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SF 502 The Spiritual Life of the Minister

Steve Harper

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Syllabus

Course: SF502 O1 (JA 2009)

Title: Spiritual Life of the Minister

Hours: 3.00

Published: Yes, on 12/08/2008

Prerequisites:

None

Department: Spiritual Formation

Faculty: Dr. Steve Harper



Email: steve.harper@asburyseminary.edu

Office: FC

SPO:

Meetings:

During 01/12/2009 to 01/16/2009 on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 9:00a to 5:00p in FC227.

Maximum Registration: 30

Catalog Description: The relationship between spirituality and ministry is studied in light of contemporary society, gifts and graces, spiritual disciplines, and ministerial functions. The goal is to equip students to function in ministry with the strengths that a sound spirituality provides.

Objectives:

SF 502 The Spiritual Life of the Minister

SF 502 The Spiritual Life of the

Minister

January 12-16, 2009

Dr. Steve Harper

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Introduction

This course connects Christian spiritual formation to the vocation of ordained ministry. Using scripture, tradition, reason, and experience as the matrix for exploration, the course focuses upon the personal identity and professional functioning of the clergyperson. The goal of the course is to help students face the opportunities and the challenges of professional ministry with the foundation of a sound spiritual life.

Textbooks

Henri Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus* (Crossroad, 1993)

Eugene Peterson, *The Contemplative Pastor* (Eerdmans, 1993)

Evelyn Underhill, *Concerning the Inner Life* (Kessinger, 2003)

Warren Wiersbe, *On Being a Servant of God* (Baker, 1999)

William Willimon, ed, *The Pastor's Guide to Personal*

Spiritual Formation (Beacon Hill, 2005)

It is assumed that these texts will be read prior to the beginning of the class, so that a common theoretical base can be laid for the class. References to particular parts of the books will be made, for re-reading each day.

Course Objectives

1. You will acquire knowledge about...
 - ...a theology of the spiritual life as applied to the vocation of clergy
 - ...the intersection point between "personal" and "professional"
 - ...a style of ministry that will equip you for the long haul
 - ...what others value in fostering authentic spirituality for ministry
2. You will develop skills in...
 - ...fostering the character of a virtuous clergyperson
 - ...functioning as a spiritual leader
 - ...living in ministry as a servant of God
 - ...developing a contemplative lifestyle in the midst of your ministry
3. You will be encouraged to deepen your life in Christ by...
 - ...participating in the "direction in common" model of the class
 - ...using the means of grace
 - ...pursuing matters of personal interest and/or need in your journey

Class Structure

The course uses an adaptation of the "Direction in Common" model designed by

Fr. Adrian Van Kaam and Dr. Susan Muto. Dr. Harper will provide a handout summarizing this model on the first day of class. This class acknowledges that spiritual formation occurs in the context of Christian community.

Grading System

The course will follow a traditional pattern for grading, with the assignment of

the final grade in accordance with the policies of the current Catalog. The final grade for this course will be determined by the grading of the major paper for the class. Dr. Harper will use time the first day of class reviewing the nature of this paper and the point-values for various segments of it.

Course Requirements

1. Prior to the class----(a) complete your reading of the texts
(b) conduct a pastoral leader interview

2. Attend all sessions of the class----because of the intensive nature of this course, you must be certain that you have nothing to prohibit you from full participation.

4. After the class----write a 10-12 page paper on a theme relevant to the course content. You may use any themes or sub-themes found in the daily schedule, in your reading, or other subjects that bear upon the spiritual life of the minister. The due date is Friday, January 30. You should most likely settle upon your theme and begin preliminary research prior to the class in order to complete the work by the due date. Note-late work (after the due date) will be given a reduction of one letter (e.g. from an A to a B).

Course Schedule (Daily-9:00 am to 5:00 pm)

Monday	Read Underhill & Willimon books for overview Class Orientation "Ministry as a Dangerous Vocation" "And Some Apostles" (Wiersbe, ch 1-5)
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Tuesday	"Spiritual Leadership" (Nouwen)
Wednesday	"The Spirit of Ministry" (Peterson)
Thursday	"The Soul of Ministry" "The Body of Ministry"
Friday	"The Services of Ministry" (Wiersbe, chs 6-30)

Pastoral Leader Interview

This interview is due on the first day of class. You are free to interview anyone who is engaged in a full-time professional ministry. For maximum benefit, you should interview someone who is in the kind of ministry you envision yourself being in after you graduate-or the kind of ministry you are in right now.

The following questions are "standardized" as a way for Dr. Harper to assess trends in the responses. However, you should feel free to add any questions of your own to make the experience more focused and personal.

You may use a simple "Question and Answer" format to report this interview, or you may prefer to write it out in a more narrative style. Regardless, your report should capture the person's answers to all of the questions asked.

1. Discuss the ways your vocation invites the cultivation of your

spiritual life.

2. Discuss the ways your vocation threatens the cultivation of your spiritual life.
3. What are the main components of your spiritual formation? Why have you come to see them as mainstays for you?
4. Who are the people who have most positively influenced your formation? Why?
5. If you could give one word of counsel to persons starting out in professional ministry to help them cultivate their spiritual life, what would you say?
6. Is there anything else which comes to mind that you really want to include in this interview?

Required Texts: