



Spiritual Formation for Practitioners CHP570 LA

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.

Instructor: Philip Tse,
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Credit Hours: 3
Prerequisites: none
Course Term: September 14 - November 20, 2026

Course Description

This course is designed to facilitate the spiritual formation for Spiritual and Pastoral Care Practitioners for professional ministry. The interdisciplinary perspective will focus on understanding spiritual formation in the context of theology, human development, and contemporary culture. Such an approach will facilitate increased awareness and understanding of the individual practitioner's being, vocational and spiritual identity, further equipping them to minister professionally and grow in attentiveness to God. Opportunity will be given for theological and therapeutic reflection regarding the presence of God and the sacred in one's life and clinical practice. The course will require self-reflection, interactive exercises, experiential learning and group discussion.

Course Schedule

Course Intensive Day 1	Monday, Sept 14	2:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Course Intensive Day 2	Wednesday, Sept 16	2:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Course Intensive Day 3	Monday, Sept 21	2:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Course Intensive Day 4	Monday, Sept 28	2:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Course Intensive Day 5	Monday, Oct 5	2:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Course Intensive Day 6	Wednesday, Oct 14	2:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Course Intensive Day 7	Monday, Oct 19	2:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Course Intensive Day 8	Monday, Oct 26	2:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Course Intensive Day 9	Monday, Nov 2	2:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Course Intensive Day 10	Monday, Nov 16	2:00 pm – 5:00 pm
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Note: Attending all online course sessions is required for passing the course. An online access link will be provided in the Populi classroom.

Course Objectives

This course's theme and content are consistent with, and taught through the lens of, the Mennonite Brethren Confession of Faith. Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

The aim of this course is to:

- Enable participants to understand and articulate spiritual formation from a personal, theological, and developmental perspective.
- Help participants reflect on their spiritual formation and assess areas of strength and their needed growth, so to develop as led by God.
- Provide opportunity for participants to expand the concept that individuals can have a profound and mysterious relationship with the God who made us, who knows our hearts, and who offers us life.
- Offer opportunities to experience and participate in a variety of spiritual disciplines and practices to integrate them into a personal quest for spiritual development and relationship with the Divine.
- To know and value personal and participatory worship as pursuit of spiritual formation.

The most effective learning occurs as you carefully process information through higher-order thinking skills. Your performance and evaluation in this course will be based on demonstrating your engagement and learning, not simply repeating basic facts. In all that you do in this class, you should use higher-order thinking skills, as described below:

- Comprehension: demonstrates the ability to grasp meaning, explain, and restate ideas,
- Application: demonstrates the ability to use learned material in new situations,
- Analysis: demonstrates the ability to separate material into component parts and show relationships between the parts.
- Synthesis: demonstrates the ability to put together the separate ideas to form a new whole, to establish new relationships, and
- Evaluation: demonstrates the ability to judge the worth of material against stated criteria.

Required Texts

- Barton, Ruth Haley. *Sacred Rhythms. Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation*. InterVarsity Press: Downers Grove, IL. 2006
- Herrington, Jim, Creech, R. Robert & Taylor, Trisha. *The Leader's Journey. Accepting the Call to*

Personal and Congregational Transformation. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco: CA. 2003

- Holly, K. Oxandler. *The Soul of the Helper*. Templeton Press: West Conshohocken, PA, 2022
- Myers Briggs, Isabel. *Introduction to Myers-Briggs Types*. 7th edition. Pal Alto. CA USA: Consulting Psychology Press, 2016.
- Vancil, Marilyn. *Self to Lose Self to Find. Using the Enneagram to uncover your true, God-gifted self*. Convergent: New York. 2020.

Supplemental Bibliography

- Benner, David G. *Human Being and Becoming, Living the Adventure of Life and Love*. Brazos Press: Grand Rapids, MI. 2016.
- Benner, David G. *Opening to God, Lectio Divina and Life as Prayer*. Intervarsity Press: Downers Grove, IL. 2010.
- Benner, David G. *Soulful Spirituality. Becoming Fully Alive and Deeply Human*. Brazos Press: Grand Rapids, MI. 2011.
- Benner, David G. *The Gift of Being Yourself*. Intervarsity Press: Downers Grove, IL. 2004.
- Dirks Morris. *Forming the Leader's Soul*. SoulFormation: USA. 2013
- Foster, Richard J. *Everything Belongs. The Gift of Contemplative Prayer*. The Cross Road Publishing: Canada. 2003.
- Foster, Richard J. *Freedom of Simplicity*. HarperCollins Publishers: New York. 1981.
- Kelly, Thomas R. *A Testament of Devotion*. HarperOne: New York. 1996.
- Mulholland Jr., M. Robert. *Invitation to A Journey, A Road for Spiritual Formation*. Intervarsity Press: Downers Grove, IL. 1992.
- Rolheiser, Ronald. *Sacred Fire. A Vision for A Deeper Human and Christian Maturity*. Random House Company: New York. 2014.
- Thurman, Howard. *Jesus and the Disinherited*. Beacon Press: Boston. 1976.
- Vancil, Marilyn. *Beyond the Enneagram*. Convergent: New York. 2022.
- Rolheiser, Ronald. *Sacred Fire. A Vision for A Deeper Human and Christian Maturity*. Random House Company: New York. 2014.
- Thurman, Howard. *Jesus and the Disinherited*. Beacon Press: Boston. 1976.
- Vancil, Marilyn. *Beyond the Enneagram*. Convergent: New York. 2022.

Course Learning Outcomes

Below is a list of the Graduate Student Learning Outcomes.

Knowledge and Its Application

- demonstrate in-depth knowledge of a particular field of study and/or profession
- demonstrate ability to apply knowledge and discipline specific methodology to solve unique problems
- demonstrate superior ability to identify and interpret new ideas and research in a specific discipline
- demonstrate superior skills in academic research, writing, and communication act as skilled practitioners to move beyond knowledge into practice

Cognitive Complexity

- show ability to carry out discourse and research as an active member of a discipline
- demonstrate the ability to “undertake inquiry and analysis, to solve problems with a high degree of innovation, divergent thinking and risk taking”
- give evidence of integrating knowledge and applying the knowledge across disciplinary boundaries
- give evidence of originality in the application of knowledge (master’s) and undertaking of research (doctoral)

Inter-and intra-personal Wellness

- demonstrate a holistic awareness of their personhood, purpose, and calling within the context of the communities in which they live and study
- demonstrate an appreciation of the role of community in wellness.
- demonstrate increased professional capacity and autonomy
- demonstrate superior organizational and time management skills
- demonstrate academic and personal integrity

Aesthetic Expression and Interpretation

- consider and practice creative engagement and interdisciplinary thinking
- demonstrate the ability to engage in a dynamic educational environment within which intellectual and imaginative products are brought into relation with the most pressing human issues of our time

Social Responsibility and Global Engagement

- demonstrate the ability to analyze, appraise and evaluate their discipline in a social context
- develop the ability to become socially responsive agents with a commitment to understanding global issues

Spiritual Formation

- demonstrate greater understanding of and connection to God’s work in the world
- utilize spiritual practices for self-reflection and the helping of others
- exemplify a Christian ethic in pursuit of truth, reconciliation, compassion and hope

Leadership

- demonstrate high level innovative expertise, collaborative knowledge and the capacity to inspire others and achieve results
- demonstrate academic proficiency to communicate effectively and to enter into conversation and constructive dialogue with others
- demonstrate integrity and humility in all matters.

Course Activities/Requirements

[NOTE: The “Course Activities/Requirements” section refers to everything that students are expected to do in the course. This section is intended to make students fully aware, in advance, of the workload and of the instructor’s expectations. Provide here a comprehensive list of all projects, public presentations, participation, written assignments, field trips, class discussions, labs, simulations, etc.]

Prior to the first class (Sept 14, 2026), students are expected to have taken the following online personality tests:

- Myers-Briggs Typology Indicator online (<https://mtbionline.com>) and to have purchased Introduction to Type (see Required Reading). Taking the instrument is an extra expense of approximately US\$50. You may want to take the Myers-Briggs online for free (<https://www.6personalities.com/Free-Personality-Test>), but the results may not be as good as the “Myers-Briggs Typology Indicator”
- Enneagram Test (www.enneagraminstitute.com). The cost for this test is about US\$12.

Course Outline

Session	Dates	Content
1	Sept 14	Course overview Students’ autobiographies or life stories Self-awareness
2	Sept 16	Understanding your spiritual journey from waking to walking ... your life stories in relation to growth and development, family system, cultural issues, trauma, losses, etc. ... seeing your role in spiritual care and mental health
3	Sept 21	Working out your spiritual journey from wrestling to working ... life, ministry, theological financial, emotional issues that you are wrestling with. ... be aware of your past, things around you, looking forward and looking upward for something workable in your faith journey.
4	Sept 28	Exploration of Enneagram and Myer-Briggs Personality types in relationship to soul formation Discussion of the book “ <i>Self to Lose Self to Find. Using the Enneagram to uncover your true, God-gifted self</i> ” by Vancil, Marilyn
5	Oct 5	Exploration of Myer-Briggs Personality types in relationship to soul formation

6	Oct 14	Understanding your true and false self with the concept of dominant, auxiliary, tertiary and inferior function for exploration of your spiritual journey
7	Oct 19	The 7 stages of soul journey mentioned in the book of "Soul of the Helper" by Oxhandler, Holly K.
8	Oct 26	The spiritual practices mentioned in the book of "Soulful Spirituality" by David Benner
9	Nov 2	Discovery of "self" based on the book "The Gift of Being Yourself" by David Benner
10	Nov 16	A plan for your spiritual journey based on the book "Invitation to a Journey" by Mulholland, M. Robert

Assignments

1. **Autobiography** (1,500-2,000 words, i.e. 6-8 pages). The autobiography should outline the growth and development of your journey. Students should explore their family and cultural system. Students should also indicate their Myers Briggs personality type and Enneagram in their autobiography for exploring their self-awareness. Students are expected to summarize their life theme(s), and how they use their "self" to help others. The Autobiography will be due on Sep 28th, 2026.
2. **Reflection paper** (1,000-1,500 words, i.e. 4-6 pages). This reflection paper should be based on their experience in spiritual health or mental health care integrating with the book readings for their soul formation. This reflection will be due on Oct 26th, 2026.
3. **Final Paper** -- Submission of a final paper (3000-3500 words, i.e. 10-14 pages). This final paper should be an exploration about the subject of soul formation, and the spiritual exercise or practice that would guide them to develop a plan for a spiritual journey. This final paper will be due on Nov 20th, 2026.

Schedule of Assignments and Evaluation

Week	Due Date	Assignments	% of Grade	Cumulative %
1	Sept 14-16	Complete MBTI and Enneagram Test prior to the first day of class on Sept 14		

2	Sept 21			
3	Sept 28	Autobiography due on Sept 28 th	30%	30%
4	Oct 5			
5	Oct 14			
6	Oct 19			
7	Oct 26	Reflection Paper due on Oct 26 th	30%	60%
8	Nov 2			
9	Nov 20	Final Paper due on Nov 20 th	40%	100%

[NOTE: The “Course Evaluation” section lists all of the gradable components of the course, and states their grade value. Include optional assignments, if applicable. Identify which Course Objectives / Learning Outcomes are being assessed by each of the assessment methods used in the course. Keep in mind that different kinds of learning outcomes can be assessed appropriately by different methods.

Grading System

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Point
A+	97-100	4.30
A	93-96	4.00
A-	90-92	3.70
B+	87-89	3.30
B	83-86	3.00
B-	80-82	2.70
C+	77-79	2.30
C	73-76	2.00
C-	70-72	1.70
F	Below 70	0.00

Course Evaluation

Near the conclusion of this course, you will be asked to complete a course evaluation. The course evaluation will be integrated into the Populi classroom in Week 8.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Description	Grade Point	Meaning in Graduate Work
A+	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	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-	Very Good	3.70	Thorough and plausible development of position. Skillful 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+	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	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-	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+	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	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-	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 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.

Important Academic Notes

Artificial Intelligence

Students may use AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Copilot) to assist with research for assignments in this course, provided that any assistance or content provided or created by the AI tools is appropriately identified as a source and fully cited. This includes citing the exact prompts used. Citation is not needed for simple proofreading; however, AI tools may only be used to support your work, not to produce it. AI may not be used to rewrite, augment, transform, translate, paraphrase, or increase the fluency of your original work in any way.

Failure to clearly indicate and reference AI-generated material, or the use of AI paraphrasing tools that alter the syntax, clarity, or originality of your work, will be considered a violation of academic integrity and will be reported as academic misconduct.

Students should consult their instructor if they have any questions about using generative AI tools.

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 are expected to adhere to the principles of sound academic scholarship at MB Seminary. Plagiarism is the presentation of another person's words, ideas, or work as one's own without proper acknowledgement, whether intentional or unintentional. This includes copying text without citation, closely paraphrasing a source without attribution, submitting work written by another person (including use of AI tools, per the policy above), and resubmitting one's own previously submitted work without the instructor's permission. Students are expected to cite all sources in Turabian format as outlined below. Suspected plagiarism will be addressed and may result in a reduced or failing grade on the assignment, a failing grade in the course, or further disciplinary action, depending on the severity and circumstances of the violation.

Paper Formatting

Students are required to adhere to the Turabian Notes (Bibliography) format for all papers. This is the standard for theological education. Please consult the following manual for instructions:

Turabian, Kate, L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Thesis, and Dissertations*. 9th ed. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2018.

Assignment Grade Appeals

Students may appeal a grade to the course instructor by submitting written reasons within one week of receiving the grade. Formal course grade appeals go directly to Dr. Brian Cooper, Academic Dean (briancooper@mbseminary.ca), or, in the case of Dr. Cooper's courses, to Dr. T. Anderson, Academic Director (tanderson@mbseminary.ca). The result may be a higher, lower, or unchanged grade. This decision is final, and no further appeal is available.

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

All students at MB Seminary will receive a username and password to the Seminary's Learning Management System, Populi. If you have difficulty with your password or login credentials, please contact Keith Reed, Director of Church Relations and Ministry Implementation (keithreed@mbseminary.ca).

Course Intensive/Campus Closure

In the event of deteriorating weather conditions or other emergencies, every effort will be made to communicate any class cancellations to your church host and contact. Please also refer to your course's classroom page in Populi.

Equity of Access

Students with a learning disability are responsible for informing the seminary and requesting accommodation before the course begins, so that necessary arrangements can be made to support their learning. Accommodation requests will be taken seriously, and every effort will be made to implement them. However, blanket extensions to due dates or other deadlines are not an appropriate request and will not be granted, and accommodations cannot be arranged retroactively once a course is underway.

For further information, please contact Dr. Brian Cooper, Academic Dean (briancooper@mbseminary.ca) or Dr. T. Anderson, Academic Director (tanderson@mbseminary.ca) for assistance.