



OneSpirit Learning Alliance  
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Dear Potential Distance Learner,

As you consider joining One Spirit as a distance learner, I hope you will read my message endorsing One Spirit's Distance Learning Program. Having been a teacher in settings ranging from Ivy League colleges to correctional institutions, I was a distance learning skeptic of the worst kind. I believed there could be no substitute for the intimacy of a physical classroom, and I believed distance "cheapened" the vocation of teaching. Then I enrolled at One Spirit and changed from hating distance education to celebrating it.

As a distance learner at One Spirit my heart and world opened up in so many ways. I never felt alone. I was always in contact with classmates, both fellow distance learners and classroom learners. My study groups became family in the best sense of the word - we held each other in safety but also challenged each other to do our best, academically and personally. My first and second year deans were always just a phone call away. They were generous with their time in a way that was very unlike the deans I had experienced in a "regular" academic setting. I often discussed with my mentor, who had also been a distance learner, how One Spirit had managed to get so many elements of distance education right.

So much of my education at One Spirit was provided by my classmates. The class website discussions were always active with classmates commenting about assignments, supporting each other, and sharing opportunities for expressing interfaith ministry in the world. My classmates were a strong complement to the "official" teachers.

I invite you to take the journey as a distance learner at the One Spirit Interfaith Seminary. It is a decision you will not regret. You will receive a sturdy academic and developmental foundation from which to go forth and serve the world. You will build spiritual friendships that will last well beyond your official time as a student and that will support you in your life's ministry. If there is anything more that you would like to know about the experience of completing this program "from a distance," please let the Admissions Department know and I will be very happy to "meet" you on the phone or online.

Blessings,  
Rev. Ana Teresa Ortiz class of 2011