

# **Introduction to Christian Discipleship**

## **10.101/6 credits**

### **Ottatown Discipleship School, a program of CMU**

#### **Course Syllabus 2007/2008**

**Director: Paul Kroeker (B.Sc., M.A., Th.M. Regent College)**

#### **Course description:**

Within the context of a mentoring environment students will be encouraged to explore the nature of Christian discipleship and an understanding of Christian faith. Lectures will introduce students to major themes of the Old and New Testaments, the character of God, the nature of the early church and historic Christianity, Christian ethics, the practice of spiritual disciplines and corporate worship, and the attempts to interpret Christian faith in a post modern world. Selected readings have been chosen to represent some of the current attempts to interpret Christian faith in our time. Within the “circle of trust” of a Christian community, students will be encouraged to wrestle with the difficult theological questions with a mentor or during group discussion.

Throughout this study, the students will be encouraged to consider the express mission of the Ottatown discipleship program, which is “to inspire and nurture students in their life of discipleship with Jesus Christ...in a journey towards: knowing God - in truth and relationship; knowing yourself - in personality and character, in abilities and gifts; and, knowing the world - in its beauty, diversity and pain. As a result, the community conversation will often centre on the intersection of the larger story of Christian faith and one’s own life story, in an attempt to discover effective ways of living as a faithful Christian in the post-modern world.

*This course will be given a pass/fail evaluation and may be used to fulfill one of the first year introductory requirements in Biblical and Theological Studies (3 credits) and an additional elective (3 credits) in BTS.*

#### **Learning Objectives:**

1. To gain an understanding of Christian discipleship, Christian community, and the call of Jesus to “follow me”.
2. To develop a basic knowledge of the major themes of the Bible and how these relate to one another to form one biblical story.
3. To learn, and to practice spiritual disciplines that will enable the continued development of strong Christian character.
4. To explore the themes and moments in the early church, and throughout church history, that leads to greater understandings of the nature of the Church today.
5. To gain an understanding of the challenges all young men and women face as they become adults, seeking to establish reasonable goals and objectives for further growth and decision making.

6. To do a study of one's own spiritual origins (church or denomination) and to become more capable of expressing one's own convictions about faith.

**Course Lecture Series:**

Each lecture series will generally include eight, two hour sessions of instruction and directed interaction. Since the instructor will live on site with the students there will be considerable additional time of discussion. Students will receive lectures from seven different instructors. Further study and reflection will take place under the direction of the site leaders and within the various interactive group settings. Through a written response to a set of questions for each lecture series, as well as through journaling, and group discussion, students will indicate their grasp of the material under discussion.

**Instructors 2006/2007:**

All site leaders who direct the student learning and assist in the evaluation have a completed undergraduate degree, extensive training, and in some cases further study towards a masters degree. All instructors have appropriate academic credentials and exceptional field experience.

Introduction to OT Themes and Issues – Jodie Smith, M.A.

Introduction to NT Themes and Issues – Brian Larmour, M.Div.

Worship as a Way of Life – Gareth Goossen, M.Div.

Becoming Men Character and Faith – Blayne Greiner M.Div.

Becoming Women of Character and Faith - Sharon Snyder, M.A.

Contemporary Idols and Christian Faith – Nathan Rieger, M.Div.

Wrestling with the concept of the Church – Jamie Howison, M.A.

NT Testament Christianity and the Post Modern Church – Dan Unrau D.Min.

Anabaptist Perspectives - Craig Ginn Ph.D. (candidate)

**Required student reading:** discussion, a written reflective response and specific questions will be assigned in relation to each reading.

Claiborne, Shane. *Irresistible Revolution*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006.

Winner, Lauren. *Real Sex: the naked truth about chastity*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006.

Campolo, Tony and Brian D. McLaren. *Adventures in Missing the Point*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.

Yancey, Philip. *What's So Amazing About Grace?* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.

Thomas, Gary L. *The Glorious Pursuit: Embracing the Virtues of Christ*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1998.

Burgos-Debray, Elisabeth (ed.). I, Rigoberta Menchu: an Indian Woman in Guatemala. New York: Verso 1984.

Methabane, Mark. *Kaffir Boy*. New York: Free Press, 1986.

### **Key Biblical Readings, Study and Reflection**

The lecture materials in New Testament and Old Testament surveys, guided student devotional sessions, and related reading assignments will introduce students to the following Biblical texts: Genesis, Ecclesiastes, Amos, Luke, Acts and Philippians.

### **Assignments and academic credit:**

This is a 6 credit hour portion of the program and will be entered into the Outtatown records as a pass/fail evaluation. This course centers on a series of lectures by visiting instructors along with group discussion, assigned readings, journaling and related assignments. Since much of this takes place in very informal settings, the evaluation process can be difficult. Furthermore, much of the learning is experiential in nature and depends on group interaction, which can further complicate the outcomes. The main assignments are as follows:

- Three page journal responses to questions from lectures (6/7 sessions).
- Home Church Study
- Response and discussion on reading assignments (three entries)
- Biblical readings, reflections, journal entries and mentoring sessions
- Response to issues of poverty and injustice from a Biblical perspective

### **Course Evaluation:**

Required books, questions, and journal response	30%
Home Church Study and personal faith story	10%
Written response to lectures (on 5 of 7 lectures)	30%
Biblical readings and guided reflection	20%
Issues of poverty and injustice and a Christian response	10%

*Marking guide to be developed for all assignments and to be appended with final copy*