

MN531 MAKING DISCIPLES 1 - AUGUST 2021

(REGISTER ALSO FOR MN532 MAKING DISCIPLES 2 – FALL 2021)

2 Credits: letter grade only

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Course Description

This course, part one of a required two-course series with MN532, explores the role and practice of the teaching and discipling ministries of the church as graced means of cultivating the character of Christ personally and corporately. An incarnational model of teaching and learning—engaging the whole person—will be emphasized. Students will reflect on their own experiences of these ministries, both as teacher and student; engage texts on teaching, contemplative attention, spiritual formation in children and youth, virtue formation, and catechesis; and practice practical theological reflection as they build skills for teaching in various contexts. Models for learning, recent cognitive research, and instructional design models will be dialogue partners as students select and describe a context of teaching and learning; then design, teach, and evaluate a teaching/learning experience. **Course Fee: \$25 for required August 16th retreat.**



Course Objectives By participating fully in this class, students will:

1. Describe and practice a method of contemplative practical theological reflection for a variety of ministry contexts;
2. Define the characteristics and describe the influence of cultural formation, with regards to formation as a disciple of Christ;
3. Describe teaching and learning models, using human development patterns and cognitive research on learning, so as to communicate Gospel truths in ways that meet people in their particular stage of developmental and learning needs;
4. Describe and assess the ways that a particular Christian community approaches the tasks of Christian teaching and discipleship;
5. Explore discipleship needs and approaches for children, youth, emerging adults;
6. Explore models of adult catechesis and on-going mystagogy;
7. Explore best practices and develop personal skills relevant to teaching and learning.

M.Div. Curricular Goals Fulfilled by This Course

- Be formed by, live in, and minister out of Scripture and the historical and theological tradition of the Church.
- Educate and equip individuals and congregations to live and minister joyfully and faithfully as part of their own denomination and the ecumenical church.
- Lead and nurture congregations to promote peace and justice in the public arena and encourage the witness and service of the church in mission to the world.
- Integrate theology and practice in all areas of life and ministry.

MAMD Curricular Goals Fulfilled by This Course

- Develop, implement, and assess strategies for missional living in a specific cultural context.
- Adopt spiritual practices that nurture their personal lives as faithful disciples and witnesses.
- Develop skills and capacities for faithful and competent Christian witness.

Requirements

1. Attendance, pre-load reading, and attentive participation in the class – 30%
2. Book summaries – 30%
3. Comprehensive Ministry Context Description and Analysis – 30%
4. Proposal for the learning experience you want to teach during Fall semester - 10%

Required Course Texts (for both MN531 & MN532)

1. Depending on your denomination: Presbyterian Church (USA) *Book of Common Worship*, United Methodist Church *Book of Worship*, Episcopal Church *Book of Common Prayer*, etc. For students from ecclesial traditions without a common prayer book, choose one of the above or another source that includes (suggested) rites of baptism, communion, and other gatherings for worship.
2. Anderson, Keith. *The Digital Cathedral: Networked Ministry in a Wireless World*. Morehouse, 2015. ISBN-13: 978-0819229953
3. Lichtmann, Maria. *The Teacher's Way: Teaching and the Contemplative Life*. Paulist Press, 2005. ISBN 0-8091-4303-8
4. Smith, James K. A. *You Are What You Love*. Brazos Press, 2016. ISBN-13: 978-1587433801
5. Sousa, David A., *How the Brain Learns*, Fifth Edition, Corwin Press, 2016. ISBN-13: 978-1506346304.
6. Stonehouse, Catherine. *Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey: Nurturing a Life of Faith*. Baker Books, 1998. ISBN 0-8010-5807-4
7. Twenge, Jean M. *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy--and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood--and What That Means for the Rest of Us*. Atria Books, 2017. ISBN-13: 978-1501151989
8. Yaconelli, Mark. *Contemplative Youth Ministry: Practicing the Presence of Jesus*. Zondervan, 2006. ISBN 0-310-26777-3

MN531 Making Disciples 1 – August Pre-Load Assignments

Three Book Summaries, uploaded it to the designated Moodle drop box by Sunday, August 8, 11:55pm.

1. James K. A. Smith, *You Are What You Love*
2. Keith Anderson, *The Digital Cathedral*
3. Jean M. Twenge, *iGen*

Book summaries are one of the best ways to engage a student in reading a text. We are saturated daily by opinions and judgments, not necessarily based in reality. Writing a text summary helps the reader understand what the writer is saying first, before jumping to critique or focusing on disagreements. In classical models of education, summarizing of a story, text, or concept, is called *narration* and often done verbally. It helps the student begin teaching the text back to the instructor, and helps the instructor know whether the student understands the material. For our purposes, you will be writing your book narrations. The second part of the assignment gives you a chance to reflect on what you read with an eye toward taking action. Again, this is to keep the focus on a close reading of the text and encourage using the material in your daily life as soon as possible.

Book Summary Format (900 words, parenthetical page citations, single space, 12 pt.):

1. **Summarize** the text. *What is the purpose of the book? What is the main argument the author is making? What are the main ideas?* If you find yourself answering the questions, “I think” or “I feel” – stop and return to summarizing.
2. **Describe** 1 question or concern that the book provokes in you for discipling others or teaching the faith. *How might you resolve this question or concern? What would you need to know about your context to resolve this question or concern?*
3. **Describe** 3 important insights from the book for your ministry today. *How might you implement these insights immediately in your context? What would you need to know about your context to implement these insights?*

Advance notice - during the residential, you will have the following chapters or essays to read:

1. Christian Smith, *Souls in Transition*, Chapter 2 (PDF on Moodle)
2. Various Authors, *Studying Congregations*, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 7 (PDF on Moodle)
3. Simone Weil, “Right Use of School Studies with a View to the Love of God” (PDF on Moodle)
4. CS Lewis, “The Weight of Glory” (PDF on Moodle)
5. Andrew Root, excerpts. (PDF on Moodle)

Post-Load Assignments

1. Context Analysis Project: Explore your teaching context and look at it with fresh eyes. **Describe** it using your senses, consider the history, consider the demographics, **reflect** on your experience of the context. **Pray. Dialogue** with people in your context. Let things sit and **rest** for a bit. Go back to the context and dig deeper. The key is to let the context help you as you plan your teaching, and open up possible ways to present your chosen topic.

- Read and digest Chapter 7 of *Studying Congregations*. Use the questions for reflecting on your context. In addition, consider these questions for deeper reflection:
 1. What are prayer needs or thanksgivings the Holy Spirit places on your heart for this place?
 2. Take a prayer walk in your ministry context location (building, etc.) and neighborhood. What are prayer needs or thanksgivings the Holy Spirit places on your heart for this place?
 3. Who gathers in this place?
 4. How well do the people know and experience Jesus and his gospel of love and grace in this place?
 5. How are people taught about Jesus and his gospel in this place? In what location and environment does the teaching takes place?
 6. How are Sunday worship and Christian education connected, if at all?
 7. What do you hear, touch, feel, smell, or see, when you enter the space and interact with the people?
 8. What are challenges and joys?
 9. Do people love each other in this place?
 10. Who are the “Samaritans” of this community?
 11. What are rituals that are almost unnoticeable they are so familiar?
 12. How does this community relate to the larger neighborhood, city, and cultural contexts?
 13. What are important practices--greeting, communion, prayer, preaching, baptism? How are they practiced? Why are they practiced in this way?
 14. If you were to seek God's heart for the people in this ministry context, what would God long for them to know?

Use 3000 words as your target (8-10 pages, double-spaced). You may feel bored as you describe the context in detail. Boredom is an invitation to look closer, follow your curiosity, and go beyond the surface. Even if it is a familiar place and people, you will notice new things. **Due: September 3, end of day, upload to Moodle.**

2. Teaching/Learning Topic Proposal: Based on your description of the context and prayer over the context, what are some learning topics that God might be calling you to bring to the community? Write a one-page 300-500 word proposal that describes the topic, a general outline, specific audience within your context, and a date for teaching (some time in Fall semester). **Due: September 3, end of day, upload to Moodle.**

MN531 Making Disciples – August Residential Meeting Schedule

Monday, August 9 1:00pm-3:40pm	<i>Book Introductions; Who are you? Facebook Old Skool. Where are we? Context Analysis; Creating a “Thick Description.” Three Tetrahedrons: (1) Practical Theological Method;(2) Four Sources for Discernment; (3) Four Layers to a Text.</i>
Tuesday, August 10 1:00pm-3:40pm	Cultural Formation & Cultural Liturgies; What habits does our culture and communities form? <i>Incurvatus in se</i> ; Lord of the Rings & Gollum; <i>The Weight of Glory</i> -CS Lewis
Wednesday, August 11 1:00pm-3:40pm	The Telos (<i>goal</i>) of Formation: Little Christs-Icons of Christ; Rule of Love; The Kingdom of God; What difference does Jesus make? Jason Silva; Moulin Rouge; Harry Potter; Les Miserables; Batman vs. Superman; <i>Excurvatus ex se. Studying Congregations, chapter 1,2, and 3</i> (Moodle)
Thursday, August 12	No Class (Advisor meetings and Fall course previews)
Friday, August 13	No Class (Preaching or Gospel in Context)
Monday, August 16 9:00am-4:00pm Off-campus Retreat Day (TBA) \$25 for course fee	<i>Readings in Retreat - Images of Discipleship in Scripture; Traditions of Christian Formation; Reflecting on practices using the method, sources, and layers. Right Use of School Studies - Simone Weil; How does your context disciple and teach? What is your ministry context? (Gospel in Context students with Dr. James)</i>
Tuesday, August 17 1:00pm-3:40pm	How the Brain Learns; Thoughts on curriculum; Evaluating Educational and Discipleship materials; Visit the library to look at curriculums; <i>Reflect upon brain health/good learning habits you would like to incorporate into your life and upon the habits which your particular ministry context may find healthful.</i>
Wednesday, August 18 1:00pm-3:40pm	Liturgical Catechesis – Catechisms; Baptism and Easter Vigil; Sunday Worship <i>is</i> Christian Education; the Church Year and Discipleship
Thursday, August 19 1:00pm-3:40pm	Teaching Example: Science and Theology: Wolter Woods & Prairies Afternoon with Dr. Adam Hoffman and Dr. Mary Emily Duba – <i>Scientific and Biblical Reflections on Water</i> (Science for Seminaries Event.)
Friday, August 20 1:00pm-3:40pm	What difference does the church make? Dones; Deconversion; What difference does sacred space make? Reasons to be in a local worshipping community; Jason Silva (again); Invitation to a Swiss village; Babette's Feast; <i>The Church that Brought Down the Wall</i> . Collecting questions; topics as needed. Next Steps: Context Analysis and Reflection Project and Teaching Topic, due September 3.