

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

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

Semester: Fall 08  
Mentor:

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is intended to help students grow personally through developing strong interpersonal relationships and by fostering reflection on issues related to personal, spiritual and academic growth. It seeks to explore within a large and small group setting what it means to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, your mind and your soul.”

**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 create a setting where students can integrate their classroom learning with personal life issues.
4. To provide student and mentor with information about the student’s personality profile, growth needs, characteristics and ministry orientation.
5. To develop the academic skills necessary for successful completion of seminary studies.

**DESIRED OUTCOMES**

- Demonstrate commitment to live as a disciple of Jesus in Christian community through a course practicing community.
- Articulate commitment to a biblical theological Christian perspective by a good start to Seminary education.
- Interpret diverse cultural contexts of ministry using theological perspectives integrated with social scientific approaches by learning to know other students from different backgrounds and experiences.

**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  
Rath, Tom. *StrengthsFinder 2.0* (Gallup Press) 2007  
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 two writing formats accepted at MBBS, namely, the Chicago Manual of Style (Turabian), or The American Psychological Association (APA). Other helpful resources include a thesaurus, a Bible dictionary, a dictionary of theological terms, and writing and grammar aids.

**NATURE OF THE COURSE**

This course will utilize both large and small group formats. The large group discussion will focus on tools for building emotionally healthy relationships. The small groups of 8-10 students will meet with a faculty mentor to focus around sharing “call” stories, assigned readings and topics, as well as issues arising from classroom learning, reading, or experience. Book critiques, individual meeting with the mentor, and personal and ministry inventories will provide resources for personal and spiritual exploration and growth. Since community is a high value, attendance at the Hartland Experience is also expected. A more detailed course schedule will be distributed at the beginning of class.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

1. **Class Meetings.** The group will meet nine times during the semester. Attendance is expected.
2. **Book Critiques.** Students are required to write a critique of the book by Yaconelli. This review is to be at least three pages in length. Information on how to write a graduate-level book review will be covered in class. For Badke, students are to write a one-page reflection answering the question, “What are the new concepts you will take away from this text?”

3. **One-to-One with Faculty Mentor.** Students will meet individually with their faculty mentor once during the semester. The agenda for this session will flow from the student's personal growth plan as well as the critique of Yaconelli, and personal reflection on the impact of this book in the student's life. This is also a time to check in on the student's completion of the *Bible Knowledge* requirement. This meeting needs to be arranged by the student soon after the book critique and personal growth plan are due and prior to the close of the semester.
4. **Personal, Relationship, and Ministry Inventories.** Each student is to take these inventories: StrengthsFinder 2.0, Spiritual Gifts inventory, and Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. The spiritual gifts inventory will be distributed in class. The Myers-Briggs can be taken online for free at: <http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes1.htm> Insights from these tools, and any others that have been taken, should be incorporated into the personal growth plan.
5. **Personal Growth Plan-** each student is expected to write a short self-assessment report (3-5 pages) that explores personal, academic and vocational goals. *A guide for the growth plan is attached to the syllabus.* This growth plan should be submitted to the student's faculty advisor as well as the mentoring instructor.
6. **Hartland Experience or Chapel Attendance-** Since community is a high value at MB Biblical Seminary, one of the class requirement is attending the Hartland Experience. If that is impossible, then students are to attend at least four Chapels during the semester and write a one-page reflection.

### **GRADING**

Class Attendance/ Participation	30%
Book Critique Yaconelli	15%
Book Critique Badke	10%
One-to-one meeting with mentor	10%
Personal Growth plan (includes completed inventories)	25%
Hartland Experience/ Chapel attendance/reflection	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 personal growth plan.

### **Academic Policies**

MBBS academic policies (as well as other school policies) are described at <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies>. These policies provide guidance on academic integrity and plagiarism, accommodations for disability, incomplete course work, extensions, dates for changing registration, non-discriminatory and inclusive language, appeals, grading templates, 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 your professor or consult the Registrar.

Course evaluations are to be completed online and are due one week after the completion of the course. Official grades will not be posted until the student's evaluation of the course is completed.

Class Participation is one of the most significant parts of the shared learning experience at MBBS. Any student who misses more than 25% of the class time in a course may have their grade reduced by a full letter grade and may be at risk for failing the course. Exceptions to this policy may be considered because of medical or family emergencies; but all exceptions must be approved by the faculty member and the Academic Dean.

### **Confidentiality**

Students who wish to have their assignment results be more confidential may submit the assignment in an envelope. The instructor will then return the assignment in the same envelope.

## Mentoring/Connecting Personal Growth Plan

Students in Mentoring/Connecting are to write a personal growth plan based around the [MBBS Desired Educational Outcomes](#) that will be reviewed throughout their time at Seminary. The purpose of this assignment is to create a living document that provides a map for growth during the Seminary experience. It should be a culmination of the Mentoring/Connecting course as students draw together the varied experiences from the class.

The personal growth plan needs to show thoughtful reflection and include both immediate and long term goals. This Growth Plan will be reviewed midway through the student's academic career. The final product and evaluation of growth will take place in Mentoring 2: Commencing, and will also be included in the student's portfolio.

Suggested elements of the Growth Plan include (but are not necessarily limited to):

- A spiritual life and personal development “status report” - including spiritual and personal growth goals
- A statement of vocational goals and their relationship to calling, gifts, strengths and weaknesses. (Use the results from: Leveraging Leadership styles, the spiritual gifts inventory, Myers-Briggs\* and Strengthsfinder 2.0\*\*)
- Relational issues such as marital and family relationships. Also include any mentoring/coaching interactions that you are or hope to participate in.
- Evangelism, community service, and leadership goals
- An academic plan that addresses these goals

\* The Myers-Briggs Profile- This assessment can be taken online at <http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/Jtypes1.htm>.

\*\* Rath, Tom. *StrengthsFinder 2.0* (Gallup Press) 2007.