



Graceland
UNIVERSITY | 1895

Community of Christ
SEMINARY

Discernment Facilitator Training Certificate

The Discernment Facilitator Training is aimed at those who are looking to deepen their practice and facilitation of discernment processes in diverse communal contexts. In this training, participants will receive foundational theological, spiritual, and ministerial grounding in several Christian discernment traditions, will receive practical tools, skills, and guidance for the various dynamics of each part of a discernment process, will be equipped to work within the realities and logistics of communities and timelines, and will be trained as effective facilitators of discernment with application to other kinds of professional ministerial facilitation.

Each participant will receive a discernment workbook with turn-key practice handouts for ease of preparation and facilitation and will be invited to create a tool kit of resources throughout the program. In Year 2, participants will have the opportunity to practice discernment facilitation with a community in their context supported by a peer-supervision group and staff support. This training is designed for full-time and bi-vocational ministers and leaders who want to deepen their knowledge and skills within the realities of their schedules and lives.

Year 1: 6 Saturday Zoom Sessions

Each module between Zoom gatherings contains:

Required Readings

1 Reflection Paper (3-5 pages)

Fall A/ Course 1: Discerning Leadership and Facilitation Aug 24 – Oct. 18, 2026

August 29, 2026 12-3 CT

Participants will develop a posture of deep listening in communities and systems as a core gift and skill of discernment facilitation. This session will explore foundations of discernment in the Christian tradition, theological and scriptural grounding in discernment, and will introduce qualities and competencies of discerning leadership.

Fall B/ Course 2: Discernment as Process: Preparing the Community and Entering the Process Oct. 19 – Dec. 13, 2026

October 24, 2026 12-3 CT

This session will cover the initial steps of preparing a community for discernment, introduction of discernment in a community with varying levels of understanding,

setting appropriate expectations and timelines, creating a community covenant, the prayer for spiritual freedom, and articulating an accurate question that represents the heart of the matter for the discerning community.

Spring A/ Course 3: Discernment as Process: Staying with What is Unfolding Jan. 4 – Feb. 28, 2027

January 9, 2027 12-3 CT

Moving deeper into the discernment process, session three will address issues and practices related to the middle sections of journeying with a community in discernment. These include the substantive, holistic invitations of “gathering data” to address the question at hand, listening carefully to movements of consolation and desolation in the group, and staying with what is unfolding when the temptation to rush ahead arises! Because this is often the place where communities feel the most stuck, we will address strategies for working through possible frustration or lack of clarity. Participants will receive a variety of practices and tools including guidance for how to structure sessions to be responsive to what is emerging in the group.

Spring B/ Course 4: Discernment as Process: Identifying and Living the Next Faithful Steps Mar. 1 – Apr. 25, 2027

March 13, 2027 12-3 CT

Session 4 addresses the final movements in the discernment journey including identifying emerging direction, seeking group consensus, praying for confirmation, and taking action. Participants will explore faithful facilitation as possibilities begin to emerge and how to support the group in the movements from process to praxis including invitations for a habit of discernment to guide and inform the community as it moves into the future. Focus will be given to implementation and common questions and issues in bringing a process to closure.

Summer A/ Course 5: Facilitating Communal Discernment: An Adaptive Leadership Practice May 3 – June 27, 2027

May 8, 2027 12-3 CT

Participants will explore the art and skill of spiritual facilitation as it applies to discernment leadership. Discernment leadership requires structure and planning blended with flexibility and adaptability. Session 5 will discuss the prayer of spiritual freedom for discernment facilitators, navigating the various spiritual and communal movements throughout an entire process, and practical tools for organizing and guiding a group in the fluidity of a dynamic process.

Summer B/ Course 6: Practices and Resources for Discernment Facilitators June 28 – Aug. 22, 2027

August 7, 2027 12-3 CT

Experienced discernment facilitators draw from a deep reservoir of practices and tools as preparation for responsive leadership within the movements of the discerning community. This session will orient discernment facilitators to resources, practices, and possibilities for a variety of circumstances that might arise throughout a discernment process.

Year 2 Practicum

Facilitate a discernment process with support from peers and staff every other month for 90 minutes (and as needed, by request). You will work with your supervision group to establish meeting times. Write a final reflection on your experience of facilitating discernment.