

**Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary**  
**MENTORING I – CONNECTING**

*Course No.:* IS-505 (1 unit)  
*Coordinator:* Rick Bartlett  
*Meeting Times:*

*Semester:*  
*Mentor:*

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

All first semester degree students take Mentoring/Connecting. This course is intended to introduce new students to the Seminary as well as to help students grow personally through developing interpersonal relationships. Class sessions foster reflection on issues related to personal, spiritual and academic growth. Other issues addressed include a basic understanding of Anabaptism as well as an introduction to the core values of the seminary. Attendance at the Hartland retreat is required in the fall semester.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. To assist students in making a successful entry into seminary life.
2. To create a set of relationships which can offer support and help hold one on course.
3. To learn to nourish one's spirit through academic activities and the practice of spiritual disciplines.
4. To create a setting where students can integrate their classroom learning with personal life issues.
5. To encourage the development of a student's "dream" and degree program.
6. To provide student and mentor with information about the student's personality profile, growth needs, characteristics and ministry orientation.
7. To develop the academic skills necessary for successful completion of seminary studies.
8. To foster involvement in a local church.

**RELATED DEGREE OBJECTIVES**

*In Biblical Formation*

- To foster regular reading and study of the Bible, with personal application of the Bible to contemporary life and obedience to its message

*In Ecclesial Formation*

- To foster a lifestyle of openness and exercise of mutual accountability, discernment and encouragement
- To strengthen a commitment to church participation and ministry
- To develop skill in mentoring and discipling others

*In Character Formation*

- To be aware of one's personal needs, weaknesses and strengths, spiritual gifts and abilities.
- To be devoted to the disciplines of a godly life.

*In Ministry/Mission Formation*

- To know the principles and practices of ministry and leadership.
- To foster a positive attitude toward mission and ministry.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

The required texts are available at Pacific Bookshop and widely available in new and used form via the Internet.

Badke, William B. Research Strategies. iUniverse (Second Edition) 2004

Yaconelli, Mike. Messy Spirituality. Zondervan 2002

**RECOMMENDED RESOURCE MATERIAL**

All students are encouraged to acquire a basic resource library. At a minimum, this should include a dictionary and a manual of style which provides guidelines for one of the three writing formats accepted at MBBS, namely, the Chicago Manual of Style (Turabian), The American Psychological Association (APA), and the Modern Language Association (MLA) style. Other helpful resources include a thesaurus, a Bible dictionary, a dictionary of theological terms, and writing and grammar aids.

## NATURE OF THE COURSE

Groups of 8-10 students will meet weekly with a faculty mentor. These sessions will focus around sharing “call” stories, assigned readings and topics, as well as issues arising from classroom learning, reading, or experience. Book reviews, individual meeting with the mentor, and personal and ministry inventories will provide resources for personal and spiritual exploration and growth. Attendance at the annual all-school retreat is also expected. A more detailed schedule will be distributed at the beginning of class; the schedule varies slightly from group to group.

**Because this is a Graduate institution,** there are high expectations in the areas of research and writing. In order to assist students in this area, a three-hour writing workshop will be offered twice each semester. Students are encouraged to attend one of these workshops.

## REQUIREMENTS

1. **Small Group Meetings and Hartland Retreat** (Fall only). The group will meet weekly with the faculty mentor. Sessions will revolve around sharing call stories, discussion and prayer. Attendance is expected.
2. **Book Review.** Students are required to write a review of the two assigned books. Each review is to be at least three pages in length. Information on how to write a graduate-level book review will be covered in the first session.
3. **One-to-One with Faculty Mentor.** Students are expected to meet individually with their faculty mentor once during the semester. The agenda for this session will flow from the student’s reading of Yaconelli and personal reflection on how this book impacts the student’s life. This is also a time to check on the student’s completion of the *Bible Knowledge* requirement. This meeting needs to be arranged by the student soon after the book review is due and prior to the close of the semester.
4. **Personal, Relationship, and Ministry Inventories and Consultation.** Each incoming student is asked to take the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. All MDiv and MA- Christian Ministry students are also required to take the POM I (Profiles of Ministry), an inventory which helps identify ministry strengths and growth needs. The POM I is optional for MA students in Bible or Theology, though students expecting to work in vocational ministry settings are highly encouraged to participate in the POM I. MFCC students are not expected to take the POM I. Insights from these tools should be incorporated into your self-assessment and program plan assignment. You will be contacted to schedule the POM. The Myers-Briggs can be taken online at: <http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes1.htm> or if needed, can be distributed in class.
5. **Self-assessment and Program Plan.** Over the course of the semester each student is expected to develop a plan for completion of his or her seminary studies. In preparation, each student is expected to write a short self-assessment report (3-5 pages) that explores program fit as well as personal, academic and vocational goals. A guide for the self-assessment will be distributed in class. **The program plan is due prior to the one-to-one meeting with the mentor and is to be filed with the Registrar by end of semester.** *The degree program plan must be approved by the student’s academic adviser before it is filed with the Registrar.*

## GRADING

Attendance	35%
Book Reviews	25%
One-to-one meeting with mentor	20%
Completion of inventories	10%
Program plan	10%

Assessment will be based on participation in course meetings and events (i.e., absences will affect one’s grade), quality of personal engagement in written assignments, adherence to the scheduled due dates, completion of reading assignments and program plan.

## POLICY NOTES

MBBS academic policies are described at [www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies](http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies). These policies provide guidance on academic integrity and plagiarism, incomplete course work, extensions, dates for changing registration, non-discriminatory and inclusive language, appeals, etc. Students are expected to be familiar with these policies and will be held responsible for adhering to them. If you have questions about how these policies relate to you or to a situation that you face in your studies, please speak to the professor or consult the Registrar or Academic Dean.