INSTITUTE FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION

The Institute for Spiritual Formation (https://www.biola.edu/talbot/academics/isf/) (ISF) is an interdisciplinary endeavor emerging from Talbot School of Theology (https://www.biola.edu/talbot/) and Rosemead School of Psychology (https://www.biola.edu/rosemead/) to service various training and mentoring needs in spiritual formation at Biola University and the community beyond through student/faculty training and spiritual direction, the development of academic programs and the development of lay-church training. Its central aim is to integrate an in-depth integrative theology of spiritual formation with an understanding of the human and divine processes and dynamics involved in spiritual growth, soul care and mentoring in the church. Its ministries focus on ways to deepen believers' knowledge and openness to God and His work as well as an understanding of one's self and others in order to grow toward conformity of character and inner life in the image of Christ. Thus, ISF attempts to train a generation of servants who are equipped both to understand and participate in the process of spiritual growth from a theological, integrative and experiential perspective, within the context of a developing mentoring community, with the end that students are better equipped to help others in the church in this process. To accomplish these goals, ISF draws upon the expertise of an integrative faculty from Talbot (where ISF is administratively housed), Rosemead School of Psychology and eventually a host of creation disciplines, schools and departments in the University in creating a variety of related ministries:

Academic Programs

The Institute for Spiritual Formation is fundamentally committed to developing academic programs in spiritual formation and soul care-mentoring across the University in conjunction with Talbot School of Theology.

1. Offering the M.Div. Spiritual Formation concentration, Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation & Soul Care, M.A. Spiritual Formation concentration, and Certificate in Spiritual Formation at Talbot School of Theology (see the Talbot section of the catalog). These are one, two and three-year training programs in spiritual formation and spiritual direction.
2. Teaming together with Talbot's Spiritual Formation Focus Program.
3. Developing a Doctor of Ministry Spiritual Formation component in order to provide personal, professional, and academic growth for pastoral and ministry leaders.
4. Eventually partnering with other creation disciplines at the School of Education, Crowell School of Business, etc. for the sake of further academic programs and courses.

ISF Spiritual Direction

In addition to providing academic degrees, ISF also serves the training and mentoring needs of faculty, ISF graduate students, the Biola student population and the community at large. ISF's spiritual direction practicum is the very heart of its graduate training programs, offering the following ministries:

Ministering to and Training Graduate Students

- As a center for training, mentoring, developing community and research for ISF graduate students.
- As a center for training M.Div. and M.A. students in Spiritual Formation and Soul Care in supervised pre-practicum and practicum experiences in spiritually mentoring students.
- As a center for spiritually mentoring graduate students by ISF graduates, faculty and other outside trained spiritual directors.
- As a center for teaming with Talbot's Spiritual Formation Core.

Ministering to and Training Undergraduate Students

- As a center for spiritual direction and mentoring of undergraduates by ISF students, faculty and other outside trained spiritual directors.
- As a center for providing opportunities for freshmen in the undergraduate "Spiritual Formation and the Bible" course to receive an introduction to spiritual mentoring at a more personal level with ISF M.A. Pre-practicum students.

Faculty and Campus Resource and Community Development

- As a center for faculty community and development in spiritual formation and direction at the personal, curricular, academic and training levels.
- As a center and resource for Biola's dorm resident directors and resident assistants regarding training and referrals in spiritual formation and soul care.

Research Development in Spiritual Formation and Soul Care

- As a center for spiritual formation and soul care research including the creation of The Evangelical Journal of Spirituality and Soul Care.

Church and Beyond: Biola Resource and Community Development

- As a center for resource development to the church and community outside Biola including lay training in spiritual formation and direction-mentoring.