



Missional Discipleship DSC 310

The mission of MB Seminary is to educate and equip men and women to help lead the church in reaching Canada and beyond with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

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Email: randywolff@mbseminary.ca
Credit Hours: 3
Prerequisites: None
Course Term: April 8 – June 8, 2024
Intensive: April 12 (6:30 pm - 9:30 pm), April 13 (8:30 am - 4:30 pm) at Steinbach MB Church

Course Description

What practices does your church use to introduce people to Jesus and equip them to be disciples? Do you want your church to be a missional, disciple-making church, but aren't sure how to get there? In this course, we will explore how we can live missionally—to live and share Jesus wherever we go, whether that is with unbelieving family and friends, neighbours, coworkers, or classmates. We will also look at how we can grow 11 essential elements that will move our churches toward greater disciple-making effectiveness. This course's themes are informed by a Mennonite Brethren perspective in accordance with the Mennonite-Brethren Confession of Faith.

Objectives

This course will help you:

- Reinforce an incarnational lifestyle by engaging in and reflecting on missional activities regularly
- Formulate a theology of discipleship that focuses on helping people grow in their faith
- Appreciate the importance of making disciple-making a central part of church life, so that you can more effectively develop and multiply disciples (and churches)
- Grapple with various theological issues related to evangelism and spiritual formation
- Compare various approaches to evangelism and spiritual formation, and assess which ones may be most appropriate for your context or a future context in another culture
- Evaluate your church's disciple-making approach and devise a plan for making it stronger

Course Textbooks

Moon, W. Jay. *Intercultural Discipleship: Learning from Global Approaches to Spiritual Formation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017. 320 pages.

Peter, Scazzero. *Emotionally Healthy Discipleship. Moving from Shallow Christianity to Deep Transformation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2021. 276 pages.

Webb, Keith. *The COACH Model for Christian Leaders: Powerful Leadership Skills for Solving Problems, Reaching Goals and Developing Others*. Active Results LLC, 2012. 171 pages

Wolff, Randy. *Ignite: Skills for Leading Dynamic Small Groups*. Amazon Publishing. 2023. Approximately 150 pages.

Course Instructional Content

In addition to the course instructional content in the two-day learning intensive, students will need to watch additional instructional videos posted in the online classroom. Participation in all parts of the learning intensive is required to pass the course.

Learning Intensive Schedule

Learning Intensive (Steinbach MB Church)	
Friday, April 12, 2024	6:30 pm - 9:30 pm
Session 1	Course Introduction Jesus' Disciple-making Heart
Session 2	Posture of Prayerfulness (Part 1)
Saturday, April 13, 2024	8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Session 3	Posture of Prayerfulness (Part 2)
Session 4	Responsiveness to God
Session 5	Love for People
Session 6	Heart Bent on Mission

Course Assignments

The assignments for this course include ministry experience reflections, reading reflections, mentoring, discipleship approach, and the course evaluation.

Assignments are due by midnight (your time) on the day they are due. I would ask that you submit your assignments in Populi. When you go to the online classroom in Populi, you will see where you can upload your assignments. Once I have marked your assignment, I will put it in your grade book in the online classroom where you can check your grade and review the comments I made on the assignment (you will receive an automatic notification whenever I put a graded assignment in your grade book). Please note that I will typically deduct 5% of an assignment's total possible value if the assignment is submitted within a week of the due date (assignments submitted more than one week after the due date may not receive a grade). Having said that, if you find that you are unable to complete an assignment on time, I will grant one extension of up to one week for one assignment during the course (without penalty) when you inform me of your need for an extension before the due date for that particular assignment. I will also consider extensions in exceptional circumstances such as a medical emergency (when a doctor's note accompanies the request). For the times when I allow a student to rewrite an assignment, I will generally take off 20% of the assignment's value before assigning a grade to the rewritten assignment.

I am fine with you using AI platforms, including ChatGPT, to assist you in your research for any assignments for this course. Please treat any work that these platforms create as sources that you need to appropriately cite or describe (you don't need to do this if you use an AI platform for simply editing your work). For example, you may want ChatGPT to create an outline for you in response to the question about Jesus' approach to discipleship. That's totally fine if you include a note that ChatGPT assisted you in creating the outline.

Here is an overview of all the assignments followed by a detailed description of them:

Overview of Assignments

Week	Due Date	Assignments	Percentage of Final Grade	Cumulative Percentage
Week 2	Apr. 20	Reflection Paper #1	5%	5%
Week 3	Apr. 22-27	Mentoring Discussion #1 (date to be determined by mentor)		
Week 4	May 4	Reflection Paper #2	5%	10%
Week 5	May 6-11	Mentoring Discussion #2 (date to be determined by mentor)		

Week 6	May 18	Reflection Paper #3	5%	15%
Week 7	May 20-25	Mentoring Discussion #3 (date to be determined by mentor)		
Week 8	June 1	Mentoring Analysis Paper	10% (includes mentoring meetings)	25%
Week 9	June 8	Ministry Experience Reflections	30%	55%
Week 9	June 8	Discipleship Approach	45%	100%
Week 9	June 8	Course Evaluation	-----	-----

Ministry Experience Reflections (30% of the final grade)

In keeping with some of the major emphases of this course, I would ask that you engage in the following three specific areas of ministry throughout the semester:

Ministry Area #1 – Small Groups (worth 30% of this assignment's value)

For this assignment, you will participate in at least three small group meetings (with at least three people in attendance at each meeting). For at least one of the meetings, you should be the one who leads/facilitates the discussion. These could be Bible studies, accountability group sessions, Alpha table group discussions, Freedom Session meetings, etc. Virtual small group sessions are fine. At the end of the three sessions, take up to 600 words to reflect on your experience in the small group. To what extent did the group carry out the four strategies for growing a small group (from the *Robust Small Groups* video)? How does the group align or not align with the principles in *Emotionally Healthy Discipleship* and *Intercultural Discipleship*? How would you evaluate the leader's use of the small group leadership skills described in *Ignite*? What would you suggest to improve the effectiveness of this small group?

Ministry Area #2 – Coaching (worth 30% of this assignment's value)

Using the COACH Model described in *The COACH Model for Christian Leaders* textbook, meet with a non-family member for three one-hour coaching sessions (virtual or telephone coaching sessions are fine). The coachee must be aware that you will be using the COACH Model, so that they know what to expect (you can always tell them you're doing it for this course ☺). Your role as the coach in these meetings is to use the principles and practices you learned from the book to help them take next steps in their personal growth. In up to 600 words, reflect on what worked well and what you could improve as you coach people in the future.

Ministry Area #3 – Evangelism (worth 40% of this assignment's value)

For this part of the assignment, I am looking for two meaningful engagements per week with people who are not yet followers of Jesus. A meaningful engagement might be a conversation with a neighbour, an act of kindness toward a co-worker, an email or Facebook message, helping with an outreach ministry, etc. (of course, there are many other ways to engage with unbelievers). At least one of these engagements should be a Gospel interaction where you share your faith in some way (e.g. asking the person if you could pray for them, sharing your testimony, linking something they say with God or with something in the Bible, sending an email to an unsaved family member or friend where you express your faith in some way). I would ask that you engage with unsaved people (two times a week) for six weeks between April 15 – June 8 (this is an eight-week period, so you can choose six of the weeks when you will record your engagement with unbelievers). I realize that this may seem a bit forced, yet the intent is to practice and reinforce an incarnational lifestyle. Record each engagement by week including a brief note as to why you thought it was meaningful. The total length of this third ministry area reflection is 600 words.

Please submit your reflections on your small group experience, coaching and evangelism activities as one paper (maximum 1,800 words). The paper is due June 8.

Reflection Papers (15% of the final grade)

During three weeks of the course (Weeks 2, 4 and 6), you will have an opportunity to write a reflection paper in response to the course readings and instructional content. You will notice below that there are instructional videos that go along with additional disciple-making elements not covered during the two-day learning intensive. These instructional videos offer additional instructional course content to complement your learning. Your reflection paper should answer the questions assigned in each of the three weeks (see below). Make sure that you integrate Scripture, the course texts, and other relevant sources into your reflections. The week after your reflection paper is due, you will meet in church-based discussion groups to discuss your responses to the questions and explore other related topics. The maximum length for each reflection paper is 900 words.

Week 2 Reflection Paper – The Heart of Discipleship

Required Reading - *The COACH Model for Christian Leaders and Emotionally Healthy Discipleship*

Reflection Question #1 – Extraordinary Prayer

During the learning intensive, you explored the role of extraordinary prayer in church-wide disciple-making. This first reflection question gives you an opportunity to revisit a group discussion we had about prayer during the intensive.

Five years has passed and your church has become a people of extraordinary prayer. Describe what you see in this praying church. What kinds of things would need to happen for your church to realize this vision for extraordinary prayer (think in terms of both big and small steps – it's amazing how far we can go in five years by taking small steps consistently)?

Reflection Question #2 – Personalized Approach to Discipleship

Again, thinking about the instructional content during the learning intensive, what are your reactions to a personalized approach to discipleship? What are some disadvantages of this approach? What are some benefits? How does this approach fit with the small and large group discipleship approaches in many churches? After reading *The COACH Model for Christian Leaders*, describe how this personalized approach might strengthen both your personal disciple-making and more broadly, that of your church ministry (be specific).

Reflection Question #3

As you think about the core disciple-making elements that we explored in the learning intensive (posture of prayerfulness and responsiveness to the Father, love for people, a growth orientation, a personalized approach to discipleship, and a heart bent on mission), how do you see these ideas aligning with what Peter Scazzero says in *Emotionally Healthy Discipleship*? Where are there differences and why might these be significant?

The Week 2 Reflection Paper is due April 20.

Week 4 Reflection Paper – Group Discipleship

Required Reading – *Ignite: Skills for Leading Dynamic Small Groups*

Instructional Videos and Reflection Questions – Please note that this reflection paper requires watching additional videos posted in Populi.

Note: There are only two sets of reflection questions this week. The word limit for the reflection paper is still 600 words, so you will have a bit more space to respond to each question.

Video #1 - Biblical and Engaging Preaching: The Sixth Disciple-making Element

Video #2 - Effective Group Training: The Seventh Disciple-Making Element

Reflection Questions (on videos 1-2): If you could set up a large group learning and worship experience that you believe would go further in engaging people and helping them grow, what would it look like (assume that you don't have to worry about pushback from anyone)? What would you keep from your current worship service approach? What would you change? Why do you think these changes would help people grow and worship in a more optimal way?

Video #3 - Robust Small Groups: The Eighth Disciple-Making Element

Reflection Questions: As you think about the four factors that contribute to small group growth (in the *Robust Small Groups* video) and the small group leadership skills covered in *Ignite*, what are some ways that you could help your small group become more effective? Related to the larger small group ministry in your church, how might you

strengthen the three environmental factors (culture of prayer, coaching of small group leaders, and equipping) mentioned in the video?

The Week 4 Reflection Paper is due May 4.

Week 6 Reflection Paper – One-on-one Discipleship and Spiritual Disciplines

Required Reading – *Intercultural Discipleship*

Instructional Videos and Reflection Questions – Please note that this reflection paper requires watching additional videos posted in Populi.

Video #1 - Supportive Accountability: The Ninth Disciple-Making Element

Reflection Questions: When have you experienced accountability that has helped you grow as a disciple of Jesus (feel free to share about negative accountability experiences, too, and what could have made them better)? What do you see as the role of accountability in discipleship? How might you strengthen supportive accountability in your own life and within your ministry (or the larger church)? How might insights from Scripture, *Intercultural Discipleship*, and other sources add important nuances to this disciple-making element?

Video #2 - Coaching and Mentoring: The Tenth Disciple-Making Element

Reflection Questions: What has worked well as you have used the COACH model to coach another person? What has been challenging? Thinking about the four skills in the Coaching and Mentoring video, which skills are stronger for you? If you were to focus on strengthening one of your weaker skills, which one would you choose? How might you strengthen it as you engage in coaching conversations this week? Thinking bigger picture, how do you think you might strengthen a culture of coaching (or mentoring) in your church (or why wouldn't you want to strengthen coaching in your church)? How might insights from Scripture, *Intercultural Discipleship*, and other sources add important nuances to this disciple-making element?

Video #3 - Spiritual Disciplines: The Eleventh Disciple-Making Element

Video #4 - Next Steps: Developing a Discipleship Strategy for Your Church

Reflection Questions: Over the past several weeks, we've looked at 11 elements for making disciples in the church: 1) prayer saturation, 2) growing relationships, 3) growth orientation, 4) personalized approach, 5) missional mindset, 6) biblical and engaging preaching, 7) effective group training, 8) robust small groups, 9) supportive accountability, 10) coaching/mentoring, and 11) spiritual disciplines. Thinking about these 11 areas and insights from Scripture, the course texts, and other sources, what is one area where change might have the greatest impact on your church's capacity to make growing disciples of Jesus? What practical steps could you take to strengthen this area? What challenges to strengthening this area do you anticipate?

The Week 6 Reflection Paper is due May 18.

Mentoring and the Mentoring Analysis Paper (10% of the final grade)

During Weeks 3, 5 and 7, you will meet with a mentor and any other students in the class from your church in a church-based mentoring group for 60 minutes to discuss the questions you addressed in the previous week's reflection paper, explore other related topics, and contextualize ideas to your ministry setting. The mentor should be a leader in your church (e.g. pastor, elder, ministry leader) who can speak meaningfully into the course ideas and how they could apply within the church.

For the mentoring analysis paper, include the name of your mentor, your mentor's role in the church, the dates you met, and the length of each session. Please also state if others from your church attended the sessions. The bulk of the paper should focus on your analysis of the mentoring conversations. How did the discussions with your mentor support, challenge and/or add to the key principles that emerged in the instructional content and through the readings for the course (be specific about these connections and include citations that clearly show the sources of the ideas)? What are some of the blessings and challenges you experienced during your time with your mentor? How did you grow? You will want at least half of your paper to be a rigorous interaction with specific ideas from Scripture and the course (with citations).

The maximum length of the mentoring analysis paper is 1,200 words and is due June 1.

Note: It is your responsibility to make sure that you and your mentor meet the required number of times. If, for some reason, this is not likely to happen, please contact me to discuss alternative strategies.

Discipleship Approach (worth 45% of your final grade)

This assignment has two major parts:

Part 1: Theology of Discipleship (50% of assignment mark)

In this part, develop a theology of discipleship that includes both evangelism and faith formation. Your theology should include an assessment of Jesus' approach to disciple-making in the Gospels, other Scriptures, the course texts and instructional content, class discussions, small group discussions, your own experience and at least five other sources (you can check out the [Bibliography on Discipleship in Appendix A](#) for a sample list of books and articles on discipleship and related topics). It is important to compare and contrast ideas from the sources you choose and, in the process, come up with new ideas and/or applications of existing ideas. In addition, your theology of discipleship should be culturally and contextually appropriate for your current or anticipated ministry context (e.g. if you are serving in youth ministry, you could develop a theology of discipleship particularly tailored to discipling students). Your paper should answer questions like:

- What is a disciple of Jesus?
- How did Jesus develop his disciples?

- What is a biblical process for making growing disciples of Jesus who make other growing disciples of Jesus?

The maximum length of this part is 1,500 words.

Note: Just a reminder that you can use ChatGPT or other writing AI platforms for your research and writing if you treat it like any other source (see my fuller explanation in the introduction to the Assignments section).

Part 2: Your Church's Discipleship Approach (50% of assignment mark)

For part two, assess your church's discipleship approach in light of your theology of discipleship from part one. What is your church doing well in the areas of evangelism and faith formation? Where could it improve?

To assist with this assessment, I would ask that you and at least five others from your church do the Church Discipleship Assessment (<https://www.ministrylift.ca/church-discipleship-assessment-take-test>) that measures effectiveness in the 11 disciple-making elements we have explored in this course. Ask your group members to forward the summary email they receive after doing the assessment to you, so that you can analyze the results.

Based on your assessment, what are five recommendations that you could present to the church leadership team about how the church could strengthen its discipleship approach? How do these relate to your theology of discipleship from part one of this assignment?

As a final part to this assignment, create a one-page summary of these recommendations and your rationale for making them and either submit the summary to a member of your leadership team or meet with someone from the team (or the whole team) and discuss the recommendations. I would encourage you to communicate that you are making these recommendations as part of an assignment for this course, so they understand why you are suggesting them. Include a note in the assignment that you have communicated your recommendations as directed for this assignment. In addition, attach the one-page summary as an appendix for the assignment.

For part two of this assignment, it is totally fine to team up with others in your church who are taking this course for graduate credit. The assessment process would be the same, except that you would recruit five people to do the Church Discipleship Assessment for each person in your group (e.g. if three of you are working together, you would ask 15 people to do the assessment in addition to yourselves). You would then need to decide on five recommendations together. When you submit your paper, please include a note if part two was a team effort and who was in your group.

The maximum length for part two is 1,500 words.

The total length of this assignment should not exceed 3,000 words. The assignment is due June 8.

Course Evaluation

Because your feedback is very important to me (I will often change future offerings of a course based on the feedback I receive from students), I have made the course evaluation a required part of the course. You will find a link to the course evaluation in the online classroom.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description	Grade Point	Meaning in Graduate Work
A+	97-100	Superior	4.30	Exceptionally well-reasoned, compelling development of position. Outstanding incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Strikingly appropriate examples. Extraordinary insight, critical analytical and evaluative ability, and creativity. Superlative style and language usage. Makes an original contribution and is potentially publishable.
A	93-96.99	Excellent	4.00	Well-argued and convincing development of position. Insightful incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Notably appropriate examples. Excellent insight, critical analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Impressive style and language use.
A-	90-92.99	Very Good	3.70	Thorough and plausible development of position. Skilful incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Very good examples. Very good insight, analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Commendable and fluent style and language usage.
B+	87-89.99	Proficient	3.30	Proficient development of position. Appropriate incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Relevant examples. Good quality insight, analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Clear and correct style and language usage.
B	83-86.99	Good	3.00	Competent development of position, but possibly with some gaps and/or limitations. Good incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Good examples. Reasonable insight, analytic and evaluative ability. Little creativity. Generally good style and language usage, but possibly with some minor flaws.
B-	80-82.99	Average	2.70	Average development of position, but with obvious gaps and/or limitations. Satisfactory incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Satisfactory examples. Reasonable insight, analytic and evaluative ability. Little creativity. Generally satisfactory style and language usage, but possibly with some minor flaws.
C+	77-79.99	Adequate	2.30	Adequate development of position with significant gaps and/or limitations. Some incorporation of personal vision as well as references and resources. Adequate use of examples. Very little creativity. Considerable number of issues related to coherence and style.
C	73-76.99	Acceptable	2.00	Limited development of position with a noticeable lack of consistency with personal vision or references. Limited integration with external sources. Acceptable analytic and evaluative ability. Numerous weaknesses in terms of clarity, coherence, and grammar.
C-	70-72.99	Needs Work	1.70	Passable but unimpressive development of position. Position not completely consistent with personal vision or references and resources not taken fully into account or examples are basic or not completely convincing or barely acceptable insight and analytic and evaluative ability. Adequate style and language usage, but with weaknesses in some respects (e.g., clarity, coherence, grammar). Overall quality shows noticeable deficiencies.

F	Below 70	Below Standard	0.00	Unacceptable work at graduate level. Shows lack of understanding and/or competence in several of the criteria described above. This grade is a failing grade at the graduate level.
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Assignment Assessment

When I assess written assignments and presentations, I tend to look for the following:

- Appropriateness – The content matches the requirements of the assignments.
- Substantiveness – The content reveals deeper level thinking. This may take the form of critiquing existing ideas and proposing new ones. It may involve applying ideas from the readings and class discussions in deeply personal ways. It could also include a novel integration of ideas from various sources. As you think about substantiveness, I would also ask you to go beyond “left brain” thinking that focuses on systematic and logical thinking. Add “right brain” analysis that views concepts in intuitive and more holistic ways. This may involve viewing assignment topics from creative vantage points by using word pictures, analogies, metaphors, pictures, diagrams, drama, poetry, music, and other creative devices that can often enrich conceptual meaning and make it more personal. In order to get an A on an assignment, **you really need to present your ideas in an integrative and creative way.** Go beyond the stated expectations of an assignment (not in terms of length ☺). Surprise me with a novel combination and/or expression of ideas.
- Coherence – The content flows in a consistent and meaningful way.
- Engaging – The writing style does not distract from the content (e.g. grammatical mistakes), but rather engages the reader’s attention. By the way, I love creative title pages that introduce a theme or multiple themes from your assignment in an engaging way.

Assignment Grade Appeals

Students can appeal their grade to me by stating in writing their reasons for contesting the grade. Deadline for such appeals is one week after the student has receipt of grade. Formal course grade appeals can be made with the MB Seminary registrar.

Web Support-Student Portal — <https://mbseminary.populiweb.com>

All students at MBS will receive a MBS-Populi username and password. This is determined at the time of an online application. If you have any difficulty with your password or your login credentials, please contact Keith Reed, Director of Ministry Support, (keithreed@mbseminary.ca).

Course Intensive/Campus Closure

In the event of deteriorating weather conditions or other emergency situations, every effort will be made to communicate information regarding the cancellation of classes to your church host and contact.

Paper Formatting

Students are required to adhere to the Turabian Notes (Bibliography) format for all papers. Consider the [Purdue Owl](#) website for information or, Turabian, Kate, L. A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Thesis, and Dissertations, 9th ed. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2018.

Academic Integrity and Avoiding Plagiarism

As Christian scholars pursuing higher education, academic integrity is a core value of the entire MB Seminary community. Students are invited into this scholarly culture and required to abide by the principles of sound academic scholarship at MBS. Equity of Access It is the responsibility of a student with a learning disability to inform the MB Seminary Director of Student Development (briancooper@mbseminary.ca) of that fact before the beginning of a course so that necessary arrangements may be made to facilitate the student's learning experience. To repeat: To ensure that instructors know to accommodate a student who has a learning access issue, the student must inform the Director of Student Development of a disability before the beginning of the class. After that is too late.

Appendix A: Bibliography on Discipleship

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