

## **STMM 573 Spiritual Retreats—Theory, Design and Implementation**

School of Theology and Ministry

Seattle University

School Year of 2012-2013

### **FACULTY:**

Christine Betz Hall, MATS

Phone: 360-341-1994 (H)

360-320-3915 (C)

E-mail: [christine@whidbey.net](mailto:christine@whidbey.net)

Office hours by appointment

Pat Lewis, MRE, MAABS

Phone: 206-322-9211

E-mail: [Psixtyone@msn.com](mailto:Psixtyone@msn.com)

Office hours by appointment

### **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

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

Verploegen, Nicki (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.

Coursepack available for purchase

### **COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNED READINGS:**

#### Summer Quarter

Friday, June 22nd, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

- Mini retreat experience
- Meeting each other and overview of course
- Reflect on elements of a retreat and on prior retreat experiences
- Offering hospitality and inclusion
- Review dates for retreats and evenings of reflection
- Sign-up for opening prayer/altar, working with elemental symbols in creating altars

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

Saturday, June 23rd, 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 Verploegen
- Questions and class discussion
- Decisions: teams for planning retreats through the year

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
- 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 7<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 to noon

Draft Learning Covenant Due.

- 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, 49-60.

Saturday, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 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, 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

July 31st: Final Learning Covenant due.

August 9<sup>th</sup>: Retreat outlines and retreat invitations due to Chris and Pat.

August 24th: Invitations to fall retreat sent to STM for posting.

## **FALL RETREATS:**

Monday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, M.Div. Retreat at Peace and Spirituality Center  
in Bellevue

Tuesday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, MATS, MAPS, MAPC Peace and Spirituality Center  
in Bellevue

Friday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, Fall Evening Retreat/Evening of Reflection for various majors  
at SU Admissions/Alumni Building on 12<sup>th</sup> Ave.

## **Fall Quarter**

Thursday, October 4<sup>th</sup>- 5:45 to 7:45

Be prepared to give an overview of your retreat and learnings from it

- Overview of the retreats just given and learnings with the whole class
- Sensitivity to diversity in planning
- Multicultural sensitivity
- Inclusive language
- Ecumenical sensitivity

Thursday, November 8<sup>th</sup> – 5:45 to 8:35

Bring Whitcomb to use in class

- Faith Sharing Processes
- Images of God
- Spiritual Journey
- Eliciting Responses to Texts - complete exercise
- Adapting to Special Needs

## **Winter Quarter**

Thursday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, 5:45: - 8:35

- Other embodied forms:
  - ~ Drama and Storytelling
  - ~ Poetry—selecting, reading, writing, reflecting on poetry
- Meet with retreat team

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

Thursday, February 7<sup>th</sup> 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 11<sup>th</sup>: Retreat outlines and retreat invitations due to Chris and Pat.

February 15<sup>th</sup>: Invitations sent to STM for March and April retreats.

### **SPRING RETREATS:**

Monday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, M.Div Retreat at the Palisades in Federal Way

Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, MATS, MAPS, MAPC Retreat at Peace and Spirituality Center in Bellevue

Friday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, Evening of Reflection at SU Admissions/Alumni Building on 12<sup>th</sup> Ave.

### **Spring Quarter**

Thursday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, 5:45- 8:35

Be prepared to give an overview of your retreat and learnings from it

- Sharing theme and learnings of the winter/spring retreats
- Organizing longer retreats and different types of retreats to meet needs of various ages and genders.
- Exploring development of various themes

Thursday, May 9<sup>th</sup> – 5:45-8:35 *(with potential to extend class time for dinner together if class wishes)*

- Final projects presented in class
- Reflection on personal leadership style
- Evaluate class

Suggested Grade Statement due (see Grading Standards in this syllabus)

### **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.

- f. Planning and offering retreats that:
  - i. honor the spiritual formation goals of STM to “balance academic rigor with space and time for prayer, faith sharing and community building.” Specific formation requirements available online for differing degrees: <http://www.seattleu.edu/stm/forms/>
  - ii. provide extended opportunities for quiet and prayer.
  - iii. model meaningful spiritual retreat experiences for those beginning in ministry.
  - iv. foster a sense of the STM community.
  - v. encourage personal reflection on the psychospiritual dimensions of growth in relation to the intellectual content of STM coursework.

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 effectiveness of a retreat
- c. Adjusting your leadership style as necessary within the context of retreat implementation

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 class sessions and retreat team meetings.
2. Complete **assigned readings** before class sessions.
3. Decide how you wish to grow in ministry through this course. Create and be guided by a **personal learning covenant**. Individualized goals and objectives will focus your learning and organize specific strategies toward achieving your goals. Plan to offer two brief written progress reports to faculty during the year. The covenant must be typed and should be two to three pages in length. Submit a draft to the faculty before class on July 9th. They will offer suggestions for revisions due July 31st. Full description of the learning covenant in the course packet.
4. Work collaboratively with classmates to plan and facilitate **two retreats** for STM students—either two, day-long retreats or one day-long plus one evening of reflection. Dates are predetermined on the syllabus. Hand in retreat outreach materials, retreat objectives, planning schedule, and any handouts.
5. Complete and submit substantive **reflections** on each of the retreats you lead using forms in the handout packet (available electronically). Due one week after each retreat.
6. Create an **altar and lead a prayer** for at least one class.
7. Keep a **journal** throughout the year using the process outlined in this course pack. You will not hand in the journal.
8. **Final Project:** Design a retreat that you could lead in the future; the retreat will not take place during this course. It will be specific to participant group with which you work or hope to work, and incorporate elements of effective retreat planning you've learned. In the spring, you will present a fifteen-minute summary, including the schedule and one illustrative activity. See details in this course pack.

### Written Assignments:

1. A learning covenant and two progress reports.
2. Journal: an individualized format, not for submission to faculty.
3. Invitation for each retreat to be presented.
4. Retreat plan for two retreats, handouts for those retreats, and evaluations of and reflections on those retreats using forms provided in the coursepack. Revisions of retreat plans are required based on faculty and peer feedback.
5. Final project synthesizing and applying retreat model to a personally designed retreat.

## **ASSESSMENT AND GRADING**

### Self-Observation and Reflection:

1. Establish and reflect on personal goals for growth over the duration of the course. Two progress reports due to faculty over the year.
2. Reflect on personal effectiveness in planning and implementing two retreats using the format provided in the course pack. This reflection needs to be thorough and thoughtful. Rubric provided in the coursepack.
3. Reflect on personal leadership style and how that impacts 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. Guidelines and rubric for peer and self-evaluations provided in the coursepack.
2. After each retreat, receive and respond in a thoughtful way to feedback from retreatants, faculty, and peers.

### Faculty will observe and assess:

1. Your learning covenant and progress reports.
2. Your contributions in class, including reflections on readings, creation of altar and meditation, and commitment to collaborative teamwork.
3. The retreats your team facilitates, including your self and peer evaluations and reflections.
4. Final synthesis of the course, including your final project and presentation.

### **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.

## Grading Standards – STMM 573

**Participation:** 20%

Personal learning covenant  
Class attendance and participation  
Class altar and prayer  
Journaling  
Reflection on leadership style  
Suggested grade statement

**Two retreats:**

Including planning, group meetings, presentation,  
written feedback and self-reflections

Retreat 1 30%  
Retreat 2 30%

**Final Project:** 20%

Including retreat plan, class presentation,  
and handouts

### Student's Suggested Grade Statement

Please submit a brief written statement to the faculty at the final class session to suggest an appropriate grade for your work. You may find the following considerations useful.

- Your increasing competence as a retreat facilitator/leader
- Your progress in relationship with your goals
- Your faithfulness to your plan
- Your growth in the following areas:
  - goal setting
  - integration of readings and class presentations
  - self-evaluation and reflection in ministry
  - communication and leadership skills
  - strengths and growing edges of your leadership style
- The regularity and quality of your meetings with retreat team members
- The overall impact of this experience on your life and ministry

Your suggested grade for STMM 573, Spiritual Retreats: