

**33-506: Theological Education in the Parish
Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary**

June 30 – July 11, 2014

M-F 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and W 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Instructor: Tamar Wasoian

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This class focuses on the dynamics of Christian education as a vital component of the ministry of the church. It combines insights from the field of education with the call of the church to teach and educate. Students who complete this class will be able to plan, teach and evaluate various teaching methods implemented by the churches in their educational practices.

CLASS GOALS: (This class addresses the following goals determined by the CE faculty)

Knowing: To know practices and disciplines of Christian education and formation and to understand how these are affected by differing cultural contexts. (This also includes becoming acquainted with the educational practices of another major religious community.)

Doing: To examine, assess, and lead a variety of approaches to teaching and learning appropriate to a particular faith community. This goal includes experience or practice in the following:

- To be able to read, evaluate and engage the culture of a congregation and its community with particular sensitivity to culture, race, class and gender.
- To teach Christian practices and faith in intentional ways to address the developmental and faith issues of people in congregations.
- To integrate practices of theological study into teaching and learning leadership in a congregation.

Being: To be a theological educator who seeks to liberate and empower persons to be co-creators of the reign of God in our multi-cultural and multi-faith environment. This goal includes the following:

- To be a reflective teacher and leader who can empower others in the congregation to be reflective and open to transformation.
- To be a Christian disciple who continues to engage in the practices that develop and deepen faith.
- To understand oneself as a critical and open participant in an ongoing theological tradition.

READING:

- Jack Seymour. TEACHING THE WAY OF JESUS: EDUCATION CHRISTIANS FOR FAITHFUL LIVING. Abingdon Press, 2014. ISBN: 978-1-4267-6505-6. \$22.00
- Dori Grinenko Baker. THE BAREFOOT WAY: A FAITH GUIDE FOR YOUTH, YOUNG ADULTS, AND PEOPLE WHO WALK WITH THEM. Presbyterian Publishing, 2012. ISBN: 978-0-6642-3802-5. \$11.00
- Anne E. Streaty Wimberly. SOUL STORIES: AFRICAN AMERICAN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. Abingdon Press, revised, 2005. ISBN: 978-0-6874-9432-3. \$20.00
- Michael Novelli. SHAPED BY THE STORY: HELPING STUDENTS ENCOUNTER GOD IN A NEW WAY. Zondervan, 2008. ISBN: 978-0-3102-7366-0. About \$10.00
- Chose one of the following books for teaching session:
 - Irwin Kula. YEARNINGS: EMBRACING THE SACRED MESSINESS OF LIFE. Hyperion, rev., 2007. ISBN: 978-1-4013-0913-8. \$12.00
 - Eboo Patel. ACTS OF FAITH: THE STORY OF AN AMERICAN MUSLIM IN STRUGGLE FOR THE SOUL OF A GENERATION. Beacon, 2010, ISBN: 978-0-6870-7116-6. \$12.00

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Students are expected to attend and actively participate in all the classes as scheduled. Readings and assignments are expected to be turned in timely manners to retain the easy flow of the learning/teaching experience.

FACILITATION

Students are expected to lead one teaching and learning session of their own design. Group presentation could be considered depending on size of the class.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

- Timely fulfillment of assignments.
- Active and thoughtful participation in class discussions.
- Critical thinking, clarity, and respect in expressing opinions.
- Openness in learning and a nurturing attitude towards fellow classmates.

RESPONSIVE ASSIGNMENTS

- 1- All students should read all of the required readings to actively participate in class discussions and activities.
- 2- Read Seymour's book and write a two to three pages summary of the main points. **Due first day of classes.**
- 3- TEACHING ASSIGNMENT

Design ONE learning session. (*Individually or with another class colleague considering the class size.*)

Develop a detailed lesson plan for the ONE lesson that you intend to present to the class. Lesson plans must be submitted a DAY (24 hours!) before the scheduled teaching session. Make sure to define the setting of the learning environment, the age and the social-economical background of the learners. Define in general terms the teaching strategy and the expected learning outcomes.

A written pedagogical evaluation of the session (3-5 pages). **Due on July 18.**

In writing this paper consider the following:

- If the teaching is in group, your evaluation of the group process.
- Evaluation of the actual teaching lesson: timing, content, process, leadership style, and group engagement.
- Assessment of the lesson plan. What was the strength of the lesson plan? What would you change or keep?
- Teaching approach. Why did you choose this approach? How would change or modify it?

4- FINAL ASSIGNMENT

Choose one of the options for your final project.

- a- Explore your understanding of the educational ministry of the church (5-7 pages). How do you see your role and contribution to it? Make sure to include pedagogical and theological insights from the class readings and discussions. Finally, present your vision of your role as an educator in the ministry of your church.
- b- Plan an age-specific ministry, OR design a retreat for specific age group, OR mission trip for your church.
 - Consider the cultural background of your congregation.
 - Choose the age group, learning outcomes and teaching-learning methodology.
 - Plan for training the volunteers and integrating the parents if applicable.
- c- Evaluate curriculums or resources (at least THREE) that would be helpful in your ministry and present how are you planning on using them in your ministry.
- d- Creative suggestions are welcomed.

Make sure to discuss your choice with the instructor before the classes are over.

This final assignment is **due on August 1.**

EVALUATION AND GRADING

- 15% Participation
- 15% Religious Education autobiography
- 30% Teaching assignment and evaluation
- 40% Final paper

CLASS SCHEDULE

June 31: Why do we teach?

Reading: *Teaching the Way of Jesus* (Chapters 1-3)

July 1: How do we teach?

Reading: *Teaching the Way of Jesus* (Chapter 5)

July 2: Why teaching matters?

Reading: *Soul Stories*

Afternoon: Lesson plans made easy. Work on outlining lesson plans.

July 3: Storied learning.

Reading: *Shaped by the Story* (Chapters 1-4, 6, 8)

July 4: No class

July 7: How do we learn? Learning patterns and teaching methods.

Reading: *Shaped by the Story* (Chapter 8-9)
The Barefoot Way

July 8: Putting it together: Developing your teaching method.

Reading: *Teaching the Way of Jesus* (Chapter 7)

July 9: Group work- Presenting lesson plans and evaluation.

Afternoon: Review of curriculums and teaching resources.
Assignment: Share an 'A HA!' moment you had while teaching.

July 10: Group work – presenting lesson plans and evaluation.

July 11: Why are we called to teach? Evaluation and implications for teaching ministry in the church.

Reading: *Teaching the Way of Jesus* (Chapter 8)