

STMM 573 Spiritual Retreats, Theory, Design and Implementation

School of Theology and Ministry

Seattle University

School Year of 2011-2012

FACULTY:

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REQUIRED TEXTS:

Vandergrift, Nicki Verploegen (2001), *Planning and Implementing Retreats*, Liguori Press.

Whitcomb, Holly W. (2006), *Practicing Your Path: A Book of Retreats for an Intentional Life*. Philadelphia, PA: Innisfree Press, Inc.

Paintner, Christine and Betsey Beckman (2010) *Awakening the Creative Spirit: Bringing the Arts to Spiritual Direction*. NY: Morehouse Publishing.

Course pack available for purchase

COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNED READINGS:

Summer Quarter

Friday, June 24th, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Retreat experience

Meeting each other and overview of course

Reflect on elements of a retreat and on prior retreat experiences

Offering hospitality and inclusion

Sign-up for teams for planning retreats throughout year

Establishment of dates for remainder of school year: classes and retreats

Sign-up for opening prayer/altar, working with elemental symbols in creating altars

Readings: Whitcomb, p. 25-38, Vandergrift, read the entire book for tomorrow

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Saturday, June 25th, 9:00 to noon

- Planning retreats
- Developing themes, goals, and outcomes
- Rhythm and timing in retreats
- Selecting images, texts, materials, and music
- Small group discussion of key ideas in Vandergrift
- Questions and class discussion

Saturday, June 25th , 1:00 to 4:00

- Team Building -- in retreat teams
- Group dynamics
- Creating safety
- Large group, small group, individual (solitude and solidarity)
- Getting feedback from participants
- Cohesive dynamics for team planning
- Leadership styles
- Participant styles: Dunn and Dunn
- A more detailed analysis of retreats using Whitcomb
- Meet with team to brainstorm first retreat and establish plans for further work together.

Readings: Whitcomb: Various chapters

Saturday, July 9th, 9:00 to noon

- Creating a sacred environment
 - Importance of rituals
 - Creating altars
 - Nurturing silence
- Exploring ways to deepen
 - Shalem process
 - Lectio Divina and Visio Divina process
 - Guided Meditation
 - Centering prayer
 - Walking Meditation

Readings: Section in course pack on rituals – be prepared to discuss; Paintner and Beckman, Chapter 5, Contemplation and Imagination, pp. 49-60

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Saturday, July 9th, 1:00 to 4:00

Forms of Embodiment – Discussion of the role of the arts in spiritual deepening

Creative Processes:

Movement [hand dancing, embodied prayer, gesture prayer, stretches, mirroring, free movement, Shibashi]

Music [singing/chanting, listening, improvising, toning]

Small group work and discussion of rest of course

Readings: Paintner and Beckman: Part 1- Spiritual Direction and the Arts pp. 1-34, Chapter 6, The Dance of Embodiment, pp. 61-75; Chapter 8, Music, Voice, and Rhythm, pp. 93-108

August 8th: Retreat outlines and retreat invitations due to Carol and Pat.

August 22nd: Invitations to fall retreat sent to STM for posting.

Fall Quarter

September 16th: Personal goal needs to be sent to Pat and Carol.

Monday and/or Tuesday, September - TBD [Off campus]

Day of Reflection for M.Div. at the Palisades in Federal Way and MATS, MAPS and MAPC at St Mary's in Bellevue

Friday, September - TBD, [On Campus]

Evening of Reflection for various majors

Thursday, October 13th- 5:45 to 7:45

Review the retreats just given and give each other feedback

Sensitivity to diversity in planning

Multicultural sensitivity

Inclusive language

Ecumenical sensitivity

Bring all evaluation sheets for first retreat and be prepared to give and receive feedback. This includes reflection on accomplishment of your personal goal.

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Thursday, November 17th – 5:45 to 8:35

Faith Sharing Processes

Images of God

Spiritual Journey

Eliciting Responses to Texts - complete exercise

Responding to Participant Styles

Gardner: Multiple Intelligences -

Dunn and Dunn – Physical needs

Adapting to Special Needs

Bring Whitcomb to use in class.

Winter Quarter

Thursday, January 12th, 5:45: - 8:35

Other embodied forms:

Drama and Storytelling [Bibliodrama and/or role playing, mime, reader's theater]

Poetry [selecting, reading, writing, reflecting on poetry]

Meet with small groups

Readings: Paintner and Beckman: Chapter 4, Storytelling, pp. 37-48; Chapter 9, Poetry-Writing, pp. 109-124.

Thursday, February 9th, 5:45-7:45

Other embodied forms:

Visual arts [engaging in process, use of materials, mandalas, tryptic, masks, etc.]

Assignment for final project

Readings: Paintner & Beckman: Chapter 7, Visual Arts Experience, pp. 76-92

February 15th: Retreat outlines and retreat invitations due to Carol and Pat.

February 20th: Invitations sent to STM for March and April retreats.

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March 10th: Personal goal to Carol and Pat.

Monday and/or Tuesday, March - TBD

Day of Reflection for MDiv at the Palisades in Federal Way and MAPC, MATS, and MAPS at St. Mary's in Bellevue

Spring Quarter

Friday, April - TBD

Evening of Reflection for various majors, On Campus

Thursday, April 12th, 5:45- 8:35

Sharing assessment of the winter/spring retreats
Organizing longer retreats and different types of retreats
to meet needs of various ages and genders.
Exploring various themes and how they could be developed.

Bring all evaluation sheets for March and April retreats and be prepared to give and receive feedback. This includes reflection on the accomplishment of your personal goal.

Thursday, May 17th – 5:45-8:35 (May extend class for dinner together and needed time for presentations.)

Synthesis projects presented in class
Reflection on personal leadership style
Evaluate class

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

This course develops the skills and understandings required to plan and implement effective spiritual retreats. It invites the learner to grow in his/her confidence and competence in designing sacred containers for people of various ages and backgrounds to encounter the movement of the Spirit in their lives. Students work in team settings and alone to apply their skills and understandings and are asked to reflect throughout the term on their growth as spiritual leaders.

Goal 1: To understand and apply practices of effective spiritual retreat planning and leading by:

- a. Synthesizing knowledge of ritual, diversity, scripture, spiritual practices, and the arts
- b. Reflecting prayerfully on elements and practices that assist the spiritual lives of others and recognizing elements and practices that are not as conducive to spiritual growth using feedback from participants, faculty, and teammates
- c. Choosing themes that reflect the movement of the spirit on local, global, and cosmic levels
- d. Leading from a knowledge of scripture, spiritual texts, and prayer, incorporating those understandings into the retreats themselves
- e. Practicing discernment regarding the spiritual needs of STM students and finding ways to meet those needs in retreat settings

Goal 2: To work collaboratively as well as independently to plan and implement retreats by:

- a. Listening thoughtfully and with discernment to others on their planning team
- b. Relinquishing personally held ideas for the sake of the whole
- c. Reflecting thoughtfully on your own work and the work of the team, giving honest and constructive feedback that enhances growth

Goal 3: To develop and reflect on one's personal style of spiritual leadership by:

- a. Demonstrating awareness of the sacred role of retreats
- b. Articulating your personal leadership style and ways it might enhance and/or impede the success of a retreat
- c. Adjusting your leadership style as necessary within the context of retreat implementation

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These goals meet the following learning outcomes of the Master of Arts in Transforming Spirituality (MATS)

- Knowledge of the interaction of religious/spiritual experience, ritual, and culture in their ecumenical and multicultural dimensions
- Ability to listen and respond to how the Spirit is active and alive in local, global, and cosmic communities
- Ability to discern and nurture spiritual experience in relation to self and others
- Ability to articulate and live from and understanding of self as human, minister, and leader
- Ability to be a responsive, discerning listener who can enter another's worldview

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Attend and actively participate in all classes.
2. Work collaboratively with others to plan and lead two day-long and one evening of reflection for STM students.
3. Complete and submit reflections on each of the retreats you lead, your own effectiveness in leading those retreats, and on the work of each of your team members. [Evaluation forms are available in course pack and electronic form.] (Dates on which these are due are listed in the course outline.)
4. Establish a personal goal for growth for each of the retreats you lead. Reflect on how well you accomplished each goal. (These are due before and after each retreat. Dates are listed on course outline.)
5. Complete and discuss assigned readings in class.
6. Create an altar and lead a prayer for at least one class.
7. Plan a retreat by yourself specific to a setting in which you work or hope to work, incorporating elements of effective retreat planning from throughout the year. Present a fifteen minute summary, including the schedule and one illustrative activity that helps to realize the theme. (This will not be implemented at this time.) [See detailed directions in course packet.]
8. Reflect on your personal leadership style and the ways it manifested itself throughout this course. Discuss the strengths and the limitations of your style in

terms of retreat leadership and collaborative work. Share your reflections during the final class session.

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ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Self-Observation:

1. Reflect on personal success in planning and implementing two day-long and one evening retreat using form in course packet. This reflection needs to be in-depth and thoughtful.
2. Establish and reflect on a separate personal goal for growth in each of the three retreats implemented. This will be evaluated based on the detail, appropriateness, and thoughtfulness of each goal.
3. Reflect on personal leadership style and how that has impacted your ability to effectively lead retreats. Demonstrate an awareness of any changes in style that have occurred through the year as adjustments have been made in the act of leading.

Reflection of Others:

1. After each retreat, complete thorough and constructive feedback for each of your peers in your planning and implementation group.
2. After each retreat, receive and respond in a thoughtful way to feedback from retreatants, faculty, and peers.

Faculty Observation and Assessment:

1. Each retreat including faculty suggestions for revision and faculty evaluation of the retreats including critiquing peer evaluations, self-evaluations and retreat evaluations
2. Each contribution in class including reflections on readings, creation of altar and meditation, and commitment to collaborative teamwork
3. Each statement of and reflection on personal goals and growth as a leader
4. Final synthesis of the course including retreat plan and presentation

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Written Assignments:

1. Invitation for each retreat to be presented
2. Retreat plan for each of three retreats, handouts for those retreats, and evaluations of those retreats (Revisions of retreat plans are required based on faculty and peer feedback)
3. Final project synthesizing and applying retreat model to a personally designed retreat.

Grading:

The nature of this course requires active participation and attendance. You must be a willing participant in a peer group engaging in collaborative planning and implementation of three retreats. Each person will be assessed on the degree to which he/she contributed to the success of the planning and the retreat and what he/she learned from that process. Much of the planning will occur outside of class time and regular communication with peers and professors is required. Any absence or reluctance to contribute to the success of retreats has the potential to lower your grade. [A grading rubric is included in course packet.]

The average grade for the course is expected to be a **B**. Students aspiring for a higher grade must more than meet the expectations in the demonstration of collaborative skills, listening skills, thoughtful reflection, clarity and creativity in planning, effective leadership skills, timeliness in meeting requirements, participation in class discussions, and integration of recommended readings.

COMPONENTS OF COURSE GRADE

Fall retreat	22%
Winter retreat	22%
Evening retreat	22%
Attendance and Participation	12%
Final Paper	22%