



Weborg Center for Spiritual Direction
North Park Theological Seminary
Chicago, Illinois

Listening to the Movement of God in Oneself
SPFM 7501-Three Credits
Course #1 of the Certificate in Spiritual Direction

COURSE SYLLABUS

Contact Person: Ellen Kogstad, Interim Center Director.

Course Description

As the first of five courses in a program leading to a certificate in spiritual direction, this course will provide foundational information on the history and cultural distinctives of spiritual direction in the Christian tradition. The course will focus on building listening capacity as the primary skill to recognize the movement of God in oneself (discernment) and eventually the primary skill in the ministry of spiritual direction.

Course Objectives

- Introduce the ministry of Spiritual Direction.
- Develop listening skills through participation in Listening Groups.
- Cultivate the ability to recognize the movement of God in one's own life through the development of the practice of discernment.
- Nurture a healthy life with God through exploration and participation in spiritual practices, events and exercises that provide greater self-awareness, stronger listening capacity and resources for self-care. It is expected that all directors in training are meeting monthly with a trained spiritual director.
- Foster the importance of cohort learning, highlighting the gifts of mutual encouragement, support and feedback.

Required Texts

L. Patrick Carroll and Kathryn Dyckman. *Inviting the Mystic, Supporting the Prophet: An Introduction to Spiritual Direction*. Paulist Press, 1981. ISBN 9780809123780

Guenther, Margaret. *Holy Listening: The Art of Spiritual Direction*. Cowley Publication, 1992. ISBN 9781561010561

Nouwen, Henri. *Spiritual Direction: Wisdom for the Long Walk of Faith*. Harper One, 2006. ISBN 9780060872748

Peacock, Barbara L. *Soul Care in African American Practice*. IVP, 2020. ISBN 9780830846719. Barbara Peacock also has written a workbook called: *Soul Care in African American Practice Workbook*, Urban Ministries, 2021. ISBN 9781683537267

Recommended Texts

Silf, Margaret. *The Inner Compass*. Loyola Press, Chicago, 2003.

Dougherty, Rose Mary. *Discernment: A Path to Awakening*. Paulist Press, NJ, 2009.

Liebert, Elizabeth. *The Way of Discernment: Spiritual Practices for Decision Making*. John Know Press, Louisville, 2008.

Course Requirements

1. Students will be present and engaged in every session of the week beginning with the solitude retreat on Monday, July 21 and concluding Sunday, July 27 at 2 p.m. Attendance for the full 7 days is mandatory.
2. Complete the required reading before coming to campus and complete the Canvas "Reading Completion Form" by July 21. The books you will read during your two years of training are for your learning and will form a solid foundation to help guide you in the practice of direction. We will discuss your readings at our Tuesday dinner at the Seminary. Be prepared to interact with these questions:
 - a. How did this book shape your understanding of SD?
 - b. How do you see this book influencing your practice of SD?
 - c. Is there anything from this book that you'd like to emulate?
 - d. What was the concept or quote that impacted you most?
3. Complete the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) and debrief session before coming to campus. You will receive a separate email about the IDI and the debrief session.
4. Students will bring to the course a 300-word personal narrative from one's own life story to be shared in Listening Groups. You will find a fuller description of the paper and an example on Canvas.
5. If you are unfamiliar with the Enneagram and do not know your Enneagram number, you need to take the WEPSS inventory. Come prepared to discuss how the enneagram has assisted you in greater self-awareness. You can find the assessment at www.wepss.com.
6. Dr. Hauna Ondrey assignment. TBD
7. Write a 6-7 page (double-spaced, 12-point type) integrative reflection paper on the experiences and learning from the intensive and the readings. A reflection paper is not a summary of your time in the course. Rather, it is a way to integrate your learning in a

very personal way. Use class notes, handouts, texts, and personal experience in Listening Groups as source material. Include an assessment of how the course impacted your calling to the ministry of spiritual direction. The paper is due on or before **Friday, August 8 at 5 pm CST**. Upload your paper to Canvas. Please save your Word document as lastnamefirstname7501-reflection paper.

8. Spiritual direction is required throughout your CSD certificate program. Please communicate with Ellen Kogstad (by email on or before July 1) regarding your director and how often you meet and or plan to meet. You are encouraged to begin direction as soon as you are able.

Grading

Grading is Pass/Fail and is based on participation and completing all course requirements. To pass, students must complete assignments within the allotted time frame unless they have received prior approval for an extension from Ellen Kogstad. Additionally, if you do not complete this course, you may not continue into the online Practicum-SPFM 7502. If you encounter any challenges in completing assignments, please reach out to Ellen Kogstad as soon as possible.

Course Schedule for the Week of July 21-27, 2025

MONDAY - ALL DAY RETREAT at St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, IL

7:30 Carpool to retreat.
9:00 Arrival and Announcements
9:15 Welcome into Silence
12 noon - Lunch Together-In Silence
1:00 Silent Retreat Continues
5:30 Dinner Together - In Silence
7:00 Evening prayer
8:00 Van/cars leave to return to Campus/Hotel/Home

A general schedule will be provided for the retreat, including time for solitude, individual spiritual direction, group prayers, and several options for rest and relaxation.

TUESDAY- Classroom N204

8:45 - Morning Prayer
9:00 - Welcome to North Park Theological Seminary Community
9:15 - **Connecting with God** – Rich Johnson



12:00 – Lunch Break

1:30 - **Introduction to Listening Groups** - Melanie Myatt

Listening Groups 1 & 2

5 pm - Dinner Together. The Weborg Center will cover the cost. Reading discussion.

FREE EVENING

WEDNESDAY

8:45 - Morning Prayer

9:00 - **Spiritual Direction: History and Significance**- Hauna Ondrey

12:15 – Lunch Break

1:45 – **Christ's Virtues and the Enneagram** – David Wu

5:00 – Dinner

FREE EVENING

THURSDAY

8:45 - Morning Prayer

9:00 - **Listening Groups #3**

10:30 – **Spiritual Disciplines in Direction** – Eva Sullivan-Knoff

Self-Supervision

12:15 - Lunch

1:45 - **Centering Prayer** - Ken Lund

5:00 - Dinner

FREE EVENING

FRIDAY

8:45 - Morning Prayer

9:00 – **Listening Groups #4**

10:30 - **Who Am I? – Spiritual Direction and Identity** - Ken Lund

12:00 – Lunch – Introduction to SPFM 7502- Juliet Liu

1:30 - **Discernment and Decision Making** - Ellen Kogstad

5:00 - Dinner

6:30 - Listen Group Reflections and Learnings – Melanie Myatt & Rob Peterson

SATURDAY

8:45 - Morning Prayer

9:00 – **Course Wrap-Up** – Melanie Myatt

Course Evaluations

12:15 - Lunch

Free Afternoon and Evening

SUNDAY

9:00 - Class Gathering – Final Comments, questions, writing your paper.

10:15 - Class Photo

10:30 - Worship Service, Consecration of Cohort 19, Blessing of Cohort 21.

12:00 - Celebration Brunch

1:00 - Ending (Please do not plan to fly out before 3 p.m. if possible)

Academic Honesty

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park University is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating will receive a failing grade on the assignment and are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion. Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

1. Plagiarism – the use of another’s work as one’s own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet.
2. Copying another’s answers on an examination.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one’s answers or work.
4. Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present.
5. Use of ChatGPT or other AI composition software to impersonate individual assignments.

For additional information, see the [Seminary Academic Catalog](#), pp. 25–26.
accommodations

Your experience in this class is important to me. North Park is committed to creating inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have already established your accommodations, please share your accommodation letter with me so we can discuss how your accommodations will be implemented in this course. If you have not yet established services and have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations, please [email the Disability Access Specialist](#) or contact by phone (773-244-5737). Student Engagement facilitates the interactive process that establishes reasonable accommodations.

TITLE IX

Students who believe they have been harassed, discriminated against, or involved in sexual violence should contact the Title IX Coordinator (773-244-6276 or TitleIX@northpark.edu) for information about reporting, campus resources and support services, including confidential counseling services.

As members of the North Park faculty, we are concerned about the well-being and development of our students, and are available to discuss any concerns. Faculty are legally obligated to share information with the University’s Title IX coordinator in certain situations to help ensure that the student’s safety and welfare is being addressed, consistent with the requirements of the law. These disclosures include but are not limited to reports of sexual assault, relational/domestic violence, and stalking.

Please refer to North Park’s [Safe Community](#) site for reporting, contact information and further details.

Incomplete Grades

If, due to extenuating circumstances (specifically, pregnancy, illness, personal and family issues, military assignment, etc.), a student anticipates they will be unable to complete course work within the allotted time, that student may request a grade of incomplete from the course instructor before the last week of class clearly stating the reason(s) for this request.

Overscheduling and/or lack of self-discipline are not considered extenuating circumstances. If the request is timely and meets the criteria, student and instructor will submit the incomplete grade form and the grade for that class will be listed as “I” until the last day of the following semester. If coursework is not submitted by the last day of the following semester the listing of “I” will automatically be changed to “F.” For the full policy, see page 15 of the [Seminary Academic Catalog](#) in University’s online catalog.

Program Assistant: Melanie Myatt - Cohort 14
Center Summer Support:

Course Instructors

Ellen Kogstad
Hauna Ondrey
Ken Lund
Rich Johnson
David Wu
Eva Sullivan-Knoff
Melanie Myatt

Listening Group Leaders
TBA



SPIRITUAL CLASSICS - See Course Requirement #6

Choose a writer/mystic from the list below or select someone on your own. Please communicate your selection to Rob Peterson and if you have any questions don't hesitate to reach out.

Amanda Berry Smith, Autobiography
Augustine, Confessions
Benedict of Nursia
Bernard of Clairvaux
Brigid of Kildare
Brother Lawrence
Carl Olof Rosenius
Catherine of Genoa
Catherine of Siena
Clare of Assisi
Desmond Tutu
Evelyn Underhill
Ernesto Cardenal
Francis of Assisi
Francis de Sales
Gregory of Nyssa
Gustavo Gutiérrez
Hildegard of Bingen
Howard Thurman
Ignatius of Loyola
Jarena Lee
Johanna Eleonora Petersen
John Bunyan
John Chrysostom
John Cassian
John of the Cross
John Woolman
Julian of Norwich
Mechtild of Magdeburg
Oscar Romero
Paul Petter Waldenström
Philipp Jakob Spener
Sayings of the Desert Fathers and Mothers
St. Basil
St. Bonaventure
Teresa of Avila
Therese of Lisieux
The Cloud of Unknowing
Toyohiko Kagawa
Walter Hilton