



**GRACE COMMUNION  
SEMINARY**

**CM512 Small Group Bible  
Study Leadership  
Short Syllabus**

**Instructor: Gary Deddo, PhD, assisted by Cathy Deddo, MA**

**Course description**

This course will train students to lead a small group for church congregations that are centered around Bible studies that contribute to a growing faith, hope and love for Jesus Christ. Students will learn and practice the skills needed to prepare for and lead Bible studies that foster fellowship, spiritual maturity and a vision for service, outreach and mission.

Estimated workload: For a student to do well in this course, the student will need to invest a total of 144 hours, or about 12 hours per week of reading, participating on the website, and writing papers.

**Required textbooks**

Olesberg, Lindsay. *The Bible Study Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide to an Essential Practice*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Connect, 2012. ISBN: 978-0-8308-1049-9, 253 pp., \$13.10.

Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. 4th edition. Zondervan, 2014. ISBN: 978-0-310-51782-5, 304pp., \$13.00.

Kirk, J. Alex, Jay Anderson, et al. *Small Group Leaders' Handbook: Developing Transformational Communities*. Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Connect, 2009. ISBN: 978-0-8308-2112-9, 180 pp. \$8.00

Please obtain these books before the class begins. To find the lowest prices on these books, you may find it helpful to use [www.bookfinder.com](http://www.bookfinder.com).

## **Recommended textbooks and personal library resources**

Keener, Craig S. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*. 2nd edition. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014.

Lawrence, Paul, John H. Walton, A. R. Millard, and Heinrich Von Siebenthal. *The IVP Atlas of Bible History*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006.

Marshall, I. Howard, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer, and D. J. Wiseman, eds. *New Bible Dictionary*. 3rd edition. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996.

Richards, E. Randolph, and Brandon J. O'Brien. *Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes: Removing Cultural Blinders to Better Understand the Bible*. 1st edition. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2012.

Walton, John H., Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2000. ISBN: 978-0-8308-1419-0

## **Student learning outcomes**

This course fits primarily into the fourth GCS student learning outcome: Conduct the work of pastoral ministry in witness to and representation of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Through this course, students will...

1. First SLO. Identify the Trinitarian and incarnational biblical and theological foundations for Bible study centered small fellowship or discipleship groups

Reading textbooks, lectures/note, handouts, demonstrated through forums, exercises and final project

2. Second SLO: create dynamic formats for Bible study centered small group meetings that include other interactive elements such as hospitality, prayer, sharing.

Textbooks, forums, Final Project

3. Third SLO: Choose and use appropriate resources to study and prepare to lead a small group Bible study

Textbooks, weekly exercises, Response to Mark Papers and Final Project

4. Fourth SLO: identify and demonstrate the use of the fundamental guidelines for proper biblical interpretation in a small group setting.

Video demonstrations, reading textbooks and handouts, weekly exercises, forums, Response to Mark papers, Final Project

5. Fifth SLO: Formulate appropriate discussion questions for leading the Bible study portion of a small group fellowship/discipleship meeting

Video demonstrations, textbooks, handouts, weekly exercises, Final Project

6. Sixth SLO: Recognize key small group dynamics that contribute to healthy fellowship and Bible study discussion and common pitfalls to avoid.

Video demonstrations, textbooks, handouts, weekly exercises, forums

For more details, see Appendix C.

## **Requirements and assignments**

1. **Read the lectures and class notes.** Lectures will be posted each Monday for the first ten weeks. See the *Academic Catalog* for study suggestions. You should look up any scripture references in the lectures.
2. **Watch weekly videos of a small group Bible study demonstration and write a reflection on what you learned about leading from the video and post in forum.**
3. **Read an assigned section from the Gospel of Mark and make notes.**
4. **Read the textbooks and assigned articles.** The assigned chapters total about 410 pages, or about 40 pages each week.
5. **Participate in Forums.** In most courses, part of the learning that occurs comes through discussion and interaction with other students. In an online class, this is done through comments posted on a discussion

forum. There will be two forums: A Reflection Forum on the video presentation, and another Reflection on the Bible study that you prepare and lead. This counts for 20 percent of the final grade.

6. **Handouts and Exercises** This counts for 25 percent of the final grade. You will need about 20 hours to work on these exercises – an average of 2 hours per week – some weeks more, some less.
7. **Prepare for and lead a Bible study, with a group or as few as one other person once per week for 1 hour.** You will spend about 2 hours preparing in addition to viewing the one-hour video which will be on the passage you will be leading. 25% of your grade.
8. **Write one Response Paper to chapters 1-4 and another to chapters 5-8 of the Gospel of Mark, due the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> week and end of the 11<sup>th</sup> week. This is 10% of your grade.**
9. **One final project.** You will prepare two small group Bible study meetings, with study notes and leaders notes for the entire meeting, including notes for the study and a completed manuscript. Due the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> week. 20% of your grade.

### **Assignments, estimated hours, and grade weighting**

| <b>Assignment</b>  | <b>Hours #</b> | <b>Percentage of grade</b> |
|--|----------------|----------------------------|
| *Read Section of Gospel of Mark to prepare for class 1 hr/wk   | 10 hrs         | req                        |
| *Watching video and listening to audio-1hr/wk.   | 10 hrs         | req                        |
| *Observation Reflection on Video (1/2 hr / week)   | 5 hrs          | req                        |
| Reading the syllabus and weekly lectures/notes (1hr per wk)  | 12 hrs         | req                        |
| Reading the textbooks and Articles (410 pp.)<br>20 hrs BSH; 7 hrs *Deddo Articles; 4 hrs, Fee; <i>Sm Grp Leaders Handbook</i> ; 2 hrs / week. (33 hours total, 3.5 hours per week avg., 40 pp. /wk avg.) | 33 hours       | req                        |

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| Complete all BSH exercises, 21 x 30 min each                          | 10.5 hrs  | 10  |
| *Reading Handouts and Exercises 1.0 hr /wk                            | 10 hrs    | 15  |
| *Prepare to Lead Weekly Bible Study (2 hrs/wk)                        | 20 hrs    |     |
| *Lead a Bible Study with at least one other person (1 hr/wk)          | 10 hrs    | 25  |
| Weekly Forums (1 hr/wk) Reflect on Bible Study                        | 10 hrs    | 20  |
| Response to Mark papers (2 x 2 hrs.)                                  | 4 hrs.    | 10  |
| Final Project: Prepare two (2) Sm Group Bible Study Meetings (10 hrs) | 10 hrs    | 20  |
| Total – about 12 hours each week x 12 weeks                           | 144.5 hrs | 100 |

# Some students will complete the course requirements in less total time, and some will take more time. A student who reads quickly may be slow in writing papers, and vice versa.

\*These elements of the course will be available to non-credit observers

### **Weekly topics and assignments (tentative)**

| Week   | Topic  | Assignments to be done during the week   |
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| Week 1 | Small Groups, Bible Study and the Nature of the Church<br>1. Mark 1:1-15 John the Baptist, Jesus begins His ministry | Deddo, 1 <sup>st</sup> part of <i>Church and Ministry</i> (35 pp.)<br>Deddo, <i>Scripture, God's Gift</i> (pp. 1-16) (51pp)<br>Watch Video 1, Submit response<br>Forum Interaction<br>Weekly Exercises<br>Prepare and Lead Bible Study |
| Week 2 | The Aim of Small Groups<br>2. Mark 1:16-31 Calling first disciples, teaching, casting out                            | Read: <i>The Bible Study Handbook</i> (BSH) pp. 13-53 (40 pp.)   |

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|        | demon, healing Simon's mother-in-law   | Watch Video, Submit response<br>Weekly Exercises<br>Prepare and Lead Bible Study Forum Interaction  |
| Week 3 | Leading Small Groups as Ministry<br>3. Mark 1:32-2:12 Healing many, praying, healing leper, paralytic  | Read: BSH, pp. 54-88 (34 pp.)<br>Watch Video, Submit response<br>Weekly Exercises<br>Prepare and Lead Bible Study Forum Interaction   |
| Week 4 | The Basics of Bible Study in Small Groups<br>4. Mark 2:13-28 Calling Levi, fasting and wineskin sayings, Lord of the Sabbath                   | Read: BSH, pp. 89-129 (40 pp.)<br>Watch Video, Submit response<br>Weekly Exercises<br>Prepare and Lead Bible Study Forum Interaction  |
| Week 5 | Preparing a Small Group Study: Interpretation<br>5. Mark 3:1-19 Healing man with withered hand, withdraws to sea and crowd almost crushes Him, | Read: Deddo, G. "Scripture: God's Gift," pp. 17-41 (25 pp.)<br>Watch Video, Submit response<br>Weekly Exercises<br>Prepare and Lead Bible Study Forum Interaction<br>Response Paper 1 to Mark |
| Week 6 | Preparing to Lead a Small Group Study<br>6. Mark 3:20-35 chooses the 12, accused of possession and who is true family                          | Read: BSH, pp. 130-174 (44 pp.)<br>Watch Video, Submit response<br>Weekly Exercises<br>Prepare and Lead Bible Study Forum Interaction   |

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| Week 7  | Background for Leading a Bible Study<br>7. Mark 4:1-34 Parables of the Kingdom  | Fee, <i>How to Read</i> , Ch 1, 3, 4 (45 pp)<br>Watch Video, Submit response<br>Weekly Exercises<br>Prepare and Lead Bible Study<br>Forum Interaction                               |
| Week 8  | Leading the Bible Study as Fellowship—integrating other elements into the small group time and small group dynamics<br>8. Mark 4:35-5:20 storm at sea, the demoniac               | Read: <i>Small Group Leader's Handbook</i> , Ch. 1, 7 (33 pp.)<br>Handout and weekly exercises<br>Watch Video, Submit response<br>Prepare and Lead Bible Study<br>Forum Interaction |
| Week 9  | Resources and Tools<br>9. Mark 5:21-43 Jairus and woman with flow of blood  | Read: BSH, pp. 175-230 (55pp)<br>Watch Video, Submit response<br>Weekly exercises<br>Prepare and Lead Bible Study<br>Forum Interaction  |
| Week 10 | Vision: Gathering believers, seekers, co-leaders, new leaders in small groups under the Word of God, Living and Written<br>10. Mark 6:1-13 In His hometown and sending out the 12 | Deddo, last part <i>Church and Ministry Strategy</i> (11 pp.)<br>Watch Video, Submit response<br>Weekly Exercises<br>Prepare and Lead Bible Study<br>Forum Interaction              |
| Week 11 | 11. Mark 6:14-44 Herod, feeding of 5000   | Watch Video, Submit response<br>Response Paper 2 to Mark  |
| Week 12 | 12. Mark 6:45-52 Jesus walks on water, summary  |   |

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|  | <p><b>Final Paper:</b> Prepare Two Small Group Bible studies with Background study notes, marked up manuscript and Leaders Notes for the meeting and the study.</p> <p><b>Final paper must be turned in by the end of Sunday (Month Day, Year)</b></p> |
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