

**SP508: THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES. (4 units)**

**Richard Peace, Robert Boyd Munger Professor of Evangelism and Spiritual Formation;**  
**Online Facilitation by Kimberly Thacker, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Evangelism & Philosophy**

---

**DESCRIPTION:** With the renewal of interest in Spiritual Formation there has also been a new interest in the classic disciplines that promote spiritual growth. The aim of this course is to discuss spiritual disciplines in the context of the ancient understanding of the spiritual journey and in the light of various Christian spiritualities that have flourished down through the ages.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Upon the successful completion of the course, students will have:

- Understood the nature of the spiritual journey and how the spiritual disciplines assist in our growth
- Explored and experienced various spiritual disciplines and practices
- Developed a deeper understanding of one particular spiritual discipline, school of spirituality, or person who is a model of spirituality
- Developed skills as a Minister of Spiritual Formation
- Experienced a silent retreat.

**RELEVANCE FOR MINISTRY:** Interest in spirituality is growing both in the church and outside the church. There is an active conversation going on in our culture about the nature of spirituality and the process of transformation. Those involved in ministry must be able to participate effectively in this conversation as well as guide others as they seek to follow the spiritual way. This course will not only explore the nature of spirituality, but will also seek to assist students to engage in various spiritual disciplines designed to foster the way of love.

**COURSE FORMAT:** The class will be conducted on the Internet using a 10-week lesson program aligned with Fuller's academic calendar. Each week students and the instructor will interact with the course material through journaling, and threaded discussions. In addition, each student will participate in a six-hour silent retreat and engage in personal contemplative prayer times.

**REQUIRED READING:**

- Allen, Diogenes. *Spiritual Theology*. Cowley Publications, 1997.
- Chittister, Joan. *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily: Living the Rule of St. Benedict Today*. HarperCollins, 1991.
- Peace, Richard. *Contemplative Bible Reading*. NavPress, 1998.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Meditative Prayer*. NavPress, 1998.
- Sire, James. *Learning to Pray Through the Psalms*. InterVarsity Press, 2006.
- Theibodeaux, Mark. *Armchair Mystic*. St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2001.

**Choose one:**

- Barton, Ruth Haley. *Sacred Rhythms: Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation*. InterVarsity Press, 2006.
- Or Foster, Richard. *Celebration of Discipline*. rev. ed. HarperOne, 1988.
- Or Jones, Tony. *The Sacred Way*. Zondervan, 2005.

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. Weekly Threaded Discussions (25%), Journaling (10%), and occasional Webliography entries (5%)
2. Reading assigned texts and listening to course lectures (10%)
3. Attendance at a silent retreat plus reflection paper (15%)
4. Personal engagement in spiritual exercises plus reflection papers (15%)
5. Research paper on some aspect of spirituality (20%)

**PREREQUISITES:** None.

**RELATIONSHIP TO CURRICULUM:** Meets MA in Theology requirement in Spirituality (SPIR). Ministry Focus Elective in MA in Global Leadership degree.

**FINAL EXAMINATION:** None

Updated July 2008