

## **Spiritual Direction Certification Program - Year One**

### **First Quarter**

#### **Self-Awareness I**

In this course students develop an understanding of spiritual direction and its role in religious life throughout the ages and explore their own religious/spiritual history. Students gain the ability to advance with greater clarity of what they hold to be true for themselves and others and develop an understanding of the role of and approaches to spiritual direction in modern times.

Learning objectives:

Identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth that support the director/directee relationship.

Explore and articulate cross-cultural understanding and conditioning and how this affects relationships with others.

Integrate spiritual understanding of self.

Identify core beliefs and practices that honor one's true self.

#### **The Art and Ministry of Spiritual Direction I**

A foundational course in Spiritual Direction, this course invites the transformation of self, others, and the world by integrating mind, body, will, and spirit of the student. Students are introduced to the nature of spiritual direction and grow skills to deepen relationships with self, the Divine, and others. Students gain a foundational understanding of Spiritual Direction, ethics, and basic skills for becoming a Spiritual Director in this class.

Explain the nature of spiritual direction

Develop basic skills for spiritual direction

Recognize, in self and others, potential obstacles to spiritual growth

Demonstrate qualities of heart-centered spiritual direction

List and explain the ethics for a spiritual director

## **Second Quarter**

### **Contemplative Practices I**

From the rich contemplative traditions to contemporary New Thought prayer, in this class students experience and demonstrate the power of affirmative and centering prayer, Lectio Divina, Examen, and more. This course provides foundational principles, as well as the experience, and application of prayer and meditation for the spiritual direction student while simultaneously providing tools to support directees.

Practice contemplative exercises and prayer.

Integrate regular contemplative practices into daily life.

Employ the use of contemplative practices in spiritual direction with others.

Demonstrate models of contemplative practice that relate to life experiences.

Reflect on and recognize the benefit of contemplative practices for the director and directees.

### **Practicum I**

A robust practicum is at the heart of every Spiritual Direction program. In real time scenarios, students engage in the process of spiritual direction and receive instructor and peer support for growing these skills. Students also gain practical knowledge in the practice of writing verbatims. In a safe and encouraging environment, students develop listening skills, explore tools for inquiry, and personally experience the movement of God within spiritual direction sessions with others.

Demonstrate a foundational knowledge of providing spiritual direction for others.

Use verbatims to record spiritual direction sessions.

Develop listening skills specific to the movement of the holy in the lives of others.

Review the practice of spiritual direction in a supportive and safe environment.

Develop growing ease in practicing spiritual direction through scenarios with peers.

## **Third Quarter**

### **Contemplative Practices II**

Expanding on the practices experienced in Contemplative Practices I, students explore meditation and non-dual consciousness, mindfulness, expressive prayer, insight meditation, walking meditation and other contemplative practices. By exercising each of the contemplative practices themselves, students recognize and deepen their experience of oneness with Creation, the impermanence of “life”, a richer connection to all humanity and more. In this class, students deepen their own formation of Self in support of the director/directee relationship.

Practice contemplative exercises and prayer.

Integrate regular contemplative practices into daily life.

Employ the use of contemplative practices in spiritual direction with others.

Apply contemplative practice to discernment in the spiritual direction process.

Experiment with various contemplative practices in the context of spiritual direction.

### **Nature of Reality/ Mysticism**

This class explores the many ways we experience the Holy. Students will “meet” the mystics from throughout the ages, engage in the practices of ever-expanding consciousness that deepen an experience of the divine, and examine the cultivation of a mystical life. Through personal practice, students gain tools to engage in the adventure and exploration of being present to the transcendent in the sacred space of spiritual direction.

Identify the practices associated with both ancient and contemporary mystics.

Recognize the movement of the transcendent.

Develop a diverse experience of what is Holy.

Use practices that deepen an experience of the divine.

Apply an awareness of the transcendent to the spiritual direction process.

## **Fourth Quarter**

### **Integrating Spirit, Soul, and Body**

In this class students identify, expand, and build upon their existing prayer/meditation practice and develop a hearty, supportive, prayer consciousness/meditation plan based on their first year in the spiritual direction program. Using modalities studied throughout the year, students identify and share how these skills enhance their spiritual awareness. Students create active self-care programs and outcomes and adjust a personal self-care plan.

Review personal prayer and meditation skills.

Identify and share consciousness, prayer, and meditation skills.

Integrate existing practices into daily life.

Create an active self-care program.

Apply self-care practices to daily life.

### **Practicum - II**

Students continue real time experiences of spiritual direction with their peers so they can experience growth in use of concepts, methodology, and the ethical practice of spiritual direction. Through safe and constructive support from instructors and peers in this class, students strengthen and continue to master skills in spiritual direction.

Use constructive support from others to deepen self-awareness and mature in the practice of spiritual direction.

Employ loving and constructive support for other spiritual direction students.

Apply previously examined concepts and tools during experiences of spiritual direction.

Demonstrate growing familiarity and proficiency with tools used in the spiritual direction of others.

Recognize and demonstrate the ability to respond to cultural and religious variations in the context of spiritual direction.

## **Spiritual Direction Certification Program - Year Two**

### **First Quarter**

#### **Self-Awareness II**

Building on their experience from the first four quarters of the spiritual direction program and the exploration completed in Self-Awareness I, students will continue the pilgrimage of exploring themselves and those for whom they will provide spiritual direction. Students will continue to deepen what is true for themselves and create a rule of life. This class includes study of the Enneagram, Conscious Evolution, and elements of Transpersonal Psychology.

Demonstrate a deepening spirituality as a means of self-awareness and service to others.

Integrate the topics studied as tools for growth for others and self.

Write a rule of life.

Reveal new unique gifts that contribute to providing spiritual direction.

Show proficiency in identifying growing edges through self-awareness.

#### **Art and Ministry of Spiritual Direction II**

This class will also explore group spiritual direction, images of the Divine and its impact upon the spiritual life, faith styles and their impact on the SD process. Students will grow through theological reflection, begin to discern faith styles in spiritual direction, and identify personal skills that support the spiritual direction process.

Show a growing range as a director through theological reflection.

Demonstrate an ability to reflect contemplatively as a spiritual director.

Identify faith styles and their impact on the spiritual direction process.

Apply knowledge of ethical issues in spiritual direction practice.

Assess personal skills that support others on their spiritual journey.

## **Second Quarter**

### **Addressing the Human Condition**

Pain and beauty coexist in the experience of loss. This course explores images of and guidance from the Ground of all Being during times of loss and great change. What does spiritually companioning another during these times look like for spiritual directors? Students will address illness and hospitalization, death and dying, grief and loss, addiction, and mental health within the context of spiritual direction.

Differentiate between the “dark night of the soul” and grief

Recognize the boundaries between spiritual direction and counseling

Explore accompanying another during a time of loss

Formulate a network of peers for referral

Investigate transference and countertransference when working with the bereaved, ill, or addicted.

### **Society and Spirituality**

This class introduces students to cross-cultural knowledge, differing lifestyles and interfaith understanding as it concerns the practice of providing spiritual direction with diverse individuals and groups. Students will explore diversity and inclusion, interfaith and interspiritual understanding, East/West faith traditions, indigenous wisdom and more. The course also covers exploration of how cultural and spiritual beliefs affect worldview in a spiritual direction practice.

Examine growing edges for cultural competency.

Apply cross-cultural knowledge to a spiritual direction practice.

Demonstrate understanding of multicultural and interfaith spiritual direction.

Collect religious/spiritual resources appropriate to the care of directees.

Exhibit awareness of spiritual care practices that respects diversity.

## **THIRD QUARTER**

### **Spiritual Direction, Discerned Action and Social Transformation**

This course expands on and synthesizes the work of spiritual direction with and for the greater community through exploring generational variances, spirituality beyond institutions, new mystics, and contemplation as compassionate action. Students will explore the wider perspective of culture and its impact on beliefs and practices, the contribution of generational variances in spiritual direction, the connections between contemplation and compassionate action, and more, in this class.

Investigate spiritual direction for the spiritual but not religious.

Relate the impact of spiritual direction to culture and its belief systems.

Compare and differentiate generational variances in spiritual direction practice.

### **Practicum III**

In the third practicum of the program, students will explore working outside of their comfort zone and delve into advanced themes in their spiritual direction practice. Resistance and trauma in spiritual direction practice, various group spiritual direction practices, and exploring specialized themes as a spiritual director will be covered in this course.

Recognize cultural and religious variations.

Examine advanced themes.

Demonstrate the ability to respond to cultural and religious variances as a spiritual director.

Research resources and gather information in support of those who require specialized companionship.

## **FOURTH QUARTER**

### **Spiritual Direction Supervision – Putting it All Together**

In this course, students will learn the “business of spiritual direction.” This class covers ethical and legal issues, establishing a business practice of spiritual direction, the administration of a spiritual direction practice, continuing education and other information toward making a living as a spiritual director. Additionally, students will explore spiritual direction supervision as an ongoing activity of a strong spiritual direction practice.

Recognize ethical and legal issues in a spiritual direction practice.

Review best practices in the administration of a spiritual direction business.

Formulate a plan for a continuing spiritual education practice.

Experiment with peer supervision sessions.