

***“No graduate degree is awarded on the basis of course work alone, but is awarded on the basis of demonstrated proficiency in the field.”*** – Creighton University Bulletin: Graduate Issue

## ***INTEGRATING ESSAY CONTENT***

---

Creighton University’s graduate program in Christian Spirituality holds as its primary value the integration of the following three elements. These elements are not viewed as successive stages or compartments but as a lived synthesis of mind, heart and mission.

- A thorough knowledge of Christian Spirituality based on Scripture, Church tradition and Christian heritage, contemporary theology and psychology with an emphasis on Ignatian Spirituality.
- Experiential appropriation of the mysteries of the Christian faith grounded in human development through reflection, prayer and communal worship.
- An apostolic orientation directed toward more effective ministry skills, especially toward preparation for giving spiritual direction and directed retreats. This element only applies towards certificate-seeking students.

The integrating essay for the Master of Arts in Christian Spirituality program is intended to:

- Demonstrate a creative integration of the three elements of the Christian Spirituality program to an area of Christian life and ministry of greatest personal relevance to the student.
- Show how the Christian Spirituality program has enhanced the student’s understanding and performance in this area of Christian life and ministry.
- Avoid the extremes of an objective summary of course matter or a subjective treatment of a topic with no reference to the Christian Spirituality program.
- Demonstrate graduate-level proficiency in Christian Spirituality.

A faculty evaluation grid, used for grading the integrating essay, is included with these guidelines. Students are encouraged to reference the grid when writing the essay to gain an understanding of the objectives faculty are assessing as the essay is being reviewed. Essays selected by the faculty as models are available for reference and review, and should be consulted. The essays are located in Colleen Hastings’ office, Hitchcock Room 304D.

## ***INTEGRATING ESSAY TIMELINE***

---

### **STEP 1 – Attend an Integrating Essay Information Session**

All degree-seeking students should attend the integrating essay information session that is held the first Tuesday of each CSP term. The session is held in the McGloin Hall lobby immediately following the opening CSP liturgy. The program director will explain the construction of a successful essay and answer questions. ***All degree-seeking students should attend at least one information session prior to submitting the Essay Topic Approval Form.***

### **STEP 2 – Obtain Essay topic approval**

The integrating essay topic must be approved before the essay has been written. Approval is gained by: 1) attending an information session; 2) submitting the topic approval form; and 3) receiving the signature of the program director. Ideally, students should schedule an office visit with the program director to present and discuss their essay proposal form and receive the approval signature in person. ***All essay topics must be submitted for approval the summer before the anticipated graduation.***

### **STEP 3 – Write the Essay**

- The Integrating Essay should be a minimum of 20 pages and a maximum of 30 pages that are typed, double-spaced, and have been formatted according to directives from a standard style handbook for writing. A footnote in the opening paragraph should give reference to the handbook being used. A written paper rubric is attached and should be used to construct the essay.
- Footnotes or endnotes should be used to indicate sources drawn upon for the essay. These sources should include courses and readings from the Christian Spiritual program itself as well as additional sources and readings used to develop the topic. Students are encouraged to consult with appropriate faculty in developing the topic. The essay should have the potential of being published in a reputable spiritual journal.
- Faculty-selected essays are on display in the Christian Spirituality office. It is recommended that the student consult the model essays for content and style.

### **STEP 4 – Submit the Essay**

- Two copies of the essay should be submitted in a clear plastic binding with the title page being the first page.
- The essay should be submitted the last Wednesday of the student's final term of study. The essay should be submitted to: Colleen Hastings, Christian Spirituality Program, Hitchcock Room 304D, Creighton University, 2500 California Plaza, Omaha, NE 68178. ***The absolute deadline for submission of the essay is September 1<sup>st</sup> of the year the student intends to graduate.***

### ***The Creighton University Writing Center***

<http://mockingbird.creighton.edu/english/>

Creighton Hall, Room 136

(402) 280-4707

The Creighton Writing Center is recommended for students needing help with their writing assignments. The Writing Center will work collaboratively with the student to jump start, fine tune and clean up their writing projects. It is recommended you schedule an appointment, in person, with the self-service appointment notebook at the Writing Center. Don't forget to cancel if you can't make it to your scheduled appointment, another student may be waiting to take advantage of this service.

### **APPLICATION FOR MASTER OF ARTS IN SPIRITUALITY DEGREE**

---

Candidates for the Master of Arts in Spirituality degree must complete the "*Application for Degree*" form found on-line in their N.E.S.T. account. The application for the degree, awarded in December, may not be available on-line until mid-September. Candidates are encouraged to continue to check the N.E.S.T. from their home location and apply once the Registrar has posted the December graduation application.

NOTE: An application deadline for December graduates is set for mid-October. Notification of essay approval will not occur until late-November, well past the graduation application deadline. Candidates are encouraged to assume their essay will pass. Should it not, or if they are asked to re-work the essay, the Office of Graduate Programs will coordinate the change with the Registrar's office.

### **APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE IN SPIRITUAL DIRECTION AND DIRECTED RETREATS**

---

Candidates for the Certificate in Spiritual Direction and Directed Retreats must also complete and submit an "Application for Certificate." The Certificate application is available in the candidate's N.E.S.T. account.

Contact Teresa Udron (tudron@creighton.edu) in the Registrar's Office with degree and/or certificate graduation questions.

## Faculty Evaluation Grid for Integrating Essay

### Master of Arts in Christian Spirituality

The following is the assessment tool used by Christian Spirituality program faculty in reviewing the integrating essay. An essay with two or more “*Below Expectation*” marks will be reviewed by a second Christian Spirituality program faculty member. If the essay assessment remains the same, the student will be given an opportunity to re-write the essay to qualify for graduation.

**PROGRAM GOAL # 1: The candidate demonstrates a thorough knowledge of Christian Spirituality based on Scripture, Church tradition and Christian heritage, contemporary theology and psychology with an emphasis on Ignatian Spirituality.**

Use the following statements to evaluate Program Goal # 1	BELOW EXPECTATION	MEETS EXPECTATION	EXCEEDS EXPECTATION
Clearly presents, supports and justifies thesis of essay with facts and data.			
Presents graduate –level understanding of Christian Spirituality.			
Shows interpretation and generalization of knowledge.			
Additional comments about the student’s success in demonstrating their knowledge of Christian Spirituality.			

**PROGRAM GOAL # 2: The candidate demonstrates experiential appropriation of the mysteries of the Christian faith grounded in human development through reflection, prayer, and communal worship.**

Use the following statements to evaluate Program Goal # 2	BELOW EXPECTATION	MEETS EXPECTATION	EXCEEDS EXPECTATION
Demonstrates application of knowledge of Christian Spirituality to own personal experience.			
Shows personal change that has occurred as a result of classroom dialogue, personal prayer, communal worship and social experiences of the Christian Spirituality program.			
Perceives awareness of personal style specifically, prejudices and projections that may shape and impede own understanding.			
Additional comments about the student’s success in expressing experiential appropriation.			

**PROGRAM GOAL # 3: THIS GOAL PERTAINS CERTIFICATE CANDIDATES ONLY. The candidate demonstrates an apostolic orientation directed toward more effective ministry skills, especially toward preparation for giving spiritual direction and directed retreats.**

Use the following statements to evaluate Program Goal # 3	BELOW EXPECTATION	MEETS EXPECTATION	EXCEEDS EXPECTATION
Demonstrates an ability to apply knowledge to diverse ministries including spiritual direction and directed retreats, if applicable.			
Shows how ministry skills have changed or been effected as a result of the program.			
Additional comments about the student’s success in expressing apostolic orientation.			

# Written Paper Rubric

*This rubric is intended only as an aid and reference for writing the Integrated Essay.*

## INTRODUCTION

**(20%)**

No stated purpose.	Purpose for writing is vague or not clearly stated.	Purpose for writing is clear and specific.
No introduction of major points.	Vague introduction of major points.	Clear introduction of major points that are relevant to the topic.

## DEVELOPMENT

**(40%)**

Major points do not support thesis.	Major points partially support thesis.	Major points fully support topic.
Fails to consider multiple viewpoints.	Presents other points of view but does not reason through them.	Clearly and fairly discusses multiple points of view.
Sequencing of major/minor points does not support writer's purpose.	Sequencing of major/minor points partially supports writer's purpose.	Sequencing of major/minor points effectively supports writer's purpose.
Fails to show how evidence supports main points/thesis.	Weak analysis of evidence to show how it supports main points/thesis.	Clear reasoning that shows how evidence supports main topic.
Fallacies abound within the essay.	Some fallacies exist within the essay.	Essay is free of fallacies.
No transitions.	Transitions are not always clear.	Transitions effectively connect major/minor points.

## CONCLUSION

**(15%)**

No conclusion or one that does not support the thesis.	Conclusion partially supports thesis.	Conclusion is clear and reinforces the topic and major parts.
Conclusion is disconnected from the evidence and reasoning, or it introduces new ideas.	Conclusion is not strongly linked to the evidence and reasoning, or it is not concise.	Conclusion is fully justified by the evidence and the reasoning, and it is concise.

## STYLE AND GRAMMAR

**(25%)**

Numerous sentences that are wordy and vague.	Some sentences are not always clear.	Clear, concise sentences.
Paragraphs contain sentences not relevant to the topic.	Some paragraphs are confusing or vague.	Clear, concise paragraphs that include topic sentences.
Primarily passive voice.	Some passive voice – not excessive.	Primarily active voice.
Minimal use of APA format	Several errors in APA format	Only one or two errors in APA format
Numerous errors in grammar, tense, punctuation or spelling.	Only a few errors in grammar, punctuation or spelling.	Only one or two errors in grammar, punctuation, or spelling.

## Topic Approval Form for Integrating Essay

Master of Arts in Christian Spirituality

<b>NAME:</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Degree Candidate</b>
<b>GRADUATION MONTH &amp; YEAR:</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Certificate Candidate</b>
<b>INTEGRATED ESSAY TITLE:</b>		
<p>1) <i>This essay topic and summary proposal must clearly reflect the program goals listed on the faculty evaluation grid.</i></p> <p>2) <i>Only proposals that explicitly reflect the program goals will be approved.</i></p> <p>3) <i>It is highly recommended that the candidate present the topic and summary proposal to the director in person. Call the Theology department at (402) 280-2501 to schedule an appointment.</i></p> <p>4) <i>The topic and summary proposal is due the SUMMER BEFORE the final summer of study.</i></p> <p>5) <i>The absolute deadline for submission of the essay is September 1<sup>st</sup>.</i></p>		
<b>INTEGRATED ESSAY SUMMARY:</b>		

**Director's Approval:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date