November, 2011

Dear Practicum Applicant,

Thank you for beginning the application process for the Spiritual Direction Practicum for the fall of 2012. This letter will outline the process that you need to follow and the materials you need to prepare. Your desire to enter into the introductory phase of application to the Practicum for the fall of 2012 is an important step in discerning your call to the ministry of spiritual direction. I welcome you to the application process.

In this PDF file, you will find the following:

a) **OVERVIEW OF THE PRACTICUM**,  

b) **RECOMMENDATION FORM** for your spiritual director and a form for the letter from one other person (details below)  

c) **GUIDELINES for your AUTOBIOGRAPHY**  

d) **PRACTICUM GUIDELINES** for Establishing Director/Directee Relationships, and  

e) **TIMELINE** with deadlines in the application process.

The process includes two interviews, involving the Coordinator of the Practicum as well as members of the Supervisory Team. You need to allow at least an hour and a half for these interviews when they are scheduled. In order to prepare for your interviews, you need to submit the following information:

1. If you have received a **Thirty-Day Retreat or a Retreat in Everyday Life**, write a brief note explaining where, when, and with which director you made this retreat. Please have the note signed by the director of your retreat. If you are currently in process with this retreat, please indicate that.

2. **Letters of Recommendation:**

   a) Ask your spiritual director to complete the **Recommendation Form** [see Recommendation Form] and send it to Carolynne Ervin, MA, Coordinator of the Spiritual Direction Practicum.

   b) Ask for a letter of recommendation from someone who knows you well to write a letter indicating that they see the gifts for spiritual direction emerging.

3. Write a 8-12 page narrative autobiography using the guidelines provided. [See “Guidelines for Autobiography”] as well as briefly describe your personal experience of spiritual direction.

4. Please include a brief letter with your application materials, indicating concretely your approach for connecting with potential directees. (i.e., Give the names of
pastors, prayer group leaders, etc. whom you have contacted and see as viable possibilities for making connections). Several viable plans are necessary since some will be fruitless.

5. Please send your materials to the address below. As soon as I receive them, I will schedule your initial interview. You may also bring them to my office which is Room 204 in **St. Joseph’s Hall**.

Carolynne Ervin, MA  
**Coordinator of the Spiritual Direction Practicum**  
Chestnut Hill College  
9601 Germantown Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19118-2693

I value your desire to offer spiritual direction and want to support your ongoing discernment of this call. If you have any questions, please call Carolynne Ervin at 215.248.7075 or e-mail me at ervinc@chc.edu.

Sincerely,

Carolynne Ervin, MA  
Coordinator of the Spiritual Direction Practicum
Steps in the Application Process for the Spiritual Direction Practicum

(This is an open process from November to May.)

1) Complete application materials and mail to:

   Carolynne Ervin, MA, Coordinator of the Spiritual Direction Practicum.

   Applications need to be submitted no later than January 15, 2012.

2) Interview I will be scheduled.

   All application materials are due prior to this interview, including Recommendation letters.

   These interviews are usually scheduled in January and February.

3) Interview II will be scheduled with members of the Supervisory Team.

   These interviews are usually scheduled in February and March.

4) Applicants will be notified by letter about their acceptance into HLSP 671: Theory and Praxis of Spiritual Direction, Practicum I.

5) There will be a Preliminary meeting with the new Practicum Group as soon as the applications are completed. This meeting is usually held in May. The entire practicum involves on-going discernment.
PRACTICUM IN SPIRITUAL DIRECTION
Supervision and Academic Responsibilities for Student/Directors
2012-2013

I. HLSP 671 Theory and Praxis of Spiritual Direction: Practicum 1 (Fall) – 3 credits
HLSP 672 Ethical Issues in Spiritual Direction: Practicum 2 (Spring) – 3 credits

- 26 three hour classes in Spiritual Direction
- 10, two hour sessions of individual supervision (the supervisor usually uses the first half-hour to personally review the student director’s verbatim.)
- Student directors must begin supervision with two directees. While in supervision, directees are seen every two weeks.

II. HLSP 673 Psychological Issues in Spiritual Direction: Practicum 3 (Fall) - 3 credits
HLSP 674 Peer Supervision in Spiritual Direction: Practicum 4 (Spring) - 3 credits

- 18 three hour classes in Spiritual Direction and Peer Group Supervision
- 10 two hour sessions of individual supervision
- 8 three-hour, peer group supervision sessions
- Student directors begin with four directees. The frequency of sessions is usually every two weeks with a two directees but varies with others. This needs to be discussed with the supervisor.

III. HLSP 675 Retreat in Everyday Life: Practicum 5/Nineteenth Annotation Elective: 2 Credits

This Nineteenth Annotation course includes both theory and supervision. Each student director will need one person to direct through the entire Nineteenth Annotation. This class is supervisory in nature. This course meets every other week for both Fall and Spring semesters.

IV. Prerequisites to apply for the Practicum are listed in the catalog. Receiving a “Retreat in Everyday Life” before taking HLSP 671 is required of the Student director.

V. Currently, a generous donor pays each student’s supervision fee. If this donation ceases at any point, the student will assume the cost of all individual supervision sessions. There is a $100 Practicum fee to be paid at the beginning of each Practicum year.

VI. While finishing the Spiritual Direction Certificate Program at Chestnut Hill College, no remuneration is requested by student directors while offering direction.
PRACTICUM IN SPIRITUAL DIRECTION
Recommendation Form for Spiritual Director

Please Return this Form to the Address below By______________.

Name of the person completing this recommendation:

______________________________________________________________________________

Address___________________________________________________ Apt. No.__________

City_______________________________________________ State_____] Zip Code __________

Phone number(s)_______________________Email address______________________________

Position_______________________________________________________________________

Candidate's Name_______________________________________________________________

To the person completing this recommendation:

_________________________ is applying to Chestnut Hill College for admission into the Practicum in Spiritual Direction. This program is an intensive, advanced program in a specialized area of ministry. Those applying for admission into this program should be above average in personal and ministerial maturity. Those participating in this program will be offered sufficient knowledge of theology and spirituality. The responsibilities of spiritual direction are serious. Those involved in this program need a high level of personal spirituality, maturity, and competence. While we respect the need for confidentiality, you can assist us in discerning which candidates are called to the ministry of spiritual direction. Please rate the candidate on each of the following items using a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the highest); if you do not have concrete knowledge of the candidate in a particular capacity, please indicate with N/A (not applicable). There is room provided for any further comments you may have. This recommendation will be reviewed by the supervisory team only and kept in complete confidentiality.

MINISTERIALLY:

_____ has potential for development in spiritual direction

_____ has satisfactory interpersonal relationships

_____ has the ability to deal with persons on a one-to-one basis

_____ satisfactory demonstration of responsible behavior

_____ satisfactory demonstration of leadership potential

_____ sees leisure as an integral part of God's call to mission

_____ takes time regularly for relaxation and renewal

Comments:
INTELLECTUALLY:

_____ manifests the ability to think independently and to be challenged by difficult areas of concentration

_____ has the ability to articulate, question, discuss, and challenge

_____ has an eager attitude toward reflection, study, and research

_____ is in tune with “intelligence” of the whole body

_____ uses more sources of ”bodily” intelligence than just the brain

Comments:

PSYCHOLOGICALLY:

_____ is open and honest in relationships with peers

_____ is open and honest with persons in positions of leadership

_____ demonstrates maturity of thought, attitudes, and feelings

_____ has regard for persons and their development and growth

_____ has regard for one's own personal growth

_____ has the ability to talk about one's feelings

_____ has the ability to stop talking about one's feelings

_____ demonstrates a healthy self-esteem and self-confidence

_____ has the ability to listen to others

_____ has the potential for change of attitudes, ways of living, ideas, ways of relating to people

_____ demonstrates awareness and acceptance of personal brokenness and vulnerability

_____ has freedom in expressing vulnerability

_____ has an appreciation for therapy, both individual and group work

Comments:

SPIRITUALLY:
demonstrates evident faith dimension in his/her life

shows stability in his/her life's vocation

shows an eagerness to grow in prayer and relation to God

has an appreciation for personal spiritual direction

has demonstrated fidelity to personal direction over a period of time

experiences a God who communicates deeply through the joy and pain of life

Comments:

PHYSICALLY:

does some form of exercise on a regular basis

demonstrates stamina and physical fitness

demonstrates a love for the body through any one of the following experiences: massage, dance, yoga, etc.

Comments:
FURTHER QUESTIONS/COMMENTS:

1. How long and how frequently have you been seeing this person for spiritual direction?

2. How long has this person been in discernment with you about becoming a spiritual director? Please comment about his/her discernment process.

3. Would you send a member of your family or a friend to this candidate for spiritual direction after the candidate completes this program? Why or why not?

4. To your knowledge, is there any physical, emotional, or psychological challenge which would interfere with this person's effectiveness as a spiritual director?

5. Have you any additional observations or comments?

SIGNATURE___________________________________________DATE____________

Please return this form promptly to the address listed below.

CAROLYNNE ERVIN, MA
COORDINATOR OF THE SPIRITUAL DIRECTION PRACTICUM
CHESTNUT HILL COLLEGE
9601 GERMANTOWN AVENUE
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19118-2693
GUIDELINES FOR SECOND LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION
FOR THE PRACTICUM APPLICATION PROCESS

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1) How long have you known this person and in what capacity?

2) How does this person relate to others?

3) What qualities or natural gifts do you see emerging that would encourage you to recommend this person to accompany another on their faith journey?

4) What would you say is this person’s greatest strength?

5) What would you say will be this individual’s greatest challenge?

Please return this form promptly to the address listed below.

CAROLYNNE ERVIN, MA
COORDINATOR OF THE SPIRITUAL DIRECTION PRACTICUM
CHESTNUT HILL COLLEGE
9601 GERMANTOWN AVENUE
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19118-2693
GUIDELINES FOR AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The contents of the autobiography will remain confidential and will be read ONLY by the Coordinator and members of the Supervisory Team. You may find it helpful to read the chapter, “Praying with Your Experience of God and Writing Your Own Spiritual Autobiography,” which is in *The Discerning Heart: Discovering a Personal God* by Maureen Conroy, RSM.

*Elements to be included* (Length: Approximately 8-12, double-spaced pages):

**Part I: (6-9 pages)**

1. **This is a general overview** of your faith life as it evolved particularly in your young adult and adult years. What have been some transforming moments of faith which have drawn you to the ministry of spiritual direction? In your discussion, please note any significant changes or challenges (death, prolonged illness, addictions, moves) which had an impact on you and your faith. (2-3 pages)

2. Describe your physical, emotional and psychological health as you grew and developed. To your knowledge is there any physical, emotional, or psychological challenge which would interfere with your effectiveness as a spiritual director? (1-2 pages)

3. Describe some of the stages that emerged as your spirituality grew and developed. Please mention any significant experiences which are connected with your call to the ministry of spiritual direction. Were there any turning points on your journey? Discuss your relationship with God as you currently perceive it. How does this relationship affect your personal relationships? (3-4 pages)

**Part II: (2-3 pages)**

1. Describe your experience of Spiritual Direction:
   - A) How long have you received spiritual direction?
   - B) What is the name of your spiritual director?
   - C) How would you describe your experience of spiritual direction? i.e., What happens in the sessions?
   - D) What has been the benefit to you of receiving spiritual direction?
   - E) For how long have you been discerning your call to this ministry with your spiritual director? Please describe this process.

2. How do you experience being called by God and others to the ministry of spiritual direction? Are you currently involved in offering spiritual direction to others? Have others encouraged you to participate in a program of this nature? What strengths and weaknesses do you bring to the ministry of spiritual direction?

3. How will the successful completion of this program be integrated into your current life circumstances?
PRACTICUM GUIDELINES
FOR ESTABLISHING THE DIRECTOR-DIRECTEE RELATIONSHIP

Requirements Regarding Number of Directees

The assumption guiding our Practicum is that spiritual directors are called to this ministry by God and by others. Before pursuing the director-directee relationship, consider whether you experience a call from any person to do spiritual direction. This is very important.

HLSP 671: Theory and Praxis of Spiritual Direction: Practicum 1
HLSP 672: Ethical Issues in Spiritual Direction: Practicum 2
(August-April)

If you are accepted into the Practicum, please interview several candidates over the summer. By the time you begin class at the end of August, you need a firm commitment from two people who are ready to begin Spiritual Direction with you. You will meet directees every two weeks from September through April for one hour sessions. A third directee may be added in January based on discernment with your supervisor.

HLSP 673: Psychological Issues in Spiritual Direction: Practicum 3
HLSP 674: Peer Supervision in Spiritual Direction: Practicum 4
(August-April)

When beginning Practicum 3, you need a firm commitment from four people who are ready to engage Spiritual Direction with you. Hopefully, two of these will be continuing from the previous year. Based on discussion with your supervisor, additional directees may be added gradually, up to six people. In the second year, the time between appointments will vary among two, three, or four weeks. Each session will be one hour.

HLSP 675: Retreat in Everyday Life: Practicum 5
(September - April)
Nineteenth Annotation Instruction/Supervision: Elective

Before you begin the class, we ask that you have one person clearly committed to doing this retreat. They need to understand the commitment in advance. It is a commitment to a one-hour, weekly direction session with you for approximately 24-28 weeks.
SUGGESTIONS REGARDING THE CHOICE OF DIRECTEES

- Listen for clear desires for help with prayer and a relationship with God.
- Can the person share some former experiences of God with you? Do they sound genuine to you? Is the person praying? By praying, I mean any relating to God, formally or informally.
- While listening to the person’s experience of life, are there current crises or serious trauma from the past? Dealing with trauma, past or present, is very challenging during the initial development of the spiritual director. Do not accept anyone in serious crisis.
- Please do not consider directing a personal friend or someone with whom you have a close association. Dual relationships can become very challenging.

CONNECTING WITH DIRECTEES

We want to offer various possibilities for connecting with potential directees:

- Parishes or congregations where you know the priests or ministers are open and would let you speak at meetings (especially scripture or prayer groups, etc.) or put an announcement in the bulletin.
- Prayer groups
- Hospital chaplains who can refer people who want help with prayer.
- Coordinators of Religious Education
- Be prepared to present a simple description of spiritual direction: your name, some background, i.e., degrees (Candidate, Holistic Spirituality and Spiritual Direction), your geographic area and a phone number. (Don't give your address. Use common sense before inviting someone you only know through phone conversations to your office at home.)