the individual needs to contact me immediately.

COURSE POLICIES:

Absences: Students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive promptly. Please communicate with the instructor about anticipated and unforeseen absences. Unexcused absences will affect a student's grade.

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 language respects both gender and racial diversity, and students should demonstrate awareness that language about persons and God expresses value 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 penalty in grading.

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 forms of plagiarism or dishonesty:

- Copying from another person's or 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 the Course of Study Office (202-885-8688).