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Fostering Equanimity through Spiritual Disciplines to Increase Undergraduate Retention at Greenville University

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GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY

FOSTERING EQUANIMITY THROUGH SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES
TO INCREASE UNDERGRADUATE RETENTION
AT GREENVILLE UNIVERSITY

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF PORTLAND SEMINARY
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

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Portland, Oregon

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

DMin Dissertation

This is to certify that the DMin Dissertation of

Patrick Miller

has been approved by
the Dissertation Committee on February 16, 2018
for the degree of Doctor of Ministry in Leadership and Spiritual Formation.

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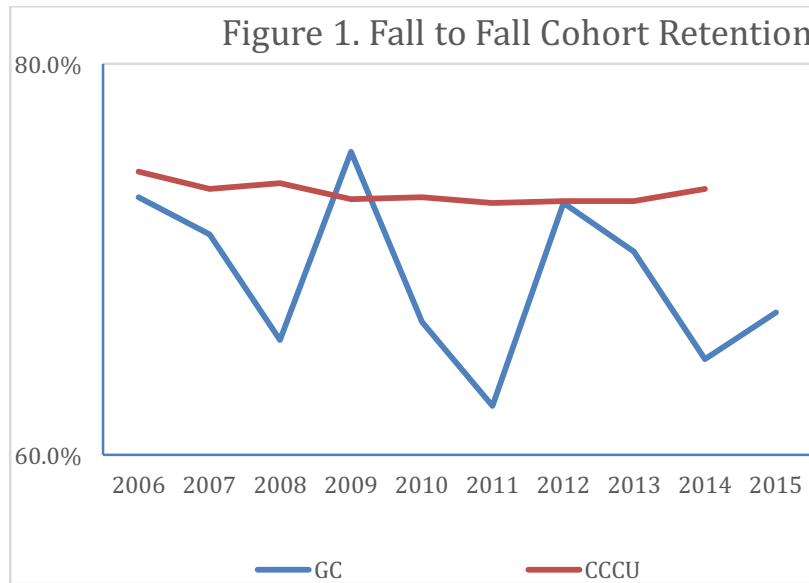
To God for equanimity, grace, and peace.

ABSTRACT

This dissertation responds to the problem of unstable freshman-to-sophomore retention rates at Greenville University between 2005 and 2015. Greenville University retention rates have oscillated between a high of 75.5% in 2009 and a low of 62.5% in 2011. This differs from the performance of the other members of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities over the same time period. For CCCU schools, retention has remained between 72.7% and 74%. While both CCCU schools and Greenville University invested significant time and resources into retention programs, Greenville's efforts did not produce stable retention rates. Section one details the fluctuating retention rates at Greenville University and its programmatic attempts to respond to this problem. Section two reviews the contemporary ways American colleges and universities seek to foster student retention. Section three articulates a solution to this problem built on both Astin, Astin, and Lindholm's concept of equanimity and Smith and Pearce's study of emerging adult spirituality. The proposed solution is a three-credit general education course targeting students in their critical second semester of college. This course will foster equanimity in these students through engagement of spiritual disciplines. Sections four and five describe the course and how it incorporates both contemporary data about emerging adults and best practices for ministering to them. Section six identifies potential topics for future study concerning equanimity and emerging adulthood.

SECTION 1:
THE PROBLEM

Over the past decade, Greenville University has struggled to stabilize freshman-to-sophomore cohort retention rates to a stated goal of 75%.¹ Greenville’s retention rate has fluctuated between 62.5% and 75.5%.² The Council of Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) is a group of institutions similar to Greenville that is useful for comparison. The CCCU has reported a relatively stable average retention rate for its membership, averaging near 73% between 2006 and 2015.³ Greenville’s retention goal is intended to stabilize annual income, decrease strain on recruitment efforts, and, over time, build the size of the traditional student body.



¹ Marcos Gilmore, interview by author, Greenville, IL, April 20, 2017.

² Greenville College Office of Student Development, “Board of Trustees Report,” December 2015, Greenville University Archives, Greenville University Library, Greenville, IL.

³ Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, “Retention and Graduation Rates Survey,” 2014, accessed March 26, 2016, http://beta.cccu.org/professional_development/research_and_assessment/retention_and_graduation_rates_survey.

Extreme changes year to year in the retention rate create significant budget problems for small universities like Greenville. Years of lower net enrollment result in cuts to personnel and budgets. In years of increased net enrollment, uncertainty based on past oscillations stymies appropriate investment in personnel and programs. These issues are compounded in years where a well-retained class graduates the same year a freshman class is retained at a low rate. The resulting dip in total student enrollment can be felt for years.

Examples include the 2006, 2009, and 2012 freshman cohorts. As seen in Figure 1, each of these classes returned in the falls of 2007, 2010, and 2013, respectively, with retention rates above or near 75%. However, the positive budget impact of these three well-retained classes was undercut by the low retention rates of the classes that entered the following two years.

The impact of this income instability extends beyond budget cuts and uncertainty about future planning. It increases strain on recruitment efforts both for traditional enrollment counselors and athletic recruiters. For enrollment counselors, efforts that could be spent on recruiting higher-quality students get shifted to a greater focus on sheer number of recruits. For athletic recruiters, time and resources that could be spent on team development and care for players is lost in exchange of additional recruiting to replace student-athletes who didn't retain.

Another impact of this unstable retention rate is an ever-shifting size of the student body and a disproportionate number of freshmen on campus. As the cohorts retain at differing rates, college planning for facilities, staffing, and teaching become more challenging and less efficient. The larger number of freshmen results in an

immature and unstable student culture. There are fewer upperclassmen to teach and model the culture, and fewer of those who learn it from them return.

For a university like Greenville that articulates a mission of transforming students both in and outside the classroom, this failure to convert incoming students into graduates is a failure of mission. To be effective, Greenville needs to overcome students' lack of academic motivation, demographic challenges, and lack of academic preparation in order to transform them into graduates at a rate that exceeds what is possible without intervention.

Greenville's leadership has not been inactive in the face of this problem. Since the 2006 cohort of freshmen entered the institution, significant funding and time have been spent to increase the retention rate. Eleven specific programs have focused on the problem of retention from one perspective or another. These include:

1. CORE 101 Curriculum
2. Retention Surveys
3. Leadership & Life Calling (Career & Calling) Office
4. Campus-Wide Student Concern Communication
5. Freshdesk
6. Clifton StrengthsFinder Strengths Programs
7. Summer Calling
8. Six by Six Dinners
9. NetVUE "Vocation First"
10. Coaching
11. Foundations of Excellence Programs

A brief description and assessment of each of these eleven strategies follows.

Strategy number one focused on the CORE 101 curriculum. Greenville's general education curriculum included four interdisciplinary CORE courses, including one taken by all first-year students during their first semester. This course was originally conceived in 1999 as a course taught by tenured faculty that would introduce freshman to the liberal arts and college-level writing through topics about which the faculty member was passionate. The diversity of both content and course structures created unevenness in the student experience during their freshman year as well as challenges with assessing the effectiveness of the teaching of the course content.

Major changes to the CORE 101 curriculum took place in 2011. The learning outcomes were updated. The course was refocused with a goal of fostering retention and persistence to graduation. Students were both encouraged and challenged to embrace the college community and be part of something bigger than themselves. Also, faculty were asked to share more of their faith to both model and invite students to be part of God's story. Assignments and assessments were streamlined and coordinated across course sections. Teaching of the course shifted from tenured faculty to primarily student affairs and academic support personnel. Assignments were added to encourage reflection about students; transition to college, identifying their "place" at Greenville, and their selection of a major. Common course texts focused on developing strengths and planning an indirect but purposeful course toward a career were adopted. Students were placed in sections of the course based on their intended major. Lastly, a significant service learning component was added to the course.⁴

⁴ Teresa Holden, interview by author, Greenville, IL, April 20, 2017.

The goal of these changes was to engage new students in ways that validated their beliefs about the purpose of a college education and the experience of being a college student. At the same time students were challenged to embrace Greenville's Christian liberal arts heritage and find their own place and voice within the community. The purpose of the service learning component was to help students transcend their "self" focus and to being experiencing tastes of the careers they were focusing on.⁵

This strategy was ineffective due to a lack of commitment by academic departments and a resulting overemphasis on inexperienced non-faculty to deliver the course content. While this freshman seminar course had always struggled to attract and retain faculty after the initial tenured-faculty-focused version, retirement of long-time champions of general education courses among the faculty, greater enforcement of common assignment and assessments in all course sections by the program director, and directives by Academic Affairs leadership to directing faculty to focus on their departmental teaching responsibilities, resulted in a course taught primarily by staff with minimal teaching experience. To support this increasingly inexperienced pool of instructors, the course was regularly modified to streamline content and content delivery. This made the course increasingly generic, undercutting its effectiveness.

Greenville's second strategy focused on the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI). The SSI is an instrument that "measures student satisfaction and priorities, showing you how satisfied students are as well as what issues are important to them." It is an assessment administered by Ruffalo Noel-Levitz. It has been "taken by more than 5,500,000 students at 2,700 campuses," allowing a college like Greenville to compare the

⁵ Ibid.

satisfaction of its students against groups such as other CCCU schools, other private schools or all college students nationally.⁶

Since 2006, the SSI has been administered to a representative group of Greenville University students in even numbered years. The odd numbered years have been spent developing responses to the areas of highest concern. An area of high concern for Greenville University would be an area where Greenville's students score a high level of importance and dissatisfaction at a greater level than comparable schools.

Staff responsible for retention have taken a systematic approach to administering the survey, disseminating survey results to decision-makers on campus and using the data to influence student programs and procedures. These decision-makers include not only vice-presidents, but also deans, directors, and members of the faculty. As a result of this survey, items like Wi-Fi quality, residence hall comfort, and advising quality have been improved.⁷

Lack of funding and the resulting decrease in morale minimized the impact of this strategy. While one can highlight a dozen examples of how SSI data led to direct action to respond to issues of concern raised by students, further analysis would also show that far more items were left unaddressed due to a lack of funding. This lack of financial commitment to address the more expensive items raised by the SSI, created a decrease in morale in those responsible for gathering and presenting this data to university leadership. Additionally, the financial choice to offer this assessment every other year,

⁶ Ruffalo Noel Levitz, "Student Satisfaction Inventory," accessed May 29, 2017, <https://www.ruffalonl.com/complete-enrollment-management/student-success/student-satisfaction-assessment/student-satisfaction-inventory>.

⁷ Marcos Gilmore, interview by author, Greenville, IL, April 20, 2017.

resulted in large amounts of time between the identification of problems, the proposing of solutions and the assessment of these solutions.

Strategy three focused on the Center for Career & Calling. This office focuses on increasing student retention by linking career development and vocation formation programs to StrengthsFinder programs, student leadership development programs, and CORE 101. This center seeks to increase retention among freshmen through connections in the CORE 101 class. All new students in CORE 101 complete both the Gallup StrengthsQuest assessment and the Kuder Journey career values, interests, and skills inventory. Both are assignments in the course, which also involves lectures and interviews with the center's staff. This was intentional to connect students with their self-perceptions and career aspirations to course material that would propel them through their college careers.

The program also sought to help students connect their personal beliefs about God, discernment, and vocation to Greenville's mission to transform students for lives of character and service. In some students' lives, the goal was to bring practical aspects of career development, leadership development, and self-assessment into their already well-developed sense of calling. For other students, it was to bring a sense of God's calling through discernment to their understanding of their talents and abilities. For many others, it was to start with a reason to be in college at Greenville and seek to build both a sense of vocation and preparedness for what's next.

This strategy failed to engage students and impact retention due to lack of connection with academic majors and a misalignment with student expectations. Despite the opportunities offered by the office, few students took advantage of them outside of

required assignments in COR 101. Attempts to provide these resources through academic majors faced resistance due to either a lack of career preparation and vocation content in major courses or a lack of desire to update existing career and vocation courses to partner with the Center for Career & Calling. This left most students to experience their most intense engagement of career development and vocation formation during their first semester of college. Though the content was targeted at college student and students engaged it at a high level, the impact was severely limited by the timing of its delivery. It became one more first semester topic and experience for young college students making the transition into their new chapter of life in college.

Strategy four focused on identifying and responding to students engaging in academically risky behaviors. Over the past decade, Greenville has utilized three systems, including the “Student Check-Up System,” the “Student of Concern” form, and the “Jenzabar Early Alert System,” to streamline this communication.

Created prior to 2006, the Student Check-Up System was an Panethernet (Greenville University intranet)-based system for submitting and tracking information about at-risk students. This system provided a form for faculty and other employees to fill out that would alert the Office of Student Success to a student-focused concern. The student success staff would then follow up with the student and add notes in the Student Check-Up System about the intervention. These notes were available to student success staff and the student’s advisor.⁸

In 2008, the Office of Student Success streamlined the reporting of students with concerning behavior by faculty and staff through use of an online form within Maxient.

⁸ Ibid.

Maxient is the University's student conduct database software. This online form allowed any employee to quickly and confidentially report a student's academic or other behavior for follow-up by the Office of Student Success.

In addition to updating the form, the Office of Student Success expanded its marketing of the form to faculty and employees. Part of this marketing took the form of regular email reminders to submit forms about students' concerning behavior. The office also regularly highlighted successful intervention stories at faculty meetings and all-employee gatherings.

In January 2016, the Jenzabar Early Alert system was launched. This component of a Jenzabar, the campus student information management system, provided a platform for faculty and other employees to submit a concern about a student to the Office of Student Success. Once submitted, the note is reviewed and assigned to someone in the student's college life for follow-up. Once these people—often resident directors, athletic coaches, or community life staff—have engaged the student regarding the concern, they document their interaction in the early alert system database.⁹

This strategy had limited impact on retention due to limits on how student development and academic support professionals could respond to students facing an academic crisis. Greenville's academic support and student development offices operate from a philosophical perspective that treats students as empowered adults. As a result, procedures governing academic withdrawal, academic probation, conditional admission and athletic eligibility, grant students a degree of empowerment and authority that preempt many effective crisis responses.

⁹ Ibid.

Strategy five focused on customer service. In the spring of 2015, the ticket-based task management system Freshdesk was expanded for use beyond the Information Technology (IT) and Maintenance departments. Within a year, the marketing, mailroom, international affairs, residence life, and student success offices had adopted use of this system. By fall 2017, the student accounts, registrar's office, and athletics had joined as well. Each of these offices uses Freshdesk to increase the quality of their customer service.

Freshdesk has two components. The first is a ticket management system. The ticket management system has allowed these departments to create, manage, and track service requests; assess customer service in terms of timeliness of response; automate common responses to questions; and regularly update customers about the status of their requests.

The second component is a self-service database of solutions to common problems. The solutions database component of Freshdesk provided all of campus a common location where all members of the campus community can find answers to common questions and commonly requested forms. It also contains many resources outlining campus processes and guides for how to use campus equipment.¹⁰

The effectiveness of this strategy is hard to measure due to its recent implementation. It faces a challenge similar to other strategies previously discussed in terms of campus-wide adoption and relying on empowered students to solve their own problems. It may provide self-service solutions to many students in ways that fit with the expectations of the institution they developed during the admissions process. Time will

¹⁰ Rick Murphy, interview by author, Greenville, IL, April 20, 2017.

tell whether this strategy is effective in fostering a campus culture that leads to increased retention.

Strategy six focused on Gallup Strengths. Since 2001, as part of the required CORE 101 freshman seminar course all students completed the Clifton StrengthsFinder assessment. In the course, students reflect and write about their strengths. They also identify and implement strategies for using their strengths to be successful in college and life.

In addition to this coursework, they had two additional opportunities to learn about their strengths. The first was to be interviewed by a certified Strengths Coach. The coach would review the student's results and interview the student to better understand how the strengths manifested themselves in the student's life. This information was used by the coach and student to develop strategies for college success.

The second event was the strengths dinner. This dinner was held midway through the semester and allowed students to eat a meal with faculty that shared at least one of their signature strengths. Faculty were invited to a meal and sat at a table for one of their most clearly manifested strengths. Students would eat with them and discuss ways they use their strengths to be successful in college, life, and career.

Strengths coaching ended prior to 2010 due to a lack of continued training of coaches. The strengths dinner persisted until 2012 but had become merely a dining commons meal with faculty sitting at assigned tables. These initiatives and all other StrengthsFinder programs ended in January of 2015.¹¹

¹¹ Marcos Gilmore, interview by author, Greenville, IL, April 20, 2017.

From 2006 to 2015, Strengths was an ineffective strategy to foster retention due to its lack of impact on students beyond CORE 101 and lack of funding for training and events. All students received an impactful introduction to positive psychology and their specific “strengths.” However, the lack of opportunities to revisit these personal themes throughout their college experience and grow them into true areas of strengths were a missed opportunity. Additionally, the lack of funding for the few campus-wide strengths events undercut their quality in such a way that the events were often seen by students as hassles rather than opportunities.

Strategy seven focused on maintaining timely communication with students during summer break. Every summer break since 1998, the student government president called students. Beginning in early June, the student body president or her/his designee would contact every student who was enrolled during the spring semester at her/his home address. Students were asked about their grades, housing, bills, and any other concerns they may have. This was done in part to identify concerns or possible retention threats while they could be addressed. Calls were strategically made after fall semester bills were mailed or posted. If a student was not housed or registered, or had an outstanding balance on her/his bill, they were called first. Students “in good standing” were called later.¹² This program ended in May 2015.

The idea behind this strategy is sound. However, it was ineffective due to the challenge of contacting enough students in time to positively impact their experience. Students’ issues and questions change throughout the summer and depending on when a

¹² Ibid.

student was contacted the “check-in” by the student government officer may have missed the most critical time when help could have been rendered.

Strategy eight focused on connecting meaningful relationships between students and employees. From prior to 2006 to the fall of 2015, the Office of Student Success provided funding for faculty to host dinners for up to six students at a time. The goal of this “six by six” approach was to connect students to faculty and employees. These connections were intended to both foster a sense of community and connectedness with students and help them find resources for the challenges of college life. Dinners could be hosted at any time and in any context. Many faculty and staff hosted students in their homes for simple dinners. Some took student out to places that the host employee enjoyed.

The program was patterned after an advancement-giving program where the fundraising goal would be met five dollars at a time. In this case, the goal was retaining student six students at a time, hence “six by six.” It was also marketed as “Six students at six o’clock at night for dinner.” Academic department heads were initially targeted to host, but in time it expanded to any employee. The definition of dinner was eventually expanded to include ice cream, dessert, or even just coffee. The goal of this program was to improve retention by increasing relationships between employees and students.¹³

This strategy proved ineffective due to the high level of fatigue experienced by the small number of employees who hosted “six by six” gatherings. If most of the two-hundred employees of Greenville participated in one or two gatherings of students annually, this may have been a sustainable retention program. However, this program

¹³ Ibid.

shifted quickly from dinners hosted by a broad number of stakeholder employees to coffee meetings and lunches facilitated by a small group of employees within the office where the program originated.

Strategy nine focused on fostering students' understanding and embrace of their vocation. In 2013, the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) awarded Greenville University a NetVUE grant. The purpose of the grant was to "incorporate a vocational focus in our first-year seminar curriculum in order to give students a framework for understanding the value and purpose of their liberal arts education."¹⁴ NetVUE is a project of the CIC funded by the Lily Endowment and focused on the enrichment of the "intellectual and theological exploration of vocation among undergraduate students."¹⁵ Each of the schools "ha[s] a desire to address the intellectual and theological exploration of vocation in the classroom, in student life, and in service to the community."¹⁶

The terms of the grant-funded project were the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 academic years.¹⁷ Its goals were:

1. Revision of the first-year seminar curriculum to include vocational discovery.
2. Development of a New Faculty Faith Integration Seminar shaped by a theological understanding of vocation.¹⁸

¹⁴ Brad Shaw, "Greenville College NetVUE Program Development Grant Proposal," September 2013, 1.

¹⁵ Council of Independent Colleges, "NetVUE Conference Program," March 2015.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Council of Independent Colleges, "2013 NetVUE Program Development Grant Agreement Form," November 2013.

¹⁸ Brad Shaw, "Greenville College NetVUE Program Development Grant Proposal," September 2013, 2.

3. Development of a Greenville University vocabulary for engaging vocational discovery and discernment.

To meet goal one, trainings were held for CORE 101 instructors. This training reintroduced the Gallup StrengthsFinder inventory for limited use in the course. It also introduced instructors to a theological understanding of vocation, utilizing Parker Palmer's *Let Your Life Speak*. They were also trained to administer new CORE 101 assignments. These assignments included a reflection on how one's own strengths have contributed and will contribute to pursuing a vocation, development of four-year plans that included both academic and personal goals, and assignments focused on the text *You Majored in What?*, by Katharine Brooks. The faculty were also instructed on how to use the Kuder Journey instrument, which helps students identify their career-focused values, skills, and interests.

Goal two was met through the creation of the New Faculty Faith Integration Seminar. It was both academic and experiential. Newly hired faculty met weekly throughout the year to discuss writings on the topic of vocation, listen to presentations by veteran faculty, and review writing assignments. The group also traveled for a weeklong retreat at a monastery to discuss topics of vocation.

Goal three was the responsibility of the Office of Career & Calling. They developed a vocabulary for engaging students in vocation discovery. It was focused on a review of the college's foundational documents, including the theological assumptions and philosophy of education. It also focused on traditional Free Methodist and Methodist teachings on the topic of vocation. Office staff met with department chairs from across

the campus to understand the terms, texts, and theologies of vocation used in the various academic programs.

This strategy resulted in a significant investment into the intellectual infrastructure of the CORE 101 faculty, Center for Career & Calling and participants in the new faculty development seminars. The increased understanding of theological vocation in these programs was intended to impact their students and their student's retention. This remains to be seen. Also, the impact of this work was undercut by change in leadership for all three programs during the final year of the grant program.

Strategy ten focused on the concept of holistically coaching students toward success. Beginning in the fall of 2010, the Office of Student Success launched a pilot program offering peer-to-peer academic coaching. In this program, successful juniors and seniors were assigned to freshmen and sophomores who were not succeeding academically. The pilot program was targeted at the football team and men's soccer team.¹⁹ The academic coach conducted weekly interviews with the student about their academic success behaviors including attendance, sleep patterns, social stress, and athletic performance. Beyond the interview, the academic coaches sought to develop an encouraging and, if necessary, challenging voice in the student's life. This program has expanded to include any probation student who chooses to participate.

In the fall of 2016, an additional type of coaching was added to the Office of Student Success. This program linked six community life professionals to a small group of twenty students in the freshman cohort. This insured that one-hundred twenty students

¹⁹ Marcos Gilmore and Teresa Holden, interview by author, Greenville, IL, April 20, 2017.

had a coach. The student success professionals involved in this program committed to meet regularly with these students and respond to any challenges they faced.

The students selected for this program were Level 3 students by Ruffalo Noel-Levitz on a five-point scale for their predicted academic success. This scale is based on a formula that includes high school GPA and ACT or SAT score.²⁰

This program targeted Level 3 students, as research has shown that Level 1 and Level 2 students are very difficult to impact toward future academic success using traditional student success techniques over the course of a single year of intervention. Level 4 and Level 5 students need little support. Additionally, Level 3 students make up the largest group of students on campus; thus, impacting them will have the largest possible impact on campus retention rates.

Much like strategy four, focused on streamlining communication of concerns about students to those staff members who can assist them, this strategy also struggled to impact retention due to Greenville policy and culture. Coaches can meet with students, identify issues and develop effective strategies, but if there is no internal motivation in the student or external pressure that can be brought to bear on the student, then the impact of such work is negated. Despite these challenges the targeting of “Level 3” students does seem to have contributed to upward retention rate trends. This may be due to “Level 3” students having sufficient internal motivation to be impacted by coaching.

Strategy eleven was a focus on improving the first-year experience at Greenville. In the summer of 2013, Greenville contracted with the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education (Gardner Institute) to undertake the Foundations

²⁰ Michael Ritter, interview by author, Greenville, IL, April 14, 2017.

of Excellence self-study focused on retention of first-year students. The Gardner Institute helps educational organizations like Greenville “increase institutional responsibility for improving outcomes associated with teaching, learning, retention, and completion.”²¹

The Foundations of Excellence self-study was a year-long self-study conducted by nine committees of faculty, staff, and students focused on nine areas where first-year students interact with the institution. These areas were Philosophy, Organization, Learning, Faculty, Transitions, All Students, Diversity, Roles & Purposes, and Improvement.²² Each committee gathered evidence of how new students interacted with one of these areas at Greenville College. The committee chairs then collaborated to produce a report for the Gardner Institute reflecting their work in all nine areas. These reports were guided by a framework of questions and best practices.

The Foundations of Excellence review resulted in six major recommendations. These recommendations were:

1. A first-year experience committee led by a first-year experience director
2. Advising center
3. Hiring a diverse faculty and staff
4. Holistic risk assessment approach and warning system
5. Meeting the needs of under-served African-American students
6. A one-stop-shop²³

²¹ John N. Gardner Institute, “Mission and Vision,” accessed March 25, 2017, <http://www.jngi.org/institute/mission-vision/>.

²² John N. Gardner Institute, “Foundations of Excellence,” accessed March 25, 2017, <http://www.jngi.org/foe-program/foundational-dimensions/four-year-first-year-focus/>.

²³ Greenville University, “Greenville College Foundations Final Report,” Greenville University, April 2014, 1.

Over the 2014-2015 academic year, each of these recommendations was implemented.

Recommendation one was the formation of a first-year experience committee. In 2014, the college named the Dean of Student Success and Assessment to serve as the first-year director while retaining existing responsibilities. This individual picked up responsibilities for new student orientation and first-year experience programs and co-chaired the first-year experience committee. The committee representation was expanded and empowered as a standing faculty committee.

Recommendation two was the creation of an advising center. In 2014, the advising center launched with three part-time positions. These staff were “dedicated to empowering students to develop Christ-centered educational plans and achieve degree completion.”²⁴ The staff’s initial plans included coordination with second-year faculty as they began advising responsibilities, utilizing strengths of experienced faculty to increase accessible, accurate advising across campus and to coordinate with Student Success, the Center for Career & Calling, and other departments to maintain effective academic advising across campus.²⁵

Due to staffing changes, by the fall 2015 semester, the Center’s staff had changed to a single full-time individual. This Associate Director for Advising focused the advising center’s efforts around communicating advising information, triage advising, and training faculty to advise well. The center also provided events in partnership with the Office of Career Services, Student Success, and Residence Life to empower students to navigate their path toward completing a college degree efficiently and intentionally.

²⁴ Greenville University, “GC Launches Advising Center,” accessed April 17, 2017, <http://www.greenville.edu/news/gc-launches-advising-center>.

²⁵ Ibid.

Recommendation three was expanding hiring of diverse faculty and staff. Since the fall of 2014, steps have been taken to implement this recommendation. African-American churches that have had relationship with the college either through ministry programs, attending students, or alumni connections have been intentionally targeted to identify potential employees for vacancies.²⁶ The diversity committee has provided resources to hiring managers for conducting hiring processes that seek to intentionally diversify the campus community. Web resources have been created to target and attract more diverse applicant pools. These are in addition to previously existing efforts to hire diverse faculty and staff, including stated mandates for individual hiring managers to seek diverse applicants, prioritizing diverse candidates for interviews, and advertising positions in ways to maximize diversity hires.²⁷

Recommendation four was for the college to adopt a holistic risk assessment approach and warning system. As of the fall 2016 semester, the following items had been implemented: tracking class attendance in courses heavily attended by freshmen; informal low-grade reports are offered by the Student Success staff, who reach out to faculty with freshmen in their courses to post an informal three-week grade; conduct cases, parking tickets, and unpaid balances are irregularly shared with the Student Success staff for student follow-up; chapel information is reported at three points in the semester for all students; Student Success staff follows up through residence life to

²⁶ Teresa Holden, interview by author, Greenville, IL, April 20, 2017.

²⁷ Katrina Liss, interview by author, Greenville, IL, April 25, 2017.

encourage participation; and athletic teams are beginning to report students who leave a sports team and have begun notifying Student Success of students with concussions.²⁸

Recommendation five focused on meeting the needs of under-served African American students. In 2015, Pastor Darryl Hawkins was hired to be the pastor in residence. This African American pastor speaks every 3 to 4 weeks in chapel and provides limited pastoral care. The University has also continued to develop its relationship with local African American communities through connections to the ESL school district. Additionally, the college has hired, since the implementation of this recommendation, multiple African-American faculty members as well as added a non-white senior administrator and multiple non-white board members to the University's leadership.²⁹

Recommendation six was the creation of a "one-stop-shop" for housing administrative offices that serve students. In the summer of 2014, the office space of the student development, financial aid, and admissions in main floor of the dining commons building was renovated. Admissions moved out and the records office and student accounts office moved into Lower Armington. A common office manager for these offices was hired in the summer of 2015. IT support moved from off-campus to the basement of the library in the summer of 2014. In the summer of 2016, Residence Life and Student Development offices moved to be located by student success, the advising center, and student activities and leadership development. This resulted in a majority of the student-focused offices in two buildings—the library and Lower Armington. The only

²⁸ Marcos Gilmore, interview by author, Greenville, IL, April 20, 2017.

²⁹ Teresa Holden, interview by author, Greenville, IL, April 20, 2017.

office that did not consider a move was campus safety, as they chose to remain away from the center of campus for logistics reasons in case of a crisis on campus.

The Foundations of Excellence strategy had wide ranging impacts on programs policies, staffing structures and office locations across Greenville's campus. The proposals generated by this intensive self-study were each responded to by University leadership. However, funding allocated to addressing these proposals was minimal and this resulted in either implementation of the least costly proposals or the implementation of alternative low-cost versions of more expensive proposals. Due to leadership transitions six months following the completion of this self-study, future direct funding for this project's proposals did not materialize. As a result, its impact on retention was limited.

These eleven responses to Greenville's problem of unstable retention rates show that the leadership of the college over the past decade has actively sought to impact the problem of unstable retention. As you will see in the next chapter, they have accessed and implemented the best practices of both secular and faith-based higher education researchers and practitioners.

These eleven programs have involved dozens of professionals giving thousands of hours and spending tens of thousands of dollars. Faculty and staff have sought to engage students in all aspects of their Greenville University lives, including the classroom, the residence hall, the sports fields, their pasts, their futures, and their motivations and desires. Students have no doubt been impacted by these intentional, sincere, and high-quality efforts. However, despite these efforts, the retention rates of the college do not correlate with any individual or combination of programmatic efforts and have remained

erratic. Possible reasons for each of these individual program's lack of sustained impact were articulated earlier, but one overarching challenge faced by all of these programs was, presidential transition.

In January 2008, Dr. V. James Mannoia's nine-year tenure as president of Greenville University ended. He was followed by an interim president, Dr. Ed Blue who served for eighteen months. In the summer of 2009, Dr. Larry Lineman was appointed president. His leadership ended in the summer of 2012. Dr. Randy Bergin was appointed acting president and served until the summer of 2013. In July 2013, Dr. Ivan Filby was announced as president.³⁰ As a result of these changes, the era of Greenville University from 2006 to 2015 which is the focus of this study, is marked by significant transition in leadership.

These changes in presidential leadership brought with them changes in personnel and responsibilities at the executive leadership level. In some cases, new individuals were brought in to provide new perspectives and plans. In other cases, deans or middle managers were elevated to the executive level. These staffing changes and the accompanying shifts in values, vision and plans resulted in system wide stress that likely blunted the potential impact of all of the retention efforts previously referenced.

³⁰ Greenville University, "Presidential Search," accessed March 1, 2018, https://www.greenville.edu/about/presidential_search/.

SECTION 2: OTHER PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

As discussed in the first section, Greenville University has engaged in at least a dozen initiatives aimed at stabilizing and increasing freshman-to-sophomore cohort retention. These initiatives have been rooted in leading research and ideas on how to retain college freshmen and facilitate their persistence to graduation. This research and ideas come from experts such as George Kuh, Vincent Tinto, Alexander Astin, Donald Clifton, Chip Anderson, Carol Dweck, Angela Duckworth, Laurie Schreiner, Bryan Dik, Ryan Duffy, William Placher, Kay Marie and Kevin Brennfleck and Katharine Brooks. In this section, we will explore these fourteen practitioners' key theories and practices. It will also highlight the ways Greenville has utilized these theories and practices, albeit with limited success.

The first practitioner is George Kuh. He presently serves as the Founding Director of the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment. He is the author of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and a number of texts on helping students succeed in college. These texts include *Student Success in College: Creating Conditions That Matter*, and *Piecing Together the Student Success Puzzle*.³¹

George Kuh is responsible for articulating one of the key concepts within the professional field of student success. This concept is that demographics are destiny when

³¹ Association of American Colleges & Universities, "George D. Kuh," accessed May 29, 2017. <https://www.aacu.org/contributor/george-d-kuh>.

seeking to predict retention, persistence, and graduation rates.³² The quality of high school academic preparation strongly predicts chances for postsecondary persistence. This includes family educational background, socioeconomic status, financial aid type and availability, and enrollment patterns.³³

Kuh defines general student success as academic achievement, involvement in educationally purposeful activities, satisfaction, acquisition of desired knowledge, skills and competencies, persistence, and attainment of educational objectives.³⁴ Students who find something worthwhile to connect with in the college environment are more likely to engage in educationally purposeful activities, persist, and achieve their educational objectives.³⁵

This definition focuses significantly on individual students taking ownership of their experience. However, individual students may do so operating out of different theories. Kuh discusses these different approaches in his writings. These include focuses on student engagement, psychology, culture, and economics. In each of these theories, he puts forth models for how certain students may make existential decisions about pursuing and completing college.

The first of these theories is focused on engagement. According to Kuh:

The engagement premise is straightforward and easily understood: the more students study a subject, the more they know about it, and the more students practice and get feedback from faculty and staff members on their writing and collaborative problem solving, the deeper they come to understand what they are

³² George D. Kuh, Jillian Kinzie, Jennifer A. Buckley, Brian K. Bridges, and John C. Hayek, *Piecing Together the Student Success Puzzle: Research, Propositions and Recommendations* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Periodicals, 2007), 21.

³³ *Ibid.*, 42.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 105.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 117.

learning and the more adept they become at managing complexity, tolerating ambiguity, and working with people from different backgrounds or with different views.³⁶

His research indicates that levels of this engagement vary more in institutions than between institutions. This means that no one type of higher education or individual institution better addresses engagement. Each institution has within its enrollment students who are operating at widely differing levels of engagement.

Kuh's second theory is focused on psychology. It is rooted in John Bean and Shevawn Eaton's work. This study revealed that personality traits such as self-efficacy help students persevere when faced with academic challenges. They found that those students with natural and strong self-concepts meet and overcome challenges.

Kuh's third theory of student success focuses on culture. A student's satisfaction and their engagement of educationally significant activities are impacted by their perceptions of the institutional environment, dominant norms, and dominant values. Students who come from cultural, national, gender, sexual orientation, or religious backgrounds that differ from those of the educational institution will struggle to succeed.

Kuh's fourth and final theory of student success focusses on economics. Students often view themselves as consumers in terms of their college or university choices. Thus, they put a high value on money and time.³⁷ They make data-driven decisions. They have shared responsibility to educational quality and student success.³⁸

³⁶ George D. Kuh, "The National Survey of Student Engagement: Conceptual and Empirical Foundations," *New Directions for Institutional Research* 2009, no. 141 (March 9, 2009): 5–20.

³⁷ Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, and Hayek, 19.

³⁸ George Kuh, Jillian Kinzie, John H. Schuh, Elizabeth J. Whitt, and Associates, *Student Success in College: Creating Conditions that Matter* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2015), 192.

In addition to these four theories for understanding the student experience, Kuh puts forth a number of tangible practices that successful colleges and universities use. These effective student success practices include clear missions, high standards, high expectations, assessments with timely feedback, student-learning-centered culture, peer support, encouragement to explore differences, emphasis on first-year experience, and respect for diverse ways of knowing.³⁹

Kuh's work references DEEP colleges and universities. DEEP is defined as Documenting Effective Educational Practice. It emerged from his study of what high-performing colleges did to promote student success.⁴⁰

The twenty DEEP colleges he identified exhibited six common characteristics that fostered student engagement. They each had a living mission and lived educational philosophy. They had an unshakeable focus on student learning. They had environments that were adapted for educational enrichment. They had clearly marked pathways for student success. They had an improvement-focused ethos. They shared responsibility for education quality and student success.⁴¹ In addition, DEEP colleges had a small gap between espoused and enacted mission.⁴²

Effective colleges also have regular reminders that the institution has values and sticks to them. They have an unshakeable focus on student learning.⁴³ They have holistic learning that runs deep in institutional policy and practices. They value undergraduate

³⁹ Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, and Hayek, 102.

⁴⁰ Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, and Associates, xvi.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 26.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 62.

student learning, experiment with engaging pedagogies, demonstrate a cooperative passion for student development, and make time for students.⁴⁴ High-quality teaching is a focus.⁴⁵ They adapt environments for educational enrichment and believe location is an advantage to pursuing their mission.⁴⁶ They embrace location and fashion learning settings to achieve their purposes.⁴⁷ They have a living mission and educational philosophy. They give explicit instructions and clear roadmaps. They teach student values and what successful students do and take advantage of resources. They also provide resources when they need them.⁴⁸ First-year experience programs are common.⁴⁹ They have an improvement-oriented ethos focused on perpetual learning, with momentum toward positive change, curiosity, and experimentation.⁵⁰

A review of Greenville's eleven responses to its fluctuating retention show a number of utilizations of Kuh's influence. Key among these was the revision to the CORE 101 curriculum and how it highlights pathways for student success, student engagement, and self-efficacy. There is also evidence of Kuh's influence in the Foundations of Excellence recommendations to hire diverse faculty and staff, create an advising center, and seek to meet the needs of under-served African American students.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 65.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 66.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 91.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 93.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 110.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 113.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 133.

The second practitioner is Vincent Tinto. Tinto is an Emeritus professor at Syracuse University, where he taught and served as the chair of the higher education program. The focus of his professional life was research on higher education, especially regarding student success and effectiveness of learning communities in helping facilitate student growth. One of his most notable works on the topic of student success is *Leaving College*, written in 1987.⁵¹

Tinto defines college completion as “student success.”⁵² His theory of success focuses on students moving by rite of passage from one set of precious connections to another. They move from an old community to a new community to forge new connections.⁵³

Student persistence or retention is a function of the dynamic relationship between the individual and other actors in the college and home community. Increased social and academic integration lead to persistence. However, this only has moderate empirical support. Alternatively, what is strongly supported is the fact that students leave college when they don’t make the transition from their previous life.⁵⁴

Implementing Tinto’s model requires students to learn to negotiate foreign environments and effectively interact with strangers. Students who persist tend to match culture on campus.⁵⁵ Persistence is also marked by the movement of the student from past

⁵¹ Syracuse University School of Education, “Vincent Tinto,” accessed July 7, 2017, <http://soe.syr.edu/about/member.aspx?fac=64>

⁵² Vincent Tinto, *Completing College: Rethinking Institutional Action* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 4.

⁵³ Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, and Hayek, 13.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 15.

forms of association to new forms of membership in the social and intellectual community of the college or university.⁵⁶ Students must become part of the community and let go of the old community. Those who leave early often struggle with this transition. Incongruence and isolation rather than academic failure are central to departure.⁵⁷

Tinto's model has four assumptions. The first is that students' perceptions guide their reality and their membership is based on these perceptions. The second is that the individual and institution constantly interact in formal and informal situations. In this relationship, the individual is both the actor and interpreter. Third, social and intellectual integration are essential to persistence. The fourth is that this persistence is an educational phenomenon with the classroom at the center.⁵⁸

Tinto's work lists a number of reasons why students stay in college and work toward graduation. These reasons include students having frequent and rewarding interactions with faculty. This not only increases these students' graduation rates, it also enhances students' social and intellectual development.⁵⁹

Tinto argues that colleges and universities need to respond to these reasons by creating favorable conditions. These conditions for student success include expectations, support, assessment with feedback, and involvement.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Vincent Tinto, *Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Curse of Student Attrition*, (Chicago, IL: University Press, 2012), 135.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 136.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 136-137.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 82.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 7.

The first of these conditions is focused on expectations. To succeed, students need to know the expectations of effort.⁶¹ They need a climate of clear expectations on campus.⁶² They need an advising roadmap to success.⁶³ They need to have an experience of classroom success.⁶⁴

The second of these conditions is focused on support. This support comes in a variety of forms and sources. These include academic support programs, self-efficacy programs, social support programs, financial support programs, academic support programs, summer bridge programs, first-year seminar programs, supplemental instruction programs, learning communities, and embedded academic support programs.⁶⁵

The third expectation is for assessment to be given with feedback. Assessment and feedback are essential for student persistence.⁶⁶ Assessment is needed at entry.⁶⁷ There needs to be assessment in classrooms.⁶⁸ Lastly, there needs to be early warning systems.⁶⁹

⁶¹ Ibid., 12.

⁶² Ibid., 15.

⁶³ Ibid., 17.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 22.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 25-51.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 54.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 55.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 57.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 58.

The fourth expectation is involvement. Tinto believes this to be the most important.⁷⁰ Students are expected to develop meaning and the sense of belonging at the university or college.⁷¹ Faculty must be encouraged to promote involvement for student success.⁷² The university or college must adopt pedagogies of engagement both in and outside the classroom.⁷³ This may take the form of learning communities or service learning.⁷⁴ Lastly, this involvement must be taught as part of faculty development.⁷⁵

Another major theme of Tinto's work is belief that much of what college and university administrators know about retention and persistence is wrong or misleading. Dropouts are often portrayed as different than regular students. The reality is that students who leave often do so as part of a fulfilling choice to move forward successfully but differently.⁷⁶

Students leaving takes many forms and reasons. Decisions to withdraw are more a function of what occurs after entry than what precedes it.⁷⁷ When a student leaves college, it is highly situational and less likely the result of broad attributes of the institution or the individual student. There is no clear or easy way to characterize student

⁷⁰ Ibid., 64.

⁷¹ Ibid., 66.

⁷² Ibid., 67.

⁷³ Ibid., 68.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 71, 75.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 77.

⁷⁶ Tinto, *Leaving College*, 3.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 5.

departure.⁷⁸ Student leave due to intention, commitment, adjustment, difficulty, congruency, isolation, obligations, and finances. Intention and commitment pertain to individual's entry dispositions.⁷⁹

Tinto believes that for a college to effectively retain students, its administrators need do four things. They must invest in assessment;⁸⁰ they must invest in program development;⁸¹ they must invest in faculty development;⁸² and, lastly, they must implement institutional action.⁸³

Tinto makes it clear in his work that there are no easy solutions to retention. Programs are helpful but are not replacement for high-quality, caring, and concerned faculty and staff. They must give each and every student serious and honest attention on a daily basis.⁸⁴

A review of Greenville's eleven responses to its fluctuating retention show a number of utilizations of Tinto's influence. One key example is the engagement of faculty development in the "Vocation First" programs and the importance of students engaging with faculty and other employees through coaching and six-by-six dinners. We see his influence in highlighting the importance of programs that quickly connect students in need with academic assistance. His influence on the CORE 101 revision is

⁷⁸ Ibid., 33.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 81.

⁸⁰ Tinto, *Completing College*, 83.

⁸¹ Ibid., 85.

⁸² Ibid., 87.

⁸³ Ibid., 88.

⁸⁴ Tinto, *Leaving College*, 201.

evident in the ways the class seeks to help students make the transition from their pre-college life to their college life. We also see evidence of Tinto's influence in the Foundations of Excellence recommendations to create an advising center, hire diverse staff, and meet the needs of under-served African-American students.

The third practitioner is Alexander Astin. He is an emeritus professor at UCLA in the area of education. He is responsible for twenty-two books and over three hundred academic articles. He created the HERI and CIRP study.⁸⁵ HERI is the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. Among other duties, it manages the CIRP, or Cooperative Institutional Research Program. It is one of the largest and longest studies of American higher education institutions and participants.⁸⁶

Astin developed the IEO model, which regards the impact of Inputs, Environments, and Outcomes on students, and studied it for many decades. Inputs are the characteristics. Environment is made up of programs, policies, peers, educational experiences, and faculty. Outcomes are the characteristics after the experience.⁸⁷

He considers college to be an impactful experience, but he believes it important to remember that had students not gone to college, they would have been impacted by other things during this traditional life-stage of transition and growth. This is one of the challenges in understanding the impact of higher education on emerging adults.⁸⁸ It is hard to assess the college experience because one must identify the relevant variables and

⁸⁵ UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, "Curriculum Vitae Alexander Astin," accessed June 24, 2017, <https://gseis.ucla.edu/media/AlexanderAstinCV.pdf?937b2d>.

⁸⁶ Higher Education Research Institute, "About HERI," accessed June 24, 2017, <https://heri.ucla.edu/about-heri/>

⁸⁷ Alexander W. Astin, *What Matters in College* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1993), 7.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

discuss how outcomes are imparted to students in different ways by programs and experiences.⁸⁹ It is also hard to have a pre-post evaluation of retention due to the nature of the population. This is also made difficult by the fact students are not naturally inspired to give feedback when they are leaving an institution.⁹⁰ As a result, Astin believes retention rates are descriptive and raise good questions, but don't, by themselves, provide easy answers.⁹¹

He believes it is important to remember the difference between two types of assessment. These two are industrial assessment and medial assessment. Industrial assessment focuses on efficiencies and outcomes both pre- and post.⁹² Medial methods of assessment identify independent variables with related but not complexly aligned or correlated movements.⁹³

Astin launched CIRP in 1985. It examines multiple variables, programs, and outcomes and includes pretests on possible outcome measures. It also includes self-predictions about possible future outcomes and personal characteristics that might impact the ability to change and grow.⁹⁴ The original survey was followed four and five years later with extensive follow-up questions.⁹⁵

⁸⁹ Ibid., 16.

⁹⁰ Alexander W. Astin and Anthony L. Antonio, *Assessment for Excellence: The Philosophy and Practice of Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education, Second Edition* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012), 70.

⁹¹ Ibid., 104.

⁹² Astin, *What Matters*, 17.

⁹³ Ibid., 18.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 21.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 22.

Astin challenges institutions to build retention-focused file data, which includes both outcome and input information. Outcome information should include which individuals completed degrees, who dropped out, and who remained enrolled. Input data should include demographics, high school grades, class rank, admission tests, and freshman survey results.⁹⁶

He also challenges colleges and universities to administer preliminary student surveys with questions about satisfaction regarding advising, services, and faculty. They should also include questions about talent development, asking students how and where they grew. Finally, they should have questions about their environmental experience, including factors like their residence hall, financial aid, major, and participation on campus.

These pre-surveys should also include basic demographics, plans, and aspirations of the student, as well as the student's high school achievements and activities.⁹⁷ This is done because high school success and standardized test scores are the best indicator of college success.⁹⁸

Astin believes that in addition to this quantitative data there should also be intentional efforts by institutions to collect qualitative and situational data about students. This formal data collection should be aligned with early warning systems and staff dedicated to retention. This includes precollege data, advising data, and classroom data.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Astin and Antonio, 172.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 173.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 70.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 74.

A review of Greenville’s eleven responses to its fluctuating retention reveal a number of utilizations of Astin’s theories. These include use of retention surveys, use of Freshdesk to streamline customer service response, the summer calling program to identify student issues, and the campus-wide student concern communication programs to expedite responses to students exhibiting academically risky behavior. We see his influence in the use of demographic data to identify students to target for coaching. We also see evidence of Astin’s influence in the Foundations of Excellence recommendations to engage in holistic risk assessment and develop warning systems.

The fourth practitioner is Donald O. Clifton. He was a 19-year member of the University of Nebraska – Lincoln. He founded and provided leadership to Selection Research Incorporated and, later, the Gallup Organization. These organizations worked to research and implement his work on strengths. Simply put, the psychologically grounded study of strengths focused on the “what if” of studying what was right, well, and excellent within people.¹⁰⁰ This contrasted greatly with the history of psychology where the focus had primarily been on psychological abnormality, un-wellness, and deficiency. As a result of his ground-breaking work, he was named by the American Psychological Association as the father of strengths-based psychology.¹⁰¹

The fifth practitioner is Chip Anderson. He was an educational leadership professor and administrator of the academic advancement program at UCLA for 28

¹⁰⁰ Mike Peg, “C is for Clifton: His Work on Strengths and with Gallup,” *The Positive Encourager*, accessed November 24, 2017 <https://www.thepositiveencourager.global/don-cliftons-approach-to-doing-positive-work/>.

¹⁰¹ Gallup Inc., “Gallup Created the Science of Strengths,” accessed July 7, 2017. <https://www.gallupstrengthscenter.com/Home/en-US/About/>.

years.¹⁰² He was a leading author on retention and advising who advocated a strengths-based philosophy. He co-authored the book *StrengthsQuest* with Clifton in 2002. This text applied the philosophy of strengths and the use of the StrengthsFinder instrument to a college and university setting.¹⁰³

To develop StrengthsFinder and StrengthsQuest, the Gallup Organization conducted two million in-depth interviews.¹⁰⁴ These interviews revealed that each person has talents that are enduring and unique. Each person has areas of potential greatest growth in strengths.¹⁰⁵ Strengths begin with talent, which are the naturally occurring thoughts, feelings, or behaviors that can be applied productively. Talents are the part of one's self that seem most real. Talents represent a way of doing things.¹⁰⁶ Your greatest talents are tied to your top achievements and what you do best. Talents are what a person "does" well.

StrengthsFinder is based on positive psychology.¹⁰⁷ The focus of positive psychology is an individual's well-being. Positive psychology has shown that students can learn motivation, persistence, and positive engagement.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰² Daily Bruin, "Former Director of AAP, 63, Dies," accessed July 7, 2017, <http://dailybruin.com/2005/07/17/former-director-of-aap-63-dies/>

¹⁰³ Azusa Pacific University, "Chip Anderson Biography," accessed July 7, 2017, <http://www.apu.edu/strengthsacademy/about/chipanderson/>.

¹⁰⁴ Donald O. Clifton, Edward "Chip" Anderson, and Laurie A. Schreiner, *Strengths Quest: Discover and Develop your Strengths in Academics, Career and Beyond* (New York: Gallup Press, 2006), 11.

¹⁰⁵ Marcus Buckingham and Donald O. Clifton, *Now Discover Your Strengths* (New York: Free Press, 2001), 8.

¹⁰⁶ Clifton, Anderson, and Schreiner, *Strengths Quest*, 6.

¹⁰⁷ Buckingham and Clifton, 248.

¹⁰⁸ Tim Clydesdale, *The Purposeful Graduate, Why Colleges Must Talk to Students About Vocation* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 50.

This research and its resulting theories combat the myth that all people can be competent in anything. The reality is that people don't grow the most in areas of weakness.¹⁰⁹ Clifton and Anderson taught that if you shift from a focus on your weaknesses and failings to what is right about you, you will find the unique characteristics of your strengths.¹¹⁰ Rather than focus on improving areas of weakness, students should be encouraged to capitalize on their strengths and manage their weaknesses.

Clifton and Anderson make it clear in their work that it is important for students to distinguish talents from learnable skills.¹¹¹ They define talents as naturally occurring patterns of thought, feeling, and behavior. Students must determine their dominant talents. They can do so by reflecting on the question, "What are the activities that you become deeply absorbed in?"¹¹² This differentiates knowledge from skills. Knowledge is made up of acts and lessons learned. Skills are the steps of an activity that we learn.¹¹³ When properly understood, strengths give students a common language for talent.¹¹⁴ There are thirty-four themes of similar talents. They are the spontaneous, top of mind

¹⁰⁹ Buckingham and Clifton, 7.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 3-4.

¹¹¹ Clifton, 28.

¹¹² Ibid., 31

¹¹³ Ibid., 29.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 32.

reactions.¹¹⁵ A talent is not a strength. Talents are raw and must be refined into strengths.¹¹⁶

Students, based on Chip Anderson's professional experience, need preparation for success in the following areas: academic skills, background knowledge, and self-management skills.¹¹⁷ These college students must embrace the notion of exploring and identifying their strengths as a quest to find both confidence and an awareness of their potential for excellence.¹¹⁸ To be excellent, one must possess the necessary talent, develop the talent into strengths, and use those strengths to achieve one's goals.

A review of Greenville's eleven responses to its fluctuating retention show a number of utilizations of Clifton and Anderson's theories regarding strengths. The most evident use is the decades-long StrengthsFinder/StrengthsQuest to help students identify talents and to develop personalized student success strategies. It is also evident in the connections to Shreiner's, Brooks', and the Brenflecks' work and how they have influenced ideas of talent identification and utilization across these programs.

The sixth practitioner is Carol Dweck. She serves as a professor of both psychology and graduate education at Stanford University. Her work focuses on individuals' understanding of self and how this impacts motivation and achievement.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Buckingham and Clifton, 67.

¹¹⁶ Clifton, Anderson, and Schreiner, *Strengths Quest*, 8.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, v.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹¹⁹ Stanford University, "Carol Dweck's Profile," accessed July 7, 2017, <https://profiles.stanford.edu/carol-dweck>.

She is the author of the text *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* and many articles that provide frameworks for helping students succeed in the classroom.¹²⁰

The seventh practitioner is Angela Duckworth. She is a professor of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania.¹²¹ Her research focuses on two traits that she believes guide achievement. These two traits are grit and self-control.¹²² She explores her ideas in her influential book *Grit*. In this text, she offers strategies for people to find success in all avenues of life, building on her research discovery that not only do passion and persistence outpace talent but that grit can be developed as a character trait.¹²³

Across six studies, grit accounted for significant variance in success outcomes over and beyond IQ.¹²⁴ Duckworth created the grit scale based on this research to teach others that grit and IQ were not connected.¹²⁵ Simply stated, gritty students outperform their less gritty peers.¹²⁶

¹²⁰ Stanford University, “Carol Dweck Vita,” accessed July 7, 2017, https://cap.stanford.edu/profiles/viewCV?facultyId=10485&name=Carol_Dweck

¹²¹ University of Pennsylvania, “Angela Duckworth,” accessed July 7, 2017, <https://psychology.sas.upenn.edu/people/angela-duckworth>.

¹²² University of Pennsylvania, “Angela Duckworth – Research,” accessed July 7, 2017, <http://angeladuckworth.com/research/>.

¹²³ University of Pennsylvania, “Angela Duckworth – Grit,” accessed July 7, 2017, <http://angeladuckworth.com/grit-book/>.

¹²⁴ Robert J. Nash and Michele C. Murray, *Helping College Students Find Purpose: The Campus Guide to Meaning Making* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010). 1098.

¹²⁵ Angela Duckworth, *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance* (New York: First Scribner, 2016), 1088.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 1093.

Grit involves working strenuously toward challenge. It is defined as persistence and passion for long-term goals.¹²⁷ Purposeful graduates were resilient and could see challenges as training.¹²⁸

Duckworth's and Dweck's work highlight that perseverance in the form of resiliency and grit is at least as important to success as intelligence.¹²⁹ When a student can reflect and see a past positive turning point, it may highlight a moment of resiliency.¹³⁰ An example of this is how students who persisted in college were the ones who viewed setbacks as temporary delays in reaching lifetime goals.¹³¹

Dweck's and Duckworth's work remind students that first learning is not always best learning. To gain understanding takes a longer path.¹³² If students seek to master a topic, they must persist.

This growth mindset teaches students to relish challenge and overcoming. If intelligence is defined as fixed, the focus becomes looking smart. When a growth mindset is adopted, the focus shifts to becoming more intelligent. Students with a fixed mindset dislike effort and tend to not handle setbacks well.¹³³

¹²⁷ Ibid., 1087.

¹²⁸ Clydesdale, *The Purposeful Graduate*, 119-120.

¹²⁹ Duckworth, 1088.

¹³⁰ Jeffrey J. Arnett, *Emerging Adults in America: The Winding Road from the Late Teens Through the Twenties* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 163.

¹³¹ Clydesdale, *The Purposeful Graduate*, 118.

¹³² Carol Dweck, "Even Geniuses Work Hard," *Educational Leadership* 68, no. 1 (September 2010): 17.

¹³³ Ibid., 16.

To foster a growth mindset, colleges and universities must provide challenging work. Challenging work allows students to grow. Students with a growth mindset will respond to obstacles with involvement.¹³⁴ They will emphasize the value of the challenge over success.¹³⁵ These students embrace the power of “yet”—as in they have not *yet* learned something.¹³⁶

A review of Greenville’s eleven responses to its fluctuating retention show a number of utilizations of Dweck’s and Duckworth’s theories. Their work influenced the coaching programs and the importance of responding to student concerns efficiently. Their work is also evident in the revisions to the CORE 101 curriculum.

The eighth practitioner is Laurie Schreiner. She chairs the doctor of education program in higher education at Azusa Pacific University. She has over thirty years of higher education experience as a faculty member, administrator, and researcher. She is one of the authors of the Student Satisfaction Inventory that has measured student satisfaction on hundreds of colleges and universities in North America. She developed the Thriving Quotient that measures students’ degree of thriving in college. She has co-directed two FIPSE (Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education) grants. One was focused on successful first-year college student programming. The second was focused on the development of four-year strengths-based retention initiatives and programs.¹³⁷

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 18.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 19.

¹³⁷ Azusa Pacific University, “Laurie Schreiner, Ph. D.,” accessed July 8, 2017, <http://www.apu.edu/bas/faculty/lSchreiner/>.

Schreiner introduced the idea of thriving instead of just surviving college.¹³⁸

Thriving is rooted in a 2009 study of more than 28,000 students that sought to address the question of how students thrive.¹³⁹ Schreiner identifies rightly that college students can succeed but do so in widely different levels of engagement and qualities of experience.¹⁴⁰ Thriving students do not only succeed academically but also experience a sense of community and psychological well-being.¹⁴¹

Schreiner identifies three domains of thriving. The first is academic. The second is interpersonal. The third is intrapersonal.¹⁴²

Academic thriving involves students who are engaged in the learning processes and meaningfully process materials connecting what they know and what needs to be learned. They are energized by the learning process. They also submit to the effort-driven process of learning.¹⁴³

Interpersonal thriving involves having meaningful relationships that matter in positive ways. It involves social connections, diverse citizenship, contributing to the world, and being flexible in the face of change.¹⁴⁴ Intrapersonal thriving is sober and grounded; it is a way of proactively responding in healthy ways to the demands of life. It

¹³⁸ Laurie Schreiner, "The Thriving Quotient: A New Vision for Student Success," *About Campus* (May-June 2010): 3.

¹³⁹ Laurie Schreiner, "Linking Student Satisfaction and Persistence," *Noel-Levitz* (2009): 1.

¹⁴⁰ Schreiner, *Thriving Quotient*, 2.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

is a long-term view that sees challenges as learning opportunities. It is what Schreiner calls a positive perspective.

Some factors that Schreiner identified in college and university students were malleable and provide the most impact for fostering thriving. The first of these five factors is fostering a positive perspective of students' self and the student's future. The second was the student's level of engagement of the learning process. The third was the student's level of investment of effort and self-regulation in their curricular and co-curricular tasks. The fourth was the development and maintenance of healthy relationships and connections with others on campus. The final factor is a student's openness to diversity and desire to make contributions to the lives of others.¹⁴⁵

Schreiner recommends a number of strategies for colleges and universities to change student perspectives to increase thriving. The first is to equip students with an optimistic way of understanding their problems and challenges. The second is to help students envision future success. The third is to teach students to develop and apply their strengths.

Schreiner recommends ways that institutions of higher learning can facilitate student thriving utilizing her research. They can use high-impact teaching and learning practices. They can create a sense of community on campus.¹⁴⁶ They can build realistic optimism among students. They can promote exploration and clarification of student

¹⁴⁵ Laurie Schreiner, "Thriving in Community," *About Campus* (September 2010): 3.

¹⁴⁶ Cindy M. Derrico, Jennifer L. Tharp, and Laurie A. Schreiner, "Called to Make a Difference: The Experiences of Students Who Thrive on Faith-Based Campuses," *Christian Higher Education* 14, no. 5 (September 2015): 315.

purpose and calling.¹⁴⁷ They can embrace the power of first-year seminars as an effective way to teach psychological processes that impact their success positively.¹⁴⁸ They can train advisors to build hope and show a path forward.¹⁴⁹ They can normalize the help-seeking process for students. They can raise up peer leaders to influence and assist students.¹⁵⁰ They also must mitigate the negative influence uncaring faculty and staff have on students.

Schreiner also advocates students adopt an engaged learning posture in their traditional classroom settings. For her, this consists of three parts. Meaningful processing is the first of these and consists of deep learning, linking what a class focuses on to a student's previously existing knowledge and curiosities. Focused attention is the second and is similar to mindfulness. Students limit distractions and make strong attempts to be mentally present in class and focused on what is happening. The third component of Schreiner's engaged learning posture is active participation. This is, simply put, students doing all that is expected of them in class.¹⁵¹

In addition to classroom focused academic success students must also, according to Schreiner, adopt a strong sense of responsibility for their academic success. She identifies this as academic determination. For her, it has four components. The first is investment of effort, rooted in a growth-focused mindset. The second part is self-regulation, where students utilize their self-awareness to adapt themselves to course

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 316.

¹⁴⁸ Laurie Schreiner, "Thriving in the Classroom," *About Campus* (July 2010): 9.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 8.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 9.

¹⁵¹ Schreiner, *Thriving in the Classroom*, 4.

information that may not be easily accessible¹⁵². Her third component is mastery of the educational environment. Students must take ownership of their time, access, and support of the learning environments they encounter.¹⁵³ Lastly, she recommends students engage in regular goal-directed thinking.¹⁵⁴ They must be hopeful and focused on manageable goals that advance their academic careers.¹⁵⁵

In terms of overarching student motivation, Schreiner identifies calling as a powerful concept for fostering thriving. The idea of calling need not be religious, but could simply be altruistic and transcendent.¹⁵⁶ For many students, the idea of thriving itself emerged out of a sense that their college experience was equipping them to do what they were called by God to do with their lives.¹⁵⁷ She found calling was a powerful idea for driving thriving students forward.¹⁵⁸ Non-thriving students did not receive authentic support when they reached out.¹⁵⁹ Students whose levels of thriving diminished described uncaring faculty as a primary factor in decreasing thriving.¹⁶⁰

A review of Greenville's eleven responses to its fluctuating retention show significant evidence of the influence of Schreiner's ideas. Specifically, we see her

¹⁵² Ibid., 7.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 7-8.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 7.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 8.

¹⁵⁶ Derrico, Tharp, and Schreiner, *Called to Make a Difference*, 314.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 309.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 313.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 311.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 308.

influence on the thrive coach program and her support of strengths programs. This is both as a stand-alone StrengthsFinder program and discussions of talent in the “Vocation First” initiatives and the revision of CORE 101. Schreiner’s concepts of thriving incorporate ideas of helping students connect to necessary resources, which is evident in Greenville’s response retention surveys and the importance of responding to student concerns raised by employees. Part of the focus of the coaching initiatives and six-by-six dinners was to build a sense of community for students and build relational capital, both of which align with Schreiner’s ideas. Lastly, there is evidence of Schreiner’s ideas in the CORE 101 curriculum revisions that sought to highlight Greenville’s preparation of students for future careers.

The ninth practitioner is Bryan Dik. He is a professor of psychology at Colorado State University.¹⁶¹ His regular collaborator is the tenth practitioner, Ryan Duffy, a professor of psychology at the University of Florida.¹⁶² They have co-authored four books on the topic of vocation.¹⁶³ Their work is rooted in a vocational concept that is psychological and workplace-focused. Duffy is also the author of multiple academic articles on topics in the field of career services, focused on meaning making, motivation, and career persistence, among other topics.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹ Colorado State University, “Bryan J. Dik Vitae,” accessed July 8, 2017, <http://psywebserv.psych.colostate.edu/psylist/dik.pdf>.

¹⁶² Ryan D. Duffy, “Vitae,” accessed July 8, 2017, <http://www.drryanduffy.com/vita.html>.

¹⁶³ Colorado State University, “Bryan J. Dik Vitae.”

¹⁶⁴ Ryan D. Duffy, “Vitae.”

William Placher, the eleventh practitioner, was a teaching professor of theology for nearly thirty-five years at Wabash College in Indiana. He was also an author focused on ministry and theology topics including religious calling and vocation.¹⁶⁵

Calling has many definitions. A calling may derive a sense of purpose from work. A calling may also involve demonstrating a sense of purpose and meaning when work is an outlet for expressing purpose and meaning.¹⁶⁶ Calling may be rooted in the difference what we do makes in the lives of others. Ultimately, any honest and legitimate area of work can be a calling.¹⁶⁷

Calling can be rooted in psychology and not just theology. For example the study of “psychology of vocation,” focuses on calling and meaningful work specifically and researches career choices and career development generally.¹⁶⁸ Whether theological or psychological, calling is “a transcendent summons, experienced as originating beyond the self, to approach a particular life role in a matter oriented toward demonstrating our deriving a sense of purpose or meaningfulness and that holds “others-oriented values” and “goods” as primary sources of maturation.”¹⁶⁹ Various authors on the topic acknowledge that calling has an expressive quality of inner values. Modern calling is

¹⁶⁵ Wabash College, “Legend Lost: Wabash Mourns Placher,” accessed July 8, 2017, https://wabash.edu/news/displaystory.cfm?news_ID=6499.

¹⁶⁶ Bryan J. Dik and Ryan D. Duffy, *Make Your Job a Calling* (West Conshohocken, PA: Templeton Press), 12.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

focused on individual helping, whereas classic calling focused on service to God and others.¹⁷⁰

The concept of “calling” provokes a wide array of responses in contemporary society. Sixty-eight percent of recently studied college students found it was a relevant concern.¹⁷¹ Some students attributed it to God, others to an inner drive, and still others articulated a strong desire to fit gifts and talents and passions together, hoping for growth, clarity, and happiness.¹⁷² Life counts because God has a direction in mind. The story of one’s life has meaning as part of a larger story, the story of God’s work in the world.¹⁷³

For Christians, scripture does not offer a clear account when it comes to calling. There are references to good work with God versus toil following Adam and Eve’s sin in Genesis. In scripture, most references to call or vocation tend to be a special task in God’s service.¹⁷⁴ For example Colossians 3:23 speaks to the “everyday” calling of doing all work as service to God.¹⁷⁵ The apostle Paul defined calling as a “life of faith,” using the Greek word “klesis.”¹⁷⁶

Within church history, there are four historical eras of calling. In the Early Church, calling was to be part of church or away from society. In the Middle Ages, calling was joining religious orders. In the Reformation, calling was expanded to include

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 9.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 7.

¹⁷² Ibid., 8.

¹⁷³ William Placher, ed., *Callings: Twenty Centuries of Christian Wisdom on Vocation* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2005), 3.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 4.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 8.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 4-5.

all work. In the modern age, there was a stripping of such meaning from work due to industrialization. People became cogs in the machine.¹⁷⁷

In addition to these four broad eras, there are other notable perspectives on calling and vocation. The Puritans believed in calling for all in their community to serve, given directly from God.¹⁷⁸ William Perkins differentiated between general calling and special calling. General calling is one's obedience to Christ. Special calling was the specific work one was called to in life.¹⁷⁹ Calvin, in his *Institutes of Christian Religion*, defined calling as using God's gifts well.¹⁸⁰ Calvin differentiated between a trade- and labor-focused aligning and a specialized calling to do ministry work.¹⁸¹ Luther believed call was rigidly tied to class. In Luther's Christmas sermon, he spoke of how Christianity doesn't change one's station in life, but it does impact how one views where they are and what they can do for God.¹⁸² Calvin, however, believed there was some mobility. Ignatius of Loyola believed people should seek God first and then embrace a discernment process for identifying other work and actions.¹⁸³

A strong sense of religious vocation can give individuals a grounded idealism, not a soft "wishfulness" that collapses in the face of real-life everyday challenges. They develop "a resilience and persistence that combined broad contentment with their present

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 6-8.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 209.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 262.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 235.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 237.

¹⁸² Ibid., 214.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 239-240.

lives with ongoing progress toward a life that would positively impact others.”¹⁸⁴ Other peers who didn’t pursue exploration of these ideas of purpose and vocation didn’t articulate the perspectives as broadly or with as much resilience.¹⁸⁵ Despite the possibility of raised post-college expectations, students who studied and explored vocation and life purpose embraced longer paths that included setbacks and ultimately had more present satisfaction.¹⁸⁶

A review of Greenville’s eleven responses to its fluctuating retention show a number of utilizations of Dik’s and Duffy’s psychological ideas of calling and Placher’s ideas of religious calling. The most evident are the attempts to educate students and faculty about the concept of calling either through the creation of the Office of Leadership and Life Calling or the program within the Vocation First grant.

Kay Marie Brennfleck and Kevin Brennfleck are our twelfth and thirteenth practitioners. They are nationally certified career coaches who lead the Center for Career and Life Calling at Concordia University in Ann Arbor, Michigan. They are co-authors of *Live Your Calling*, a 2005 book that provides college students, and others, a practical guide to identifying a calling and translating it into a career.¹⁸⁷ This book is representative of a type of career counseling approach common in faith-based colleges and universities.

¹⁸⁴ Clydesdale, *The Purposeful Graduate*, 19.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 117-199.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 117.

¹⁸⁷ Concordia University – Ann Arbor, “About Career Services,” accessed July 9, 2017, <https://www.cuaa.edu/departments/careerservices/about.html>.

The Brennflecks' model of career development is common among private colleges and universities with strong evangelical Christian values. It consists of an integration of evangelical theology and the best of secular career services. This connects efficient and effective processes of self-analysis, marketing, and strategic career planning with a holy motivation to do God's work in a variety of career fields.

Specifically, the Brennflecks guide young college students through a series of six inventories to give them knowledge and enlarge their vision of what is possible. They are also equipped to learn how to make good decisions and remain motivated through the many things that can get one stuck on their way to their goals and God's goals. This maximizes a student's potential in getting the most out of their God-given calling.¹⁸⁸

The Brennflecks' model is undergirded by a type of Christianity where God speaks through scripture and we prayerfully make choices that align with what one finds in scripture.¹⁸⁹ Though the world may be complex, God will guide us if we keep scripture central to our life.¹⁹⁰ Our experiences in life inform our expectations of our professional lives, including our parents' words and our own expectations.¹⁹¹ If we do what we know God is asking us to do, we will find more ways to influence the growth of God's kingdom in the world.¹⁹² God's callings exceeds our expectations by definition.¹⁹³ There is no

¹⁸⁸ Kevin Brennleck and Kay Marie Brennleck, *Live Your Calling: A Practical Guide to Finding and Fulfilling your Mission in Life* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2005), xiii.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 146.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 147.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 31.

¹⁹² Ibid., 21.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 198.

division in the world between the sacred and the secular. All of the world's domains are God's and are places where God works and moves.¹⁹⁴

According to the Brenflecks, vocation is not found only in ministry or pastoral work. It is also found in jobs that provide opportunities to represent God's kingdom in the workplace.¹⁹⁵ Low vocational fit is where work is just a job. Level two vocational fit is where there is at least some connection between work tasks and one's secondary calling. At level three, one finds an enjoyable level of connection between work and secondary vocation.¹⁹⁶ At level four, vocational fit becomes meaningful. Level five is where one experiences a high level of integration between secondary vocation and one's work tasks.¹⁹⁷ A great benefit of level five vocational integration is that you earn a living by being your true self.¹⁹⁸ Vocation is a journey, and it will take time and energy to move up the ladder of vocational fit.¹⁹⁹

The key difference one sees between secular and Christian career services is one of focus. American culture tends to articulate calling as working in a dream job.²⁰⁰ Christians are called to something beyond work. The Bible tells the story of a primary calling for all humans. This primary calling is to a relationship with God through

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 17.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 20.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 19.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 20.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 20.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 231.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 4.

acceptance of the life and example of Jesus Christ.²⁰¹ In the New Testament, this calling is the life of faith.²⁰²

Christians are called to be the people of God doing the work of building the kingdom of God on earth.²⁰³ An important part of living a meaningful life is by actively expanding possible ways and possible contexts for God to use you.²⁰⁴ A calling is God-sized and it is something one must pursue regardless of its scope or seeming impossibility. God judges each of us on how we respond—on our obedience, not the size of our dreams.²⁰⁵

The secondary callings we engage in may be need-driven, where we respond to pain and brokenness in the world. Our calling may be design-driven, where we find a talent meets a need or an opportunity in the world. They may also be experience-driven, where our story resonates with others and reveals opportunities in them and ourselves.²⁰⁶ There is scriptural support for the idea that each person has a purpose in God's eternal plan. This is referenced in Ephesians 2:10. This sort of calling is secondary to the life of faith. This secondary calling is where the Brennflecks argue one can work out their vocation, which they define as the alignment of talents, skills, and education with opportunity.²⁰⁷ These gifts and talents are the foundation of our vocation. It also extends

²⁰¹ Ibid., 5.

²⁰² Ibid., 6.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 114.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 117.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 119.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 7.

to your relationship with God. Much work must be done to uncover one's secondary calling.²⁰⁸ As we seek to understand and explore our vocation, we must remember to keep one's primary vocation primary: our faith in God.²⁰⁹

For the Brennflecks, students must push back against things that block their calling, especially when it is clear that it isn't something we have a felt need to do. We also must confront difficult issues like accepting what our calling is or how we will find the resources for it or how it may lead to a life of low resources. Part of how we can do this well is to keep our primary calling primary and use it as motivation to do the hard things our secondary calling may require.²¹⁰ God will guide God's people is a promise found in scripture. God will take the initiative and God's people must trust.²¹¹ One must overcome the challenge of getting stuck in one's comfort zone.²¹² Other challenges to pursuing a secondary vocation are not being able to see how the puzzle of one's calling and vocation align. One may also find him/herself unable to make a decision between equally valid, appealing, or compelling options. In such instances, one should be faithful to God's voice.²¹³

In the Brennflecks' model, it is important that one knows how to discern God's guidance. Discernment begins with an attitude of openness toward where and what God

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 12.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 13.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 14.

²¹¹ Ibid., 145.

²¹² Ibid., 194.

²¹³ Ibid., 195.

may reveal.²¹⁴ One then must take responsibility for making a decision and, finally, be willing to do whatever God reveals.²¹⁵

The Christian life is one of stewardship. Stewardship of our skills, money, time, and resources. We are to manage these for the good of the Kingdom of God.²¹⁶ We see in the teachings of Jesus how God allows each human to be stewards of valuable gifts. These gifts are our talents, experiences, and opportunities. We are only responsible for those that we are given. Others have their own. There are limits to what we are given.²¹⁷ However, we also need to take risks and be proactive, trusting in God's leading and having faith in God's wisdom.²¹⁸ Each person is doing her/his work for the good of the world; it is our gift to the world. This is much like Abraham's call to be blessed in order to be a blessing to others. It also points to Frederic Buechner's iconic quote directing all people to find the problems in the world that we find great meaning and gladness in solving.²¹⁹

A review of Greenville's eleven responses to its fluctuating retention show a number of engagements of the Brennflecks' ideas about integrating quality career services theory with Evangelical Christian theology. We see the influence of these ideas on the creation of the Career & Calling Office and its programs focused on connecting theology and career services. It is also evident in the two revisions of the freshman

²¹⁴ Ibid., 149.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 150.

²¹⁶ Brennfleck, 17.

²¹⁷ Ibid., 18.

²¹⁸ Ibid., 19.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 16.

seminar class known as CORE 101 both as part of a general update of the course to better articulate career topics in the course, but also the revisions based on the “Vocation First” grant from NetVUE.

Katharine Brooks is the fourteenth and final practitioner. She serves as the executive director of the career center at Vanderbilt University. She is author of *You Majored in What?: Mapping Your Path From Chaos to Career*, and a regular blogger on career development topics. She has received multiple awards for her vision and contributions to the field of career services.²²⁰

Central to Brooks’ ideas is the concept of wise wanderings. It is a theory that embraces chaos theory to better prepare college students for careers. Chaos theory explores seemingly random movements within a larger set of boundaries.²²¹ This sort of chaos is better understood not as randomness, but as a very complex ordering of things that isn’t easily or immediately visible.²²² Brooks’ theory helps students better navigate the unexpected and not always linear path toward their goal.²²³

Brooks’ process of wise wanderings has five parts. It begins with assessing what you completely know, what you cannot know, and what you can learn. It progresses to helping students understand that they can’t base career decisions on a single trait or factor.²²⁴ Students must then be taught that change occurs constantly and that

²²⁰ Psychology Today, “Katharine Brooks,” accessed January 2, 2018, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/experts/katharine-brooks-edd>.

²²¹ Katharine Brooks, *You Majored in What: Mapping Your Path from Chaos to Career* (New York: Viking, 2009), 9.

²²² *Ibid.*, 11.

²²³ *Ibid.*, 10.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 12.

unpredictability is to be expected. They also need to be taught that the system they live in will eventually revert to order. The final teaching, however, is that this order is part of a complex system. It consists of various well-defined push-pull factors, oscillating pendulum attractors, cyclical torus attractors, and strange attractors that are random and unpredictable.²²⁵ By embracing these five parts, students will internalize a resilient career strategy that is adaptable to change, open to possibilities, possessing direction, and embracing chaos.²²⁶

Brooks seeks to combat the lie many believe that assumes a linear path from major to a lifelong career. This lie focused on the tight alignment between major and career is a early 20th century “trait and factor” approach.²²⁷ Frank Parsons posited the “trait and factor” approach at the height of business study of efficiency within industrial psychology. While trait and factor alignment are important, they are not as effective in twenty-first-century thinking about career preparation.²²⁸ It is too narrow a theory to accommodate the complexities of the opportunities and job market of current college students.²²⁹ As previously discussed in terms of StrengthsQuest, to succeed in a chosen field of study or career, it is helpful to understand one’s lasting patterns and areas of

²²⁵ Ibid., 13.

²²⁶ Ibid., 16.

²²⁷ Ibid., 2.

²²⁸ Ibid., 5.

²²⁹ Ibid., 6.

talents.²³⁰ Students often use “trait and factor” approach to justify going to college. Colleges are guilty of this as well to justify enrollment and expense.²³¹

A review of Greenville’s eleven responses to its fluctuating retention show the utilization of Brooks’ theories. Obviously, the most notable is the use of Brooks’ book as a required text in the revamped CORE 101 course. Other connections include the encouragement to use Gallup’s strengths or other talent identification methods for encouraging students to find purpose in their college experience. One can also see Brooks’ challenge to the “trait and factor” approach being highlighted in various attempts to help students see purpose in their university experience beyond preparation for employment.

These fourteen experts have shaped how most colleges and universities approach student persistence and retention. These practitioners have provided excellent strategies for both students and their institutions that touch on aspects of the university experience ranging from the classroom, to internships, to residence halls, to the athletic field. They have sought to apply a variety of academic disciplines to the problem of persistence, including education, psychology, sociology, theology, and even quantum physics. However, as seen in chapter one, Greenville University has spent the past decade implementing ideas that are directly and indirectly related to all of these theorists and yet has experienced no significant stability in its retention rates.

²³⁰ Buckingham and Clifton, 3.

²³¹ Brooks, 3.

SECTION 3: THE THESIS

A review of the eleven programs in section one and of the fourteen practitioners in section two, reveal a wide variety of approaches to addressing the issue of retention. This review also highlights a peculiarity of Greenville University's organization and values, compared to many of its CCCU counterparts. Greenville does not have a centralized campus ministry, spiritual formation, or chaplaincy office.

These functions are distributed across academic departments, athletic teams, student development offices and student government. While each of these programs align themselves with the faith statements of the institution, the vision of the president and the guidance of the part-time chaplain, they operate with independence. As a result, spiritual formation is a function of the institution that has not been explored as a way to increase student retention.

Fostering equanimity in the emerging adults who populate Greenville University through spiritual formation practices can be an effective strategy for stabilizing retention rates. In Alexander Astin, Helen Astin, and Jennifer Lindholm's book *Cultivating the Spirit*, they identify equanimity as a key variable influencing student persistence in college. Equanimity is defined as the capacity to find meaning in hardship, a view that each day is a gift, good or bad, and a spirit of thankfulness for all that makes up one's life.²³² Simply put, it is the capacity to make meaning, learn lessons, and be grateful for all of the experiences of one's life. Understanding equanimity will empower students not

²³² Alexander W. Astin, Helen S. Astin, and Jennifer A. Lindholm, *Cultivating the Spirit: How College Can Enhance Students' Inner Lives* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 50.

only for long-term success as adults, but short-term success as emerging adults in completing their college degrees.

Astin, Astin, and Lindholm conducted a study of the spiritual lives of American college and university students. The Templeton Foundation funded this survey of freshmen at a variety of sizes and types of colleges and universities. In 2004, 112,000 freshmen were surveyed and 15,000 of the same students were surveyed in 2007 as juniors.²³³ The results of this work were published in a number of articles and the aforementioned book.

This survey found spiritual growth in college enhances outcomes such as academic performance, psychological well-being, leadership development, and satisfaction with college.²³⁴ It also found that those students who measured high in equanimity had better grades and higher levels of psychological well-being, and were more satisfied with their college experience. Students who develop equanimity recognized their emotional response to negative emotions; they paused and reframed the situation and channeled emotional energy constructively.²³⁵

In addition to showing that equanimity was a trait present in students who succeeded in college, they also found a retention link. Over the course of the study, the number of students who had high levels of equanimity increased from 19% to 23% between their freshman and junior years. Those with low scores declined from 17% to

²³³ Ibid., 9.

²³⁴ Ibid., 10.

²³⁵ Ibid., 57.

13% over the same time span.²³⁶ This speaks to retention. Those who had equanimity persisted in college.

While this is a positive discovery, there are many common traits among students who persist toward graduation at a higher level than their peers. Many of the practitioners discussed earlier have identified the traits that positively predict retention and persistence among college students. These include economic status, previous grade point averages, test scores, parents who were college graduates, and many others. Many of these traits are developed over long periods of time. What makes Astin, Astin, and Lindholm's discovery about equanimity important is both its association with a positive retention trait and that it can be increased over a short period of time.

They found that equanimity can be increased through a variety of activities. For example, equanimity can be increased by engaging in the practice of reading evocative texts as a means of encountering God or one's spiritual side. It was also increased by reading specifically religious or spiritual texts. Involvement in charitable activities increased equanimity in students as well. This sort of charity didn't need to be part of large-scale efforts. Even simple acts of charity like helping a friend after class was shown to increase equanimity.²³⁷

Equanimity was found to increase in students who participated in mission trips or engaged in activities where they met people of a different race. It increased in students who experienced leadership development. Students who were part of groups that did

²³⁶ Ibid., 52-53.

²³⁷ Ibid., 58.

projects with other students that positively impacted others increased their reported levels of equanimity.²³⁸

The study found that religious activity increased equanimity. These practices included meditation, which increased equanimity by 8%. Students who engaged in either the practice of prayer or intentional self-reflection reported increases in equanimity of 7%.²³⁹ Students who had faculty who talked about their spiritual lives reported higher levels of equanimity.²⁴⁰

A review of these actions that foster equanimity reveals that many of them are directly related to traditional spiritual formation practices. These include prayer, meditation, reading of spiritual texts, reading spiritually, self-reflection, service to others, missionary work, and engaging in worship. Others are at least related to spiritually forming activities. These include helping others, engaging in teamwork, responsible study, and maintaining life/work balance.

There are a number of ways that a college or university can guide students through an equanimity-fostering spiritual formation experience. This could be offered as a curriculum by a spiritual formation office and disseminated to students through chapel, small groups, and mentoring experiences. It could be done as part of a small group or Bible study program done by sports teams over the course of a season. It could be offered by a residence life program in support of spiritual formation learning outcomes through small groups, hall chapels, and resident assistant peer mentoring. However, to maximize

²³⁸ Ibid., 59.

²³⁹ Ibid., 54.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., 60.

the impact of such a program on students' individual equanimity and their cohort's retention, it needs to be offered as a for-credit experience early in their academic career.

The best way to maximize the impact of such an experience is through a required general education three-credit course offered during students' second term at the institution. This would allow students to have worked through many transition stresses prior to beginning this course. Additionally, students in their second term are still in the process of making the decision about their future at the institution. Making the course a three-credit course provides ample in-class and out-of-classroom time to explore the academic and experiential content this course will demand.

This course will be titled UNIV 200: Equanimity and Spiritual Formation (UNIV 200). It will be a three-credit, general education course required of all students during their second term. It follows UNIV 101: Foundations of the Liberal Arts and precedes UNIV 400: Capstone Integration as the other core courses in Greenville's general education curriculum.

To maximize its effectiveness, this course will build on contemporary understandings of emerging adulthood, recent studies of emerging adult spirituality, and the recommendations of those with experience ministering to emerging adults. It will utilize the work of Jeffrey Arnett, who coined the term "emerging adult" two decades ago and who continues to research this stage of life. It will also utilize the understanding of emerging adults, including a special focus on their spirituality, gleaned by Christian Smith and Lisa Pearce's work with the National Study of Youth and Religion. The course will also be built utilizing the work of five authors who have focused on the spiritual lives

and formation of emerging adults. They are Janna Sundene, Richard Dunn, David Setran, Chris Kiesling, and Tim Elmore.

Emerging adulthood is a stage of life experienced by people between adolescence and adulthood. It typically takes place between ages eighteen and twenty-five, though individual situations may extend or shorten the time period.²⁴¹ It is a period characterized by instability in many areas of life, active identity formation, an inward focus on oneself, a sense of optimism, and a resistance to commitment that might limit options.²⁴²

This stage of life has emerged over the past half-century in most industrialized societies. In these societies, institutions and experiences that once marked a young person's transition from adolescent to adult have been delayed. Marriage and childbearing now take place later in life, moving from the late teens and early twenties to the late twenties and early thirties. The broader access to college is part of this delay.²⁴³ It is also influenced by the cultural decoupling of marriage and sex, fear of divorce, and general economic uncertainty. Additional factors include increased financial support of children by parents beyond the high-school years, wider access to and social acceptance of birth control, and general themes of post-structuralism and postmodernism in society.²⁴⁴

²⁴¹ Jeffrey J. Arnett and Jennifer Tanner, eds., *Emerging Adults in America: Coming of Age in the 21st Century* (Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2006), 4.

²⁴² Chris Kiesling and David Setran, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood: A Practical Theology for College and Young Adult Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 4.

²⁴³ Arnett and Tanner, 42.

²⁴⁴ Christian Smith, Kari Christofferson, Hilary Davison, and Patricia Snell Herzog, *Lost in Transition: The Dark Side of Emerging Adulthood* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 13-15.

Emerging adults feel “in between.” They describe a life of instability, identity exploration, self-focus, and possibilities.²⁴⁵ It’s a time when they take control of the meaning-making of their life. This includes being critically aware of creating one’s own reality, becoming a self-conscious participant in an ongoing dialogue toward truth, and cultivating a capacity to respond to that which is just and satisfying.²⁴⁶

Emerging adults adopt a self-narrative of freedom during this stage of life prior to taking on the responsibilities of adulthood.²⁴⁷ Emerging adults report the highest perceived control over their lives that they will ever report, however in actuality they have far less agency than they will have at later stages of life.²⁴⁸ During this stage of life, they are exploring their dreams and perceptions with the goal of ultimately paring down options to a smaller or single set of dreams and roles that will guide them through adulthood.²⁴⁹ This process delays identity resolution until this exploration ends.²⁵⁰

Emerging adulthood ends when young people establish careers and families.²⁵¹ Arnett articulates three stages of emerging adulthood in his work. The first stage is end of adolescence and beginning of emerging adulthood. At this sub-stage, the student lives with their family of origin and their parents remain responsible. At the age of eighteen,

²⁴⁵ Arnett and Tanner, 71.

²⁴⁶ Sharon Parks, *Big Questions Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Emerging Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose and Faith* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 6.

²⁴⁷ Kiesling and Setran, 19.

²⁴⁸ Jeffrey J. Arnett, “The Psychology of Emerging Adulthood: What is Known and What Remains to Be Known,” in *Emerging Adults in America: Coming of Age in the 21st Century*, eds. Jeffrey J. Arnett and Jennifer L. Tanner (Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2006), 304.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 305.

²⁵⁰ Arnett and Tanner, 22.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 24.

however, expectations of society change. They become a major actor in their own life.²⁵² In the second stage, emerging adults seek out temporary exploratory experiences with education, sexuality, and jobs. They are no longer embedded within their family; however, financial support from family continues. Over time, family conflicts about separation emerge, focused on life tasks and responsibilities.²⁵³ This begins to define future adult and family roles. Stage three is the transition to young adulthood. The emerging adults make lasting commitments to career, partners, and one's children. They become self-reliant in areas of finance, housing, and general agency. Their era of exploring gives way to adult structures.²⁵⁴ At the end of this stage, the emerging adult has become an adult, exerting independence in four domains. These four domains are financial, residential, age, and romantic.²⁵⁵

UNIV 200, focused on fostering equanimity, should take advantage of emerging adults' openness to new experience, inward focus, and active engagement in meaning-making. There is an opportunity to help students in such a class shift their exploration and meaning-making from a tacit to an intentional and mindful process. It would be foolish based on what is known of this stage of life to expect that they will solidly embrace any of the experiences of the course, but there is an opportunity to provide information, experiences, and insights that will become part of their adult identity.

²⁵² Ibid., 28-29.

²⁵³ Ibid., 29.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 30.

²⁵⁵ Arnett and Tanner, 31.

The emerging adults that currently inhabit college classrooms face four major challenges regardless of their economic status or American subculture.²⁵⁶ First, they are unabashed consumers.²⁵⁷ Nearly all emerging adults embrace mainstream economic culture.²⁵⁸

Second, they are intoxicated. Seventy-eight percent of emerging adults reported that they drink. Sixty percent of emerging adults reported that they binged in the past two weeks.²⁵⁹ Nineteen percent of 18- to 23-year-olds drink more than a few days a week. They reported that their level of intoxication increases as they get older.²⁶⁰

Third, they are sexually active. For 18- to 23-year-olds, 85% reported being touched sexually, 71% have had oral sex, and 73% have had sexual intercourse.²⁶¹ Additionally, 59% of emerging adults have sexual regrets, 10% have many such regrets.²⁶²

Finally, emerging adults are disengaged from civic life.²⁶³ The popularly repeated belief that emerging adults of the millennial or subsequent generation are civic-minded is a fiction.²⁶⁴ Almost all emerging adults are apathetic, uninformed, distrustful,

²⁵⁶ Smith, Christofferson, Davison, and Herzog, 227.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 70.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 108.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 110.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 111.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 149.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 159.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 195.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 224.

disempowered, or only marginally interested in political and public life. This is not distinctive, as it reflects dominant culture.²⁶⁵

Further complicating these four challenges is the fact that the mature forms of thinking that develop in emerging adulthood to respond to these challenges and others are dependent on education. Effective education of emerging adults requires organized, well-structured influence by mature adults.²⁶⁶ However, few adults model, for emerging adults, lives that are shaped by purpose, demonstrate direction, or recognize the interdependence of all people.²⁶⁷

The topics of consumerism, intoxication, sexuality, and civic-mindedness provide deeply felt and consequential topics to explore in UNIV 200, as it seeks to foster equanimity through exploration of spiritual disciplines. Since the goal of UNIV 200 is to foster equanimity, defined as students' capacity to make meaning, learn lessons, and be grateful for all of the experiences of one's life, these will be used as rich topics. Additionally, these topics will be explored utilizing a pedagogy where adults model equanimity in these areas of life to students through mentoring conversations. Additional insights into constructing UNIV 200 to effectively capitalize on what is known of contemporary emerging adults will be gleaned from the National Study on Youth and Religion.

The NSYR was conducted between August 2001 and December 2015. It was led by Christian Smith at the University of Notre Dame and Lisa Pearce at the University of

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 225.

²⁶⁶ Arnett and Tanner, 73.

²⁶⁷ Clydesdale, *The First Year Out*, 6.

North Carolina. It was funded by the Lilly Endowment and the Templeton Foundation. This study was focused on understanding the spiritual lives of American adolescents and emerging adults.²⁶⁸

The NSYR data and other studies reveal three important findings. First, a significant percentage of emerging adults have religious beliefs and engage in both spiritual and religious practices. Second, faith communities are ineffective in transmitting their faith to their younger generations. Third, religious beliefs positively impact the emerging adults who hold them.

The first important finding was that a significant percentage of emerging adults have religious beliefs and engage in both spiritual and religious practices.²⁶⁹ NSYR notes that 69% of emerging adults pray and 79% believe in God. The survey reports that 80% of emerging adults attended religious services one year prior to college and that 44% attended frequently.²⁷⁰

College students reported seeking out spirituality for belonging and refuge in difficult times.²⁷¹ Many use their faith as Moral Therapeutic Deism, meaning that it serves not as a central guiding worldview but as a tool to address conflict, concerns, and pain.²⁷² Emerging adult religious commitment was reported to not change much from

²⁶⁸ University of Notre Dame, "National Study of Youth and Religion," accessed December 16, 2017, <http://youthandreligion.nd.edu/>

²⁶⁹ Smith, *Souls in Transition*, 3.

²⁷⁰ Astin, Astin, and Lindholm, 83.

²⁷¹ Nash and Murray, 56.

²⁷² Kiesling and Setran, 23.

when they were an adolescent to when they enter college.²⁷³ The NSYR reported the sorts of religious practices emerging adults are using. These are seen in Figure 2.

	Americans	Conservative Protestants	Mainline Protestants	Black Protestants
Meditation	16%	13%	24%	7%
Sabbath	21%	31%	12%	23%
Fast	23%	21%	17%	23%
Scripture	6%	10%	5%	7%
Daily Prayer	30%	42%	24%	43%

Regardless of their level of commitment to their faith, a little more than half of emerging adults remain stable in their religious commitments.²⁷⁴

This is important to the development of UNIV 200 because it identifies beliefs and practices that are most likely to serve as starting points for further spiritual formation. It also provides comparison data for inviting students to share how they are similar or different from their peers that were surveyed. The data also highlights how emerging adults are utilizing religious practices and beliefs as tools to manage anxiety and stress. This is a useful touchpoint for discussing equanimity as an alternative to moral therapeutic deism.

The second important finding was that faith communities are ineffective in transmitting their faith to their younger generations. It is also evident from Smith's

²⁷³ Astin, Astin, and Lindholm, 86.

²⁷⁴ Christian Smith and Patricia Snell, *Souls in Transition: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2009), 282.

research that parents and faith communities are not effective agents of religion.²⁷⁵

Religion occupies a weak and often losing place in competition with other things like family, sports, school, etc. Emerging adulthood raises the stakes and removes social support for being seriously religious. However, those who do maintain a serious religiosity maintain it into adulthood.²⁷⁶

This finding is useful for the development of UNIV 200 because it highlights that traditional methods used by faith communities and parents may not be the best for teaching spiritual truths that lack immediate applicability or usefulness. It will result in the course being more experiential and learner-focused. It will also result in the course containing discussions about student perspectives on faith communities and evangelism.

The third important finding was that religious beliefs positively impact the emerging adults who hold them. Survey data of religious emerging adults show a reduction in risky behaviors like alcohol, fighting, sex, and marijuana use.²⁷⁷ They also show that religious emerging adults have better mental health, well-being, and social connections. They have less depression, less anxiety, and better relationships with their parents.²⁷⁸

This finding is important to the development of UNIV 200 because it may articulate to some students who do not have strongly held religious beliefs the practical value of such beliefs. It also provides a set of discussion points about the value of

²⁷⁵ Christian Smith and Melinda L. Denton, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2005), 27.

²⁷⁶ Nash and Murray, 283.

²⁷⁷ Kiesling and Setran, 42.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 43-44.

transitioning from the beliefs one inherits from their family of origin to one's own personally held values. It also provides a discussion point about whether beliefs or disciplines come first when seeking to be spiritually formed by spiritual disciplines.

The final key to maximizing the effectiveness of this course is to utilize the wisdom of those who have experience ministering to emerging adults. These five ministers and educators mentioned earlier are Rick Dunn, Jana Sundene, David Kiesling, Chris Setran, and Tim Elmore. Dunn and Sundene are co-authors of the 2012 book *Shaping the Journey of Emerging Adults*. Kiesling and Setran co-authored *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood* in 2013. Elmore authored *Generation iY* in 2010 and *Artificial Maturity* in 2012.

Dunn is a lead pastor of Fellowship Evangelical Free Church in Knoxville and is the former chair of educational ministries at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.²⁷⁹ Sundene is associate professor of Christian ministries at Trinity International University and a founding member of the Association of Youth Ministry Educators.²⁸⁰ Setran presently serves as a professor of Christian formation and ministry at Wheaton College.²⁸¹ Kiesling serves as a professor of human development and Christian discipleship at Asbury Seminary in Kentucky.²⁸² Tim Elmore serves as president of Growing Leaders, an organization focused on equipping “educators, coaches, leaders,

²⁷⁹ InterVarsity Press, “Richard R. Dunn,” accessed November 23, 2017, <https://www.ivpress.com/richard-r-dunn>.

²⁸⁰ Trinity International University, “Jana Sundene,” accessed November 23, 2017, <https://undergrad.tiu.edu/faculty/jana-sundene/>.

²⁸¹ Wheaton College, “David Setran,” accessed November 23, 2017, <https://www.wheaton.edu/academics/faculty/profile/?expert=david.setranphd>.

²⁸² Asbury Theological Seminary, “Dr. Chris A. Kiesling,” accessed November 23, 2017, <http://asburyseminary.edu/person/dr-chris-a-kiesling/>.

parents and other adults to impart practical life and leadership skills to young adults that will help them navigate through life.”²⁸³

A review of the work of these experts on educating and ministering to emerging adults reveals three important relationships, three important concepts, and seven keys to engagement that will be included in UNIV 200. The three relationships are those between the students and a community of faith, their mentors, and their parents. The three concepts are discernment, intentionality, and reflection. The seven keys to educating millennials are to allow them to:

1. belong before they believe
2. experience before receiving an explanation
3. find a cause that fosters educational desire
4. engage as a peer trusting that such authenticity will provide teachable moments
5. experience quickly the value of a concept so they are convinced of the value of the work necessary for mastery
6. be free to explore and develop their own ideas
7. expect transformation from the course content.

The first relationship to be explored in UNIV 200 is between the student and their community of faith. Religious communities are transcendent communities that serve others and receive poignant opportunities to transcend daily conversations.²⁸⁴ They are places that can give students a place where their identity formation and fidelity can take

²⁸³ Growing Leaders, “Dr. Tim Elmore,” accessed December 16, 2017, <https://growingleaders.com/tim-elmores/#sthash.OVCBo4bI.dpbs>.

²⁸⁴ William B. Whitney and Pamela Ebstyn King, “Religious Congregations and Communities,” in *Emerging Adults’ Religiousness and Spirituality: Meaning Making in an Age of Transition*, eds. Carolyn McNamara Barry and Mona M. Abo-Zena (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 145.

place. These communities help form religious convictions and assist in the development of religious identity.²⁸⁵ It is an ideological center for them to push off and find shelter in.²⁸⁶ Emerging adults who are part of a religious community have an enhanced sense of self and stability.²⁸⁷ Religious communities also provide space for emerging adults to find new friends and relational connections. The task of finding these sorts of connections is often difficult for emerging adults.²⁸⁸ They “need mentors and communities that will provide biblical guidance while also helping them internalize behaviors.”²⁸⁹ They need to not only internalize faith but to be connected to the historic and local community of faith.²⁹⁰ Disengagement of church by emerging adults in their 20s results in their making many major life decisions, such as marriage career and kids, without church influence.²⁹¹

The second relationship to be explored in UNIV 200 is between the student and their mentors. Emerging adults need non-parents and non-family-member adults to help them be engaged and growing.²⁹² As Parks states when discussing the impact of mentoring on both colleges and society, “restoring mentoring as a cultural force could significantly revitalize our institution and provide the intergenerational glue to address

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 141.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 143.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 144.

²⁸⁸ Kiesling and Setran, 20.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., 79.

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ Ibid., 85.

²⁹² Smith, Christofferson, Davison, and Herzog, 285

some of our deepest and most pervasive concerns.”²⁹³ Emerging adults need concerned adults to genuinely care about and for them.²⁹⁴ Mentoring requires engaging emerging adults in authentic complex relationships. Emerging adult spiritual formation and growth requires a skillful blend of encouragement and challenge, distance and closeness.²⁹⁵

The third relationship to be explored in UNIV 200 is between the student and their parents. Parents often fall into the wrongly believed trap that to share religious beliefs with their emerging adult children is pushing religion down their throats or imposing it on them. Parents generally abdicate their role in talking about meaning, assuming that peers are more influential.²⁹⁶ This myth causes parents to disengage on key topics in the lives of their emerging adults.²⁹⁷

The first of three concepts to be included in UNIV 200 is discernment. Students must learn to discern. The work of spiritual formation must empower students with grace to grow. They need help moving from a focus on great untruth to a focus on grace and growth.²⁹⁸ Utilizing a discernment framework allows them to see that many of the lies, untruths, and destructive ideas that emerging adults encounter in their lives are self-evident. They are so self-evident that the natural consequences help guide emerging adults toward grace and growth. Discernment focuses on helping emerging adults move

²⁹³ Parks, *Big Questions*, 12.

²⁹⁴ Astin and Antonio, 7.

²⁹⁵ Kiesling and Setran, 68.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 208.

²⁹⁷ Smith, *Souls in Transition*, 284.

²⁹⁸ Richard Dunn and Jana Sundene, *Shaping the Journey of Emerging Adults: Life-Giving Rhythms for Spiritual Transformation* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2012), 49.

beyond a good versus evil perspective or a divinely revealed right path, but to embrace ongoing discipleship that helps an individual find shalom.²⁹⁹ Emerging adults need to be freed from their idols and their inauthentic and damaging desires.³⁰⁰ The cure for idolatry is not just willpower but worship. We must help emerging adults love what is lovely.³⁰¹

The second of three concepts to be included in UNIV 200 is intentionality. It focuses on the fact that this Christ-focused lifestyle is not natural and produces a position of spiritual tension.³⁰² Emerging adults need to move beyond faith as moral therapeutic deism. Emerging adult spiritual formation is not therapeutic but reorients heart affections, counting the discipleship cost and abiding with Christ in life.³⁰³ We must draw emerging adults to a scriptural model of spiritual formation as self-denial and taking up the cross of Christ daily rather than self-help, actualization, and development.³⁰⁴ Such a reorientation provides an access point for emerging adults into the depth and variety of Christian traditions.³⁰⁵

The last concept to be included in UNIV 200 is reflection. Reflection is made up of three parts, including a celebration of movement and redirection, insight for repairing damage, and cooperation with the Holy Spirit.³⁰⁶ A method for this is spiritual

²⁹⁹ Ibid., 78.

³⁰⁰ Kiesling and Setran, 33.

³⁰¹ Ibid., 35.

³⁰² Dunn and Sundene, 91.

³⁰³ Kiesling and Setran, 53.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 38.

³⁰⁵ Ibid., 37.

³⁰⁶ Dunn and Sundene, 101-103.

disciplines. Emerging adults need to engage disciplines of abstinence such as solitude, silence, secrecy, and fasting that push against a culture of accomplishment and productivity.³⁰⁷ They also need to engage disciplines of engagement, including scripture reading, lectio divina, singing, and confession.³⁰⁸ This helps open the eyes of emerging adults to God's presence and work in their everyday lives. Spiritual formation happens in both great moments and ordinary actions of life. These moments and choices build and reinforce tendencies.³⁰⁹ This also builds the capacity for cultural critique.³¹⁰ Emerging adults need to be encouraged to adopt critical engagement of the culture. There are two inadequate pathways toward adulthood that emerging adults often choose. The first is that adult life is about freedom, self-fulfillment, and unbounded exploration. The second is that adult life is about independence and self-sufficiency.³¹¹

The first of seven keys to educating emerging adults is to let them belong before they believe. When seeking to influence contemporary emerging adults, one must build connection and relationship before attempting to train or educate. In general, emerging adults will make a decision to engage based more on relationship than logic.³¹²

³⁰⁷ Kiesling and Setran, 47.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., 49-51.

³⁰⁹ Ibid., 43.

³¹⁰ Ibid., 45.

³¹¹ Ibid., 232.

³¹² Tim Elmore, *Generation iY: Our Last Chance to Save Their Future* (Atlanta, GA: Poet Gardner Publishing, 2010), 49.

The second educational key is to allow emerging adults to experience before they receive an explanation. Educators must do the work necessary to draw these students into the content experientially and then seek to provide answers and information.³¹³

The third key to educating contemporary emerging adults is to find a cause that fosters an educational desire. Educators must evoke a response in these students and build on that passion in order to create opportunities for teaching less evocative content. This passion gives them a reason to engage your content.³¹⁴

The fourth of seven keys to educating millennial emerging adults is to let them engage as a peer, trusting that such authenticity will provide teachable moments. These students value authenticity above expertise, even when they need an expert. They seek relationship more than they seek information. As an educator, this requires that one set aside their role as expert, instead building relationships and working together with students in a more peer-like capacity, while at the same time taking teachable moments to highlight one's expertise and knowledge.³¹⁵

The fifth key to impacting contemporary emerging adults is to let them experience quickly the value of a concept so they are convinced of the value of the work necessary for mastery. These students are foreign to the concept of delayed gratification, as they have grown up with so many on-demand and instantly accessible resources and experiences. As a result, the burden is on the educator to highlight a quick or immediate value of the content one is teaching, while at the same time, teaching that there is much

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Ibid., 50.

of value in this world that is not immediately accessible or available without effort. This is an opportunity for scaffolding concepts leading the students from their knowledge to higher levels of education.³¹⁶

The sixth of seven keys to educating emerging adult millennials is to let them be free to explore and develop their own ideas. These students are weary of agendas and “being used.” At the same time, they, as a generation, excel in pushing others to get what they want. They desire to participate and contribute even when they lack the expertise and knowledge to do so. Educators must seek to foster this investment and input where appropriate and create educational environments where these students can create and implement their own ideas.³¹⁷

The final key to educating contemporary emerging adults is to let them expect transformation from the course content. This generation has grown up with high levels of entertainment and technological wonder in all areas of life, including worship and family. The result is a high bar for what is necessary to engage their sense of curiosity and wonder. Educators in courses like UNIV 200 focused on topics of meaning-making, personal values, and high-stakes issues facing humanity must teach in ways that do not merely inform or tell a story. The goal must be to transform the students’ understanding of the topic both in their mind and in their heart.³¹⁸

This section has laid out the case for proposing UNIV 200: Equanimity and Spiritual Formation as a general education course at Greenville University. Astin, Astin,

³¹⁶ Ibid.

³¹⁷ Ibid., 50-51.

³¹⁸ Ibid., 51.

and Lindholm's research shows that emerging adults in college who exhibit higher levels of equanimity have higher levels of retention and persistence than their peers with less equanimity. More importantly, data shows that through engagement of spiritual disciplines and other activities, equanimity can be increased in all students. Additionally, this section has identified key research findings into the general traits of emerging adults and their spiritual lives that will be factored into the details of UNIV 200 to maximize its effectiveness. Lastly the review of the work of ministers and educators focused on spiritually forming and fostering the growth of emerging adults provided additional topics to explore in the course. The next section will articulate the specific details of this three-credit general education course at Greenville University. The specific items to be integrated into the course are highlighted in Figure 3.

Figure 3 – Key Elements of UNIV 200 Taken from Research	
Activities That Foster Equanimity	
1.	Spiritual Reading
2.	Spiritual Text Reading
3.	Charitable Involvement
4.	Helping Friends
5.	Meeting People of a Different Race
6.	Mission Trips
7.	Meditation
8.	Prayer
9.	Being on a Football Team
10.	Being on a Basketball Team
11.	Studying More Than 15 Hours
12.	Having Faculty Who Talk About Their Spiritual Lives
Emerging Adult Research-Related Course Components	
1.	Mentoring
2.	Discussion Topic: Intoxication
3.	Discussion Topic: Sexuality
4.	Discussion Topic: Civic-Mindedness
5.	Discussion Topic: What Spiritual Actions Do We Take as Human Beings and Why?
6.	Discussion Topic: Equanimity Versus Moral Therapeutic Deism
7.	Experiential and Learner-Focused Pedagogy
8.	Discussion Topic: Evangelism Within Faith Communities
9.	Discussion Topic: Do Beliefs Inform Action More Than Actions Inform Beliefs?
Emerging Adult Minister & Educator Course Contributions	
1.	Explore Relationships with Faith Communities
2.	Explore Relationships with Mentors
3.	Explore Relationships with Parents
4.	Teach Discernment
5.	Teach Intentionality
6.	Teach Reflection
7.	Let Emerging Adults Belong Before They Believe
8.	Let Emerging Adults Experience Before Receiving an Explanation
9.	Let Emerging Adults Find a Cause that Fosters Educational Desire
10.	Let Emerging Adults Engage as a Peer, Trusting that Such Authenticity Will Provide Teachable Moments
11.	Let Emerging Adults Experience Quickly the Value of a Concept so they are Convinced of the Value of the Work Necessary for Mastery
12.	Let Emerging Adults to Be Free to Explore and Develop Their Own Ideas
13.	Let Emerging Adults Expect Transformation from the Course Content

SECTION 4: THE ARTIFACT

The artifact consists of the necessary documents to propose a three-credit, general education course to the Greenville University Inter-School Academic Affairs Committee (ISAAC). Five items are required on the “Course Approval/Change Form” to propose a new general education course. These include the academic catalog title and course description, a rationale for the course, a syllabus, and a course approval form. To strengthen this proposal, the artifact will include two additional items. The sixth item is a review of spiritual formation courses incorporating spiritual disciplines offered at institutions with similarities to Greenville University. The seventh item is sample sections of the spiritual formation workbook that students will work through during the course.

The first item required for the proposal is a course name and description for the academic catalog. This name and description must fit within the other core and general education courses. The course will be titled “UNIV 200: Equanimity and Spiritual Formation.”

The UNIV designation at Greenville University is reserved for interdisciplinary courses. It is primarily used for the sequence of two courses that all Greenville University students must complete. These two courses are titled UNIV 101: Foundation of the Liberal Arts and UNIV 401: Integrated Capstone. UNIV 101 guides students through their first semester at Greenville and introduces them to liberal arts, faith and learning integration, university success strategies, and an exploration of majors and careers. UNIV 401 brings together groups of students across academic majors, facilitates their learning

about a contemporary issue, and requires them to work together to propose a solution that draws from their individual strengths and collective major fields.

The proposed new course will be designated UNIV 200: Equanimity and Spiritual Formation. It is a course intended to be taken in a student's second semester. It will focus on guiding students through a spiritual formation experience. This experience will include components focused on classic spiritual disciplines, viewing challenges through lenses of a growth-focused mindset and equanimity, and articulating a personal set of beliefs and actions tied to one's personality and talents to live out during one's college career and beyond.

The course description is limited to seventy-five words.³¹⁹ Its description is patterned after the descriptions of the other UNIV courses.³²⁰ The sixty-one-word course description will be: "The purpose of UNIV 200: Equanimity and Spiritual Formation is to foster equanimity through a holistic spiritual formation experience focused on spiritual disciplines during students' second semester of university study. Students will identify their existing preference for spiritual disciplines, learn about spiritual disciplines across a variety of Christian experiences, and execute a personal spiritual disciplines plan. This is a service learning course."

The second item required in the course proposal process is the rationale for the course. This course provides a needed and distinct addition to the general education requirements of Greenville University. Presently, the task of fostering the equanimity and

³¹⁹ Greenville University, "The Greenville University Course Approval Process," 1.

³²⁰ Greenville University, "2017-2018 Undergraduate Catalog UNIV – University Curriculum," accessed December 5, 2017, <http://catalog.greenville.edu/en/2017-2018/Undergraduate-Catalog/Undergraduate-Course-Listings/UNIV-University-Curriculum>.

forming the spirit of Greenville's students falls to either the chapel program or small groups offered by athletics and residence life. This course ensures that all traditional undergraduate students encounter a spiritual formation curriculum that not only equips them to persist toward graduation, but that provides them with awareness tools and concepts that will help them successfully navigate emerging adulthood. The course will increase retention of students between their second and third semester of attendance by fostering equanimity among first-year students.

The course will increase engagement of the educational mission of the university by contemporary emerging adults. This will be done by guiding students through a curriculum focused on responding to five challenges, building three relationships, and embracing three concepts. The five challenges students will be empowered to see and respond to are consumerism, intoxication, sexual activity, civic disengagement, and a lack of adult mentors. The three important relationships this course will facilitate are the relationships between students and their parents, students and their mentors, and students and their churches or communities of faith. The three concepts the course will help student engage are discernment, intentionality, and reflection.

The third item required by the course approval process is the syllabus. The syllabus to this course will meet Greenville University syllabus standards as articulated by the Greenville University Center for Teaching and Learning.³²¹ Their template requires that all syllabi include course title information, instructor contact information, the University mission statement, the course description, campus resources including

³²¹ Greenville University, "Greenville University Syllabus Template Fall 2018," accessed December 6, 2017, <https://campusservices.greenville.edu/support/solutions/articles/12000030311-greenville-university-syllabus-template-spring-2018>.

accommodations, an objective and assignment alignment table grading scale, the University statement on writing and plagiarism, the Title IX statement, and a disclaimer. The syllabus will include the aforementioned learning outcomes. In addition to these required technical elements, the syllabus will also contain information about the educational elements of the course. These include the outcomes, texts, experiences, assessments, and lecture topics.

There are six learning outcomes for this course. These are rooted in the specific experiences that Astin, Astin, and Lindholm discovered fostered equanimity.³²² These learning outcomes are:

1. Students will use spiritual disciplines to foster their own spiritual development
2. Students will experience twelve classic Christian spiritual disciplines
3. Students will articulate how the Church has viewed spiritual disciplines historically and theologically
4. Students will serve in the church
5. Students will experience and respond to the disequilibrium between their experiences and cultural values and the values of their faith community.
6. Students will exhibit greater levels of equanimity

As a first-year study course that is part of the general education curriculum, this course must align with not only the institutional Student Learning Outcomes but also the First-Year Experience Student Learning Outcomes. This alignment is articulated in Figure 4.

³²² Astin, Astin, and Lindholm, 58-60.

Figure 4. Alignment of Course Learning Outcomes

		UNIV 200 Learning Outcomes					
		Students will use spiritual disciplines to foster their own spiritual development	Students will experience twelve classic Christian spiritual disciplines	Students will serve the church	Students will experience and respond to the disequilibrium between their experiences and cultural values and the values of their faith community	Students will exhibit greater levels of equanimity	Students will articulate how the Church has viewed spiritual disciplines historically and theologically
University Student Learning Outcomes ³²³	Practice critical self-awareness.	X			X		
	Understand our world and comprehend quantitative and conceptual relationships.						
	Think integratively to solve problems.			X			
	Apply skills and systematic reasoning.				X		
	Communicate and cooperate.			X			
	Value others.			X			
	Demonstrate cultural awareness.				X		
	Demonstrate creativity and appreciation for arts, beauty, and ideas.		X				
	Recognize worldviews.				X		
	Apply Christian values.	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Respond to God.	X	X	X		X	
Maintain healthy self-regard and a growth-focused lifestyle.		X			X		
First Year Experience Learning Outcomes ³²⁴	Upon completing the first year at Greenville College students will...						
	contribute to the positive welfare of the campus and Greenville community through service learning or service.			X			
	explore possible life and career calling and vocation options.		X	X			
	pursue answers to their own questions, problems or lines of inquiry by engaging intellectually with students and faculty.				X		
	discover how to respond to God and Scripture.	X	X		X	X	
	engage in a variety of activities (athletic, academic, co-curricular or volunteer) in order to practice physical, social and emotional balance.			X			
gain an appreciation on how Greenville has impacted and continues to impact the world.			X				

³²³ Greenville University, "Greenville University Student Learning Outcomes," accessed December 6, 2017, <https://www.greenville.edu/dotAsset/1b5c1cb6-729f-419e-a711-3840b35f486c.pdf>.

³²⁴ Greenville University, "First Year Experience Learning Outcomes," 2015.

There are three required texts for this course. The first is James Bryan Smith's *The Good and Beautiful Life*. The second is Ruth Haley Barton's *Sacred Rhythms*. The third is Ed Dobson's *The Year of Living Like Jesus*.

This course will be taught in a traditional classroom with two fifty-minute meeting periods each week for the term of the semester. These class periods will take place on Mondays and Wednesdays at 8:30am. This meeting time is intentional to allow students to gather for early morning spiritual formation activities at 7:30am that may blend into class time at 8:30am or allow the instructor to extend class into or to incorporate the 9:30am chapel hour. The class will not meet on Fridays due to the additional out-of-classroom expectations; however, this time will be available in most students' schedules for individual meetings, mentoring, and service.

Key learning experiences in this course will include service, spiritual discipline experiences, mentoring, a research presentation, chapel attendance, lecture, discussion, and two overnight experiences. Students will engage in service one hour a week at a local church. Lecture and discussion focused on the texts and experiences will take place in most of the course's thirty planned classroom meetings.

Students will be held accountable for readings and experiences through exercises in the spiritual formation workbook. The workbook also contains short reflective writing exercises to prep students for discussions. Additionally, there are checklists, notes, and short engagement assignments in the workbook for the overnight experiences at the monastery and the city.

As part of the course, students will attend a three-day, two-night experience focused on spiritual disciplines at a monastery. Students will also participate in the three-day, two-night Urban Plunge service experience hosted by student government.

Assignments in the course will vary in length and type to engage all students in a few assignments that play to their strengths. Students will reflectively journal as part of a spiritual formation workbook throughout the semester. They will complete fill-in-the-blank and short answer questions from their reading as part of the workbook as well. In groups, students will research a spiritual discipline and present it to the class. There will be two written exams about the content of the course. Students will meet with an assigned mentor three times. Attendance in class, service projects, and chapel will be for credit. Five one-page reflection papers will help students reflect and give feedback on the learning of the course up to that point.

The course schedule in Figure 5 follows a traditional fifteen-week semester at Greenville University. It is assumed that the majority of the time, this course will be offered in the spring semester. The spring semester is second semester for the vast majority of traditional Greenville University students, to whom this course is targeted.

Figure 5. UNIV 200 Course Schedule						
Week	Day	Reading	Lecture	Experience	Workbook	Other Assignments
1	Monday		Review Syllabus What is Spiritual Formation? Discuss Service		Do Through 1.2 in Class	Assign Presentations Assign Reflection Paper One
	Wednesday	Dobson 1-14 Smith 1-17	Introduce Texts	Chapel	Through 1.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day One Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
2	Monday	Dobson 15-36 Smith 17-34	Prayer Presentation Writing a Letter to God	Chapel	Through 2.2	
	Wednesday	Smith 35-50	Dobson Reflections Play	Chapel	Through 2.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am Reflection Paper One Due
	Friday			Service Day Two Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
3	Monday	Dobson 37-54 Smith 51-68	Meditation Presentation Hospitality	Chapel	Through 3.2	
	Wednesday	Smith 69-84	Dobson Reflection Sabbath	Chapel	Through 3.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day Three Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
4	Monday	Dobson 55-78 Smith 85-102	Fasting Presentation Media Fast	Chapel	Through 4.2	
	Wednesday	Smith 103-118	Dobson Reflection Silence	Chapel	Through 4.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Monastery Retreat Depart 7:30am		

5	Monday	Dobson 79-106 Smith 119-136	Study Presentation Praying for the Success of Competitors	Chapel	Complete Monastery Through 5.2	Reflection Paper Two Assigned
	Wednesday	Smith 137-152	Dobson Reflections Secret Service	Chapel	Through 5.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am
	Friday			Service Day Four Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
6	Monday	Dobson 107-122 Smith 153-170	Simplicity Presentation Deaccumulation	Chapel	Through 6.2	Reflection Paper Two Due 1am
	Wednesday	Smith 171-184	Dobson Reflection Prayer	Chapel	Through 6.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day Five Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
7	Monday	Dobson 123-142 Smith 185-204	Solitude Presentation A Day Without Gossip	Chapel	Through 7.2	
	Wednesday	Smith 205-220	Dobson Reflection Living One Day Devotionally	Chapel	Through 7.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day Six Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
8	Monday	Dobson 143-144 Barton 1-28	Submission Presentation Longing for More	Chapel	Through 8.2	Reflection Paper Three Assigned
	Wednesday		Exam One Review Dobson Reflection Mentors	Chapel	Through 8.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am Exam One Open 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day Seven Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
9	Monday	Dobson 145-162 Barton 29-44	Service Presentation Solitude	Chapel	Through 9.2	Exam One Closed 1am Reflection Paper Three Due at 1am
	Wednesday		Dobson Reflections Mentors and Church	Chapel	Through 9.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am

						Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day Eight Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
10	Monday	Barton 45-61 Dobson 163-188	Scripture Confession Presentation	Chapel	Through 10.2	
	Wednesday		Evangelism & Civic Mindedness Dobson Reflection	Chapel	Through 10.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Urban Plunge 7:30am		
11	Monday	Barton 62-77 Dobson 189-220	Prayer Dobson Reflections	Chapel	Urban Plunge Complete Through 11.2	Reflection Paper Four Assigned
	Wednesday		Sex and Intoxication	Chapel	Through 11.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day Nine Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
12	Monday	Barton 78-90 Dobson 221-248	Guidance Presentation Honor the Body	Chapel	Through 12.2	Reflection Paper Four Due 1am
	Wednesday		Equanimity Dobson Reflection	Chapel	Through 12.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day Ten Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
13	Monday	Barton 91-109 Dobson 249-274	Celebration Presentation Self-Examination	Chapel	Through 13.2	
	Wednesday		Moral Therapeutic Deism Dobson Reflection	Chapel	Through 13.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30m
	Friday			Service Day Eleven Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
14	Monday	Barton 110-129 Dobson 275-288	Discernment	Chapel	Through 14.2	Reflection Paper Five Assigned
	Wednesday		Exam Two Review Ed Dobson Dobson Reflection	Chapel	Through 14.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day Twelve Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	

15	Monday	Barton 130-145	Sabbath	Chapel	Through 15.2	Reading Reflection Due 1am Reflection Paper Five Due
	Wednesday	Barton 145-166	Rule of Life	Chapel	Through 15.4	Workbook Due 9:30am Exam Two Open 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day Thirteen Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
	Monday					Exam Two Closed 1am Course Evaluation Due 1am

The “Course Approval/Change Request Form” is the final piece necessary in the course approval process. It asks dozens of questions about the course details, the rationale for creating the course, how the course advances the integration of faith and learning in the curriculum, the impact of the course’s assignments on university assessment efforts, and plans for staffing and resourcing the course.³²⁵

The form questions the course’s contribution to faith and learning integration. This course integrates faith and learning in a variety of ways. The course addresses a number of specifically Christian topics, including spiritual disciplines, individual religious beliefs, vocation, and God’s role in guiding individual and collective behavior. Students will also practice spiritual disciplines, serve in the church, and build mentoring relationships as parts of assignments. Students will participate in two overnight retreats to ministry settings including a monastic community and urban church communities. The

³²⁵ Greenville University, “Course Approval Process at Greenville University,” 3-5.

course meets the following Student Learning Outcomes for the institution that focus on faith and learning:

1. Apply Christian values.
2. Respond to God

The course also meets the following faith and learning integration-focused learning outcomes articulated by the First Year Experience Committee:

1. Discover how to respond to God and Scripture

Lastly the following course learning outcomes focus on faith and learning:

1. Students will use spiritual disciplines to foster their own spiritual development
2. Students will experience twelve classic Christian spiritual disciplines
3. Students will articulate how the Church has viewed spiritual disciplines historically and theologically
4. Students will serve in the church
5. Students will experience and respond to the disequilibrium between their experiences and cultural values and the values of their faith community.
6. Students will exhibit greater levels of equanimity

The form requires a plan for how the course will be staffed and paid for. The course will be limited to a class size of twenty-eight students, meaning that a minimum of ten sections of the course will need to be offered. Eight or nine sections will be offered in the spring and one or two sections offered in the fall or January term. The course will be staffed by ten members of the Community life staff as part of their employment agreements.

The cost of the course is \$30,000, to cover travel to and lodging at the monastery. This cost will be covered by a \$100 per student course fee. This cost estimates two hundred and eighty students attending the retreat annually along with ten student assistants and ten instructors. Assuming a \$30 per day cost of the retreat for three days, the cost of the retreat will be \$27,000. The transportation costs for the retreat are estimated at \$600 per weekend, with a total of five weekends.

The form requires a number of approvals prior to submission. In the case of this course, it requires the signature of the Dean of the Bastian School of Theology and Ministry and the Dean of Arts and Sciences. It also requires the support of the General Education Council.

In addition to the required course approval documents, a review of similar courses at other institutions like Greenville will be included in the course proposal. This will provide both support and context for this course. Nine comparison courses will be reviewed, from Anderson University in Indiana, Spring Arbor University in Michigan, Taylor University in Indiana, St. Francis University in Indiana, Seattle Pacific University in Washington, Point Loma Nazarene University in California, Mt. Vernon Nazarene University in Ohio, Northwest Nazarene University in Idaho, and Missouri Baptist University.

SECTION 5:
THE ARTIFACT SPECIFICATIONS

Goals and Strategies

What are the main goals for the Track 02 Artifact?

There are two primary goals for this artifact. The three-credit course will foster equanimity in students by guiding students through the study and practice of spiritual disciplines. Based on the findings of Astin, Astin, and Lindholm's study of college students, this increased equanimity will lead to the second goal of the artifact. This second goal is an increase in retention, defined as an increase in the number of students who return to Greenville for their third semester.

The secondary goals for this artifact are the six learning outcomes of the course:

1. Students will use spiritual disciplines to foster their own spiritual development
2. Students will experience twelve classic Christian spiritual disciplines
3. Students will articulate how the Church has viewed spiritual disciplines historically and theologically
4. Students will serve in the church
5. Students will experience and respond to the disequilibrium between their experiences and cultural values and the values of their faith community.
6. Students will exhibit greater levels of equanimity

How will you test a beta-version of the Artifact and assess its success?

Three opportunities exist to beta-test the content of this course prior to its implementation in the Spring of 2020. An elective version of this course will be made

available to students during the two-week interterm in January 2018. The three course texts will be used in resident-chaplain-led small groups in during the Spring 2018 and Fall 2018 semesters to gauge their accessibility for students. Course components will be piloted in the Fall 2018 resident chaplain class.

How will you measure the success of your artifact?

Success will be measured four ways. Initial success will be identified through a self-reported increase in equanimity in students over the time period of the course. Primary success of this artifact will be measured by an increase in the number of first-time freshman students who take the course who return to Greenville for their third semester of study. Another short-term success will be noted in the course evaluations of the effectiveness of the course in meeting its six learning outcomes. Long-term success will be identified through identification of an increase in the number of students who take the course that persist through graduation within six years.

Audience

Who is the primary intended audience/user of your completed artifact?

The primary audience of this artifact are first-time freshmen at Greenville University. Ideally, these students will take the course during their second semester at Greenville. Some students, due to course conflicts, athletic commitments, or failure to complete prerequisites may take the course over Interterm after their first semester or during their third semester.

What do you want the audience/user to do/think/experience after encountering your artifact?

Students who experience this course should become more spiritually formed into the likeness of Christ. They will gain knowledge, experience, and understanding of spiritual disciplines. They will witness and experience diverse expressions of both spiritual disciplines and spiritually forming activities. They will integrate ideas about classic Christian formation through spiritual disciplines, with ideas about how culture and race shape how we engage the world and our faith. They will identify ways that theories of human development can inform spiritual formation and vice versa. They will identify which spiritual practices foster their personal formation. They should ultimately experience an increase in their equanimity in the face of challenges.

What task will your audience/user be trying to accomplish wherein your Artifact might be utilized?

Greenville University students will encounter this course during their second semester. They will be seeking to move beyond their first semester in college and its myriad of transitions. They will be seeking confirmation that the first semester experience was worth the personal and financial cost. They are also seeking encouragement and strategies for future college success. The course directly provides confirmation, encouragement, and strategy. Ultimately, it fosters equanimity, which empowers the student to see challenges as temporary opportunities for learning and growth.

Scope and Content

Define the scope of your Artifact. What will be the technical and content parameters for your artifact? How will the content of your Artifact be organized?

The Artifact will be bound by the Greenville University Interschool Academic Affairs Committee guidelines for a general education course. It will also be bound by the syllabus and online course site guidelines of the Greenville University Center for Teaching and Learning. Lastly, it will be bound by the parameters outlined in the Greenville University Course Catalog and Faculty Handbook.

The Artifact's organization is bound in two ways. The course documents and online learning components will be bound by the Desire to Learn (D2L) course site. The details and goals of the course will be bound by the syllabus.

What special technical or functional requirements are needed?

There are two areas of technical or functional requirements needed for this artifact. The first is mastery of the various components of the D2L course management system. The second is effective alignment of learning outcomes, assessments, and teaching methods. Assistance with both of these items are available through the Greenville University Center of Teaching and Learning.

Budget

What is the entire budget (line-item) for the Artifact

Instructor Pay	10 Sections Annually 10 Community Life Staff Instructors – Load Credits = \$0 Total Instructor Pay = \$0
Monastery Trip	300 Students x \$30 Room & Lodging x 3 nights = \$27,000 4 Shuttle Buses x 5 Weekend Trips = 20 Round Trips

	<p>375 Miles Per Round Trip x 0.40 a Mile = ~\$150 per Round Trip 20 Round Trips x \$150 Per Round Trip = \$3,000</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Total Monastery Trip Cost = \$30,000</p>
Service Experience	<p>Local Service = \$0 Student Government Service Opportunities = \$0</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Total Service Cost = \$0</p>
Urban Plunge	<p>Student Government Urban Plunge = \$0</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Total Urban Plunge Cost = \$0</p>
	Total Course Cost = \$30,000
Course Fee	\$100 x 300 Students = \$30,000

What hardware or software may be required to complete the Artifact?

The software and hardware necessary for completing the artifact are the D2L course management software and Microsoft Office for creating documents and presentations.

Outsourcing Fees?

This Artifact requires no outsourcing fees.

Ongoing personnel/administrative support costs?

This Artifact requires no personnel/administrative support costs.

Promotion

To achieve approval for this Artifact, it will be necessary to promote it and educate faculty both to approve the course and to teach it. Once approved as a general

education course, there will be no need to promote the course outside of the course catalog and advising materials. As the course is piloted over Interterm and the semesters prior to its official launch in Spring 2020, it will be necessary to attract students to take the course as an elective.

This promotion will take a number of forms. Presentations to the administrators responsible for the McAllister Scholars (Honors) program, the Mosaic (Diversity) Scholars program, and PASS (Conditional Admission) program would be effective ways to encourage their students to take the course. Students who desire to pursue ministry professionally or personally after college will also be targeted through email, digital signage, and informational gatherings.

How will you market or make available your Artifact to your audience?

The target audience will be required to take the course as part of Greenville's general education requirements. During the piloting of the course as an elective, the course will be available for sign-up through the online course scheduling tools available to all Greenville Academic Advisors and students.

What is your overall marketing strategy?

The overall marketing strategy for this course is to inform faculty advisors as to the goals and aims of the course to ensure as many students as possible are signed up for it in their second semester during their first advising appointments. Additionally, to foster support for the course being a priority for in-season, despite its travel and daily commitments, coaches will be informed as to the retention goal of the course. Coaches

are more likely to support a course being taken in-season if it leads to retention and less recruiting. Students' service, urban ministry, and monastic experiences will be highlighted in university publications, admissions materials, and internal marketing to foster the idea that this course is a signature Greenville University experience.

Standards of Publication

What are the standards of publication particular to the chosen media genera?

The standards of publication for this course are those set forth by Greenville University. The D2L site and syllabus will follow templates and guidelines provided by the Center for Teaching and Learning. The course proposal itself is dictated by the form provided by the Greenville University Inter-School Academic Affairs Committee (ISAAC).

Action Plan

Identify the various components of the Track 02 Artifact

This artifact consists of six components. They are the Catalog Description, Rationale, Approval Form, Course Syllabus, Spiritual Formation Workbook Sample, and a Review of Similar Courses.

Identify the technical skills required to complete the artifact

The primary technical skill required to complete this artifact is typing out the documents. Research and presentation skills would be necessary to get the approval of the Dean of the School of Theology, Philosophy and Ministry, the Dean of Arts and

Sciences, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Seeking approval of the course would require political work of gaining votes on ISAAC, the General Education and Faculty Assembly.

Develop a timeline

Action Step	Due Date
Review the use of Spiritual Formation Workbook Spiritual Disciplines content in RC Class and the use of Dobson, Barton and Smith texts as floor gathering options for RCs	January 22, 2018
Review the course proposal with the Dean of the Bastian School of Theology and Ministry as a THEO 199 elective in the Spring 2018, Fall 2018, Interterm 2019, Spring 2019, Fall 2019 and Interterm 2020 terms	January 22, 2018
Review the course proposal with the Dean of the Bastian School of Theology and Ministry	June 1, 2018
Review the course proposal with the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences	June 1, 2018
Review the course proposal with the Vice President for Academic Affairs	June 1, 2018
Review the course proposal with the Registrar	July 1, 2018
Review the course proposal individually with the members of the General Education Council	September 2018
Review the course proposal with the members of ISAAC	September 2018
Submit the course proposal to the General Education Council for approval	October 1, 2018
Submit the proposal to ISAAC	November 1, 2018
Meet with both “challenging” and “stakeholder” faculty to discuss the course proposal.	December 2018
Ask the Faculty Moderator to add discussion of the proposal to the Faculty Assembly agenda	February 1, 2019
Ask for feedback on the proposal at Faculty Assembly	March 1, 2019
Ask the Chair of ISAAC to bring the proposal to Faculty Assembly for final approval	March 15, 2019
Course is Approved	May 1, 2019

SECTION 6:
POSTSCRIPT

In the course of writing this dissertation, a number of topics have emerged that are tangential to the purpose of this study but warrant future review and study by another author. The first is a question of whether this project would require significant changes were it to focus on the generation that is just now beginning to graduate high school, Generation Z. The second topic is the possible exploration of a connection and similarities between equanimity, a growth-focused mindset, and thriving. The third topic is focused exploration of the non-spiritual formation contributors to equanimity development identified by Astin, Astin, and Lindholm. The last topic would be a review of whether the articulation of spiritual disciplines by Richard Foster remain useful and meaningful to Millennial and Post-Millennial emerging adults. Each of these topics will be expanded below.

The college and university students for whom this dissertation project is focused are nearly gone. If one considers the events of September 11, 2001 and the development of social media in the early 2000s as key influences into the generation that follows the millennials, then they are nearly college age. As described by Corey Seemiller and Meghan Grace in their book *Generation Z Goes to College*, their traits differ from millennials. They are a generation that has always been connected digitally to online resources and relationships.³²⁶ They view the world as a scary place.³²⁷ They have grown

³²⁶ Corey Seemiller and Meghan Grace, *Generation Z Goes to College* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2016), 17.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, 35.

up with far greater gender, racial, and cultural diversity than any generation previously.³²⁸ Compared to the millennials before them, they tend to be more collectively focused than individually focused, less optimistic and more realistic, and less service-oriented and more social-change oriented.³²⁹

Once this generation is better understood academically, an author could look at Astin, Astin, and Lindholm's work on equanimity, Christian Smith's work on emerging adult spirituality and even Arnett's work on emerging adulthood itself and see if it maintains relevance regarding this new generation. Additionally, the work done by Dunn, Sundene, Keating, Setran, and Elmore to develop spiritual formation programs to specifically engage millennials is ripe for an update by one who grasps an understanding of the post-millennial generation.

The second topic for additional study is whether what Astin, Astin, and Lindholm articulate as equanimity shares some commonality with Dweck's idea of a growth-focused mindset or Laurie Schreiner's idea of thriving. Each practitioner's perspective is rooted in a similar transcendent idea that while reality is difficult, there is hope. And that hope, if trusted, will lead to success. Additional research into college and university student persistence that focuses on this intrinsic motivation rooted in hope could yield clarity and reduce the black-box nature that tends to guide retention efforts.

The third topic worth of additional study identified by the author is the non-spiritual-formation-focused contributors to equanimity development identified by Astin, Astin, and Lindholm. Their study found that equanimity was increased by being on a

³²⁸ Ibid., 38.

³²⁹ Ibid., 122.

football or basketball team. Evidence was found that the more students studied, the higher their equanimity. If they studied more than 15 hours a week it increased by 7%. However, if they studied less than 6 hours a week, there was no increase.³³⁰ Their definition of studying includes helping friends after class.³³¹ Equanimity increases with leadership development. Engaging in group activities that have constructive effects increases it as well.³³² Follow-up research and application of these findings could be interesting.

The fourth and final topic identified by the author of this dissertation as worthy of additional study is whether Foster's *Celebration of Discipline* remains a useful articulation of spiritual disciplines for a millennial and post-millennial generation. While the text is an accessible, straightforward classic, it is bound by late-1970s evangelicalism. Are there teachers of spiritual disciplines in the broader church and other religions in the United States utilizing other texts and lists? If they are, how accessible are these different lists to college students?

³³⁰ Astin, Astin, and Lindholm, 60.

³³¹ Ibid., 58.

³³² Ibid., 59.

APPENDIX 1:
CATALOG DESCRIPTION

UNIV 200: Equanimity and Spiritual Formation, Three Credits

The purpose of this course is to foster equanimity through a holistic spiritual formation experience focused on spiritual disciplines during students' second semester of university study. Students will identify their existing preference for spiritual disciplines, learn about spiritual disciplines across a variety of Christian experiences, and execute a personal spiritual disciplines plan. This is a service learning course.

Prerequisites: UNIV 101

APPENDIX 2: RATIONALE

There are two rationales for the creation of this course. The first is to increase retention of students between their second and third semesters of attendance. This will be accomplished by fostering equanimity among first-year students. The second rationale is to increase the engagement of the educational mission of the university by contemporary emerging adults. This will be done by guiding students through a curriculum focused on responding to five challenges, encouraging them to build three important relationships, and teaching them how to embrace three spiritually forming concepts.

The first rationale for the creation of this course is to increase retention through the fostering of equanimity. Alexander Astin, Helen Astin, and Jennifer Lindholm conducted a study of the spiritual lives of university students between 2004 and 2007.³³³ This survey found spiritual growth in college enhances outcomes such as academic performance, psychological well-being, leadership development, and satisfaction with college.³³⁴ It also found that those students who measured high in equanimity had better grades and were more satisfied with their college experience.³³⁵ Not surprisingly, they found that students who had higher levels of equanimity persisted toward graduation in higher numbers.³³⁶

³³³ Astin, Astin, and Lindholm 9.

³³⁴ Ibid., 10.

³³⁵ Ibid., 57.

³³⁶ Ibid., 52-53.

Equanimity is defined as the capacity to find meaning in hardship, a view that each day is a gift good or bad, and a spirit of thankfulness for all that makes up one's life.³³⁷ Simply put it is the capacity to make meaning, learn lessons and be grateful for all of the experiences of one's life. Understanding equanimity will empower students not only for long-term success as adults, but short-term success as emerging adults in completing their college degrees.

While there are many identified traits that can predict retention and persistence, equanimity is a trait that can not only be identified but fostered in individual students to increase their likelihood of retaining and persisting toward graduation. Astin, Astin, and Linholm found that equanimity can be increased through a variety of activities. A review of these actions that foster equanimity reveals that many of them are directly related to traditional spiritual formation practices. These include prayer, meditation, reading of spiritual texts, reading spiritually, self-reflection, service to others, missionary work, and engaging in worship.³³⁸

There are a number of ways that a college or university can guide students through an equanimity-fostering spiritual formation experience. It could be offered as a small group curriculum in the residence halls, it could be a series in chapel, or it could be a set of objectives spread across the core or general education curriculum. However, to maximize the impact of such a program on students' individual equanimity and their cohort's retention, it needs to be offered as a for-credit experience early in their academic career. The best way to maximize the impact of such an experience is through a required

³³⁷ Astin, Astin, and Lindholm, 50.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, 58-59.

general education three-credit course offered during students' second term at the institution. This would allow students to have worked through many transition stresses prior to beginning this course. Additionally, students in their second term are still in the process of making the decision about their future at the institution. Making the course a three-credit course provides ample in-class and out-of-classroom time to explore the academic and experiential content this course will demand.

The second rationale for this course is to increase the engagement of the educational mission of the university by contemporary emerging adults. This will be accomplished by guiding them through a curriculum focused on three traits of their generation. They will be asked to respond to five challenges, build three important relationships, and embrace three spiritually forming concepts.

The five challenges faced by this generation as identified by research are consumerism, intoxication, sexual activity, disengagement from civic life, and a lack of older adult mentors. The research shows that these students are unabashed consumers.³³⁹ Seventy-eight percent of these students drink³⁴⁰ and seventy-three percent of these students have had sexual intercourse.³⁴¹ These emerging adults reflect the dominant culture and are apathetic, uninformed, distrustful, disempowered, and, at best, marginally interested in civic life.³⁴² These are students who have grown up with few adult role models who live out adult lives shaped by purpose, demonstrating direction, or

³³⁹ Smith, Christofferson, Davison, and Herzog, 70.

³⁴⁰ Ibid., 110.

³⁴¹ Ibid., 149.

³⁴² Ibid., 225.

recognizing the interdependence of all people.³⁴³ In UNIV 200, through the use of mentors, individual reflection, and classroom engagement with the university's social values, students will identify their personal beliefs and become mindful of the choices they make as they attend a socially conservative university.

The first of the three relationships that are lacking in most contemporary emerging adults are those between the students and a community of faith. Religious communities are places that can give students a place where their identity formation and fidelity can take place. These communities help form religious convictions and assist in the development of religious identity.³⁴⁴ It is an ideological center from which to push off and in which to find shelter.³⁴⁵ Emerging adults who are part of a religious community have an enhanced sense of self and stability.³⁴⁶ Disengagement of church by emerging adults in their 20s results in their making many major life decisions, such as marriage, career, and kids, without church influence.³⁴⁷ In UNIV 200, through service at churches, participation in church worship opportunities, individual reflection, and course content provided by local clergy, students will build relationships with local faith communities.

The second of three relationships lacking in most contemporary emerging adults are those between the students and their mentors. Emerging adults need non-parents and non-family-member adults to help them be engaged and growing.³⁴⁸ As Parks states when

³⁴³ Clydesdale, *The First Year Out*, 6.

³⁴⁴ Whitney and King, 141.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 143.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 144.

³⁴⁷ Kiesling and Setran, 85.

³⁴⁸ Smith and Snell, 285.

discussing the impact of mentoring on both colleges and society, “restoring mentoring as a cultural force could significantly revitalize our institution and provide the intergenerational glue to address some of our deepest and most pervasive concerns.”³⁴⁹

Emerging adults need concerned adults to genuinely care about and for them.³⁵⁰

Mentoring requires engaging emerging adults in authentic complex relationships.

Emerging adult spiritual formation and growth requires a skillful blend of encouragement and challenge, distance and closeness.³⁵¹ In UNIV 200, through interactions with adults at service sites, class lectures by clergy, and mentoring-focused spiritual formation assignments, students will identify possible mentors and initiate a mentoring relationship.

The last relationship lacking in most contemporary emerging adults is that between the students and their parents. Parents often fall into the wrongly believed trap that to share religious beliefs with their emerging adult children is pushing religion down their throats or imposing it on them. Parents generally abdicate their role in talking about meaning, assuming that peers are more influential.³⁵² This myth causes parents to disengage on key topics in the lives of their emerging adults.³⁵³ In UNIV 200, through two assignments focused on identifying similarities and differences between parent and child beliefs, and interviews that the student will conduct over Thanksgiving break, spring break or online, the student will gain awareness of their relationships with their parents and discuss with them ways for relationship growth during the natural transitions

³⁴⁹ Parks, *Big Questions*, 12.

³⁵⁰ Astin and Antonio, 7.

³⁵¹ Kiesling and Setran, 68.

³⁵² *Ibid.*, 208.

³⁵³ Smith and Snell, 284.

of emerging adulthood. Interviews will be conducted by students with a parent, guardian or an invested family member from home.

The three concepts to be embraced by the emerging adults participating in UNIV 200 are discernment, intentionality, and reflection. Discernment equips emerging adults to look beyond simply making choices out of a good versus evil perspective or a divinely revealed right path, but to embrace ongoing discipleship that helps an individual find shalom.³⁵⁴ Intentionality allows emerging adults to embrace the reality that a Christ-focused lifestyle is not natural and produces spiritual tension that must be overcome with values-based choices and effort.³⁵⁵ Reflection equips emerging adults to identify and celebrate the growth and change in their lives, opportunities to seek insight for repairing broken areas of their lives, and ways to create space to cooperate with the Holy Spirit.³⁵⁶

The first key to educating emerging adults is to let them belong before they believe. When seeking to influence contemporary emerging adults, one must build connection and relationship before attempting to train or educate. In general, emerging adults will make a decision to engage based more on relationship than logic.³⁵⁷

The second educational key, of seven, is to allow emerging adults to experience before they receive an explanation. Educators must do the work necessary to draw these students into the content experientially and then seek to provide answers and information.³⁵⁸

³⁵⁴ Dunn and Sundene, 78.

³⁵⁵ Ibid., 91.

³⁵⁶ Ibid., 101-103.

³⁵⁷ Elmore, 49.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

The third key to educating contemporary emerging adults is to find a cause that fosters an educational desire. Educators must evoke a response in these students and build on that passion in order to create opportunities for teaching less evocative content. This passion gives them a reason to engage your content.³⁵⁹

The fourth of seven keys to educating millennial emerging adults is to let them engage as a peer, trusting that such authenticity will provide teachable moments. These students value authenticity above expertise, even when they need an expert. They seek relationship more than they seek information. As an educator, this requires that one set aside their role as expert, instead building relationships and working together with students in a more peer-like capacity, while at the same time taking teachable moments to highlight one's expertise and knowledge.³⁶⁰

The fifth key to impacting contemporary emerging adults is to let them experience quickly the value of a concept so they are convinced of the value of the work necessary for mastery. These students are foreign to the concept of delayed gratification, as they have grown up with so many on-demand and instantly accessible resources and experiences. As a result, the burden is on the educator to highlight a quick or immediate value of the content one is teaching, while the same time teaching that there is much of value in this world that is not immediately accessible or available without effort. This is an opportunity for scaffolding concepts leading the students from their knowledge to higher levels of education.³⁶¹

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ Ibid., 50.

³⁶¹ Ibid.

The sixth of seven keys to educating emerging adult millennials is to let them be free to explore and develop their own ideas. These students are weary of agendas and “being used.” At the same time, they are generationally known as being quite comfortable pushing others to get what they want. They desire to participate and contribute even when they lack the expertise and knowledge to do so. Educators must seek to foster this investment and input where appropriate and create educational environments where these students can create and implement their own ideas.³⁶²

The final key to educating contemporary emerging adults is to let them expect transformation from the course content. This generation has grown up with high levels of entertainment and technological wonder in all areas of life, including worship and family. The result is a high bar for what is necessary to engage their sense of curiosity and wonder. Educators in courses like UNIV 200 focused on topics of meaning-making, personal values, and high-stakes issues facing humanity must teach in ways that do not merely inform or tell a story. The goal must be to transform the students’ understanding of the topic both in their mind and in their heart.³⁶³

The specific alignment of research, assignments, and experiences are highlighted in Figure 6.

Figure 6. – Connection of Recommendations from Research and UNIV 200 Course Components	
Activities That Foster Equanimity	Course Component
1. Spiritual Reading	Course Experience & Reflection
2. Spiritual Text Reading	Course Experience & Reflection
3. Charitable Involvement	Course Experience & Reflection

³⁶² Ibid., 50-51.

³⁶³ Ibid., 51.

4. Helping Friends	Course Experience & Reflection
5. Meeting People of a Different Race	Urban Ministry Retreat
6. Mission Trips	Urban Ministry Retreat
7. Meditation	Course Experience & Reflection
8. Prayer	Course Experience & Reflection
9. Being on a Football Team	Not Incorporated
10. Being on a Basketball Team	Not Incorporated
11. Studying More Than 15 Hours	Not Incorporated
12. Having Faculty Who Talk About Their Spiritual Lives	Course Lectures
Emerging Adult Research-Related Course Components	
1. Mentoring	Course Experience & Reflection
2. Discussion Topic: Intoxication	Course Lecture & Discussion and Workbook Reflection
3. Discussion Topic: Sexuality	Course Lecture & Discussion and Workbook Reflection
4. Discussion Topic: Civic-Mindedness	Course Lecture & Discussion Workbook Reflection
5. Discussion Topic: What Spiritual Actions Do We Take as Human Beings and Why?	Course Lecture & Discussion Workbook Reflection
6. Discussion Topic: Equanimity Versus Moral Therapeutic Deism	Course Lecture & Discussion Workbook Reflection
7. Experiential and Learner-Focused Pedagogy	Course Structure & Assignments
8. Discussion Topic: Evangelism Within Faith Communities	Course Lecture & Discussion Workbook Reflection
9. Discussion Topic: Do Beliefs Inform Action More Than Actions Inform Beliefs?	Course Lecture & Discussion Workbook Reflection
Emerging Adult Minister & Educator Course Contributions	
1. Explore Relationships with Faith Communities	Church Service
2. Explore Relationships with Mentors	Mentor Experience
3. Explore Relationships with Parents	Generational Survey
4. Teach Discernment	Workbook
5. Teach Intentionality	Workbook
6. Teach Reflection	Workbook
7. Let Emerging Adults Belong Before They Believe	Course Structure
8. Let Emerging Adults Experience Before Receiving an Explanation	Course Structure
9. Let Emerging Adults Find a Cause that Fosters Educational Desire	Course Structure
10. Let Emerging Adults Engage as a Peer, Trusting that Such Authenticity Will Provide Teachable Moments	Classroom Lecture Style Service Participation
11. Let Emerging Adults Experience Quickly the Value of a Concept so they are Convinced of the Value of the Work Necessary for Mastery	Course Structure

12. Let Emerging Adults to Be Free to Explore and Develop Their Own Ideas	Workbook Writing Prompts Generational Discussion
13. Let Emerging Adults Expect Transformation from the Course Content	Course Structure

In UNIV 200, students will embrace discernment, intentionality and reflection primarily through activities and assignments focused on spiritual disciplines. They will read and reflect on James Bryan Smith's *The Good and Beautiful Life*, Ruth Haley Barton's *Sacred Rhythms*, and Ed Dobson's *The Year of Living Like Jesus*. They will experience each of Foster's twelve identified spiritual disciplines. They will encounter and reflect on the lives of the monks engaged in lives framed by discipline at St. Meinrad's Archabbey. They will serve and be mentored. They will create and execute a spiritual formation plan for themselves.

This course provides a needed and distinct addition to the general education requirements of Greenville University. Presently, the task of fostering equanimity and spiritually forming Greenville's students falls to the chapel program and small groups offered by athletics or residence life. This course ensures that all traditional undergraduate students encounter a spiritual formation curriculum that equips them to not only persist toward graduation, but that provides them with awareness tools and concepts that will help them successfully navigate emerging adulthood.

APPENDIX 3:
APPROVAL FORM

THE COURSE APPROVAL PROCESS AT GREENVILLE UNIVERSITY

Form approved by UAAC 9/23/2003, revised 9/28/04, 4/19/11, and 5/16/17.

Overview:

A department that wishes to add a course to their departmental offerings must obtain permission from four sources: the program director, the department chair, the appropriate curriculum committee, and the dean of the school. Once all approvals have been gained, the course can be added to the GU Catalog listings and can be offered when faculty load or funding permits.

Checklist:

- Identify the specific need for the new course.** Develop a clear rationale that would justify adding/changing a course.
- Develop a syllabus for the course that conforms to the GU guidelines.**
- Gain approval from the program director and the department(s).** The program director and the department chair must sign and date the course approval form before it moves on to the appropriate curriculum committee. Note that if a course is cross listed in other departments, all departments must approve the course and all department chairs must sign the form.
- Complete the Course Approval Form.** This requires obtaining information from the registrar and school dean or VPAA. Each of these people must initial various lines on the form. It may also require obtaining bids or finding advertised prices for new equipment, and/or gaining approval from various directors of General Education programs (e.g., approval from the Diversity Committee if the proposed course is designed to meet a Global Foundations requirement).
- Submit the completed form with syllabus and any required additional documentation to the Chair of the appropriate Academic Committee.** Ask that this request be placed on the agenda for a future meeting. Three caveats are important here: 1. This proposal will not be considered at the next meeting unless there is available space on the committee's agenda. 2. The proposal must be submitted at least seven days prior to the next meeting or it most likely will not be considered until the following meeting. Last minute requests for review are rarely acceptable. 3. *The Course Proposal Form must be complete with required documentation, or it will be returned without action.*
- Attend the committee meeting during which the proposal will be discussed.** Be ready to address questions that the committee members might have. Department chairs must attend or the committee will likely table the request. All departmental faculty who have unique information about the proposal should also attend the meeting.

COURSE APPROVAL/CHANGE REQUEST FORM

Form approved by UAAC, 9/23/2003, revised 9/28/04, 4/19/11, and 5/16/17.

Department: General Education**Are you requesting a:**

- Modification of existing course status: Which one:
 New Course: Proposed Title (35 character limit): Equanimity & Spiritual Formation

IF PROPOSING A NEW COURSE, SKIP TO PAGE 2

We are requesting a modification of: (Check all that apply):

- prerequisite(s) course level or number cross-listing
 number of credit hours title other:

Please provide a detailed explanation of the change(s) being requested.

Explain why the change is necessary or important.IF PROPOSING A COURSE MODIFICATION *ONLY*, SKIP TO APPROVALS, PAGE

COMPLETE PAGES 2 – 5 IF PROPOSING A NEW COURSE**Proposed title (35 character limit):** Equanimity & Spiritual Formation**Proposed credit hours:** 3.0 Variable? No Yes Min: _____ Max: _____**Desired course level:** 100 200 300 400 500**Desired course prefix(es):** UNIV

Note: The cross listing of courses in multiple departments requires signed approval from all department chairs, and, when the departments are in different schools, approval from both schools and ISAAC. (See Approval section, page 6).

Course number assigned by registrar: 200**Prerequisites:** UNIV 101**Corequisites:** None**Reason for proposing new course (check all that apply):**

- Addresses identified deficit(s) in student learning
 Results from significant changes in the discipline
 Takes advantage of faculty expertise
 Needed for new major/track/emphasis
 Other:

Frequency of course offering:

- Every Semester
 Every Year Every Other Year
 Fall Fall of odd calendar years Spring of odd calendar years
 Spring Fall of even calendar years Spring of even calendar years
 Summer Odd calendar years Even calendar years
 Interterm Odd calendar years Even calendar years
 Other _____

Course delivery: Face-to-face Hybrid Online**Grading scale:** Letter grade Pass/Fail**Catalog description (required – syllabus description is not adequate):**

The purpose of this course is to foster equanimity through a holistic spiritual formation experience focused on spiritual disciplines during students' second semester of university study. Students will identify their existing preference for spiritual disciplines, learn about spiritual disciplines across a variety of Christian experiences, and execute a personal spiritual disciplines plan. This is a service learning course.

Is this a replacement for an existing course? No Yes Which one:**If a replacement, should students be allowed to take the new course to replace a failing grade in the existing course?** No Yes**Can students take the course more than once?** No Yes: For how many total credits?

Proposed course status (*check all that apply*) Meets General Education requirement for: UNIV 200 Meets the Global Foundations requirement*Requires approval from the Diversity Committee: (chair's initials)* Meets the Quantitative Reasoning requirement*Requires approval from the Mathematics Department Chair: (initials)* Meets the upper division Writing Intensive requirement

Requires approval from the Writing Intensive Coordinator: (initials) _____

 Elective within major(s): Required within major(s):

If this course modifies major requirements, attach a form showing both present and proposed major requirements, including the total number of credit hours required currently and as proposed.

Will the course have a student fee? No Yes – Amount: \$100.00

(note that this is rarely allowed for courses offered in the fall and spring semesters)

Explain need for fee: *The fee covers the cost of transportation, meals and lodging at both a three-day, two-night service project (Urban Plunge) and a three-day, two-night retreat to St. Meinrad's Archabbey.*

Requested class size limit (if none, please so indicate):*Twenty-eight students***If requesting a limit in the class size, explain the need for the limit:**

The requested class size is to ensure that the instructor and student assistant can transport the class in two fifteen-passenger people movers for the required service component of the course.

Explain the need for and possible benefits of offering the course:

This course provides a needed and distinct addition to the general education requirements of Greenville University. Presently, the task of fostering the equanimity and forming the spirit of Greenville's students falls to either the chapel program or small groups offered by athletics and residence life. This course ensures that all traditional undergraduate students encounter a spiritual formation curriculum that equips them to not only persist toward graduation, but that provides them with awareness tools and concepts that will them successfully navigate emerging adulthood.

The course will increase retention of students between their second and third semester of attendance. This will be accomplished by fostering equanimity among first-year students.

The course will increase engagement of the educational mission of the university by contemporary emerging adults. This will be done by guiding students through a curriculum focused on responding to five challenges, building three relationships, and

embracing three concepts. The five challenges that students will be empowered to see and respond to are consumerism, intoxication, sexual activity, civic disengagement, and a lack of adult mentors. The three important relationships that this course will facilitate are the relationships between students and their parents, students and their mentors, and students and their churches or communities of faith. The three concepts the course will help student engage are discernment, intentionality, and reflection.

Discuss how this course brings together faith and learning to help fulfill the GU mission of providing a “transforming Christ-centered education.” In other words, in what ways does this course intentionally integrate faith and learning?

This course integrates faith and learning in a variety of ways. The course addresses a number of specifically Christian topics, including spiritual disciplines, individual religious beliefs, vocation, and God’s role in guiding individual and collective behavior. Students will also practice spiritual disciplines, serve in the church, and build mentoring relationships as parts of assignments.

The course meets the following Student Learning Outcomes for the institution that focus on faith and learning:

- 1. Apply Christian values.*
- 2. Respond to God*

The course meets the following faith and learning integration focused learning outcomes articulated by the First Year Experience Committee:

- 1. Discover how to respond to God and Scripture*

The following course learning outcomes focus on faith and learning:

- 1. Students will use spiritual disciplines to foster their own spiritual development*
- 2. Students will experience twelve classic Christian spiritual disciplines*
- 3. Students will articulate how the Church has viewed spiritual disciplines historically and theologically*
- 4. Students will serve in the church*
- 5. Students will experience and respond to the disequilibrium between their experiences and cultural values and the values of their faith community.*
- 6. Students will exhibit greater levels of equanimity*

Which specific assignments in this course contribute to your department’s assessment plan?

This course is part of the First Year Experience at Greenville University. The following assessments tie to the first-year experience learning outcomes:

First Year Experience Learning Outcomes Upon completing the first year at Greenville College students will...	Assessment(s)
contribute to the positive welfare of the campus and Greenville community through service learning or service.	1. Service project at a local church 2. Participation in a three-day, two-night urban service trip
explore possible life and career calling and vocation options.	1. Monastery reflection 2. Spiritual formation journal
pursue answers to their own questions, problems or lines of inquiry by engaging intellectually with students and faculty.	1. Spiritual discipline presentations
discover how to respond to God and Scripture.	1. Spiritual discipline presentations 2. Spiritual formation journal 3. Monastery reflection
engage in a variety of activities (athletic, academic, co-curricular or volunteer) in order to practice physical, social and emotional balance.	1. Service project at a local church 2. Chapel attendance requirement
gain an appreciation on how Greenville has impacted and continues to impact the world.	1. Service project at a local church 2. Participation in a three-day, two-night urban service trip

Does this course address program learning objectives not well-addressed by existing courses?

In general, this course addresses the First Year Experience Learning Outcomes that relate to spiritual formation and Greenville's Christian values better than THEO 110. THEO 110 is primarily focused on faith and learning issues within the mind. UNIV 200 provides significant opportunities for students to put into action their values and experience Christian worship, spiritual formation activities, service to the church, and dialogue with mentors and family about beliefs and actions.

ATTACH A COURSE SYLLABUS THAT FOLLOWS GU GUIDELINES

Cost Projections

Note that approved courses incurring additional cost may not be offered until resources are made available or until alternative, less costly methods of implementation are found.

Faculty Load:

Note: Load sheet projections for the next two academic years should be prepared and discussed with the School Dean or VPAA.

- The course will be taught by existing full-time faculty and will not require overload or additional use of part-time faculty for at least two years.
- The course will be taught by a part-time faculty member but will not result in additional cost for at least two years.
- This course requires additional departmental load in order to be taught.

Required additional load hours: Year 1: Year 2:

Expected costs Year 1: \$ Year 2: \$

Please explain how the courses will be staffed. Explain who is expected to teach the course. If other faculty re-assignments are necessary to offer this course, briefly explain these changes.

Ten sections of this course will be offered each year. These ten sections will be taught by ten members of the Community Life staff as part of their employment agreements. This requires no additional cost to the institution. teaching load. This requires no additional cost to the institution

Have you consulted with the dean of the school in completing this section? Yes No

Library Resources:

No new resources are required

At least some new resources are required:

Type	Initial Cost Estimate	Annual Cost Estimate
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Books	\$180	\$30
<input type="checkbox"/> Journals	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Online Subscriptions	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	\$	\$

Four copies of each of the course texts will be kept on reserve for students who cannot afford to purchase the books. The \$180 initial cost estimate is to purchase twelve texts. The \$30 annual cost is for replacement costs of lost or worn books.

Have you consulted with the Director of the Library in completing this section? Yes No

Other Resources (complete only if any are required):

Type	Start-up Cost Estimate	Continuing Annual Cost Estimate
<input type="checkbox"/> Software	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Hardware	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Other equipment	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	\$	\$

If software or hardware is required: Have you consulted with the IT department in completing this section? Yes No

An advertisement, bid, or other source of documentation (all dated) must be attached to the proposal if any of the boxes in this section were checked.

Explain additional cost requirements:

St. Meinrad's Trip	Expenses	Income
Course Fee (\$100 x 300 students)		\$30,000
Meals & Lodging (300 students x \$30 per day x 3 days)	\$27,000	
Transportation (\$0.40 x 375 miles roundtrip x 20 trips)	\$3,000	
Total Budget Impact		\$0

ALL PROPOSALS REQUIRE THE APPROVAL INFORMATION BELOW.
 PROPOSALS SENT TO COMMITTEE WITHOUT ALL DEPARTMENTAL AND
 DEAN SIGNATURES WILL BE RETURNED WITHOUT ACTION.

APPROVALS

Program Director: _Date:

Department Chair: _Date:

Cross Listed Department Chair: _Date:

School Dean: _Date:

Cross Listed School Dean: _Date:

General Education Director: _Date:

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE ACTION Approved Denied Referred back to department on (date):

Curriculum Committee Chair: _____

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

VPAA: _____ Date: _____

*The original with signatures is kept by the registrar.**The department chair should keep a copy.**One copy should be part of the official committee minutes.*

Note: ISAAC is to review and recommend curriculum and major changes for academic programs that fall into two or more schools, in which over one-third of the required credit hours for the major are drawn from outside one school. This policy does not apply to secondary education majors. The governing unit of the School of Education controls the secondary education curriculum as mandated by the State of Illinois. ISAAC is to receive a report of all curricular changes approved by a school's curriculum committee for inclusion in the ISAAC Minutes.

For Records Office Use:

- ⇒ Course entered into Jenzabar Catalog.
- ⇒ Course added into printed GU Catalog.
- ⇒ Course built in appropriate term(s).

Date: _____

Initials: _____

APPENDIX 4:

COURSE SYLLABUS³⁶⁴



UNIV200.[XX] [Term] [Year] – [Instructor Name]

MW 8:30 AM- 9:20 AM [Classroom Location]

Contact Information

Office: [Office Location]

Office Hours: [Office Hours]

Email address: [Email Address]

Phone: [Phone Number]

Greenville University Mission Statement

Greenville University empowers students for lives of character and service through a transforming Christ-centered education in the liberal arts, sciences, and professional studies.

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to foster equanimity through a holistic spiritual formation experience focused on spiritual disciplines during students' second semester of university study. Students will identify their existing preference for spiritual disciplines, learn about spiritual disciplines across a variety of Christian experiences, and execute a personal spiritual disciplines plan. This is a service learning course

PREQUISITES

UNIV 101

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Students will use spiritual disciplines to foster their own spiritual development
2. Students will experience twelve classic Christian spiritual disciplines
3. Students will articulate how the Church has viewed spiritual disciplines historically and theologically
4. Students will serve in the church

³⁶⁴ Greenville University, "Greenville University Syllabus Template Spring 2018," accessed December 6, 2017, <https://campusservices.greenville.edu/support/solutions/articles/12000030311-greenville-university-syllabus-template-spring-2018>.

5. Students will experience and respond to the disequilibrium between their experiences and cultural values and the values of their faith community.
6. Students will exhibit greater levels of equanimity

Textbook Information

Greenville partners with eCampus, a leading supplier of textbooks. Please view the portal by logging in at the My.Greenville.edu resources page. There is also an ordering center located in Greenville Central if you would like assistance with ordering your books.

Required Texts

Your textbooks are not included in tuition and are therefore your responsibility to obtain. Failure to obtain textbooks in time to complete an assignment, even if it is the fault of the textbook supplier, is not grounds for an exception to the late work policy. To assist students, two copies of each required and optional text are available on two-hour reserve at the library front desk.³⁶⁵

Barton, R. (2006). *Sacred Rhythms*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
ISBN: 0830833331

Dobson, E. (2009). *The Year of Living Like Jesus*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
ISBN: 9780310247777

Smith, J. (2009). *The Good and Beautiful Life*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
ISBN: 9780830835324

Optional Text

It is recommended that you purchase the following resources and keep them through the duration of the program. These writing resources will be useful in completing the writing assignments you will be required to complete.

Hacker, D. (2011). *A Writer's Reference* (7th ed.). Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Campus Resources

Greenville University has a variety of student support systems in place. Visit the Campus Services site to see the offices and services available and find contact information.

Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have a documented disability. Please notify the instructor during the first week of class of any accommodations needed for the course. Late notification may cause the requested accommodations to be unavailable. All accommodations must be approved through the Disability Services Coordinator, Marcos Gilmore.
Marcos.Gilmore@greenville.edu 618.664.6616

³⁶⁵ The ideas to place copies of the course texts online and to not allow lack of textbook access as a reason to waive the late work policy was taken from Dr. Jay Richard Akkerman at Northwest Nazarene University.

Methods of Instruction & Expectations

Electronic Devices

Please be sensitive about the use of technology and social media in the classroom, especially during lecture and discussion times. It is important to honor the work of the instructor, guest presenters, and other students. The goal is that the classroom is a hospitable place for engaged dialogue and learning.

If you need to leave your cell phone turned on during class, please be sure it is in silent mode and leave the classroom to take any calls. If you are accessing the internet on your tablet, phone, computer, or other device during class time, please be aware of the distraction this may be to you and other students. The instructor seeks to create a classroom learning environment that minimizes distractions, maximizes mindfulness, and facilitates the learning process.³⁶⁶

Equality and Civility

The Greenville community expects all members of the community to treat each other with respect and civility. Differences are to be honored whether they are related to religion, culture, gender, or politics. All people are created by God. Students, both inside and outside the classroom, are expected to avoid dehumanizing language, to extend grace, and to avoid stereotyping based on gender, race, age, gender, able-bodiedness and/or sexual orientation. Student are expected to use inclusive language, images, and metaphors for both humans and God in classroom dialogue, in-class presentations, online interactions, and all writing assignments.³⁶⁷

Desire to Learn (D2L) Course Site

Students are expected to access the course site daily Monday through Friday to ensure they are up to date on course details. They are expected to contact the Information Technology office, the course student assistant, or the course instructor if they are unable to access the site or its content.

Attendance

You will receive credit for every class you attend. This is an experiential and collaborative course. If you miss class, even for excused absences, the experience cannot be replaced. For athletes, musicians, and others who anticipate having a high number of absences in the course that may negatively impact your attendance grade, please contact the instructor for extra credit, alternative experiences, and one-on-one meeting opportunities.

³⁶⁶ Adapted from George Fox University.

³⁶⁷ Adapted from George Fox University.

MLA Style

Proof your work carefully and use appropriate MLA format for all papers. Pay particular attention to the proper citation of sources. Formatting, clarity, and citations will be assessed in all assignments

Exams

The course has two exams. The exams will contain matching, short answer, and essay questions. The exams will be offered during class time, online and will be open note.

Reading Response

There are reading assignments required prior to each class period. You must complete the fill-in-the blank and reflection questions about each reading before class. The Student Assistant will check for completion on Monday and Wednesday. The Instructor will review your answers more thoroughly when you submit the workbook after class on Wednesday's for review

Reflection Papers

Five reflection papers will be written following significant experiences in the course. These papers will be a minimum of 5000 words and respond to a specific question. MLA format is expected for these papers.

Presentation

Working in a group, students will research a spiritual discipline. As a group, you will teach the class the history and practice of your assigned spiritual discipline, drawing on your research. The presentation will last between 18 and 20 minutes. One of your sources must be *Celebration of Discipline*, by Richard Foster. You will provide a 3.5"x 2.5" sticker for everyone's workbook that summarizes your presentation. A template will be provided.

Spiritual Formation Workbook

Each week, students will complete questions, have experiences, and write reflections in their spiritual formation journal. This journal will be provided the first day of class and must be submitted for review each Wednesday. It will be returned by campus mail no later than Thursday afternoon.

Extra Credit

Extra credit is available in two ways. The first opportunity is by having a writing tutor review written assignments. Five percentage points of the total points of a writing assignment may be earned by proving that an assignment submission was reviewed by a writing tutor more than 24 hours before the due date. The second extra credit opportunity is to attend additional service opportunities on Fridays.

Course Schedule

Week	Day	Reading	Lecture	Experience	Workbook	Other Assignments
1	Monday		Review Syllabus What is Spiritual Formation? Discuss Service		Do Through 1.2 in Class	Assign Presentations Assign Reflection Paper One
	Wednesday	Dobson 1-14 Smith 1-17	Introduce Texts	Chapel	Through 1.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day One Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
2	Monday	Dobson 15-36 Smith 17-34	Prayer Presentation Writing a Letter to God	Chapel	Through 2.2	
	Wednesday	Smith 35-50	Dobson Reflections Play	Chapel	Through 2.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am Reflection Paper One Due
	Friday			Service Day Two Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
3	Monday	Dobson 37-54 Smith 51-68	Meditation Presentation Hospitality	Chapel	Through 3.2	
	Wednesday	Smith 69-84	Dobson Reflection Sabbath	Chapel	Through 3.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day Three Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
4	Monday	Dobson 55-78 Smith 85-102	Fasting Presentation Media Fast	Chapel	Through 4.2	
	Wednesday	Smith 103-118	Dobson Reflection Silence	Chapel	Through 4.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Monastery Retreat Depart 7:30am		

5	Monday	Dobson 79-106 Smith 119-136	Study Presentation Praying for the Success of Competitors	Chapel	Complete Monastery Through 5.2	Reflection Paper Two Assigned
	Wednesday	Smith 137-152	Dobson Reflections Secret Service	Chapel	Through 5.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am
	Friday			Service Day Four Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
6	Monday	Dobson 107-122 Smith 153-170	Simplicity Presentation Deaccumulation	Chapel	Through 6.2	Reflection Paper Two Due 1am
	Wednesday	Smith 171-184	Dobson Reflection Prayer	Chapel	Through 6.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day Five Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
7	Monday	Dobson 123-142 Smith 185-204	Solitude Presentation A Day Without Gossip	Chapel	Through 7.2	
	Wednesday	Smith 205-220	Dobson Reflection Living One Day Devotionally	Chapel	Through 7.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day Six Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
8	Monday	Dobson 143-144 Barton 1-28	Submission Presentation Longing for More	Chapel	Through 8.2	Reflection Paper Three Assigned
	Wednesday		Exam One Review Dobson Reflection Mentors	Chapel	Through 8.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am Exam One Open 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day Seven Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	

9	Monday	Dobson 145-162 Barton 29-44	Service Presentation Solitude	Chapel	Through 9.2	Exam One Closed 1am Reflection Paper Three Due at 1am
	Wednesday		Dobson Reflections Mentors and Church	Chapel	Through 9.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day Eight Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
10	Monday	Barton 45-61 Dobson 163-188	Scripture Confession Presentation	Chapel	Through 10.2	
	Wednesday		Evangelism & Civic Mindedness Dobson Reflection	Chapel	Through 10.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Urban Plunge 7:30am		
11	Monday	Barton 62-77 Dobson 189-220	Prayer Dobson Reflections	Chapel	Urban Plunge Complete Through 11.2	Reflection Paper Four Assigned
	Wednesday		Sex and Intoxication	Chapel	Through 11.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day Nine Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
12	Monday	Barton 78-90 Dobson 221-248	Guidance Presentation Honor the Body	Chapel	Through 12.2	Reflection Paper Four Due 1am
	Wednesday		Equanimity Dobson Reflection	Chapel	Through 12.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day Ten Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
13	Monday	Barton 91-109 Dobson 249-274	Celebration Presentation Self-Examination	Chapel	Through 13.2	
	Wednesday		Moral Therapeutic Deism Dobson Reflection	Chapel	Through 13.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30m
	Friday			Service Day Eleven Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	

14	Monday	Barton 110-129 Dobson 275-288	Discernment	Chapel	Through 14.2	Reflection Paper Five Assigned
	Wednesday		Exam Two Review Ed Dobson Dobson Reflection	Chapel	Through 14.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Workbook Due 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day Twelve Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
15	Monday	Barton 130-145	Sabbath	Chapel	Through 15.2	
	Wednesday	Barton 145-166	Rule of Life	Chapel	Through 15.4	Reading Reflection Due 1am Reflection Paper Five Due Workbook Due 9:30am Exam Two Open 9:30am
	Friday			Service Day Thirteen Chapel	Check Mailbox for Workbook	
	Monday					Exam Two Closed 1am Course Evaluation Due 1am

Assignment Details

This section is designed to provide detailed explanations for course components and assignments:

Exams

1. Two exams will be administered as part of this course.
2. Exams will each focus on one of the two course texts and all other content assigned, discussed, and experienced in the course prior to the week of the exam.
3. Exams will be taken online through the D2L course site.
4. Exams will open on Wednesday after class in the week they are assigned.
5. Exams will close at 1am the following Monday.
6. Exams will contain:
 - a. 20% Term Matching
 - b. 20% Short Answer
 - c. 60% Essay Questions

Reflection Papers

1. Five reflection papers will be assigned as part of this course.
2. Each paper will focus on a question related to a major experience in the course:
 - a. What are the reoccurring experiences in your life that have shaped your worldview and values prior to this course?
 - b. What experiences during the retreat to the monastery evoked a spiritual response?
 - c. What role do your parents have in your present spiritual beliefs and future spiritual formation?
 - d. What experiences during the urban retreat evoked a spiritual response?
 - e. What spiritual disciplines did you find most meaningful? How will you incorporate into your life after this course ends?
3. Each paper must follow MLA guidelines.
4. Each paper must be longer than 500 words and shorter than 750 words.
5. Papers that do not meet length or formatting guidelines will not be graded.
6. Each paper must be submitted to its D2L drop box by 1am on its due date.

Presentations

1. Each student will participate in a group presentation with one or two other people.
2. The topic of the presentation will be assigned. It will be one of Richard Foster's 12 spiritual disciplines.
3. The presentation will be between 18 and 20 minutes long.
4. Each presentation must include a 3.5"x 2.5" sticker for each student for their workbooks that contains the essential information of the presentation.
5. All members of the group must show evidence of participation in all aspects of the presentation.

Spiritual Formation Workbook

1. On the first day of class, each student will receive a printed workbook. This workbook contains activities that are to be completed each week.
2. The workbook readings, assignments and activities align with the weekly course schedule.
3. The workbook contains sections focused on the two retreats that will be completed during the two retreats.
4. The workbook contains a section focused on a mentoring relationship that will be completed over the course of the semester and three mentoring meetings.
5. On Wednesdays, notebooks will be turned in after class for evaluation and feedback. They will be available in campus mail no later than Thursday afternoon.

Service Project

1. The class will serve a local church for thirteen weeks during the semester.
2. Students are expected to attend and serve faithfully for eleven of the thirteen weeks.
3. Service will be scheduled during Friday class time.

Mentoring

1. Students will be assigned a mentor and meet with them three times during the semester.
2. Students will complete the three mentoring pages in the workbook as part of the workbook grade.
3. A sticker with mentor details will be distributed on the first day of class.

Attendance and Reading Response

1. Students receive one point for each class period they attend on time.
2. Students receive one point for each class period they are engaged in the class discussion and activities.
3. Points are deducted for tardiness and lack of engagement (sleeping, disruption, headphones, etc.).

Assignments Points & Assessment Criteria**Attendance – 6.0% 60 points**

- 30 class periods
- 1 point for attendance
- 1 point for attentiveness
- Failure to meet chapel requirement will reduce course grade one letter
- Failure to attend monastery retreat will reduce course grade one letter
- Failure to attend Urban Plunge retreat will reduce course grade one letter
- Course incompletes will be offered to students who are unable to attend the retreats due to illness

Service Project – 5.5% 55 points

- 11 weeks
- 5 points for each weekly attendance

Spiritual Formation Workbook – 36% 360 points

- 15 weeks
 - 20 points weekly (5 per page) = 300
 - 2 Retreats x 15 points (5 per page) = 30
 - 3 mentoring pages x 10 points = 30

Spiritual Discipline Presentation – 7.5% 75 points

- 25 points for sticker
- 50 points for class presentation

Reflection Papers – 25% 250 points

- 5 papers
- Reflection Paper 1 – Spiritual, Religious and Disciplines Self-Assessment
- Reflection Paper 2 – Monastery Retreat Reflection
- Reflection Paper 3 – Parent Role In Spiritual Formation
- Reflection Paper 4 – Urban Retreat Reflection
- Reflection Paper 5 – Spiritual Discipline Experience and Future Application Self-Assessment
- 50 points per paper
 - 5 Points – Formatting
 - 5 Points – Focus
 - 5 Points – Coherence
 - 10 Points – References to Course Content
 - 25 points – Quality of Reflection

Exams – 20% 200 points

- Exam 1 focused on Smith's *The Good and Beautiful Life*
- Exam 2 focused on Barton's *Sacred Rhythms*
- 100 points per exam
 - 25 points – Matching
 - 25 points – Short Answer
 - 50 points – 5 Essay Questions (10 points each)

Course Total – 100% 1000 points**Grading Scale**

1000 pts to 905 pts 100% to 91% A
 904 pts to 895 pts 90% A-
 894 pts to 885 pts 89% B+
 884 pts to 805 pts 88% to 81% B
 804 pts to 795 pts 80% B-
 794 pts to 785 pts 79% C+
 784 pts to 705 pts 78% to 71% C
 704 pts to 695 pts 70% C-
 694 pts to 685 pts 69% D+
 684 pts to 605 pts 68% to 61% D
 604 pts to 595 pts 60% D-
 594 pts or fewer 59% F

Objective and Assignment Alignment Table

The table below outlines how the assignments and activities fulfill course objectives and align to program, department, and institutional objectives.

SLO* ³⁶⁸	First Year Experience Learning Outcomes* ³⁶⁹	Course Objective	Assignments/ Activities
4.4	3	Students will use spiritual disciplines to foster their own spiritual development	Spiritual Formation Workbook Reflection Paper 2, 3 & 5
4.3	4	Students will experience twelve classic Christian spiritual disciplines	Spiritual Formation Workbook Monastery Retreat
3.1	NA	Students will articulate how the Church has viewed spiritual disciplines historically and theologically	Exam 1 Spiritual Discipline Presentation Reflection Paper 2 & 3 Urban Retreat
2.2	1	Students will serve in the church	Service Project Monastery Retreat Urban Reflection
4.2	3	Students will experience and respond to the disequilibrium between their experiences, cultural values and the values of their faith community.	Spiritual Formation Workbook Reflection Paper 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 Monastery Retreat Urban Retreat
4.3	3	Students will exhibit greater levels of equanimity	Spiritual Formation Workbook

*The text of these outcomes is listed at the end of the syllabus.

³⁶⁸ Greenville University, "Greenville University Student Learning Outcomes," accessed December 6, 2017, <https://www.greenville.edu/dotAsset/1b5c1cb6-729f-419e-a711-3840b35f486c.pdf>.

³⁶⁹ Greenville University, "First Year Experience Learning Outcomes," 2015.

Greenville University Student Learning Outcomes³⁷⁰

The University has committed itself to education for character and service. Therefore, through our curriculum and co-curriculum, we want students to:

1. **Seek truth through critical inquiry and research:**

- 1.1 Practice critical self-awareness. Articulate and justify one's own principles and assumptions. Be able to assess arguments about religious, political, cultural, and scientific topics—especially in one's chosen field. Subject individual reasoning, ideas, and expression to critical analysis and revision. Recognize and develop personal strengths. (Knowledge)
- 1.2 Understand our world and comprehend quantitative and conceptual relationships. Seek, identify, synthesize, and communicate relationships among concepts, especially in a chosen discipline. Demonstrate a scientific understanding of physical and biological concepts and the human race, and be able to articulate how scientific accounts of natural processes are congruent with theological understandings of the created order. (Knowledge)
- 1.3 Think integratively to solve problems. Evaluate and integrate alternative perspectives and disciplinary frameworks; use social structures to accomplish goals and solve problems to benefit society. (Skill)
- 1.4 Apply skills and systematic reasoning. Analyze and solve problems with quantitative and qualitative reasoning. Demonstrate skills necessary to succeed in a chosen discipline. Demonstrate a consistent, scholarly, and ethical use of evidence, especially in a chosen discipline. (Skill)

2. **Collaborate and communicate:**

- 2.1 Communicate and cooperate. Express one's self effectively through a variety of means: oral, written, and other creative modes; work effectively and productively on collaborative teams. (Skill)
- 2.2 Value others. Articulate and live out the Christian concepts of human freedom, rights, justice, grace, dignity, and service. Build friendships across cultural barriers. (Value)

3. **Engage culture and be creative:**

- 3.1 Demonstrate cultural awareness. Describe the essential components of culture, the challenges and opportunities of cultural interaction, and distinctive contributions of Western civilization. Demonstrate knowledge of at least one other culture. (Knowledge)
- 3.2 Demonstrate creativity and appreciation for arts, beauty, and ideas. Demonstrate creativity and innovation in various types of endeavors especially by participating in the arts and other creative pursuits. (Value)

³⁷⁰ Greenville University, "Greenville University Student Learning Outcomes."

4. **Demonstrate Faith and Learning in Action:**

- 4.1 Recognize worldviews. Articulate essential features of a Christian worldview and be able to differentiate it from other influential worldviews; explain how Christian commitments can and should influence personal actions. (Knowledge)
- 4.2 Apply Christian values. Analyze real-world situations using the lens of the Wesleyan Quadrilateral: scripture, reason, tradition, experience; demonstrate a desire to serve God and live faithfully. (Skill)
- 4.3 Respond to God. Value God's expression as Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer; respond to God's loving character and actions through worship, service, and stewardship of resources. Communicate and participate in God's saving purpose for the redemption of the created order. (Value)
- 4.4 Maintain healthy self-regard and a growth-focused lifestyle. Exhibit personal growth (psychological, social, physical) and accomplishment. Articulate a personal value system, enlightened by liberal education, and directed toward life-long learning and discovering one's calling. (Value)

First Year Experience Learning Outcomes³⁷¹

Upon completing the first year at Greenville University students will...

1. contribute to the positive welfare of the campus and Greenville community through service learning or service.
2. explore possible life and career calling and vocation options.
3. pursue answers to their own questions, problems or lines of inquiry by engaging intellectually with students and faculty.
4. discover how to respond to God and Scripture.
5. engage in a variety of activities (athletic, academic, co-curricular or volunteer) in order to practice physical, social and emotional balance.
6. gain an appreciation on how Greenville has impacted and continues to impact the world.

³⁷¹ Greenville University, "First Year Experience Learning Outcomes."

Course Policies

Attendance Policy

Students will earn up to 2 points each class period toward their attendance and participation grade. 1 point is earned for on-time attendance. 1 point is earned through active participation during class. Points are deducted for non-engagement and tardiness.

Whether excused or unexcused, absences will result in the loss of 2 attendance points. These points can be earned back with additional service hours (10 points each).

Missed Assignments

Each assignment is due by 1am on the day it is due. Five percentage points are deducted from for each day an assignment is turned in late. After seven days, late assignments will not be accepted and a zero will be given as the grade.

Greenville University Policy on Writing and Plagiarism

Greenville University is committed to helping students improve writing. The university expects all courses to contain a writing component as part of the evaluation of student progress. We expect students to produce written work that is focused, well developed, organized, and relatively free of grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors. Papers that fall short of this standard will not be accepted; the work will be returned to the student for revision within a reasonable time. Students on a Christian college campus are expected to do all academic work with integrity. This means that they should practice academic honesty without exception. The University takes this so seriously we ask all incoming students to sign a statement guaranteeing that they understand the notion of academic integrity and will conform to the policies described below.

All forms of academic dishonesty, which include cheating and plagiarism, are inappropriate on our campus. Cheating and plagiarism are variations on a theme: both involve offering the work of another as one's own. Students cheat and/or plagiarize when they:

Give or receive aid from another student or other person during a test, quiz, or homework assignment when they were told to work alone.

Copy all or part of another student's work—an exam, worksheet, homework assignment, essay, speech, musical composition, web production, etc.—and submit it as their own work.

Copy all or part of any published or copyrighted source such as a book, periodical article, or musical composition and submit it as their own work.

"Cut and paste" information from a digital source such as a CD-ROM or web page and submit it as their own work.

Steal ideas or conceptual frameworks from another source and submit them as their own without giving proper credit to the source.

Submit other people's work as their own (e.g., a roommate's term paper or one purchased over the Internet).

Ask someone else to complete a writing project for them and revise and edit the work in such a way that they are not really the one responsible for the final document. (Please note: GU's faculty often encourage students to share their work in progress with others, in fact the University even pays writing tutors to help students think through revising an assignment. This is simply a good habit for any scholar that we fully endorse. What we don't want students to do is let another person take over and complete an academic task that is their own responsibility.)

This list is not exhaustive, but should give a clear idea of what constitutes academic dishonesty. In general terms, academic dishonesty occurs when people knowingly or unknowingly take credit for words or ideas that are not their own in work that is produced for a class, presentation, publication, or other public domain. All forms of cheating and plagiarism involve intellectual theft, and thou shalt not steal!

Students are responsible to use appropriate quotation marks whenever they use words from another source. They must cite sources for ideas that originated with others. They are responsible to learn the specific documentation methods required in their chosen academic disciplines. Whenever they are in doubt about how to cite sources or use others' writings in their own, they should ask a professor.

At GU, academic dishonesty has severe consequences. If instructors discover any instance of cheating or plagiarism, they are well within their rights to assign a failing grade for that assignment or for the course. Furthermore, they must report the student to the department head and the Office of Academic Affairs. This office will forward the information to the appropriate deans. If a second instance of academic dishonesty occurs, the student will receive a failing grade for the course, and the case will be forwarded to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for review and possible further disciplinary action. A student may be expelled from the institution for repeated or extreme violations of academic integrity. Appeals can be handled through the normal judicial process.

Title IX

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can contact Katrina Liss, our Title IX Deputy Coordinator, at 664.7014, or use our Incident Reporting Form.

Disclaimer

This syllabus and all of its contents are property of Greenville University.



UNIV 200: Equanimity & Spiritual Formation

Journal & Workbook

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Spiritual Discipline & Formation

Each week in class group of two or three students will present a twenty minute presentation on one of the twelve spiritual disciplines discussed by Richard Foster in his book, Celebration of Discipline.

Place Sticker Here

Each group is required to present and provide a sticker containing the most essential history and details of the discipline as it has been used by Christians throughout history.

Barton & Smith

In the end, this is the most hopeful thing any of us can say about spiritual formation: _____
_____...

The _____, the _____
and the _____ are foundational aspects of change, but the real change agent is _____
_____.

Although this book's emphasis is on _____
_____, the spiritual journey was never meant to be taken _____.

What do you do regularly to grow spiritually?

Service	Upcoming Schedule
<p>Each week there will be an opportunity to serve on Friday at a local church between 8:30am and 10:30am. There are thirteen opportunities to complete ten service opportunities.</p> <p>What has been the most meaningful service opportunity in your life?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p><u>Wednesday</u> Read Dobson 1-14, Smith 1-17 Complete Workbook 1.3 & 1.4 Reflection Paper One Assigned Turn in Workbook</p> <p><u>Thursday</u> Pick-Up Workbook at Mailbox</p> <p><u>Friday</u> Service 8:30am to 10:30am</p> <p><u>Monday</u> Read: Smith 17-34, Dobson 15-36 Presentation on Prayer</p>

Ed Dobson: Introduction	
<p>One of the desires of a _____ is the desire to be just like the _____.</p> <p>“As I read [<i>The Year of Living Biblically</i>], I was deeply convicted by the fact that someone had taken the Bible seriously enough to attempt to live it out. ...I began to think about doing something similar...What if I were to try to live like Jesus lived? What if I tried to do some of the things Jesus did? Maybe just for a year.</p>	<p>What are visible ways that you model parts of your life after parents, teachers and coaches?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Experience: Silence

Each week you will be given instructions on how to incorporate the spiritual discipline presented in class on Monday, into your life four times over the remainder of the week. Some of these experiences will be easy others will be difficult and stretch you.

Reflect on your experience. What was very easy about this experience? What was difficult? How were you positively impacted?

Instructions:

- 1. Find a place that is very quiet
2. Spend five minutes in silence
3. After five minutes write down a few words that describe your experience
4. Repeat and reflect on this activity four times before next Monday.

Table with 2 columns: Date & Time, Notes. Rows 1-4.



This is a photograph of the gear that Renan Ozturk a filmmaker and experienced mountain climber takes with him on a typical project. Take five minutes to review this picture and reflect on what it can teach you about spiritual formation.

Prayer

Notes from Presentation:

Place Sticker Here

Smith: “The Good and Beautiful Life” and “The Gospel Many People Have Never Heard”

This book is built around the

_____. The aim is to help
Christians _____ and
_____ the teachings of Jesus
about things such as _____,
_____, _____,
_____, _____ and
_____.

The _____ of _____ is a
present reality that will be
_____ in the
future.

Name one person you model your
Life after. Why?

Name a useful lie that guided
your
life for a long time?

Service	Upcoming Schedule
Did you serve this week? <hr/>	<u>Wednesday</u> Read Smith 35-50
Who at the church did you serve with? <hr/>	Complete Workbook 2.3 & 2.4 Reflection Paper One Due 1:00am Turn in Workbook
<hr/>	<u>Thursday</u> Pick-Up Workbook at Mailbox
What did you do in service? <hr/>	<u>Friday</u> Service 8:30am to 10:30am
What did the Holy Spirit reveal to you? <hr/>	<u>Monday</u> Read: Smith 51-68, Dobson 37-54 Presentation on Prayer

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Ed Dobson: January</h2>
--

Trying to be like _____ and _____ his teachings, I am quickly finding, is a _____	Ed struggles to pray that Mary is the _____ Mother of God. What is a spiritual practice others engage in that you would struggle to do? Why?
...One thing he appreciate was my willingness to answer questions by saying, “ _____ ”	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>



This painting by Artur Markowicz is titled "Prayer." Take five minutes to review this picture and reflect on what it can teach you about spiritual formation.

Meditation

Notes from Presentation:

Place Sticker Here

Smith: "The Grand Invitation" and "Learning to Live Without Anger"

The _____, far from being a new set of _____ that further divide the religious haves and have nots, are words of _____ and _____ to those who have been _____.

_____ and _____ anger are fueled by two ingredients, _____ and _____, that, when united, ignite into a strong emotion.

Which beatitude do you find most personally challenging? Why?

Service	Upcoming Schedule
Did you serve this week? <hr/>	<u>Wednesday</u> Read Smith 69-84
Who at the church did you serve with? <hr/>	Complete Workbook 3.3 & 3.4 Turn in Workbook
<hr/>	<u>Thursday</u> Pick-Up Workbook at Mailbox
What did you do in service? <hr/>	<u>Friday</u> Service 8:30am to 10:30am
<hr/>	
What did the Holy Spirit reveal to you? <hr/>	<u>Monday</u> Read: Smith 85-102, Dobson 55-78 Presentation on Prayer
<hr/>	
<hr/>	

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Ed Dobson: February</h2>

I sat in a nearby _____ _____ and prayed through the _____. It was _____, _____ and _____ experience.	<u>What are the most precious things you have given away and been given?</u> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Certainly the last part of the passage from Acts deals with _____ _____ and that still applies today, doesn't it? So why not the part dealing with _____?	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Experience: Meditation

1. Take four fifteen-minute times to practice “palms down/palms up” meditation.
2. In a quiet place sit and reflect on your day
3. As issues of concern come to mind place your palms down release with spoken words the issue of concern.
4. With palms up ask for Christ to give you love or peace for the issue of concern that you let go.

Reflect on your experience. What was very easy about this experience? What was difficult? How were you positively impacted?

Date & Time	Notes
1	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
2	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
3.	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
4.	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Fasting

Notes from Presentation:

Place Sticker Here

Smith: “Learning to Live Without Lust” and “Learning to Live Without Lying”

We must make a clear distinction between _____ and _____, between feeling sexual desire and _____.

Reread the short section “The Limits of Honesty. Do you agree or disagree? Why?”

Jesus is teaching about the difference between _____ and _____ righteousness and on becoming a new kind of person in the kingdom of God.

Quakers called this “_____.” _____ means speaking without _____ or _____.

Service	Upcoming Schedule
<p>Did you serve this week?</p> <hr/>	<p><u>Wednesday</u></p>
<p>Who at the church did you serve with?</p> <hr/>	<p>Read Dobson 1-14, Smith 1-17 Complete Workbook 1.3 & 1.4 Turn in Workbook</p>
<hr/> <hr/>	<p><u>Thursday</u> Pick-Up Workbook at Mailbox</p>
<p>What did you do in service?</p> <hr/>	<p><u>Friday</u> Service 8:30am to 10:30am</p>
<hr/> <p>What did the Holy Spirit reveal to you?</p> <hr/>	<p><u>Monday</u> Read: Smith 17-34, Dobson 15-36 Presentation on Prayer</p>

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Ed Dobson: March</h2>
--

“Basically, I use two prayers. The _____ and the _____. I pray them both in the _____ and the _____.”

In Northern Ireland where I grew up we were part of the _____ church movement which meant that we were against all forms of _____, _____, _____ and even praying the Lord’s prayer were all foreign to our experience. We believed that prayer out to be _____ - _____.

Experience: Fasting

For our fasting experience we will be using a dawn to dusk fast.

1. Identify three days this week that you will not eat any food between dawn and dusk.
2. Take special care to remain hydrated
3. Your fourth fast day will be a 24 hour fast.
4. If you have a medical issue you may modify your fast by limiting to a few necessary items.

Reflect on your experience. What was very easy about this experience? What was difficult? How were you positively impacted?

Date & Time	Notes
1	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
2	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
3.	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
4.	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>



A family baptism at a river in Idaho. Take five minutes to review this picture and reflect on what it can teach you about spiritual formation.

Monastery Retreat [DATES]

Departing Friday [DATE] at 7:30am we will be traveling to St. Meinrad Archabby in southern Indiana for a three day and two-night retreat. The purpose of our retreat is to:

1. Learn from the practices of the monastic community of St. Meinrad Archabby
2. Focus our attention on how God is working in our lives by reducing the distraction of our typical responsibilities and experiences
3. Experience different spiritual disciplines or variations of spiritual disciplines than are common to our personal faith traditions.
4. Build relationships with instructors, classmates, monks and others.

Schedule		
Friday 7:30am Depart GU 8:30am Breakfast Stop 11:00am Arrive at St. Meinrad 12:00pm Noon Prayer 1:00pm Lunch 5:00pm Vespers 6:00pm Dinner 7:00pm Compline	Saturday 5:30am Vigils & Lauds 7:30am Mass 8:30am Breakfast 12:00pm Noon Prayer 1:00pm Lunch 1:30pm Tour 5:00pm Vespers 6:00pm Dinner 7:00pm Compline	Sunday 9:00am Mass 10:30am Brunch 12:00pm Noon Prayer 1:00pm Depart St. Meinrad 4:30pm Return to GU
Packing List		
<input type="checkbox"/> Bible <input type="checkbox"/> This Workbook <input type="checkbox"/> Course Texts & Other Homework <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Changes of Clothing <input type="checkbox"/> Coat, Hat & Gloves and Outside Shoes <input type="checkbox"/> \$20 for Fast-Food Travel Meals and Coffee <input type="checkbox"/> Toiletries No electronics including phones No items of value		

St. Meinrad Archabby Community



Please seek the answer to these questions from the monks and staff of St. Meinrad Archabby. You may not search for these answers online.

Why does the St. Meinrad Archabby exist in southern Indiana?

Who is St. Meinrad?

What is a Benedictine?

St. Meinrad Retreat: Friday

In what ways are the St. Meinrad community like and different than your faith community?

What are the names of three new people that you got to know today?

Close your eyes and take a few minutes to think back through your day. What are the images, feelings, smells and sounds that come to mind?

Write three questions that you have about today's experiences:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Write about a moment today when your emotions were provoked. What was the emotion? What provoked this emotional response? Why?

St. Meinrad Retreat: Saturday

What did you learn during the guided tour?

By midnight find answers to the three questions you had at the end of Friday.

1.

2.

3.

During unscheduled time today, visit the Monte Cassino Shrine. Spend thirty minutes there. Reflect on what you saw, felt, smelled and heard in the shrine.

What is the story of the Monte Cassino Shrine?

Write three questions that you have about today's experiences:

1.

2.

3.

St. Meinrad Retreat: Sunday

Describe the positive and negative experiences of not having your phone since Friday morning:

How is Greenville's required chapel policy for students, similar and different from the required worship gatherings for monks at St. Meinrad?

The St. Meinrad grounds and buildings are filled with visual art. Which piece of art did you find most compelling? Why?

By noon find answers to the three questions you had at the end of Saturday.

1.

2.

3.

How did you experience hospitality at St. Meinrad?

St. Meinrad Retreat: Review

Describe three mental images that stick in your mind from the retreat:

What practices or ideas will you take from this retreat and integrate into your worldview and/or daily practices?

What circumstances would compel or allow you to join a monastic community like St. Meinrad?

List all spiritual disciplines you witnessed or experienced at St. Meinrad:

Pages 26 to 75 Omitted in this Sample

Mentoring Overview

On the first day of class a mentor was assigned to you. This person below has been in prayer for you and your upcoming mentoring meetings for the past month. You will meet with them on the following Fridays:

place mentor details sticker here

This mentoring experience is short term and focused. You will meet three times. Your meetings will focus on a specific topic. Your meetings will focus on:

1. A Key Experience & A Key Relationship
2. A Spiritual Gift & A Spiritual Challenge
3. A Strong Belief & A Big Question

You will meet your mentor in a public place for an hour. You are only expected to share to a level of depth you are comfortable with, but at least as deeply as you would in a public discussion. You are welcome to continue the relationship beyond the three meetings if you choose, or not.

Describe one life impacting experience. How was it impactful?

Describe one life impacting relationship. How was it impactful?

Mentoring Meeting 1: A Key Experience & Key Relationship		
Mentoring Location:	Date:	Time:
What did you learn about your mentor today?		
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		
What did you learn about yourself?		
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		
What aspect of your spiritual life is easy for you? Give an example.		
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		
What aspect of your spiritual life is challenging? Give an example.		
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		

Mentoring Meeting 2: Spiritual Gift & A Spiritual Challenge

Mentoring Location:

Date:

Time:

What did you learn about your mentor today?

What did you learn about yourself?

What are some beliefs that you hold very deeply about God and faith?

What are some questions you have for God?

Mentoring Meeting 3: A Strong Belief & A Big Question

Mentoring Location:

Date:

Time:

What did you learn about your mentor today?

What did you learn about yourself?

Do you plan to meet with your mentor ever again? Explain.

What did God teach you through this mentoring relationship?

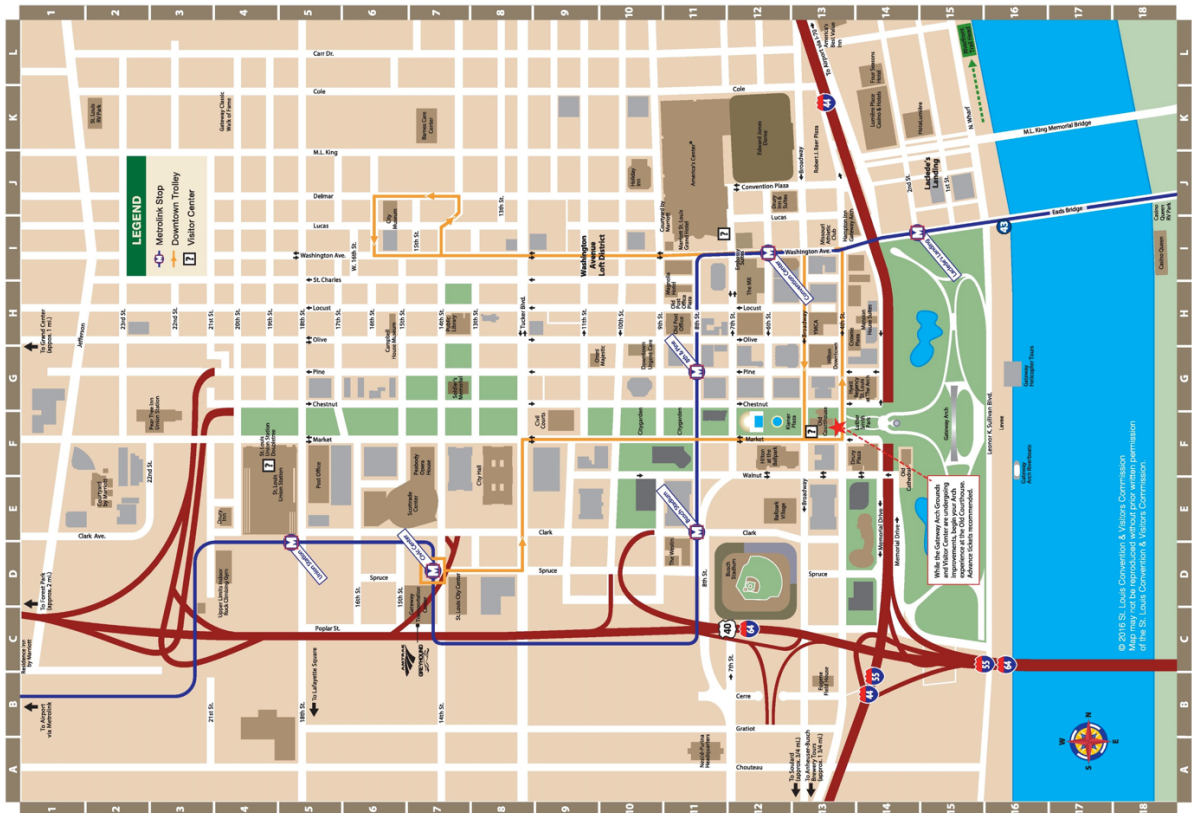
Notes	
7	Renan Ozturk: https://www.pdnonline.com/features/the-things-they-carry-renan-ozturks-expedition-filmmaking-setup/
11	Artur Markowicz, Prayer: http://www.artnet.com/artists/artur-markowicz/past-auction-results
15	Protests in Milwaukee in 1967. https://projects.jsonline.com/topics/50-year-ache/
19	A Family baptism https://gerryreynolds.photoshelter.com/image/I0000DZg6_uwvbS4
76	Spiritual Mentoring – Keith Anderson and Randy Reese
82	St. Meinrad: http://www.saintmeinrad.org/visit-us/maps-directions/ On the World Map: http://ontheworldmap.com/usa/city/st-louis/st-louis-downtown-map.html

Back Inside Cover

[Exterior Back Cover]
St. Meinrad Archabby



Downtown St. Louis



APPENDIX 6:
REVIEW OF SIMILAR COURSES

A number of small colleges and universities similar to Greenville in either location, heritage, or mission offer spiritual formation courses that incorporate spiritual disciplines to their residential undergraduate population. The nine schools, contacted by the author, that were willing to share syllabi for review included Anderson University in Indiana, Missouri Baptist University, Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Northwest Nazarene University, Point Loma Nazarene University, Saint Francis University, Seattle Pacific University, Spring Arbor University, and Taylor University. Six of these nine schools are located in the Midwest. Five of the nine share a common Methodist holiness denominational heritage. All nine schools share similar Christ-centered educational missions as Greenville University.

Spring Arbor University is a sister school to Greenville University and shares not only a Methodist holiness heritage, but common Free Methodist denominational ties. It offers a general education course that focuses on spiritual formation and spiritual disciplines. However, this three-credit course is an upper division course intended for students' junior years. This course is titled COL 300: Christian Faith and its Practices. It is described in its syllabus as an invitation to “students to practice the virtues of memory, gratitude, and faith within the context of the communion of saints. In this course students will explore our Christian tradition, its practices and its doctrines in terms of community

living, spiritual formation, and the SAU Statements of Faith.”³⁷² This course’s learning objectives are focused on assisting students to:

1. understand the tools of spiritual discipline that help one put their hearts and minds in a place that makes them most available to the presence and work of the Holy Spirit.
2. understand the process of spiritual formation, that transformation can be catalyzed by the implementation of spiritual disciplines but ultimately takes place only by the work and influence of the Holy Spirit
3. employ and apply several of the spiritual disciplines in one’s own life and to consider the impact of their presence in one’s life
4. consider what tools of spiritual discipline would be most helpful in one’s own life and understand the importance in regularly incorporating those habits into one’s life
5. develop a plan for regular participation in habits that make one’s self available to the presence and work of the Holy Spirit³⁷³

These objectives are pursued through a curriculum that includes a plan of intentional living, three mentor meetings, an experience of solitude, and a required visit to a faith community vastly different than one’s own. The curriculum also guides the students through daily devotional questions at the start of class, a wide theological variety

³⁷² Spring Arbor University, “COL 300: Christian Faith and its Practices,” 1.

³⁷³ Ibid., 1.

of readings on devotional classics. Assessments range from short writing assignments and longer reflective writing pieces to a short presentation to the class and reading quizzes.³⁷⁴

Seattle Pacific University, like Spring Arbor, is a sister school to Greenville University. They share not only a Methodist holiness heritage, but denominational ties as well. They offer a three-credit course titled UFDN 1000: The Cristian Faith. Students who take this course are dual-enrolled in a zero-credit UFDN 1000L: Christian Faith Small Group “lab” course. It is an undergraduate course required of all residential program undergraduates at SPU.

The syllabus for The Christian Faith describes the course as introducing “students to the central beliefs, practices, and virtues of the Christian faith and its diverse past and present expressions. In a world marked by individual and social sin, this course focuses on the ways Christian Scripture, creeds, doctrines, and communities form Christian disciples’ identity and their calling to partner in God’s reconciling work in the world.”³⁷⁵

UFDN 1000’s learning outcomes are:

1. You are taught to think more deeply and carefully about the claims made in these creeds.
2. You will come to understand how and why the church engages in theological reflection, and how it will invite historical understanding of the development of Christian doctrine.

³⁷⁴ Ibid., 5.

³⁷⁵ Seattle Pacific University, “University Foundations,” accessed December 28, 2017, <http://spu.edu/catalog/undergraduate/20178/course-descriptions/UFDN>.

3. You will begin to understand that theology is both an object of belief and a way of believing.³⁷⁶

These objectives are pursued through a curriculum that includes as one of its central experiences a Wesleyan small group patterned after those instituted by John Wesley. Each week, these facilitated small groups gather to focus around the question “How goes it with your soul.”?³⁷⁷ Other key assignments and experiences in the course include a Spiritual Autobiography, a Core Convictions profile focused on individual students’ beliefs, and an experience of practicing a classic spiritual discipline and writing on the experience. The course also includes three exams over the reading and a final exam.³⁷⁸

Point Loma Nazarene University, located in southern California, shares a Methodist holiness heritage with Greenville University. It offers two courses focused on spiritual formation and spiritual disciplines. They are CMI155: Christian Formation and Ministry and THE306: Life of Holiness, both for three credits. Christian Formation and Ministry is not part of the general education curriculum and is available only to ministry majors. Life of Holiness is an upper-class general education course.

The syllabus for Christian Formation and Ministry describes the course as focused on helping students “learn the various roles and offices of the church, the classic

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

³⁷⁷ Seattle Pacific University, “Soul Care,” accessed on December 28, 2017, <http://spu.edu/academics/school-of-theology/undergraduate-programs/university-foundations/UFDN-1000/soulcare>.

³⁷⁸ Point Loma Nazarene University, “CMI155: Christian Formation & Ministry Syllabus,” 1, accessed December 28, 2017, https://www.sandiego.edu/cas/documents/contemplative-studies/01Stele_Syllabus.pdf.

Christian disciplines as a means of grace and the importance of the theological reflection for ministry.”³⁷⁹

CMI155 has four course learning outcomes:

1. Develop a biblical and theological framework for ministry through the church
2. Understand the importance of personal formation and spiritual disciplines in ministry
3. Discover personal vocation, talent, and gifts for ministry
4. Demonstrate theological reflection in specific ministry settings and situations³⁸⁰

These objectives are pursued through a curriculum that values experiential learning opportunities. Evidence of this is that the course includes a participation grade of nearly 25%, four community classroom dinners, and an off-campus retreat.³⁸¹ The course also facilitates spiritual formation in students through a group presentation, a spiritual formation project, a vocational ministry paper, and development of a rule of life.³⁸²

PLNU’s other spiritual formation course is THE306: Life of Holiness. This upper-division course is required of all students. The syllabus describes THE306 as “A study of the Biblical foundations of the holiness message, Wesleyan theological perspectives set in the context of the history of the Church, and the classic disciplines of spiritual formation.”³⁸³

³⁷⁹ Ibid.

³⁸⁰ Ibid.

³⁸¹ Ibid., 2.

³⁸² Ibid., 3-4

³⁸³ Point Loma Nazarene University, “THE306: Life of Holiness,” 1.

THE306 has three learning outcomes:

- Explain the intellectual integrity, rich diversity, and coherence of the doctrine of holiness in the Christian tradition.
- Explain the characteristic features of the theology and practice of holiness in Wesleyan theology.
- Explain the importance of an ongoing, lifelong commitment to and participation in the Christian tradition and congregational life.³⁸⁴

These objectives are completed through a curriculum that includes in-classroom and out-of-the-classroom experiences. Classroom experience include lectures, group presentations, and exams.³⁸⁵ Out of the classroom experiences include service, worship and Sabbath experiences to be evaluated and reflected upon. Students also create a personal “rule of life” and articulate their own theological beliefs and how they reflect their faith tradition.³⁸⁶

Northwest Nazarene University, located in Nampa, Idaho, offers one undergraduate course focused on spiritual formation and spiritual disciplines. It is PRTH3210: Spiritual Formation, for two credits. This upper-division course is not part of the general education curriculum and is available as a ministry major course or as an elective. The syllabus for Spiritual Formation describes the course as “a study of the theory and practice of spiritual formation and Christian discipleship.” PRTH3210 has ten learning outcomes:

³⁸⁴ Ibid., 1.

³⁸⁵ Ibid., 3-4.

³⁸⁶ Ibid., 4.

1. Listen to and respect the constructive contributions of others in the course
2. Pursue holy character by practicing faith formation and the classic Christian disciplines as a means of grace
3. Identify and explain the history and movements of Christian spirituality
4. Practice the disciplines of fasting, Sabbath-observance, and Eucharist in a context of support and accountability
5. Clarify a theology of spiritual formation from the context of someone in Christian ministry
6. Construct a creative project exemplifying a significant aspect of the student's spiritual journey
7. Develop skills in leading others in sacramental and ascetic practices
8. Students will display a growing personal and spiritually transformed life valuing personal, pastoral, and professional integrity in serving as an example of holiness of heart and life.
9. Students will value and relate Scripture to their own spiritual growth and to life situations, particularly in the context of the Church's pastoral practices.
10. Students will demonstrate cultural competence by analyzing the culture of the church and community they will serve.³⁸⁷

These objectives are pursued through a curriculum that includes lecture, discussions, and participation with other classmates in a spiritual formation small group.³⁸⁸ Students also complete a spiritual autobiography, design a Wesley Covenant

³⁸⁷ Northwest Nazarene University, "PRTH3210: Spiritual Formation," 1-2.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

Service, attend an off-campus retreat, and articulate a 2,000-word personal philosophy of spiritual formation.³⁸⁹

Mount Vernon Nazarene University shares a Methodist holiness heritage with Greenville University. It offers one course focused on spiritual formation and spiritual disciplines. It is HUM1012: Anam Cara and Other Bits of Celtic Wisdom for two credits. This lower-division course is part of the required University Core curriculum. According to the syllabus, this course “will help students identify, form and practice habits of the Christian mind through the basic analysis of worldview in their own lives and in key texts and through writing.”³⁹⁰ The course will help students “engage aspects of discipleship of the Christian mind including the connection to a discipleship of the whole person, the requisite development of particular habits and virtues, and the need to practice discernment from a Christian and Wesleyan worldview.”³⁹¹ The course learning outcomes are:

1. Explore and understand the interconnectedness of the discipleship of the whole person and the discipleship of the Christian mind
2. Engage the processes of discipleship involved in the formation of the life of the Christian mind
3. Identify and use the key habits, virtues, and disciplines of the mind that produce discernment from a Christian and Wesleyan perspective

³⁸⁹ Ibid., 5-6.

³⁹⁰ Mount Vernon Nazarene University, “HUM1012: Anam Cara and Other Bits of Celtic Wisdom,” 1.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

4. Frame, interpret, judge, and develop practices in reference to the key elements of a Christian perspective
5. Distinguish dualistic beliefs and practices from a Christian worldview
6. Understand and appreciate the Wesleyan distinctive within a Christian worldview
7. Understand the role and ethics of writing in a Christian liberal arts education.³⁹²

These objectives are pursued through a curriculum that includes reading, writing assignments, and a few small projects. One assignment focuses on reflecting on one's agreement or disagreement with the text *Anam Cara*, focused on Celtic Christian spirituality. Students are asked to reflect on their habits, use of time, and relationships and respond intentionally. They are also asked to complete and reflect on two projects. These include developing a relationship with their academic advisor and reviewing their personal use of space and time.³⁹³

Missouri Baptist University is the closest CCCU school to Greenville University. It does not share a denominational heritage like Greenville's. It offers one undergraduate course focused on spiritual formation and spiritual disciplines. It is CSC 343: Leading In Spiritual Formation, for three credit. This upper-division course is not part of the general education curriculum, but could be taken as an elective if prerequisite courses in the department are met.³⁹⁴

The syllabus for Leading In Spiritual Formation describes the purpose of this course: "Through a study of Biblical, classical and contemporary material, this course

³⁹² Ibid., 2.

³⁹³ Ibid., 3.

³⁹⁴ Missouri Baptist University, "CSC 343: Leading In Spiritual Formation," 1.

assists the students in discipling themselves...and in understanding, practicing and teaching spiritual disciplines in the life and worship of the church.”³⁹⁵ CSC 343’s

learning outcomes are:

1. The student will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Personal Christian Discipleship
2. The student will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Corporate Christian Discipleship
3. The student will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Discipleship applied to Evangelism.

These objectives are pursued through a curriculum that include a variety of assignments, experiences, and assessments. Students summarize John Bunyan’s *The Pilgrim’s Progress*.³⁹⁶ They summarize Donald Whitney’s *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, and identify three spiritual practices they will add to their life and articulate how they will implement them into daily life. They will also summarize Whitney’s *Spiritual Disciplines Within the Church*, praise and critique the text, and utilize it to evaluate one’s home church. They also will work through Jim Berg’s *Changed into His Image*, utilizing a workbook that incorporates daily scripture reading, memorization, and disciplines as well as engagement with Berg’s text.³⁹⁷

Anderson University, located in Anderson, Indiana is one of the closest regional CCCU schools to Greenville University. It offers one undergraduate course focused on

³⁹⁵ Ibid.

³⁹⁶ Ibid., 5.

³⁹⁷ Ibid., 6.

spiritual formation and spiritual disciplines. It is RLGN 1100: Introduction to Spiritual Formation, for three hours. This lower-division course is not part of the general education curriculum but can be taken by all students as an elective. It is also the first course of the Spiritual Formation major at Anderson University.

The syllabus for RLGN 1100 notes the course purpose is “to provide students with the history, theology and practice of spiritual formation. The hope is that students are transformed by the course; there are theoretical and practical components where students take on spiritual disciplines and reflect critically on the process.”³⁹⁸ As a result of completing this course, students will learn:

1. The significance of practice and habit for spiritual formation
2. The history and theology of practices for Christian spiritual formation
3. To reflect critically on their own formation
4. How to read critically and interpret theological texts
5. How to ask good questions
6. How to write a good argument
7. How to develop habits of character like courage, compassion, and wisdom³⁹⁹

This learning is pursued through a curriculum that includes reading summaries, exams and a group presentation. Experiential components include a canoe trip and reflections on various spiritual practices and experiences.⁴⁰⁰ Students identify a specific

³⁹⁸ Anderson University, “RLGN 1100: Introduction to Spiritual Formation,” 1.

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

spiritual practice, incorporate it into their life for the term of the course, and reflect on in formally twice.⁴⁰¹

Taylor University is one of the closest regional CCCU schools to Greenville University. It does not share a denominational heritage with Greenville. It offers one undergraduate course focused on spiritual formation and spiritual disciplines. This course is CMI262: Personal Foundations for Ministry. It is available to all students as an elective, but its primary purpose is as a course for students studying in one of the ministry-focused majors. The syllabus describes the course as introducing “students to processes and concepts which facilitate spiritual formation in the context of a developing Christian community. Students’ capacity for ministry is enhanced in this course as patterns of personal growth and development are nurtured.”⁴⁰² After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Experience authentic Christian community.
2. Reflect on their lives and circumstances in light of their theological commitments.
3. Identify personal points of inhibited emotional, social, moral, and spiritual development.
4. Identify perceptions of God that inform life narratives.
5. Articulate growing vocational awareness and direction.
6. Value the role of relationships in spiritual formation.
7. Develop a biblical case for appropriate sexual intimacy in relationships.
8. Experience the benefit of the spiritual disciplines.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., 3.

⁴⁰² Taylor University, “CMI262: Personal Foundations for Ministry,” 1.

9. Be committed to the ongoing process of personal growth and spiritual formation.⁴⁰³

These objectives are pursued through a curriculum that includes an autobiography, a semester-long small group experience, and deep reading and reflection focused on four texts.⁴⁰⁴ Students also journal about weekly “Soul Adventure” experiences designed to help awaken and tune one’s spiritual sensitivity.⁴⁰⁵

St. Francis University is one of the closest regional religiously affiliated schools to Greenville University. It does not share a denominational heritage like Greenville’s. It offers one undergraduate course focused on spiritual formation and spiritual disciplines. It is a required general education course, ICON 100: Vices and Virtues, for three credits. The syllabus describes this course as one that “connects students to the university, the community and the Franciscan tradition.”⁴⁰⁶ The learning outcomes for the course are:

1. Students will become connected to the University’s unique mission and values
2. Students will sharpen skills that will ease the transition into college level study
3. Integrate understanding of the Franciscan tradition into one’s own life and disciplinary context
4. Identify an information need, find and evaluate resources, and incorporate new information one’s current knowledge⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid., 2-4.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., 3.

⁴⁰⁶ University of St. Francis, “ICON 100: Vices and Virtues,” 1.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

These objectives are pursued through a curriculum that includes a unit focused on Rebecca DeYoung's book *Glittering Vices: A New Look at the Seven Deadly Sins and Their Remedies*. This unit in particular challenges students to integrate disciplines focused on addressing the traditional seven deadly sin into their lives. For each of the mortal sins—envy, vainglory, sloth, avarice, anger, gluttony and lust—students are given two actions. The first action is some sort of rigorous assessment of the sin in the student's life. The second action is a reflective action facilitating the student reconciling her/his worldview and reality.⁴⁰⁸

A review of these nine courses reveal four ideas that have influenced design of UNIV 200: Equanimity and Spiritual Formation at Greenville University. The first is the importance of having both experiential content that is reflected on and knowledge content that is assessed. The spiritual formation journal that students will work through each week incorporates not only activity directions and reflection questions focused on students' previous or contemporary experiences, but includes new readings, content, and examples that will be included in the exams for assessment.

The second idea is the importance of ensuring that the course content can be engaged by a student who has a non-Christian faith perspective. The assignment directions and workbook content utilize language that is inclusive. In some cases, this takes the form of directions that ask the student to focus on their humanity or personal values. In other cases, the student is asked to use their culture, family, or faith tradition as context for responding when completing an assignment or responding to a prompt.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

The third idea gleaned from these other spiritual formation courses is the importance of keeping spiritual formation and spiritual disciplines focused as much as possible on topics and issues that students are experiencing and interested in. Rather than focusing on interesting examples from the lives of second-century mystics or the instructor's personal heroes, UNIV 200 seeks to blend historical examples from across the denominations most represented at Greenville with examples that are contemporary.

The fourth and final idea to be applied to UNIV 200 is to not underestimate the importance of short-term experiences of a spiritual formation practice, service experience, or mentoring experience. The course incorporates three mentoring meetings, two three-day retreats, and five-day experiences with spiritual disciplines. While longer experiences might be more impactful, the examples given by these nine courses highlight the value of even short "tastes" of these experiences as educational tools.

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