

What Is Good To Teach About Teaching?

Guiding Questions:

- Why is this conversation about teaching important to graduate schools, students in the programs, and the institutions that hire their graduates?
- How do graduate programs develop strategies and models that fit into the ethos of their institutional culture and that help prepare graduate students for their first full-time teaching experience?
- What content related to teaching and learning theory, pedagogy, and assessment seems helpful to convey to graduate students in their preparation for teaching?
- What kinds of strategies assist graduate students and their mentors to critically reflect on their experiences as a teacher?
- What resources are available to graduate teaching programs?
- Other questions?

Why is this conversation important to:

- Graduate schools
- Students in their programs
- The future institutions their graduates serve

Strategies and Models:

- Must fit into the current teaching culture of the institution and enhance the overall teaching ethos for all students in the institution
- Full semester (or year-long) formal course on teaching/learning
- Focused workshops on aspects of teaching/learning
- Some programs work at these issues from an intra-disciplinary (in religion) perspective; others are specific to a discipline
- Peer learning and reflection communities while engaged as teachers during their program
- Connecting with offerings through University Teaching and Learning Centers
- Others?

Content and Topics:

- Teaching and learning theory, pedagogical theory
- Development of a philosophy of teaching
- Creating syllabi & meaningful assignments
- Skills for lecture & discussion
- Discipline-specific teaching strategies
- Teaching and learning with diverse students (culture, race, class, sexual orientation and gender identity, learning styles, etc.)
- Evaluation of students
- Assessment of curricula and programs

- Responding to student evaluations; inviting students to offer evaluation or engage in reflecting on what they are learning during a course
- Technology and teaching; online and distance learning
- Crafting the life of a teacher-scholar
- Job searches
- Others?

Developing Teaching Portfolios

Strategies for Inviting Critical Reflection on Teaching (or: how to move from offering “experience for the c.v.” to critical engagement and reflection on teaching and learning):

- Experience as teaching assistants or research assistants
- Co-teaching courses with mentors/faculty members
- Formal & informal mentoring around teaching
- Responsibility as solo teacher for an undergraduate or masters level course
- Others?

Some Resources and Texts:

Brookfield, Stephen. *The Power of Critical Theory: Liberating Adult Learning and Teaching*; San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005.

Brookfield, Stephen. *The Skillful Teacher: On Technique, Trust, and Responsiveness in the Classroom*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990.

Hess, Mary E. & Stephen D. Brookfield, eds. *Teaching Reflectively in Theological Contexts: Promises and Contradictions*. Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company, 2008.

hooks, bell. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge, 1994

Jones, L. Gregory and Stephanie Paulsell, eds. *The Scope of Our Art: The Vocation of the Theological Teacher*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.

Palmer, Parker. *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher’s Life (10th Anniversary Edition)*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007.

The following are 2 additional sources that I use in teaching pastoral theology graduate students:

Ramsay, Nancy. “Navigating Racial Difference as a White Pastoral Theologian,” *Journal of Pastoral Theology*, 2002 (12/2): 11-27.

Reynolds, Sherrie & Toni Craven. *Higher Education Reconceived: A Geography of Change*. Fort Worth: TCU Press, 2009.

The Journal: *Teaching Theology and Religion*

Others?