

Abilene Approval Chart for Curriculum Changes

A = Approve I = Information Item R = Respond In Writing

Course Number: B1B1675 or Degree Plan(s):

		Dept./School	College	Dean	TEC	AUAC/Grad	Provost
	Campus-Level Academic Review¹						
	Change to a Course Include signatures from all chairs/program directors for cross-listed courses. ¹						
1.	Title (description unchanged)	A	A	A	I	I	I
2.	Description (not affecting content)	A	A	A	I	I	I
3.	Course term(s)	A	I	A	I	I	I
4.	Content (change of course outcomes)	A	A	A	I	I	A
5.	Number of credit hours	A	A	A	A	A	A
6.	Course number within the hundred	A	A	I	I	I	I
7.	Course number beyond the hundred	A	A	A	A	A	A
8.	Prerequisites	A	A	A	I	I	I
9.	Course restriction (e.g., majors only, junior standing)	A	A	A	A	A	A
10.	Level change (U to G or G to U)	A	A	A	A	A	A
11.	Cross list course	A	A	A	A	A	A
12.	Department of record	A	A	A	A	A	A
→ 13.	Open or close a course <i>New Course</i>	A	A	A	A	A	A
	Change to a Degree Plan						
14.	Educational Program — Revise	A	A	A	A	A	A
15.	Educational Program — Adopt/revise admission requirements	A	A	A	A	A	A
16.	GPA — Revise program-required GPA	A	A	A	A	A	A
17.	Minor — Revise	A	A	A	A	A	A

		Dept./School	College	Dean	TEC	AUAC/Grad	Provost	Campus Faculty	Senior VPAA	President
	Full Review									
	Change to Catalog Information (for Campus)									
18.	General requirements for Bachelor's and Associate Degrees	-	-	-	-	A	A	A	A	I
19.	Policies governing academic probation and suspension	-	-	-	-	A	A	A	A	I
20.	Requirements for graduating with honors	-	-	-	-	A	A	A	A	I
	Change to a Degree Plan									
21.	Educational Program — Add or Discontinue ^{2,3}	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	I
22.	Educational Program — Discontinue (Provost-proposed)	R	-	R	A	A	A	A	A	I
23.	Minor — Add or Discontinue	A	A	A	A	A	A	-	A	I
24.	Minor — Discontinue (Provost-proposed)	R	-	R	A	A	A	-	A	I
25.	Degree — Add or Discontinue	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	I
26.	Degree — Discontinue (Provost-proposed)	R	-	R	A	A	A	A	A	I

		Dept./School	College	Dean	AUAC	Provost	UGEC	University Faculty	Senior VPAA	President
	Change to General Education Requirements for Undergraduates (System)									
27.	Change course outcomes of an included course	A	A	A	A	A	A	-	A	I
28.	Add or drop a required course from the General Education Requirements	A	-	A	-	A	A	A	A	I
29.	Add or drop a course from a menu within the General Education Requirements	A	-	A	-	A	A	-	A	I
30.	Comprehensive revision of General Education Requirements	-	-	-	-	A	A	A	A	I

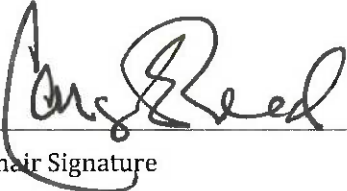
Notes

² Any change to a cross-listed course requires the signature of both department chairs or program directors overseeing the course to ensure that the courses stay in sync. This includes courses taught at other campuses (e.g. BIBL 101 and BIBO 101).

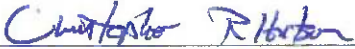
³ For undergraduate majors, a minimum of 30 hours is required. These programs must have a minimum of 6 elective hours, unless the requirements of external accrediting bodies make it impossible. Master's programs must include a minimum of 30 hours, and doctoral programs must include a minimum of 30 hours beyond the master's.

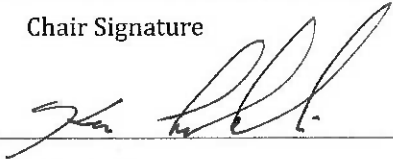
⁴ When a department/school or dean proposes closing a program, approval routing follows the typical process beginning with the department/school. An administrative proposal by the provost or senior vice president for academic affairs would follow the "provost-proposed" routing on the chart.

Updated 8/1/2023

	Department/School(s)	15 April 24
Chair Signature		Date

Chair/Program Director Signature	Date
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College Academic Council(s)	
	4-15-24
Chair Signature	Date

Chair Signature	Dean(s)	Date
		4-15-24
Signature		Date

Signature	Date
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Teacher Education Council	
Signature	Date

Campus Academic Council: Abilene Undergraduate or Abilene Graduate	
Signature	Date

Provost

Signature

Date

University General Education Council

Signature

Date

University Faculty

Abilene Faculty Senate Chair signature

Date

Dallas Faculty Council Chair signature

Date

Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Signature

Date

President

Signature

Date

Abilene New Course Application

You may delete the preceding instructional pages before submitting application.

Course ID (<i>Subject Code and Number</i>)	BIBM 675
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1. Systems and Catalog Information Complete each item.

A	Course Developer	Jennifer Schroeder
B	Course Instructor	Jennifer Schroeder
C	Course Title	Spiritual Formation of Children
D	Course Abbreviation for Banner if title is more than 30 characters	Spiritual Formation of Children
E		CBS - Biblical Studies ▾
F		GST - Graduate School of Theology ▾
G		3 ▾
G1		3 ▾
G2		0 ▾
H	Is the course for a fixed or variable number of credit hours?	Fixed ▾ If variable, explain rationale:
I	Is the course repeatable for additional credit?	No ▾
J	Maximum total number of credit hours a student can earn for this course	
K		Lecture (LEC) ▾ See Schedule Type definitions in the Reference section.
L		3 ▾
M		Standard ▾
N	Maximum Enrollment	20

O	Catalog Description (50 words or less)	This course explores the processes of Christian spiritual formation and implications for ministry with children in a variety of contexts. Students will engage critically with theological, sociological, and cultural frameworks as they consider how to nurture children toward full participation in the kingdom of God.
P	List any prerequisites (course/s, test scores, class standing, major, etc.)	
Q	List any corequisites (these <i>must</i> be taken at the same time; note that a single requirement cannot be both a prerequisite <i>and</i> a corequisite)	
R	If the course is cross-listed, specify the subject code and course number of the other course	
S	Does this course require any additional student course fees?	No ▾ If yes, attach a completed course fee form .
T1	Will the course be offered in fall terms?	Select ▾
T2	Will the course be offered in spring terms?	Select ▾ yes, odd years
T3	Will the course be offered in summer terms?	Select ▾
U	First semester this course will be offered under new Course ID. <i>May not be earlier than the coming fall semester.</i>	Fall 2024
V	Is this course required for a program(s)?	Select ▾ If yes, attach a completed curriculum proposal to change the program(s).
W	Should the addition of this course be retroactively applied to the degree plan it supports? <i>This is rare, and rationale should explain compelling extenuating circumstances.</i>	Select ▾ If yes, provide rationale:

X	Has this course been offered as a Special Topics course? <i>New courses are not required to be taught as Special Topics courses prior to approval.</i>	No ▾ If yes, provide course ID, term, and enrollment:
Y	List any courses in which the content overlaps the proposed course. (Course ID and Name). <i>Attach a statement from the instructor/dept chair of the existing course justifying the new offering.</i>	

2. Curriculum

- A. Explain any effects of this course on any degree plans. If the addition of the course alters program requirements, submit a separate [Approval Chart for Curriculum Change](#) to update the program.
- B. Justify the addition of this course to the current curriculum, explaining the gap it meets.

3. Course Design

A. Audience and Course Goal

1. Describe the intended audience, including prerequisite skills.
The purpose of this course is to provide students with a deep understanding of the theological, sociological, and cultural frameworks that impact and cultivate spiritual formation in children as it applies to a myriad of contexts. The intended audience is graduate students, and there are no prerequisites.
2. State the overarching course goal(s) in performance terms.
The goal of this course is to further students' understanding of the theological, sociological, and cultural elements of children's ministry that inform praxis so that they are able to serve and lead effectively in a variety of ministry contexts. Through this course, students will not only gain a deeper understanding of the elements that foster spiritual formation in children and its application within the practice of ministry, but they will also develop the skills to synthesize and apply those theoretical and pedagogical elements.

B. Student Learning Outcomes and Measurements

	Student Learning Outcome	Measurement
1	Capacities conducive to Effective Ministerial Practice. Graduates will demonstrate the emotional and spiritual maturity as well as the vocational skills	Weekly Essays Discussion Forum A Personal View on Children's Spirituality Paper Podcast/Video Response Forms

	necessary to fulfill their professional identity.	
2	Competence in Interpreting Cultural Contexts of Ministry. Graduates will demonstrate increased competence in assessing and intervening in varied cultural contexts of ministry.	Weekly Essays Discussion Forum Contextual Evaluation Paper Digital Presentation Pathways Assignment
3	Those who satisfactorily complete the Certificate in Practical Ministry will demonstrate essential ministerial skills in integrating theological reflection with leadership practices.	Discussion Forum Contextual Evaluation Paper Digital Presentation Pathways Assignment
4		
5		

C. Text and Resources

Give the full publication information of the textbook/s and other required resources and outside readings. For **combined undergraduate/graduate** courses, make two lists:

- A. full publication information; label **Undergraduate**.
- B. full publication information; label **Graduate**.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Allen, Holly Catterton. *Forming Resilient Children: The Role of Spiritual Formation for Healthy Development*. Downers Grove: IL: IVP Academic, 2021.

Allen, Holly Catterton, Christine Lawton, and Cory L. Seibel. *Intergenerational Christian Formation: Bringing the Whole Church Together in Ministry, Community, and Worship*, 2nd rev. ed. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2023.

DeGaynor, Elizabeth, ed. *Let the Children Lead: Exploring Children's Spirituality Today*. Alexandria, VA: VTS Press, 2023.

Larson, Mimi L., and Robert J. Keeley, eds. *Bridging Theory and Practice in Children's Spirituality: New Directions for Education, Ministry, and Discipleship*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Reflective, 2020.

Nye, Rebecca. *Children's Spirituality: What It Is and Why It Matters*. London: Church House Publishing, 2009.

OTHER REQUIRED READINGS

Allen, Amy Lindeman. "The Gift of Participation: The Little Children and Jesus." In *The Gifts They Bring: How Children in the Gospels Can Shape Inclusive Ministry*, 19–43. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2023.

- Anthony, Michael J. "Children's Ministry Models, Learning Theory and Spiritual Development." In *Nurturing Children's Spirituality: Christian Perspectives and Best Practices*, 242–62. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2008.
- Csinos, David M. "Four Ways of Knowing God: Explorations into the Spiritual Styles of Children." In *Children's Ministry That Fits: Beyond One-Size-Fits-All Approaches to Nurturing Children's Spirituality*, 48–69. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011.
- Csinos, David M. "Questioning the 'Right' Answers: Faith Formation in the Postmodern Matrix." In *Shaped by God: Twelve Essentials for Nurturing Faith in Children, Youth, and Adults*, edited by Robert J. Keeley, 153–64. Grand Rapids: Faith Alive Christian Resources, 2010.
- Csinos, David M., and Ivy Beckwith. "Vibrant Theologies." In *Children's Ministry in the Way of Jesus*, 63–80. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013.
- Gebara, Ivone. "Children's Experiences of Evil in Their Multiple Worlds." In *Child Theology: Diverse Methods and Global Perspectives*, edited by Marcia J. Bunge, 52–71. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2021.
- Kenamer, Dana, and Suzetta Nutt. "'Kids Today Just Can't...': Changing Our Posture and Practices to Welcome All Children." In *Children's Ministry and the Spiritual Child: Practical, Formation-Focused Ministry*, edited by Robin Turner and Trevecca Okholm, 73–88. Abilene, TX: ACU Press, 2023.
- Morgenthaler, Shirley K., Jeffrey B. Keiser, and Mimi L. Larson. "Nurturing the Infant Soul: Spiritual Formation and Very Young Children." In *Story, Formation, and Culture: From Theory to Practice in Ministry with Children*, edited by Benjamin D. Espinoza, 108–22. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2018.
- Stonehouse, Catherine. "Preparing for the Journey." In *Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey: Nurturing a Life of Faith*, 11–22. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998.
- Stonehouse, Catherine, and Scottie May. "The Formative Power of God's Story." In *Listening to Children on the Spiritual Journey: Guidance for Those Who Teach and Nurture*, 73–90. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010.
- Yust, Karen-Marie. "God Is *Not* Your Divine Butler and Therapist!: Countering 'Moralistic Therapeutic Deism' by Teaching Children the Art of Theological Reflection." In *Children's Voices: Children's Perspectives in Ethics, Theology, and Religious Education*, edited by Annemie Dillen and Didier Pollefeyt, 49–70. Leuven: Peeters Publishers, 2010.

4. Supporting Documentation

Required of all applications	
1	Approval Chart for Curriculum Changes

2	Syllabus — Attach the syllabus for the course based upon the anticipated first-semester offering.
4	Library — Submit new course application and syllabus to the Library dean's office. Attach the Library's memo.
Attach if applicable	
5	Content Overlap — Include one document for each course you listed in Section 1Y. Attach statement from instructor/dept chair of existing course justifying the new offering.
6	Departmental Resources — List the resources that support the course and are available only through the department, if applicable. Attach the list of the holdings and the location(s).
7	Resources — List resources (other than library or departmental resources) that are needed to support this course (computers, lab equipment, other technology, etc.). Attach a complete list of all items and indicate possible sources or estimated cost of each. List the sources of any needed funds.
8	Expenses — List additional expenses needed to implement this course (full-time or part-time faculty, graduate or lab assistants, student employees, travel, special student costs, room renovation, storage facility, etc.). Attach a complete list of all items, the estimated cost of each and the source of the funds.
9	Justification — Attach any documents to which you refer in Section 2B.

Updated 8/1/2023

Abilene Christian University
College of Biblical Studies | Graduate School of Theology

BIBM 675 Spiritual Formation of Children
Fall 2024 | 3 credit hours

Dr. Jennifer Reinsch Schroeder
College Fellow for Children & Family Ministry
Department of Bible, Missions and Ministry

GENERAL INFORMATION

Class meeting: This course will be offered in hybrid format—both online and residually.
Office hours: In person, phone call, or video chat available on request
Office: BSB 282
Email: rjs17a@acu.edu
Phone: 325-674-3754

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY MISSION

The GST Mission is to equip men and women for effective missional leadership for ministry in all its forms and to provide strong academic foundations for theological inquiry. By equipping students with the requisite skills, knowledge, and experience, the GST aspires to produce graduates with trained minds and transformed hearts.

MISSION OF THE COLLEGE OF BIBLICAL STUDIES

To provide leadership preparation & resources for effective worldwide ministry in Jesus' name.

ACU MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of ACU is to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world. The mission of the Department of Bible, Missions, and Ministry is twofold: 1) to equip all departmental majors with a broad spectrum of knowledge, skills, and experiences in preparation for further study or for engagement in ministry; and 2) to provide all ACU students with biblical and spiritual resources with which they may live as committed disciples.

PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE:

The purpose of this course is to provide students with a deep understanding of the theological, sociological, and cultural frameworks that impact and cultivate spiritual formation in children as it applies to a myriad of contexts. The primary audience is graduate students, and there are no prerequisites.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the processes of Christian spiritual formation and implications for ministry with children in a variety of contexts. Students will engage critically with theological, sociological, and cultural frameworks as they consider how to nurture children toward full participation in the kingdom of God.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

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NOTE: Links to additional videos and audio resources outside of the required readings will be provided on Canvas.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND COURSE COMPETENCIES

GST Student Learning Outcomes	Outcome Measures
Capacities conducive to Effective Ministerial Practice. Graduates will demonstrate the emotional and spiritual maturity as well as the vocational skills necessary to fulfill their professional identity.	Weekly Essays Discussion Forum A Personal View on Children's Spirituality Paper Podcast/Video Response Forms
Competence in Interpreting Cultural Contexts of Ministry. Graduates will demonstrate increased competence in assessing and intervening in varied cultural contexts of ministry.	Weekly Essays Discussion Forum Contextual Evaluation Paper Digital Presentation Pathways Assignment
Certificate Student Learning Outcome	Outcome Measures
Those who satisfactorily complete the Certificate in Practical Ministry will demonstrate essential ministerial skills in integrating theological reflection with leadership practices.	Discussion Forum Contextual Evaluation Paper Digital Presentation Pathways Assignment

ASSIGNMENTS

Students must fulfill the following requirements to receive a passing grade. *Please see Canvas for the grading rubrics for these assignments.*

1. **Weekly Essays:** Students will write a 600-900 word essay on the weekly topic, except on weeks 1, 9, and 15. See Canvas for each week's essay prompt. the relevant module for each week's essay prompt. The essay should adhere to a formal format and include an introduction, clear thesis, developing paragraphs, and conclusion. Essays are due by 11:59 p.m. Central on Wednesdays. Adhere to Chicago Manual of Style guidelines with respect to citations. Essays should be double-spaced.

2. **Discussion Forum:** To complete this assignment, students will choose one of the following options each week:

Each week, students will copy and paste their weekly essay to a discussion forum no later than 11:59 p.m. Central on Wednesday of the week it is due. Response posts will be due by Saturday night (11:59 p.m. Central), and the discussions will be considered closed on Sunday at 11:59 p.m. Central. Appropriate posts are concise, focused, substantive, well-reasoned, and cite research studies that support arguments or opinions. Each student must respond to the posts of at least two other students by the following Saturday evening. Appropriate responses will respectfully engage in dialogue, provide additional insights, and point out areas of agreement or disagreement while remaining true to the course mantra. Short responses that add minimal value to the discussion such as “I agree” or “nice post” will not fulfill the expectations for participation.

-OR-

Students will attend a one-hour live discussion session via Zoom. In order to receive credit for the discussion, students must be engaged in the discussion, contributing insights from their own reading of the material and responding thoughtfully to the comments of fellow students. Time for the weekly Zoom discussions will be determined at the beginning of the semester.

3. **A Personal View on Children’s Spirituality Paper:** Students will reflect on their current perspective on children’s spirituality. This overview will include reactions to theological, sociological, and cultural ideas considered in this course up to this point. This paper should be 1,000-1,200 words in length, double spaced, and should include proper citations and footnotes adhering to the Chicago Manual of Style. There is no need to provide a bibliography or works cited list.
4. **Contextual Evaluation Paper:** Students will be asked to identify three or four areas within the context of their ministry where a gap exists between espoused and operant theology as it pertains to spiritually formative practices related to children’s ministry. This paper will examine the factors that lead to this gap and offer solutions for how to move closer toward ministry centered on a healthy understanding of children’s spiritual formation. Suggestions of areas to consider might include but are not limited to: worship/children’s worship, curriculum, spiritual disciplines, language surrounding children, full participation of children in the life of the church, volunteers’/parents’/leaderships’ understanding of children’s spiritual formation, etc. This paper is intended to encourage critical thinking and problem-solving as it relates to spiritual formation and the practice of ministry with children. Furthermore, be mindful to not only address the “what” behind your assertions but the “why” as well. This paper should be between 2,500-3,000 words in length, double spaced, formal in format, and should include proper citations and footnotes adhering to the Chicago Manual of Style. There is no need to provide a bibliography or works cited list.
5. **Digital Presentation Pathways Assignment:** An important component within the context of ministry is the ability to put theory into practice. Develop a digital presentation intended to equip and/or inform parents, volunteers, or church leadership (or any combination of the three) about an important element related to the spiritual formation of children within your context. Examples of possible presentation topics
- Helping church leadership understand the importance of intergenerationality as it pertains to

- the spiritual formation of children and how to put it into practice within your context
- b. Helping volunteers better understand why a curriculum (or ministry element) transition needs to be made in order to cultivate a more spiritually formative environment within your context
- c. Equipping the worship leader or preacher/senior pastor with ideas on how to welcome children into the worship space in a meaningful and transformative way
- d. Arming parents with a framework and resources for fostering spiritual formation in the home
- e. Helping your church think through a paradigm shift where children are viewed through a lens of mutuality and reciprocity

Within any topic, it is expected that you will address both the theological and theoretical framework as well as praxis. This digital presentation should be 15-20 minutes in length, and it can be done in a variety of formats. Two of the most common format options are video recordings and slide decks with audio. If you are uncertain if your format will meet the requirements of the assignment, please ask. While the digital component is not required to have a high production value, the quality of the presentation (overall content, public speaking, and the alignment of your intended goal with your outcome) will be heavily considered. Begin your presentation by communicating your purpose.

6. **Podcast/Video Response Forms:** Students will reflect on selected podcasts/videos using the structure provided in the Podcast/Video Response Forms.

GRADING

Course grades will be based on the following:

1. Weekly Essays - 25%
2. Discussion Forum - 20%
3. A Personal View on Children's Spirituality Paper - 15%
4. Contextual Evaluation Paper - 20%
5. Digital Presentation Pathways Assignment - 15%
6. Podcast/Video Response Forms - 5%

The grading scale and standards utilized in this course are provided below.

A = 92-100	Excellent - covers full range of material, displays depth of comprehension. Written work is perfect or nearly perfect in grammar, spelling, and usage.
B = 83-91	Good - but not superior, reflects comprehension of most crucial aspects of material only. Very few grammar, spelling, or usage errors.
C = 74-82	Decent - competent in most aspects but with significant lapses. Multiple grammar, spelling, or usage errors.
D = 65-73	Uh-Oh - some effort shown but overwhelmed by flaws in thinking. Major mistakes in grammar, spelling, or usage.
F = < 64	No - don't make me go here.

Grades will reflect attention to "Writing for this Class" and "Using Inclusive Language" (on Canvas).

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

1. **Contact Expectations:** Please reach out if you need assistance, are falling behind, or encounter circumstances that are making completing coursework on time difficult for you. My preferred method of contact for ordinary communication is email. For personal matters or more in-depth discussion, I am very happy to arrange phone calls or video conferences. You can expect to hear back from me on weekdays within a day. I may or may not be able to respond to emails over the weekend.
2. **Participation:** The cumulative nature of an online, graduate-level course makes regular participation a must. Students are expected to login to the course site multiple times each week (early in the week, mid-week, and at the end of the week) to check on assignments and participate in group discussions. Students whose participation is limited due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances should notify the instructor as soon as possible to make arrangements to submit assignments after the deadline.
3. **Inclusive Language:** Every attempt will be made to use inclusive language, as this concern influences not only classroom assignments but also our interpretation of the Bible. Exceptions to this policy will be made for translation accuracy only. Students who persist in using non-inclusive language after the instructor's correction will receive a reduction in grade.
4. **Course Deadlines:** Assignments must be submitted the week they are due to avoid falling behind. Exceptions to this policy may be made only in extraordinary circumstances at the discretion of the instructor. Weekly assignments turned in after the deadline will receive half credit if they are submitted within a week of the original due date. Assignments more than a week late will generally not be accepted.
5. **Disability Policy:** ACU complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodation for qualified students with a disability. If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodation, please contact the ACU Student Disability Services Office (a part of the Alpha Scholars Program). In order to receive accommodation, you must be registered with Disability Services and you must complete a specific request for each class in which you need accommodation. Call (325) 674-2667 for an appointment with the Director of Disability Services.
6. **Academic Integrity Policy:** Definitions and consequences are posted at <http://www.acu.edu/community/offices/administrative/office-of-the-provost/academic-integrity-policy.html>
7. **Subject to Change Clause:** This syllabus, course calendar, and other attending documents are subject to change during the course. Every attempt will be made to notify students promptly when changes are made.
8. **GST Classroom Virtues:** The GST invites students to participate in a process of theological and spiritual formation. Knowing how to think theologically comes by habit and by imitation, not simply by acquiring isolated facts. The assumption here is that books alone are insufficient for addressing difficulties of life and forming people into the image and likeness of God. Ultimately, we strive to form communities of inquiry, inviting you to inhabit a shared world of learning. Within such an environment, the goal is to cultivate critical skills of reflection, spiritual disciplines, interact authentically with one another, and learn to function as a community of inquiry. A large part of this involves connecting areas of life rather than pitting them against one another. Prayer, study, and other dimensions of life are all integral to the process of formation. Consequently, we invite you to participate in a set of practices; nurtured within this context, you pursue "intellectual, moral, spiritual excellence" the result of which is the formation of the whole person.
 - a. **Desire for truth in the context of love**—the aptitude to discern whether belief-forming processes, practices, and people yield true beliefs over false ones. People motivated by this

desire will be more likely to conduct thorough inquiries, scrutinize evidence carefully, investigate numerous fields of study, and consider alternative explanations while respecting and caring for others.

- b. **Humility**—the capacity to recognize reliable sources of informed judgment while recognizing the limits of our knowledge and the fallibility of our judgments. This is not created in isolation but takes into account feedback and correction from other sources of informed judgment.
- c. **Honesty**—the capacity to tackle difficult questions without seeking simple answers. Ignoring complex and difficult questions only solidifies vices such as intellectual dishonesty, close-mindedness, and rash judgments. These vices preclude the possibility of refining our thinking and of participating in conversations with others.
- d. **Openness**—the desire to engage in an open-ended search for knowledge of God, including receptivity to different ideas, experiences, and people. Listening becomes a discipline that acknowledges the other and respects diversity. The art of being a student and a teacher is an ongoing process that necessitates hospitality, patience, and love.
- e. **Courage**—the ability to articulate one’s position while considering other perspectives. The aptitude to express convictions involves risk yet fosters opportunities for meaningful dialog. Responding to objections entails tenacity but should not be confused with close-mindedness.
- f. **Wisdom**—the capacity to offer a synthetic discernment of knowledge on behalf of the community. The aim is not merely the dissemination of information but a pastoral implementation of faith for the building up of the community. It solidifies various pieces of data, practices, and experiences and aptly applies knowledge and faith to particular situations.
- g. **Stewardship**—the commitment to one’s accountability to the gifts and responsibilities that one brings to the classroom. Classroom engagement includes proactively participating in the course goals, seeking mastery of course competencies, and collaborating with faculty and fellow students in the development of a learning environment. Committing oneself to spiritual and intellectual wellbeing and growth is a faithful response to the opportunities graduate education affords.
- h. **Hopefulness**—the receptivity to the future possibilities of God. The cultivation of thankfulness for our heritages and expectation for our future ministries engenders a guard against cynicism and a spirit of perseverance during times of stress and disorientation.
- i. **Prayerfulness**—the making of space to commune with God. The task of learning and teaching so that we are formed into the image of Christ through the Spirit involves our consistent reliance on God’s sanctifying work.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Subject	Reading Assignment
1	Foundations of Children’s Spirituality	Required Reading: ● Stonehouse, “Preparing for the Journey” (Canvas) ● Nye, <i>Children’s Spirituality</i> (whole book) ● Bruner, “Writing for This Course” Required Resource: ● Class Video

		● Kennamer, "Our Mantra, Introduction, and Foundation for This Course" Assignment: ● Introduction Post on Discussion Forum
2	Theology of Children and Children's Spiritual Formation	Required Reading: ● Larson and Keeley, <i>Bridging Theory and Practice</i> (chapters 1-2) ● DeGaynor, <i>Let the Children Lead</i> (chapter 1) ● Casinos and Beckwith, "Vibrant Theologies" (Canvas) ● Morgenthaler, Keiser, and Larson, "Nurturing the Infant Soul" (Canvas) Required Resource: ● Class Video Assignments: ● Weekly Essay ● Discussion Forum Option
3	Spiritual Formation of Children	Required Reading: ● DeGaynor, <i>Let the Children Lead</i> (chapters 2-3, 6) ● Larson and Keeley, <i>Bridging Theory and Practice</i> (chapter 9-12) ● Stonehouse and May, "The Formative Power of God's Story" (Canvas) ● Yust, "God Is <i>Not</i> Your Divine Butler and Therapist" (Canvas) Required Resource: ● Class Video ● Video: "The Mystery of God," Schroeder (Children's Spirituality Summit) Assignments: ● Weekly Essay ● Discussion Forum Option ● Podcast/Video Response Form
4	Intergenerational Theory	Required Reading: ● Allen, Lawton, and Seibel, <i>Intergenerational Christian Formation</i> (chapters 1-9) Required Resource: ● Class Video Assignments: ● Weekly Essay ● Discussion Forum Option ● A Personal View on Children's Spirituality Paper
5	Intergenerational Practice	Required Reading: ● Allen, Lawton, and Seibel, <i>Intergenerational Christian Formation</i> (chapters 10-16)

		Required Resource: • Class Video • Podcast: "The Importance of Intergenerationality," Allen (Live from the Siburt Institute) Assignments: • Weekly Essay • Discussion Forum Option • Podcast/Video Response Form
6	Models of Development (A Brief Overview)	Required Reading: • Csinos, "Four Ways of Knowing God" Canvas) • Anthony, "Children's Ministry Models, Learning Theory and Spiritual Development" • DeGaynor, <i>Let the Children Lead</i> (chapter 8) Required Resource: • Class Video Assignments: • Weekly Essay • Discussion Forum Option
7	A Vision for Children's Spiritual Formation	Required Reading: • Allen, Lawton, and Seibel, <i>Intergenerational Christian Formation</i> (chapters 17-18) • Allen, "The Gift of Participation" (Canvas) • Larson and Keeley, <i>Bridging Theory and Practice</i> (chapter 16) Required Resource: • Class Video Assignments: • Weekly Essay • Discussion Forum Option
8	Spiritual Formation and Ethnorelativity	Required Reading: • Larson and Keeley, <i>Bridging Theory and Practice</i> (chapters 3 and 13) • DeGaynor, <i>Let the Children Lead</i> (chapters 5 and 7) Required Resource: • Class Video Assignments: • Weekly Essay • Discussion Forum Option • Digital Presentation Pathways Assignment
9	Pause Week	There are no new assignments or discussions this week. It provides time for work on your larger assignments and readings.
10	Disability, Difference, and Inclusion	Required Reading: • Larson and Keeley, <i>Bridging Theory and Practice</i> (chapter 4)

		• Crisp and Stirman, "The Next Right Step" • Scretchen, "A Divine Assignment" Required Resource: • Class Video • Podcast: "Disability, Ministry, and Full Worship Participation," Spiller (Live from the Siburt Institute) Assignments: • Weekly Essay • Discussion Forum Option • Podcast/Video Response Form
11	Children's Spirituality and Resiliency	Required Reading: • Allen, <i>Forming Resilient Children</i> (chapters 1-9) Required Resource: • Class Video Assignments: • Weekly Essay • Discussion Forum Option
12	Children's Spirituality and Adversity	Required Reading: • Allen, <i>Forming Resilient Children</i> (chapters 10-13) • Kennamer and Nutt, "Kids Today Just Can't" • Gebara, "Children's Experiences of Evil in Their Multiple Worlds" Required Resource: • Class Video Assignments: • Weekly Essay • Discussion Forum Option
13	Spiritual Formation within the Family	Required Reading: • DeGaynor, <i>Let the Children Lead</i> (chapter 4) • Larson and Keeley, <i>Bridging Theory and Practice</i> (chapters 5-6) Required Resource: • Class Video Assignments: • Weekly Essay • Discussion Forum Option
14	Closing Conversations	Required Resource: • Class Video Assignments: • Closing Remarks Discussion Forum • Contextual Evaluation Paper



February 8, 2024

Dr. Jennifer Schroeder
College Fellow for Children & Family Ministry
Department of Bible, Missions and Ministry
College of Biblical Studies
(325) 674-3754

Re: Review of Spiritual Formation of Children (BIBM 675)

Dear Dr. Schroeder,

Thank you for submitting Spiritual Formation of Children (BIBM 675) to us for review. I have reviewed it based on the ACU Syllabus Guidelines. I found the syllabus to meet all aspects of the checklist.

Please note that this letter is intended as a reference, which will be read by the department chair and members of the council, who may also have questions or comments of their own. If you have any questions, please feel free to let me know.

Please also let me know if we can be of any help in the design and facilitation of this course.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott E. Hamm".

Dr. Scott E. Hamm,
Assistant Director, Adams Center

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

LIBRARY

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: 13:21
TO: Dr. Jennifer Schroeder
FROM: Mark McCallon, Associate Dean for Library Information Services
RE: Course Application for BIBM 675 – Spiritual Formation of Children

After reviewing the course application and syllabus, the library does have adequate resources to support the proposed course. Please contact Craig Churchill, Librarian Liaison, if additional resources are needed for the course. Thank you for letting us review the course proposal and syllabus.