

LIDLAW COLLEGE

Te Wananga Amorangi

401.515 Formation Course Assessment and Delivery Outline

Campus/Delivery Mode: Distance Learning

Semester 1, 2015
NQF Level: 5, 15 credits

CONTENT OVERVIEW

FORMATION IN CHRIST

1. Knowing God in Christ
2. Knowing ourselves in Christ
3. Embracing the gospel of Christ
4. Becoming more like Christ

FORMATION THROUGH COMMUNITY

5. Trinitarian at heart
6. Embracing the gifts
7. Engaging the challenges: Part 1
8. Engaging the challenges: Part 2

FORMATION FOR THE WORLD

9. Reflecting the glory of God: "Human beings fully alive!"
10. Sharing the brokenness, holding the hope
11. Participating in the work of the Spirit through our gifts, passions and personality
12. Knowing our calling

ASSESSMENT TASKS AND DUE DATES

1. Online discussion

Learning outcomes: 1, 4
Due dates: By the end of Weeks 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9.
Percentage weighting: 20% of course grade

The online discussion requires you to engage with various themes and topics. These tasks will require you to prepare an initial post of not more than 200 words. In addition to your initial posting, you will be required to make at least one further posting of at least 50 words which interacts with what your online tutor and other students have said. The second posting for each assessment exercise must be within 7 calendar days of the due date for the initial posting. Specific instructions will accompany each online discussion task. Students are expected to complete all online discussions in a timely manner.

2. Reflection 1: What's shaped your foundations?

Learning outcomes: 1, 3
Due date: End of Week 5
Percentage Weighting: 25% of course grade
Word Count: 1600 words
Expected Sources: Mostly personal reflection but may incorporate some outside reading, Maximum 3 sources.

Instructions applying to all reflections:

This is the first of two “Reflection” assignments. Each of these tasks provides you with the opportunity to engage with the material we have been covering and to apply it to your own experience.

Given that they are reflections rather than essays, the emphasis is personal and applied. You don’t need to do a lot of extra reading or research, although what you write should clearly demonstrate that you have kept up with the required readings and the course guide notes (see criterion *a* below). There are two extremes to avoid in these assignments: (i) writing in a very scholarly, impersonal style that tells the marker very little of your own personal experience and shows little self-awareness (see criterion *b*), and (ii) simply telling the story of your own experience (‘testimony’ style) without engaging in thoughtful reflection on this experience or intelligently applying the course content to your situation (see assessment criteria *c* and *d*).

If you refer to any of the readings in your reflection, please use footnotes and supply a bibliography, following the usual Laidlaw guidelines for written assignments.

Note: What you write in your reflections may cover quite personal matters. Be assured that the marker will keep whatever you write confidential. You may wish to alter names etc., so as to respect the privacy of others.

Instructions for the first reflection: ‘What’s shaped your foundations?’

In weeks 1 – 4 you have looked at issues that are foundational to your formation as a person in relationship to God, namely: (i) who God is for you, (ii) your sense of identity, (iii) the basis of your ‘belonging’, and (iv) spiritual disciplines which have helped to sustain and grow you as a Christian.

In this assignment you are asked to look back on your past experience and to reflect on the influences that have shaped you in these areas. How was your image of God shaped? What influenced how you saw/see yourself? Has your sense of ‘belonging’ been shaped more by a ‘wells’ or ‘fences’ ethos, and how has that come about? What spiritual disciplines have been most helpful (or unhelpful!) in your growth as a Christian?

Remember that you need to do more than simply tell the story here; you also need to write about *how* these past events and influences have affected your experience of the spiritual life. You may like to write about each area separately (about 400 words on each), or they may be quite interconnected so that you need to discuss them together. Either approach is fine. You should also give some indication of where you are now in relation to each of these areas – what significant challenges or breakthroughs have you experienced in each of these areas?

3. Reflection 2: Finding your fit

<i>Learning outcomes:</i>	1, 2
<i>Due date:</i>	End of Week 10
<i>Percentage Weighting:</i>	20% of course grade
<i>Word Count:</i>	1200 words
<i>Expected Sources:</i>	Text Book

This reflection assignment is based on Chapters 1 – 3 of the text book.¹ Specifically, you are required to complete the exercises outlined on pages 44 – 53. **Only submit for grading your responses to steps II and III on page 45** (see point iv. below for details), **plus a 200 word reflection** (see point v. below for details).

Please note the following points before you start:

- i. Before starting on the exercises, please read through Chapters 1 and 2, and the beginning of Chapter 3, so that you understand the purpose of what you are asked to do.
- ii. Although the main heading is “Your Autobiography”, this is **not** a repeat of the life stories which you are asked to tell in the Online Discussion of Module 7.
- iii. In Step I of the exercises (pages 44 and 45), you are asked to think about “the most satisfying events of your life” and “satisfying and enjoyable achievements”. The things you come up with don’t have to be huge world-changing achievements or peak experiences. They can be anything you did that gave you a real sense of enjoyment and fulfilment, even if they may seem to others to be quite ordinary or small things.
- iv. It’s hard to give exact guidance on how many words you should write on each area, other than “just write enough to clearly answer the question”. Here is a very rough guide for what might be appropriate for each main section. You won’t be penalised for writing a bit more or less than this, but aim to be concise – someone has to mark all this!

STEP I This step involves thinking and making your own notes - **not for handing in.**

STEP II Here is where your written assignment that you hand in starts. For the 7 achievements you describe (using headings 1 – 4 for each one) you might write about 500 words **in total.**

STEP III Please note that what you write here applies to the 7 achievements taken as a whole, not to each one separately. For each of the 5 headings (1. Abilities, 2. Subject Matter etc.) make some notes (not for handing in), and then provide 5 summaries, as indicated under “Your Fingerprint” (pages 52 and 53). Each of the five summaries should be around 100 words.

- v. Finish your assignment by writing a reflection of around 200 words about what this exercise has shown you or confirmed to you about yourself.

4. Essay

<i>Learning outcomes:</i>	3
<i>Due date:</i>	End of Study Week 1
<i>Percentage weighting:</i>	35% of course grade
<i>Word Count:</i>	2000 words
<i>Expected Sources:</i>	Significant use of a minimum of 5 books and/or articles largely taken from the Indicative Bibliography.

Essay guidelines

Choose one of the following topics and write a 2000 word essay which will count for 35% of your final grade.

¹ Alistair Mackenzie, Wayne Kirkland and Annette Dunham, *Soul Purpose: Making a Difference in Life and Work* (Christchurch: NavPress, 2004).

Whereas the reflection assignments are primarily your personal response to aspects of the course, this essay is expected to be a more objective discussion on your chosen topic, following normal academic essay guidelines. Please note the grading criteria carefully.

Having said that, you are asked to include a brief section of personal application at the end of the essay of around 250 words in length (this is counted in the 2000 word limit). In this application section you should comment on your own experience of the issues you have written about.

The bibliographies given for each topic are not intended to be definitive. You may find some of the books more helpful than others, and hopefully you will find other books or articles not mentioned there that are helpful also. It is suggested that you also search the electronic databases available through the library website for any relevant articles.

Note: A few of the items shown on the suggested bibliographies can be found on Moodle, in the "Additional course resources" folder. These are not sufficient, but will help complement your use of library resources.

Topic 1

Perhaps it seems terribly obvious to say that my images of God and my willingness to grow in those images will determine how I pray and how I will deal with what happens after I pray. Based on my personal experience and my years of priestly ministry, I am convinced that the difficulties many people face in prayer cannot be resolved until they face the images of God on which their prayers are based. Those images have very radical implications for how the praying person sees himself or herself and others.
(Pat McCloskey, *Naming Your God: The Search for Mature Images*, 103-104)

In the light of these claims, discuss the ways in which a person's images of God may impact on their personal and spiritual life as a whole, and suggest ways in which they may move toward greater maturity in this area.

Ideas for bibliography:

- Barry, William A. *God and You: Prayer as Personal Relationship*. New York: Paulist, 1987, 27-39.
- Huggett, Joyce. *The Smile of Love*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1990, 136-157.
- Hughes, Gerald W. *God of Surprises*. London: Darton Longman & Todd, 1985, 26-39.
- McCloskey, Pat. *Naming Your God: The Search for Mature Images*. Notre Dame, IND: Ave Maria Press, 1991, chapters 4-5.
- McFarland, Ian A. *The Divine Image: Envisioning the Invisible God*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006.
- Ryan, Dale and Juanita Ryan. *Recovery From Distorted Images of God*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1990.
- Thomas, Carolyn. *Will the Real God Please Stand Up: Healing Our Dysfunctional Images of God*. New York: Paulist, 1991.
- Yancey, Philip. *Reaching for the Invisible God*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000, 135-146.
- Yancey, Philip. *What's So Amazing About Grace?* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997, 19-56.

Topic 2

I interviewed ordinary people about prayer. Typically, the results went like this. Is Prayer important to you? *Oh, yes.* How often do you pray? *Every day.* Approximately how long? *Five minutes – well, maybe seven.* Do you find prayer satisfying? *Not really.* Do you sense the presence of God when you pray? *Occasionally, not often.* Many of those I talked to experienced prayer more as a burden than as a pleasure. They regarded it as important, even paramount, and felt guilty about their failure, blaming themselves. (Philip Yancey, *Prayer: Does it Make Any Difference?* 6)

Explore possible reasons as to why so many people find prayer to be unsatisfying and a source of guilt and failure. What perspectives on prayer might help such people find a more positive experience of prayer?

Ideas for bibliography

Barry, William A. *God and You: Prayer as Personal Relationship.* New York: Paulist, 1987.

Chase, Steven. *The Tree of Life: Models of Christian Prayer.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005.

Foster, Richard. *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home.* London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1992.

Houston, James M. *The Transforming Friendship.* Lion, 1989.

Huggett, Joyce. *Finding God in the Fast Lane: How to Live in God's Presence in the Midst of Chaos.* Guildford: Eagle, 1993.

Huggett, Joyce. *Learning the Language of Prayer.* Sutherland, NSW: Albatross, 1996.

Hybels, Bill. *Too Busy Not to Pray: Slowing Down to be with God.* Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 1989.

Pritchard, Sheila Mary. *The Lost Art of Meditation: Deepening Your Prayer Life.* Bletchley: Scripture Union, 2003.

Yancey, Philip. *Prayer: Does it Make Any Difference?* London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2006.

Topic 3

Most Christians approach decision making with certain assumptions concerning the will of God and with particular ideas about how to discern God's will. Some believe that God has a detailed, perfect plan for their lives, which they must discover and obey if their lives are to be blessed by God. Others believe that God has revealed all the guidance we need in the Bible, and that beyond this God gives us freedom to choose our path in life.

Explain what implications these contrasting views might have for the Christian life, and put the case for what you regard as the most helpful approach to decision making and the will of God. (It may be one of the approaches outlined above, or it may be something different).

Ideas for bibliography:

Adam, Peter. *Guidance.* Bramcote, Nottingham: Grove Books, 1988.

Friesen, Garry and J. Robin Maxson, *Decision Making and the Will of God: 12 Session Study Guide.* Colorado Springs: Multnomah, 2004.

Lonsdale, David. *Listening to the Music of the Spirit: The Art of Discernment.* Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1992, 49-66.

- Mackenzie, Alistair, Wayne Kirkland and Annette Dunham. *SoulPurpose: Making a Difference in Life and Work*. Christchurch: NavPress, 2004, chapter 2.
- Ramesh, Richard. *Soul Vision: Ensuring Your Life's Future Impact*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2004.
- Runcorn, David. *Choice, Desire and the Will of God*. London: SPCK, 2003.
- Smith, Gordon T. *Listening to God in Times of Choice: The Art of Discerning God's Will*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1997.
- Waltke, Bruce K. *Knowing the Will of God: For the Decisions of Life*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1998.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

Online Discussion

Before beginning your first online discussion, please see the grading grid (rubric) on the "online discussion grading guide and indicative mid-semester feedback" for further details on how these criteria will be applied.

- Engagement with material
- Constructive engagement with others
- Structure and presentation
- Timeliness

Reflection One

- Clear understanding of course topics and readings
- Healthy self-awareness in relation to spiritual development and practices
- Appropriate personal application of course topics
- Depth and clarity of written presentation

Reflection Two

- Clear understanding of reading and exercises
- Healthy self-awareness in relation to past experiences
- Clarity of written presentation and analysis

Essay

- Breadth of reading as evidenced in the essay
- Clear understanding of reading material
- Skills of analysis and synthesis
- Overall depth of treatment
- Originality and creativity of approach
- Presentation, style and construction of essay
- Correct use of footnotes and bibliography
- Demonstration of appropriate self-awareness in the application

LEARNING HOURS

401.515 is a 15 credit course consisting of 150 learning hours. For distance learning students, the expected learning hours are as follows:

Elements of learning	Learning hours
Learning guide & readings	60 hours
Online discussion (2.5 hours/week)	20 hours
Reflection 1: What's shaped your foundations?	20 hours

Reflection 2: Finding your fit
Essay

20 hours
30 hours
150 hours

Although the guidelines regarding learning hours are not intended to be applied rigidly, they are provided to help you plan a balanced workload.

TEXTBOOKS

The textbook for this course is:

Mackenzie, Alistair, Wayne Kirkland and Annette Dunham. *SoulPurpose: Making a Difference in Life and Work*. Christchurch: NavPress, 2004.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Extensive readings lists are included as part of each lesson in the learning guide for this course.