LEARNING
COHORT
SPIRITUAL
FORMATION
HANDBOOK

AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF MINISTRIES
~ Since 1942 ~
www.acom.edu.au

Transformation Awaits ...
INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITUAL FORMATION

ACOM considers Spiritual Formation to be essential and foundational in preparation for Christian Ministry. Nurturing spiritual depth, energy, and excellence is the centrepiece of ACOM's vision for equipping students for lifetime ministry. ACOM has long recognised that attention to one's spiritual formation is the crucial element that enables ministers to thrive in sometimes difficult environments.

Therefore, for Learning Cohort students, formational studies do not sit as an option or supplement to other subjects, rather ‘Spiritual or Personal Formation’ units are mandatory and are offered as year-long experiences involving practical and academic activities that enhance overall personal and spiritual development. ‘Spiritual or Personal Formation’ units are designed to extend the capabilities of students in the following areas:

- Spiritual maturity
- Emotional maturity
- Self-awareness
- Leadership capacity
- Vocational clarity
- Relational skills
- Personal integrity

‘Spiritual Formation’ units encompass three integrated activities:

- Intensive participation in a Formation Group led by a Formation Director
- Thoughtful engagement with the online Spiritual Formation Curriculum
- An ongoing relationship with a Personal Mentor

Thank you for agreeing to partner with ACOM by undertaking one of the vital roles within the Spiritual Formation Program. ACOM’s unique approach to preparing people for ministry would not be possible without the many willing and enthusiastic partners we have in the field. We consider Formation Directors and Mentors to be an essential part of the learning team and, as such, they are critical to our educational structure and are much-valued members of the Learning Cohort they represent. Apart from the Formation Directors and Mentors, the Spiritual Formation team also includes key ACOM staff, which includes the Spiritual Formation Program Coordinator and a Learning Cohorts’ Student Engagement Manager. During the year, at times these roles interface and overlap with one another to ensure the overall success of the Spiritual Formation program and so that Learning Cohort students can engage with the transformative experience that comes from journeying with one another through the Spiritual Formation process.

Important, we want to reassure you that you are not alone in your formation role. The Spiritual Formation Program Coordinator and Student Engagement Manager will assist you to access any resources and other support you may need. Additional information including student curriculum, required forms and resources can also be found on the online learning site ‘Moodle’ (http://acm.mrooms.net), or by emailing info@acom.edu.au.
SPIRITUAL MENTORING
WELCOME TO YOUR ROLE AS A MENTOR

You have been asked by a Learning Cohort student to take up the vital role of Mentor for this year. ACOM's training for leaders in Christian ministry has a number of facets. Focused study is an essential part of this training. However, ACOM recognises that study alone does not provide an adequate basis for ministry success. In addition, students require an expanding range of life skills, deepening personal awareness, maturing spiritual formation and solid relational skills.

To meet these requirements, ACOM in partnership with your Learning Cohort has designed a process for students to participate in two or three years of Spiritual Formation units. Spiritual Formation units provide students with important personal, character and spiritual growth opportunities through participation in a Formation Group and reflection with a Personal Mentor. These two intentional growth environments – a small group and a one-to-one relationship- provide a support, safety, and confidentiality within which trust is built and authenticity can be practiced, so that students develop as healthy integrated people in mission. The ministry of a personal mentor can have a profound impact on the development of a student, and it is our hope that students will continue through life with the benefit of ongoing mentoring. New students to Spiritual Formation typically require some assistance in choosing mentors and this assistance is provided at an initial gathering at the beginning of the year. Continuing students are expected to have their mentoring arrangements in place earlier in the year. Some students may prefer to try three different mentors during their studies or to stay with one mentor. There are advantages to both these options. For the most part, the option pursued is primarily the student's choice and your agreement to fulfil the requirements of mentoring is a renewable yearly agreement.

Thank you for being willing to take up this vital role. ACOM’s unique approach to ministry training would not work without our willing, enthusiastic mentor partners. We like to view our Mentors as part of the learning team and very much value them as part of the ACOM and Learning Cohort team. Further, we believe this student-mentor relationship to be mutually rewarding and expect that you will receive much personal benefit from the experience of nurturing a student in a mentoring relationship.

As you continue reading this handbook, we hope you will gain clarity and confidence that you can indeed positively impact the life of a student. Mentoring is not necessarily difficult, but it does involve intentionality and knowledge of key skills involved in mentoring relationships, some of which you will find outlined in what follows.
SUPPORTIVE PERSONNEL

There are a number of people who will interact with you in your role as Mentor throughout this year including your student’s Formation Director (FD), Learning Cohort’s Coordinator and possibly the Student Engagement Manager.

The student’s FD is your first port of call if you need support during the year. The relevant Formation Director (FD) will be in contact with you and will offer an orientation in your role as Mentor. The FD will outline the requirements for successful fulfilment of the mentoring component of the Spiritual Formation unit. The FD will also check with you from time to time regarding the effectiveness and value of the mentoring sessions. The Learning Cohort will require some feedback as to the willingness of the student entering a mentoring relationship and processes.

The Learning Centre Coordinator has the responsibility to coordinate the students study requirements on a more administrative basis. They are always keen to make sure that all students are travelling well on a number of fronts, including their mentoring journey.

The Spiritual Formation Program Coordinator is also happy to support you in your mentoring role, so feel free to make contact if need arises. Several articles written on the art of mentoring are available on the ACOM learning site, Moodle. Login details allowing you access to this website will be emailed to your nominated email address. Good mentoring is a wonderful experience for both mentoree and mentor. We pray both you and your student will richly be blessed by this ministry.

CONTACT THE AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF MINISTRIES

All staff details and contacts can be found via our website www.acom.edu.au.
MENTORING EXPLAINED

The role of mentoring is rapidly gaining validity within society. Mentors who act as an empowering presence in the lives of others are increasingly recognised for their important influence in all realms of life. Mentoring awakens the possibilities, helping people remove the barriers that keep them from being the people they want to be.

Mentoring can be understood as an intentional interpersonal relationship in which the mentor encourages whole of life growth in another person, whose needs, activities and ministry are the mentors primary concern.

Mentoring involves:

- Guiding a student to greater competence
- Facilitating discussion around the student’s dreams
- Promoting change and growth
- Helping the student to reach goals
- Developing leadership qualities
- Developing the student’s highest potential
- Stimulating self-belief and God-belief
- Leading the student to greater degrees of holiness
- Deepening conversations that uncover inner truth and enhance freedom
- Intentionally investing in the next generation
- Displaying empathy and immediacy
- Calling the student to account where behaviour is inappropriate or incongruent with their stated goals
- Facilitating the transformation of personality towards wholeness
- Sharing God-given resources

Mentoring does not involve:

- Leading the conversation with your agenda or program in mind
- Talking more than about 30% of the time
- Giving the student your own solutions to problems and concerns
- Preaching or sermonising from your own experiences of ministry
- Rescuing the student in difficult situations
- Dominating the student
- Giving advice without exploration of the student’s options
- Making judgments or ridiculing the student
- Allowing the student to mentor you on your issues
• Asking closed questions (closed questions are answered with a ‘yes’ or ‘no’)
• Overloading the student with too many exercises as homework
• A weak or unclarified ending to the mentoring relationship
DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN MENTORING AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Mentoring is related to but distinct from the following activities.

PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral care involves more frequent contact and sharing life’s day to day problems and circumstances. Pastoral care provides ongoing support. Mentoring stands back a bit, and maintains objectivity, focusing on the student's growth in the big areas of their character, life, and ministry.

DISCIPLING

Discipling typically refers to the process of grounding new believers in the faith and teaching them the habits needed to become mature believers. Mentoring is for anyone, at any faith stage, who wants to grow to reach their potential as a well-formed person.

COUNSELLING

Counselling is a specialised field requiring expertise, postgraduate training, registration, and supervision. Mentors are not counsellors, and should not attempt to be so. Mentors may refer students to counselling for specific issues or specialised care. In such cases, the mentor's role is to help evaluate the potential effectiveness of counselling as a strategy towards promoting the student's ongoing growth and settled-ness.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

Spiritual Direction is a specialised role requiring training and supervision and focuses on helping the person deepen their intimacy with God and their ability to hear God’s voice. Mentoring may focus on spiritual intimacy issues but will normally range more broadly into issues affecting the holistic growth – including relationships, life goals, financial or time management, priorities etc., however, intimacy with God is also a central theme.

COACHING

Within the ACOM educational model, coaching develops particular ministry skills. In doing so, Coaching may touch upon relationship and personal issues - but these issues are mostly addressed within the context of the student’s ministry skill development. Mentoring, on the other hand, may refer to ministry situations but is more focused on the student's personhood in these settings rather than the student's developing ministry skills.
THE PROCESS OF A ONE YEAR MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

Learning Cohort students and their mentors covenant to meet across the year for a total of 10 hours.

The Mentor’s objective is to support, encourage, challenge, facilitate, nurture “Whole of life growth” but with a particular attention to these objectives.

An outline for the mentoring year based on 7 x 1.5 hour sessions per month (just over 10 hours) might look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-mentoring</td>
<td>Informal meeting/conversation</td>
<td>General ‘get to know you’ discussion between mentor and mentoree, discussion around SDC areas and desired student outcomes for mentoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. (90 mins)</td>
<td>Life Stories</td>
<td>Building a relationship of trust, understanding and transparency where both the mentor and mentoree share their stories (1-2 sessions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. (90 mins)</td>
<td>Life stories/objectives</td>
<td>What are the students goals for mentoring? In which areas do they want to be stretched and challenged? Where do they need to grow? (Based around 7 areas in SDC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. (90 mins)</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Process of mentoring based on student objectives and mentors observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. (90 mins)</td>
<td>Encouragement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. (90 mins)</td>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. (90 mins)</td>
<td>Development</td>
<td>Begin to evaluate/reflect together on what has happened during the year as it draws to a close</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prayer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nurture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Challenge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resources/exercises</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Final Session</td>
<td>Appropriate reflection and closure – celebration/gift/continue?</td>
<td>Evaluation/reflection on the year and student growth Discussion around SDC Some students and mentors may desire to continue the mentoring relationship, but if not important to bring appropriate closure It may be appropriate for the student to give a small gift or card to express their thanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(90 mins)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An outline of a typical mentoring session (90 mins) might look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of mentoring</th>
<th>Guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Catch up/connection – 15-30 mins</strong></td>
<td>Brief catch up, update on where student is at, what’s been happening for them, identify anything that might need to be addressed in this session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accountabilities – 15+ mins (based around objectives)</strong></td>
<td>Is there anything student was asked to do (reflection/exercise, etc) for this session? Time for hard questions!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Growth based around – 40+ mins objectives /action points</strong></td>
<td>More hard questions! The ‘stuff’ of mentoring – working through student objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary – 5-10 mins</strong></td>
<td>What has happened during this session? Any commitments need to be followed up? How is the student at the end of this session?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FORMALISING YOUR MENTORING AGREEMENT

Your desire to enter into an ACOM mentoring partnership is formalised through a Mentoring Covenant, which is signed by both the Mentor and the Student.

This Mentoring Covenant reflects:

- A commitment to complete the required meetings (10 hours over the year set out in 6-8 meetings)
- A willingness and enthusiasm to complete the role
- An understanding of goal setting processes
- An undertaking to create a safe, listening, supportive and empowering environment for the student
- A commitment to assess the student’s personal growth and development using the provided ACOM Student Development Chart (SDC). A copy of this can be found in this Handbook under the section ‘Shared Appendices’ and an electronic copy can be found online on Moodle at [http://acm.mrooms.net](http://acm.mrooms.net)

MENTORING COVENANT

Please find the Mentoring Covenant in the appendix.
DETERMINING STRATEGIES

Various strategies can be used in the mentoring process. These strategies include, but are not limited to, those listed below:

- Providing a non-distractive comfortable physical environment that enhances focus and concentration
- Providing an intentional beginning where processes are agreed upon
- Covenanting in written form to ensure clarity of expectations
- Creating a trusting and warm relationship
- Affirming confidentiality
- Allowing the student to establish and lead the agenda each meeting
- Putting aside the mentor’s preoccupations, agendas, and favourite remedies
- Encouraging the student to discover their ‘true’ self
- Being a deeply intuitive listening presence
- Asking empowering questions
- Assisting in goal setting, motivation, and accountability
- Offering affirmation and encouragement
- Confronting incongruence in speech and behaviour
- Building and monitoring a student’s self-care strategies
- Envisioning the student’s future with them
- Holding the focus in key moments of self-discovery and self-revelation
- Praying for the student in and out of mentoring sessions
- Discerning the work of the Spirit in the student’s life journey and identifying fruit and progress
- Celebrating a student’s personhood and major moments of success
- Reducing confusion by using clarifying questions and discernment
- Offering and challenging perspectives as necessary
- Engaging in immediacy and reflection on the mentoring relationship
- Suggesting exercises, reading, etc. where suitable
- Offering a referral to a more qualified professional where needed
- Providing a healthy intentional closure to the mentoring relationship

The art of effective mentoring includes being both open and organised with your student. Openness to run with the student’s agenda in each session is imperative. If the Mentor pre-arranges material to be covered, thus diverting the student away from sharing their personal journey, mentoring can lose a great amount of energy.

A wise Mentor will first be completely open to receive the student’s updating of current life story and details of progress the student is making towards their stated goals. A skilful
Mentor will assess what is needed in a session. If a session seems to require extra material, a mentor can utilise backup exercises and stimulating questions.
SETTING GOALS

‘The beginning is the most important part of the work.’

_Plato_

The process of goal setting can greatly enhance mentoring effectiveness. Using one of the earliest mentoring sessions, discuss with the student some objectives they wish to pursue over the course of the year’s mentoring relationship. A goal is ‘that for which our energies focus and combine’. SMART goals can be described as:

- **S** - Specific (naming areas and issues to address)
- **M** - Measurable (so that progress can be discerned)
- **A** - Achievable (realistic within the year-long process)
- **R** - Relevant (to the student’s development as a missional leader)
- **T** - Time constrained (with a due date for accountability)

Examples of goals may include:

- To deepen self-awareness regarding my communication style with various age groups
- To strengthen my daily walk with God by taking 30min daily prayer walks
- To identify my strengths and weaknesses by making a list for reflection
- To construct a mission statement for present ministry opportunities
- To implement a disciplined approach to study resulting in the ability to meet deadlines for assignments without anxiety
- To be honest about personal struggles and share vulnerabilities with others

Goals contribute towards the content and the process of mentoring and are a chief vehicle for evaluating the effectiveness of mentoring. In the mentoring relationship, the setting of goals needs to be completed in the first few sessions. However, goals may be added, extended, completed or adjusted throughout the year. Mentors together with the student agree on strategies that will help the student achieve their goals. Strategies may include: reading, journaling, gaining feedback from others, fulfilling ‘practice’ activities, etc.
USE OF LIFE STORIES

‘God writes the story of our lives to make something known about himself.’

Dan Allender

‘My story is important not because it is mine, but because if I tell it anything like right, the chances are you will recognise that in many ways it is also yours. Maybe nothing is more important than that we keep track, you and I, of these stories of who we are and where we have come from... because it is precisely through these stories...that God makes himself known to each of us most powerfully and personally. If this is true, it means that to lose track of our stories is to be profoundly impoverished not only humanly, but also spiritually.’

Frederick Buechner, Telling Secrets.

ACOM encourages both the Mentor and the Student to build a relationship of trust and transparency through the sharing of their life stories. The student will already have had the experience of sharing their story with their Formation Group. Sharing a life story is a profound experience for the Student, both in telling their own stories and hearing the stories of others. Life storytelling may be a new experience for you, so below is a general guideline of what to consider in telling your life story.

We advise in the telling of a life story that you do not interrupt with comments or questions but rather listen to each other without interruption. Storytelling varies in length, but generally, a life story can take about an hour to narrate. After the story is finished, the listener is free to interact, comment and share what was impacting them in listening to the story.

In your role as Mentor, it is important to listen well to what is shared and not shared, to develop a general appreciation of your Student’s spiritual formation.

Points to Remember:

- Avoid reading your story to each other. There is a special dynamic in allowing our stories to arise from within us without prompts.
- It doesn’t matter who shares their story first. If the Student wishes to share first, as Mentor you may recognise certain threads in your story that are helpful to share. If you share first, it will give the Student more courage to share theirs.
- Be careful about what you choose to share in your life story. We encourage you to share with transparency and vulnerability, but also use tact and wisdom regarding the age and level of life experience of a younger person.
- Do not use this mentoring relationship to divulge unprocessed personal material. It is better that you obtain your own mentor or counsellor to debrief with, in
processing immediate turbulence. We encourage you to share your own tragedy and triumph of life experience in a way that is empowering for the Student.

- A wise Mentor recognises when their own personal issues interfere with mentoring discussions. This interference can jeopardise the whole mentoring process.
- If a Student reveals a level of psychological illness or instability in their lives that needs a level of care beyond what you can offer (E.g. counselling), we recommend that with the Student’s permission you refer the Student to a competent counsellor for professional assistance. Do not fall into the trap of acting as a counsellor. It may be appropriate before making a referral to seek the advice of Student's Formation Director with the Student’s permission.
ASPECTS OF YOUR LIFE STORY

Any of these aspects may be suitable to share in narrating your life story.

1. THE EXTERNAL STORY
   a. Your family of origin and heritage
   b. Where you grew up and went to school
   c. How you found school life and early family life
   d. Your emergence into adulthood
   e. Career choices or jobs, marriage and family
   f. Key events of life.

2. THE INTERNAL STORY
   a. Whether or not you felt loved by your mother, father, and family
   b. Significant others who shaped your sense of self for good and bad
   c. Defining moments of self-discovery, self-acceptance or self-rejection
   d. A sense of who you are in the adult stage of life
   e. Growth/deterioration of confidence and self-esteem at various points
   f. Turning points in life
   g. Successes and failures

3. THE SPIRITUAL STORY
   a. Early memories, revelations or teaching about God and spiritual things
   b. Your journey of response to God
   c. How God’s presence is generally perceived
   d. Times of reaching out to God
   e. Seasons of doubt and restoration

RESOURCES FOR STORY-TELLING


MENTOR OBSERVATIONS

Making observations allow you to assess the student's growth and development in ways that are helpful for the student. By giving honest feedback you encourage your student and challenge them in their ongoing development.

At the beginning of the mentoring relationship it may be helpful if your mentoree nominates general and/or specific areas for development during the mentoring relationship. Students should be encouraged to set specific goals relating to these areas.

Though it is not required of you as a mentor of a Learning Cohort Student, if you wish to reference a copy of a Student Development Chart this can be viewed online from Moodle at http://acm.mrooms.net or from the helpdesk at info@acom.edu.au.

Areas covered in the Student Development Chart include:

- **SPIRITUAL MATURITY**: deepening intimacy with God through a range of spiritual disciplines resulting in an extension of spiritual virtues.
- **EMOTIONAL MATURITY**: mastering and extending emotional intelligence, by increasing emotional recognition, expression, and regulation.
- **SELF-AWARENESS**: distilling increasing self-knowledge into wisdom making.
- **LEADERSHIP CAPACITY**: broadening influence and spiritual authority through the development of key spiritual qualities that result in resilience in leadership.
- **VOCATIONAL CLARITY**: discerning and affirming purpose, calling, capacities and life direction.
- **RELATIONAL SKILLS**: extending skill-sets that enhance depth of presence attunement and resonance with others.
- **PERSONAL INTEGRITY**: bringing clarity and purity into one's heart and motives and personal transparency.
- Personal integrity

CLOSURE OF MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

Healthy closure of mentoring relationships involves preparing both Mentor and Student to relinquish the mentoring relationship. This preparation may consist of:

- taking time to reflect on the whole mentoring relationship
- reflecting on the highs and lows of relating as Mentor and Student
- valuing the Student and the growth that has been achieved
- expressing appreciation and affirmation
• releasing the Student from the structure and expectations of the mentoring relationship

Specific strategies for concluding the mentoring relationship can include:

1. Discussing and making plans for closure of the relationship during the second last mentoring session. Agree together on how the final session will take place. The student may or may not wish to undertake another year of mentoring with you.
2. Sharing the highlights of your mentoring experience together.
3. The Mentor sharing the growth points observed.
4. Acknowledging that the relationship will alter after closure.
5. Acknowledging the joy and grief of closing a relationship.
6. The Mentor writing an affirmative letter or note to the student and reading it in their presence.
7. A celebration event in a creative way e.g., through a shared meal, a small gift or a memento.

MENTORING CHECKLIST

- Agree on suitable time structure that distributes the required hours of mentoring as evenly as possible throughout the year.
- Complete the Mentor Covenant with your student and keep a copy.
- Make sure contact has been made with the Student's Formation Director who will orientate you and supervise you in the process of Mentoring.
- Set a schedule for sharing life stories and setting of goals with the Student.
- Devise a system for keeping track of mentoring progress (you may utilise the Student Development Chart for this purpose).
- Bring the last session of mentoring to a good closure, celebrating the growth that has occurred.
- Your Student’s Formation Director will set up a time to debrief you as a mentor, gaining your perceptions of your mentoring experience(s).

Thank you again, for taking on this opportunity of building into the life of a student who seeks to build the kingdom of God. Your efforts will plant seeds into their lives that will be invaluable for their development and the future effectiveness of God’s kingdom.
MENTOR ADDITIONAL AIDS

MENTORING READINGS ON MOODLE

Several helpful readings on mentoring have been made available on Moodle http://acm.mrooms.net.

Note: These resources may make use of differing terminology when discussing mentoring and mentoring-related activities. Some authors use the word 'coaching', while others use 'spiritual direction' and others 'mentoring'. Varying terminologies, however, do not lessen the applicability of the readings to the mentoring task.

The available readings are:

- Tony Horsfall, ‘The Scenic Route Developing Spiritual Awareness’ in Mentoring For Spiritual Growth: Sharing the Journey of Faith, United Kingdom: The Bible Reading Fellowship, 2008.
- Rick Lewis, ‘Giving your Best to Mentoring’ in Mentoring Matters, United Kingdom: The Bible Reading Fellowship, 2008.
**SAMPLE MENTORING LOG**

The following format can be used to document the process and outcomes of your mentoring relationship.

**MENTORING GOALS**

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SESSION</th>
<th>SESSION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issues arising</td>
<td>Issues arising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Progress</td>
<td>Goal Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises Set</td>
<td>Exercises Set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability for next session</td>
<td>Accountability for next session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Evaluation of Session</td>
<td>Overall Evaluation of Session</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SHARE Appendices

Please see attached for the following appendices.

1. Personal Formation Student Demand Hours
2. Student Development Chart
3. Student Development Chart Areas
4. Mentor Covenant
5. Spiritual Formation Group Covenant
6. Choosing A Mentor
## PERSONAL FORMATION STUDENT DEMAND HOURS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend all group gatherings</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessments</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with Mentor</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online study sessions, required interactive activities and reading</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohort Determined Hours</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subject Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>143</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spiritual Formation
Student Development Chart

Date:

Student Name:

Year of SF: ☐ Year 1 ☐ Year 2 ☐ Year 3 ☐ PG (Year 4/5)

Form filled in by: ☐ Student ☐ Mentor ☐ FD

Name of person who filled in form:

Purpose:
To assist assessment in the areas of Spiritual Formation, two measuring tools have been provided.

1. The Student Development Chart – completed by the Student, Formation Director and Mentor
2. Spiritual Formation Assessment Matrix – a summary of the three Student Development Charts, completed by the Formation Director

Students’ development will be assessed in their formation group by their Formation Director. Students will also be assessed in their development by their mentor. Progress and development of each student is observed and recorded in seven areas:

1. Personal integrity
2. Self awareness
3. Emotional maturity
4. Relational capacity
5. Spiritual maturity
6. Vocational clarity
7. Leadership capacity

The Student Development Chart Explained:
The seven assessable areas are listed as headings down the left hand side of the document. Under each heading is a more detailed range of criteria to be observed as supporting evidence of a general assessment in each area. Along the top of the chart are a number of levels under which the assessor will select an evaluation, spanning from elementary levels through to exceptional capacities. This chart will be filled out by the Formation Director, the mentor and the student during the year. During the Student Interview in October the FD and the student will compare their summarizing selection of up to four areas of strength and up to four areas that require further development. The student’s mentor will also provide the FD with a completed Student Development Chart that will contribute to the Interview discussion.
Who fills out this chart?

The Student:

- At the beginning of the SF unit of study, a student would be wise to study these tools and be fully aware of specific areas their FD and mentor will be observing and evaluating.
- The student might select from a number of these criteria and set specific goals for growth.
- The student fills out the chart making their own self-assessment and emails to their FD just prior to the student interview held in October.
- At the student interview all the charts will be compared and contrasted by the Formation Director and the student together, by noting the selection of up to four areas of strength to be affirmed as well as up to four areas of minimal development that need focus.
- During the interview the SF Assessment Matrix will be finalized by the FD in the presence of the student so they are aware of the overall rating of development which will be kept on file by ACOM.

The Mentor:

- The mentor is provided with the Student Development Chart at the commencement of the mentoring agreement, and can request an electronic copy from info@acom.edu.au
- The mentor will begin making preliminary observations in the individual line items and overall areas.
- Together with the student they may discuss any subsequent desire to set goals in these areas.
- As the mentoring sessions progress the mentor will continue to observe and evaluate.
- The Mentor will share their observations and evaluations with the student prior to the interview.
- Just prior to the Student Interview in October the mentor will email the FD with their evaluation, also selecting up to four areas of affirmation and including four areas needing development and further focus.

The Formation Director

- Before retreat, the Formation Director will make a copy of the Chart to record preliminary observations on each student at retreat.
- The Formation Director will reflect on each student’s group interactions throughout the year and make evaluations in these seven areas.
- Immediately prior to the student’s interview, a final evaluation will be made, selecting four criteria noteworthy of affirmation as well as four individual areas needing further development by the student.
- The FD will take into consideration the Mentors evaluation of the student as well.
- During the interview the FD will share with the student their final conclusions, which are recorded in the SF Assessment Matrix of the student’s development that is emailed to ACOM, along with the three Charts, and is kept on record by ACOM.

Instructions:

Filling out the form: This form is a Microsoft Word Form Document. If you only have a paper or PDF copy, you can obtain a Word version at the online learning website - Moodle, or from info@acom.edu.au. Please fill in this form using Microsoft Word (tick the grey boxes), and save it to your computer. Mentors: Please complete this form and email it to your Formation Director by September (electronic copy available from info@acom.edu.au).
Students: Please complete this form and email it to your Formation Director prior to your Student Interview (electronic copy or online learning website - Moodle)
Formation Directors: Please complete this Form and file it with the forms submitted by the mentor and the student. Use ALL THREE forms for the Student Interview. You may wish to print a copy this Form for use during the Student Interview, but please make sure to complete the Form electronically as well. Once the Student Interview is complete, please email all 3 Forms to formationforms@acom.edu.au.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Behaviours</th>
<th>N/A or Not Observed</th>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Competent</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The student displays this behaviour minimally or inconsistently</td>
<td>The student displays this behaviour with general consistency</td>
<td>The student displays this behaviour in a consistent manner</td>
<td>The student displays this behaviour in a highly consistent manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual Maturity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Expresses a desire for intimacy with God</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responds to identified movements of God’s Spirit in their lives</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts with mercy, gentleness, and loving-kindness towards others</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Displays a peaceful trust in God in both ordinary and stressful circumstances</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrates wisdom and discernment in decisions and actions</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practices spiritual disciplines</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takes responsibility for their personal spiritual growth</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Spiritual Maturity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Observed Behaviours</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Emotional Maturity</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Regulates/controls emotions and emotional reactions</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expresses a wide range of feelings and emotions</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expresses emotions with sensitivity to others</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Names ‘surface’ feelings</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifies deeper emotions giving rise to surface feelings</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Displays empathy towards others</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Emotional Maturity</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Self Awareness</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluates self with appropriate insight and objectivity</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrates self acceptance</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identifies, evaluates and demonstrates acceptance of strengths</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identifies, evaluates and demonstrates acceptance of weaknesses</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Observed Behaviours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sets and pursues achievable goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establishes appropriate personal boundaries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Self Awareness</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership Capacity</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nurtures personal leadership qualities, capacities and limitations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrates a desire to serve others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicates vision and strategy in a way that inspires healthy commitment from others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Handles criticism and opposition appropriately</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrates resilience following defeat, disappointment or failure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adapts to changing circumstances utilising a range of problem-solving skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Leadership Capacity</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Vocational Clarity</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Observed Behaviours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Articulates vocation-related purposes, passions and commitments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establishes vocational goals and strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develops vocation-related skills and capacities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Networks with professional colleagues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adheres to professional standards and ethics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilises professional mentoring/supervision structures and accountability mechanisms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Vocational Clarity</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relational Skills</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is emotionally ‘present’ for others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiates and nurtures healthy relationships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Displays a range of relational skills (e.g., assertiveness, affirmation, collaboration, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confronts, and is reconciled with, others in emotionally healthy ways</td>
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<tr>
<td>Observed Behaviours</td>
<td>N/A or Not Observed</td>
<td>Beginning</td>
<td>Developing</td>
<td>Competent</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicates effectively in a variety of relational settings (e.g. one-to-one, small group, larger group)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balances intimacy with appropriate space/distance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Relational Skills</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Integrity</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Articulates their life story with authentic and appropriate self disclosure, vulnerability and transparency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Articulates their life story with discernment and insight</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulates their life story in a way that assists and empowers others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is reliable and dependable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balances work and family responsibilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exhibits personal honesty and integrity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Personal Integrity</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Spiritual Formation
Summary of Student Development Chart

These items will be discussed during the Student Interview.

Select up to four line items from the Student Development Chart above that represent areas worthy of particular affirmation and/or encouragement for the student.

Item 1:
Comment:

Item 2:
Comment:

Item 3:
Comment:

Item 4:
Comment:

Select up to four line items from the above Student Development Chart that identify areas requiring further development and focus by the student.

Item 1:
Comment:

Item 2:
Comment:

Item 3:
Comment:

Item 4:
Comment:
Student Development Chart Areas

**Spiritual Maturity**
- Cultivates Desire for God
- Practices Spiritual Disciplines
- Cultivates Wisdom & Discernment
- Emanates Love, Joy, Peace & Hope
- Open Posture towards God

**Emotional Maturity**
- Reads & Expresses a Wide Range of Emotions
- Reads Emotional Incongruences in Self & Others
- Displays Healthy Emotions with Freedom

**Self-Awareness**
- Sifts Feedback & Criticism for Truth
- Monitors & Deepens Inner World
- Accepts & Integrates Flaws
- Develops an Enjoyment of Being One’s Self
- Practices Self Control

**Leadership Capacity**
- Leads with Humility & Meekness
- Leads with a God-Given Calling
- Communicates Vision Effectively
- Promotes & Enables Others
- Builds Spiritual Resilience

**Vocational Clarity**
- Identifies Personal Passion/s
- Develops a Vocational Vision
- Identifies & builds Vocational Gifting & Skills
- Seeks Community Affirmation

**Relational Skills**
- Truly Present to Others
- Initiates & Deepens Relationships
- Confronts & Reconciles Difficulties
- Regulates Appropriate Intimacy & Distance
- Practices Inclusiveness

**Personal Integrity**
- Expresses Vulnerability
- Honesty & Humility
- Reliability & Dependability
- Purity & Temperance
- Demonstrates Life/Work Balance

Australian College of Ministries
info@acom.edu.au
1800 672 692
www.acom.edu.au
Spiritual Formation
Mentor Covenant

Date: …… /…… / ……

Student: …………….

This covenant is an agreement between a Mentor and Student and is to be discussed, completed and signed together. This covenant is between the Mentor and the Student and does not need to be submitted to ACOM, but both parties should keep their own-signed copies. Individual copies can be found and downloaded from Moodle found online at: http://acm.mrooms.net

UNDERSTANDING
Mentoring is a holistic intentional strategy designed to guide a student in meeting their personal growth objectives. Mentors and students meet together in 6-8 meetings for a total of 10 hours per year. This is a one-year covenant, which includes liaising with the Formation Director of the student. However, no personal material is shared apart from that which is noted in the Duty of Care and Disclosure section of this Covenant.

REQUIRED HOURS
10 hours of face-to-face contact per year

RESPONSIBILITIES
1. Mentor Responsibilities
   (a) Read the Mentoring section of the ACOM Spiritual Formation Handbook
   (b) Agree to adhere to the confidentiality guidelines set out in this handbook
   (c) Share your life-story with the Student
   (d) Assist the Student in setting goals
   (e) Attend to the Student, listening to their journey and progress towards goals
   (f) Report the detail of the Student’s attendance to the Formation Director when required
   (g) Complete the Student Development Chart and return to the Formation Director when required
   (h) Close the Mentoring relationship at the end of the required hours

2. Student Responsibilities
   (a) Begin the mentoring relationship with a willingness to grow and share
   (b) Share your life-story with the Mentor
   (c) Set personal growth goals for the year
   (d) Attend each session, sharing and updating on progress towards goals
(e) Complete the Student Development chart (if required) prior to the Student Interview and email to your Formation Director.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MENTORING ATTENDANCE LOG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SESSION 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of Attendance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CONFIDENTIALITY, PRIVACY, DUTY OF CARE AND DISCLOSURE POLICIES**

It is understood that the mentoring relationship is an opportunity to exercise confidentiality between the Mentor and Student so that an environment of honesty, transparency, vulnerability and growth is promoted.

While Mentors are expected to report to the Student’s Formation Director concerning the Student’s attendance and general progress of the relationship, the Student’s Formation Group Director will not be privy to the students personal sharing without the permission of the Student.

Disclosure by the Mentor may occur if the Mentor has concerns about the Student’s progress in mentoring and asks permission to share these concerns with the Student’s Formation Director or the Learning Cohort Coordinator. The purpose of such disclosure would be to support the co-ordination of further growth measures for the student.

In some circumstances, keeping information confidential may result in harm to the student or others. At times, keeping of certain information confidential is also unlawful and/or immoral. Formation Directors, Mentors and Learning Cohort Coordinators assume Duty of Care and Disclosure by virtue of their personal work with students. Circumstances in which information supplied by students may be disclosed are outlined below. This list of circumstances is indicative rather than exhaustive.

- **a)** A Mentor may disclose to the student’s Formation Director or Learning Cohort Coordinator, without permission from the Student, issues that compromise ACOM’s reputation or the integrity of its training. The Mentor will normally seek to inform the Student of such disclosure before doing so.

- **b)** If it appears that a crime or breach of regulations has been committed by the Student, the Mentor will take up the matter with the Student with a view to student self-disclosure. If the Student does not cooperate, then the Mentor will break the confidentiality of the Student and disclose appropriately to the Formation Director or other appropriate authority.

- **c)** If it appears that a child is in danger, the Mentor may initially take up the matter with the Student with a view to immediate self-disclosure. If the Student is not open to appropriate action, then the Mentor must break the confidentiality of the
Student and disclose appropriately to the Formation Director or other appropriate authority.

d) In the case of obvious or suspected psychiatric illness the mentor is expected to consult the Formation Director in order to secure appropriate help for the Student.

e) It is a Duty of Care on the part of the mentor to ensure proper processes are established in cases of demonstrated or potential:

- Sexual abuse of the student
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour by the student
- Non-clinical depression and similarly serious psychological states
- Significant unresolved conflict in the life of the student likely to lead to harm to the Student and/or others

Note that Mentors do not have to provide care themselves, but should ensure, in consultation with the Formation Director, that the Student has adequate care structures to manage and solve problems they face. Mentors may suggest counselling, confidants or other support structures for the student.

**AGREEMENT**

- We agree to adhere to these responsibilities and requirements.

---

Signature: 

Date: / / 

STUDENT

Signature: 

Date: / / 

MENTOR
Spiritual Formation
Group Covenant
(Applicable to Students and Formation Directors)

Date: …… /…… / ……

Student: …………….

The central purpose of Spiritual Formation Groups is to build ‘Christian communities’ that offer support, care and challenge in the advancement of each student’s spiritual formation. This advancement occurs as the group provides openness, safety and hospitality to each student despite their life circumstances and personal challenges - thus building Christian character and maturity in each student.

In order for each community to form and function, students must commit fully to the aims and process under which a Formation Group flourishes. This includes a commitment to:

- Attend every session
- Enthusiastic engagement with the process and content of Formation Groups
- Respect the policies listed in this Covenant
- Failure to attend a formation group meeting without exemption may result in a student FAILING their entire Spiritual Formation Unit. If a student is ill or cannot attend for a serious reason, where possible written (email) permission must be applied for in advance to the Learning cohort Coordinator and where applicable a Medical Certificate should also be supplied. Extra Work will be assigned.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY POLICY

- All Students and Formation Directors will maintain a Covenant of Confidentiality, whereby information shared within the Formation Group, or with another person in the context of Group Activities, is not passed on to anyone. Students are free to disclose their own learning and the personal impact of the Formation Group on them – but the content of this disclosure is not to be repeated outside the group. This point represents a critical covenantal promise that promotes safety and depth of sharing in the group.
- Students who break the covenant are subject to reprimand, suspension or dismissal. Students should report any breaches of the Covenant immediately to their Formation Director or the Learning Cohort Coordinator.
- Notwithstanding the above points, relevant academic, financial and personal information may be shared between Formation Directors, Mentors and Learning Cohort Cordinators as they prepare for Student Interviews and in instances concerning issues regarding Duty of Care. The student gives permission for this sharing to occur.
- The Student gives permission for the marked versions of their Retreat Reflection and other assessments to be forwarded and read by their Formation Director in order to give them a rounded view of the student’s performance in the unit.
DUTY OF CARE AND DISCLOSURE

In some circumstances, keeping information confidential may result in harm to the student or others. At times, keeping of certain information confidential is also unlawful and/or immoral. Formation Directors, Mentors and Learning Cohort Coordinators assume Duty of Care and Disclosure by virtue of their personal work with students. Circumstances in which information supplied by students may be disclosed are outlined below. This list of circumstances is indicative rather than exhaustive.

- A Formation Director must disclose to the Learning Cohort Coordinator at the earliest opportunity, any incident that seriously compromises the integrity of ACOM and/or its training. Any delay in reporting incidents of this kind will be interpreted as failure to disclose.

- If it appears that a crime has been committed, the Formation Director must inform the Student that it is a legal requirement to report such an offence. In the case where court orders are issued for disclosure, all Learning Cohort personnel must abide by such orders.

- If it appears that a child is in danger, the Formation Director must take all reasonable steps (short of direct intervention) to ensure the safety and protection of the child. This includes reporting a matter to the Police or other authority.

- In the case of suspected or actual mental illness, or related behavior, involving a Student or Formation Director, any group member shall consult the Learning Centre Coordinator in order to secure appropriate advice and assistance.

- Disclosure to the Learning Centre Coordinator and any other appropriate authority (including the Police) must occur in cases of:
  - Abuse or harassment (sexual or otherwise) of a group member,
  - Abuse or harassment (sexual or otherwise) of another person by a group member,
  - Non-clinical depression and similarly serious psychological states of a group member,
  - Significant unresolved conflict in the life of a group member likely to lead to harm to the student and/or others.

Formation Directors and students should not seek to provide care of a specific, therapeutic or professional nature to any person for any reason. Referral to appropriate professional caregivers should be made where such care is required, usually through disclosure to the Learning Cohort Coordinator.

Disclosure may be made between the Formation Director, Mentor and Learning Cohort Coordinator for the purposes of coordinating support and care for a student. Where possible and appropriate, the Formation Director, Mentor or Learning Cohort Coordinator will normally seek to inform the Student that disclosure has taken, or is taking place.

AGREEMENT

- I agree to participate fully in a Formation Group by attending all group sessions and abide by all Confidentiality, Privacy, Duty of Care & Disclosure provisions noted above.

The electronic copy of this document is to be agreed to by all Formation Directors and Students and submitted on Moodle.
CHOOSING A MENTOR

At ACOM, we understand mentoring as an intentional, interpersonal relationship in which the mentor encourages whole of life growth in another person, whose needs, activities and ministry are the mentor’s primary concern.

As part of your SF studies, you are required to participate in 10 hours of mentoring.

Here are some questions that can help you think through if the person you identify as a possible mentor is suitable.

- Do you look up to this person?
- What makes you want to be mentored by them?
- Have they ever mentored anyone else?
- What communication skills do they possess?
- Will they hold you accountable?
- Do they have the time, energy and desire to mentor you?

Your mentor should be selected with care and requires consultation with and approval from your Formation Director. Your Formation Director is responsible for ensuring that your mentor selection fits with ACOM’s guidelines.

These include:

- That your mentor is not a relative or close friend. Your mentor should be someone who has a level of relational separation from you, who can ask you hard questions and encourage new areas of growth.
- That you mentor is not someone in authority over you, such as a minister or employer. It is difficult to develop the kind of transparency that aids transformation when you are mentored by someone who, you might feel, needs to see your best self.
- That your mentor is someone with training or competency in mentoring.
- That your mentor is someone whose spiritual walk and character are central to who they are and who you aspire to be.