

Southern Methodist University  
Perkins Regional Course of Study School  
Winter 2026

123 Formation and Discipleship  
Pre-Class Assignments

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### **Course Description:**

This course grounds the student in the theology and core practices of personal and congregational formation and discipleship.

### **Student learning Outcomes:**

Students will be able to:

1. Articulate a theological basis for the Wesleyan emphasis on spiritual disciplines and practice them as a Means of Grace.
2. Explain and implement the General Rules and the practices of small groups in a congregation.
3. Educate and resource a congregation in the disciplines of Christian formation.
4. Organize congregations to help people discern their callings and gifts for ministry.
5. Create a “rule of life” and “plan for self-care”.

As your instructor my goal is to discuss the importance of personal and congregational growth in spiritual maturity for the basis of discipleship. I hope that we grow in our love for God and neighbor as disciples of Jesus Christ. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about this course.

### **Required Textbooks (Must Read for Class):**

1. *Formation in Faith* by Sondra Matthaei, 2008: Abingdon Press
2. *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life, Newly Revised Edition* by Marjorie J. Thompson, 2014: Westminster John Knox Press
3. *As If the Heart Mattered: A Wesleyan Spirituality* by Gregory S. Clapper, 2014: Wipf & Stock
4. *Developing an Intentional Discipleship System: A Guide for Congregations* by Junius B. Dotson, 2017: Discipleship Ministries. Booklet available for purchase or free PDF download at [www.seeallthepeople.org](http://www.seeallthepeople.org)

### **Suggested Supplemental Reading (not required, but might help your ministry):**

1. *Three Simple Rules: A Wesleyan Way of Living* by Ruben P. Job, 2010: Abingdon Press
2. *A Blueprint for Discipleship: Wesley's General Rules as a Guide for Christian Living* by Kevin M. Watson, 2009: Discipleship Resources
3. *Aiming at Maturity: The Goal of the Christian Life* by Stephen W. Rankin, 2011: Cascade Books
4. *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: It's Impossible to Be Spiritually Mature, While Remaining Emotionally Immature* by Peter Scazzero, 2017: Zondervan

5. *Emotionally Healthy Discipleship: Moving from Shallow Christianity to Deep Transformation* by Peter Scazzero, 2021: Zondervan
6. *Stride: Creating a Discipleship Pathway for Your Church* by Mike Schreiner & Ken Willard, 2017: Abingdon Press

### **Assignment Instructions:**

Papers should be typed, double space, in 12 pt. Times New Roman font, Turabian Style with footnotes.

Pages should be numbered

Include a Title page with your name, date, and course description.

### **Pre-Class Assignments:**

Each of the Pre-Class Assignments should be answered in the body of the paper. These two papers together will count for 20% of your grade and will be graded according to: 1) content – well thought out and complete answer, and 2) fulfilling instructions for the assignment including length and deadline.

Both assignments are due on the First Day of Class.

#### **Pre-Class Assignment #1:**

Answer the following question after reading the book *Soul Feast*.

Length of Assignment: 4-6 pages

The paper should reflect your own thoughts and not necessarily what the author says. Rather, it is expected that your answers will be informed by your reading of the book.

Question: **What is the significance of Spiritual Maturity from a Christian Perspective?**

Questions to consider for the paper:

1. What is Christian Spirituality?
2. What does it take to become Spiritually Mature?
3. What hinders us from spirituality?
4. What is the role of the Triune God?
5. What is the role of the Church?

Please use Biblical References to support your paper.

#### **Pre-Class Assignment #2:**

Answer the following question after reading the book *Formation in Fatih*.

Length of Assignment: 4-6 pages

The paper should reflect your own thoughts and not necessarily what the author says. Rather, it is expected that your answers will be informed by your reading of the book.

Question: **What is a Disciple of Jesus Christ and how do we form disciples?**

Questions to consider for the paper:

1. What is authentic relationship?
2. What is a communion of grace?
3. What does it take to grow in faith?
4. What type of leaders does the Church need to make disciples?
5. What is included in an intentional process of faith formation?
6. What challenges the Church in making Disciples?

Please use Biblical References to support your paper.