
Certificate in Spiritual Formation

Mission & Learning Outcomes

The Certificate in Spiritual Formation is an introductory yet intensive, integrative program within the Institute for Spiritual Formation at Talbot School of Theology, designed to assist individuals in their personal growth, provide some training in lay ministry of spiritual formation in the local church and give the student opportunity to understand their giftedness in order to determine whether the Lord is calling them to more training and preparation for ministry.

The program is designed entirely around promoting growth in the believer's inner life of faith and prayer with God in the context of a shared community and developed knowledge-base in the Word, spiritual formation and soul care. It focuses specifically on ways to deepen one's knowledge and openness to God and His work as well as understanding of one's self and others in order to grow toward conformity of character and inner life in the image of Christ. In order to accomplish this, the program has a substantial emphasis on understanding the dynamics of the Indwelling Holy Spirit as they interface human personality and relational dynamics. These integrative endeavors are enhanced by the Institute's diverse university-wide faculty that draws particularly upon Rosemead School of Psychology and Talbot School of Theology, bringing a wide range of expertise and experience to bear upon the process of human spiritual growth and soul care.

Certificate course work may later be applied toward a Master of Divinity or Master of Arts degree.

The mission of the Certificate in Spiritual Formation is to *introduce* believers to the processes involved in knowing themselves honestly and openly before God and one another in Truth, in cultivating intimacy with, growth in and obedience to Christ, in the training in lay ministry of spiritual formation in the local church which, in turn, gives opportunity for students to explore their calling and potential need for more training in ministry.

As a result of this program, the student will:

1. Appreciate and begin to grow in the reality that true Christian spirituality is grounded in the Double Knowledge and encounter of God and Self. Students will begin to understand through experience and theory that growth in Christ is based upon an encounter with God and oneself in the Truth.
2. Understand the Word of God and its role as a primary datum for true Christian spirituality. Students will come to have a grasp and commitment to the Word of God as a primary source of truth for their understanding of spiritual formation and spiritual direction (through courses in theology, biblical studies and spiritual formation).
3. Integrate truth from the data of extra-biblical sources of wisdom and true Christian spirituality. Students will also come to have some minimal appreciation for the relevant information from the history of the church, spiritual classics, personal experience, the humanities and the social sciences relevant to spiritual growth.
4. Develop discernment regarding what is of truth or falsehood in light of various contemporary competing spiritualities. Students will begin to be able to discern truth and error, what is helpful and unhelpful in true Christian spiritual growth in light of various competing contemporary spiritualities.
5. Foster honest self-assessment and humility. Students will gain an honest understanding of themselves in the presence of God and truth through various experiential prayer projects, meditation on the Word, retreats, and spiritual direction.
6. Develop some minimal understanding of the sinful dynamics at work in one's life and others. Students will become aware of the sinful dynamics that govern their lives and those they will be ministering to as well as a deeper appreciation of the origin of those dynamics from interaction with the Scriptures, psychological theory, philosophy, prayer projects and personal experience in retreats and spiritual direction.
7. Cultivate deeper intimacy with Christ in prayer. Students will personally nurture intimacy in their relationship to Christ in their meditation on the Word, experiential prayer projects, retreats, and personal experience in spiritual direction.
8. Grow in personal commitment to obedience and character of Christ. Students will cultivate growth in character as well as behavior consistent with the faith in their interaction with their spiritual directors, in projects of personal prayer and meditation on the Word, retreats and therapy.
9. Expose oneself to ministries of spiritual formation in the local church in courses and experience. Students will be exposed to the various ways spiritual formation may be part of the ministries of a local church in preaching, adult education and mentoring (through exposure in courses and experiences in retreats and spiritual direction).
10. Explore one's calling to ministry and to the need for more training and preparation. Students will be given the opportunity to explore in prayer, courses, the community

of the program, retreat and spiritual direction their own personal calling to the ministry and whether they should go on for more training in ministry.

	TTSF 621	Spiritual Formation & Theology Seminar	
OR	TTSF 701	Spiritual Formation Seminar	3
	TTSF 672	Personal Retreat & Formation.....	2
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Admissions Requirements

Applicants must possess a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale).

For special admissions deadlines and requirements involved in the Certificate in Spiritual Formation, contact Graduate Admissions. Due to the unique nature of this program, all applicants will be personally interviewed.

Graduation Requirements

- A. Satisfactorily complete all courses for a total of 26 semester units as outlined in the curriculum below.
- B. Obtain a 3.0 GPA with no grade below a "C-" in all courses to be credited toward graduation.
- C. At least 13 units must be taken at this seminary.
- D. Complete the entire program in no more than five years.

Students are placed on academic probation if their GPA for any semester falls below 3.0 and will remain on probation as long as the single semester or cumulative GPA remains below 3.0.

Probation students are granted one semester in which to bring their academic work up to the required level (3.0) for continuance in the seminary. A student cannot graduate while on probation.

Curriculum

REQUIRED COURSES

Select two 3-unit Courses from:

	TTH 511	Theology I— Introduction: Revelation & Nature of God	
OR	TTH 512	Theology II— Works of God, Angels, Man & Sin	
OR	TTH 613	Theology III— Christ, Salvation & the Spirit	
OR	TTBE 519	Survey of Genesis–Malachi	
OR	TTBE 520	Survey of Matthew–Revelation	6
	TTBE 517	Hermeneutics & the Word in Spiritual Formation	3
	TTSF 521	Introduction to Christian Spirituality & Prayer	3
	TTSF 524	History & Theory of Christian Soul Care & Direction	3
	TTSF 532	Developmental Spirituality & Contemplative Prayer	3
	TTSF 543	Personal Foundations of Spirituality & Retreat	3
	TTSF 585	Personal Spiritual Direction.....	0
		(Each semester enrolled)	

CO-CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

See department listing "Spiritual Formation Institute" for full description.

1. Personal Spiritual Direction (TTSF 585)
2. Didactic Therapy (Recommended)
3. Faculty–Student Retreat
4. Personal Retreats (TTSF 672)