

Formation at CDSP in the 2016-2017 Academic Year

At CDSP, we understand lifelong spiritual formation to be the cultivation of communal and individual habits, affects, practices and beliefs that help us know and love God, whom we see in Jesus Christ and whom we encounter in the Holy Spirit.

Through formation, we more clearly see, know, and love ourselves, our neighbors and the cosmos.

We assume that every part of a student's program of study is formation. This document outlines the requirements for the non-credit spiritual formation course that is required each year of every M.Div. and CAS student, both residential and low-residence. Students in other programs may participate if they are interested and committed to this.

Specific engagement in the formation program encompasses the following five-part structure:

1. Spiritual Direction - Every student is required to be in spiritual direction. They must tell their advisor how often the student and spiritual director meet – minimum, monthly.

Several options are offered to residential students and faculty for spiritual direction.

- a. The Directory of Spiritual Directors and Therapists has been greatly revised and updated by the Dean of Students and is available upon request. A director may be chosen from this list.
- b. If one is already in spiritual direction and wants to continue that relationship, that's fine.
- c. For residential students, if the director and directee so choose to meet on campus, the Upper Parlor in Gibbs will be provided for individual sessions. Please see the Front Office to reserve this room.
- d. For Low-Res students, we suggest you approach your bishop, or someone on the bishop's staff who oversees the ordination program, or your Commission on Ministry for a local referral. It needs to be someone who has actually had training as a spiritual director.

Many spiritual directors charge a fee for their time. Almost all directors on the list will offer a sliding scale. If financial assistance is needed to meet with a spiritual director on the school list, there is a small fund available for half the cost, with a cap at \$50/session, with both student and school contributing. Arrangements for this assistance can be made with the Dean of Students. Directors are asked to send the Dean of Students an invoice at the end of each semester with session dates.

2. Peer Formation Groups

- These will be groups of 5 to 7, pre-assigned, by class, with residential and low residence students in separate groups for ease of calendaring and differing time zone considerations.
- The groups will be self-organizing re: time, location and topic.
- Groups will meet every two weeks for at least one hour each session. You may find that you need/want a longer session, perhaps 90 minutes. The option to extend the length of sessions should be by group consensus. Over the course of the semester meetings should be calendared for one in September, two in October, two in November and one in December. In the second semester there should be two in February, two in March, two in April and one in the first half of May.
- For Entering students, an upper-class person will mentor the first three sessions and then once the group is comfortable with the provided format they will proceed on their own.
- The Dean of Students will offer suggested starter topics, practices, and reflection methods, as well as a detailed script and instructions about developing and using rounds questions.
- Group leaders rotate each session.
 - Together the group discerns various issues they want to talk about and assigns them on a meeting calendar for the whole semester. These calendars will be sent to the Dean of Students for tracking by the first group leader.
 - A different person takes the lead on the new topic each time; leaders are also calendared.
 - Leader takes responsibility for developing rounds questions that will help the group break open and reflect on the chosen topic.
 - Leader also takes responsibility for reporting back to the Dean of Students on the report form provided.
 - Prayer partners – members of each group will be prayer partners with each other, praying for one another daily throughout the month. Prayer partners are encouraged to communicate with each other during the month and respond to special prayer needs. Prayer partner pairs will change each month.
 - Prayer to open and close each meeting is the responsibility of the leader.
 - If the group is meeting in person, silence, a lit candle, icon or other focus object is encouraged.

3. For residential students, regular chapel attendance beyond required rota assignments is a crucial component of Formation at CDSP. If you are on campus on Tuesdays and Thursdays, your attendance at Eucharist is required. Occasionally classes at other GTU schools interfere with these services so absences need to be discussed with your advisor. The pattern of a student's chapel attendance is part of the conversation students have with their faculty Advisors. Advisors will track their

chapel participation and this should be a part of the ongoing advisor-advisee conversation.

For low-residence students, chapel attendance at both Eucharists and Offices is expected during the Intensives and regular rota assignments are made.

4. As part of formation, residential students are expected to attend class retreats in their entirety. Absences from retreats need to be cleared by the Dean of Students and may be conveyed to the Advisor. For low-res students, an on-campus Quiet Day will be calendared on the Saturday before classes begin in both January and June. Travel plans should be made with this in mind.
5. A Quiet Day will be offered each year on Monday of Presidents Weekend for the residential program (and any low-res students who might be in the Bay Area). The Dean of Students arranges this day, generally with an outside leader. Attendance at this is also a requirement of the residential Formation Program.