

1-1-2005

CD 651 Professional Foundations of Christian Education

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Beverly C. Johnson-Miller, Ph.D.
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Asbury Theological Seminary – Wilmore, KY 40390
Course Syllabus, Fall 2005
1:00-3:45 p.m., T, MC204

CD651 PROFESSIONAL FOUNDATIONS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

***This syllabus is subject to change prior to the first day of class. The textbooks listed will remain the same.

CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION

An examination of the key ideas set forth in the writings of 30 significant contributors to the development of Christian education, as a field of study and as an arena for the practice of Christian ministry.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this course are that the participants will:

1. become well-acquainted with the major movements and figures in the history of Christian education
2. envision ways in which historical studies may inform contemporary Christian education practice
3. develop lenses and skills for critical response and analysis of Christian education theories
4. come to understand the historical, theological, and philosophical bases for professional understanding of Christian education

REQUIRED TEXTS

A History of Christian Education by Reed and Prevost

The Big Little School by Robert Lynn

Augustine and the Catechumenate by William Harmless

SOURCEBOOK of the Christian Faith by Robert Lay

RECOMMENDED TEXT

Models of Religious Education: Theory and Practice in Historical and Contemporary Perspective by Harold Burgess

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

In order for something to be called education, it must be truly educative. Transmitting bodies of information and rules or values collected in the past does not equal education. Education involves movement beyond limitations, and frees people to live life more fully as God intended. Education involves people in co-explorer relationships, problem solving, and personal ownership in the learning experience.

The learning experience in this class will be based on this philosophy of education that calls for participatory, interactive, reflective, bilateral, and dialogical learning activities. For example, you will be asked to reflect on, and openly discuss, your personal experiences and understandings related to various topics. You may also be required to participate in reflective learning games or simulation projects in order to promote co-explorer relationships, problem solving, and personal ownership. Your presence and enthusiastic participation in all class activities will determine the value of your learning experience.

REQUIREMENTS

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Active participation in the class (10%):**

Faithful attendance – your presence in every class is expected and required

Reflecting on assigned texts – you must demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the assigned readings in preparation for class discussions

Contributing to class – your willingness to actively participate in class discussions and activities is a crucial part of the course learning experience

Completing special assignments – at times you will be asked to reflect on specific questions or briefly interview others in preparation for the next class session. These mini assignments are a required aspect of class participation.

2. **Reading Reflection Papers (Total 25%)**

Reading reflection papers will be assigned for each of the required texts. The reading reflection will include several specific questions provided by the professor. See class schedule for specific due-dates.

3. One Short Research Paper (Total 15%)

Due: September 27

The Ancient Catechumenate and the Postmodern Church

In this paper (5-8 pages) you will discuss the relationship between the ancient catechumenate and the educational practices in a specific congregation today. It is expected that you will include ideas and insights from the required readings and class discussions. There will be three parts to this five page paper: 1) a description of the educational practices in a congregation of your choice (you may find it convenient and beneficial to focus on the congregation you are currently attending); 2) a description of the catechumenate in the early church; and 3) a critical comparative analysis with suggestions on how/what the church of today can learn from the ancient educational/formational church practices.

4. In-class Debate. Scheduled: October 25

Everybody Ought to Go to Sunday School?

In this debate you will, along with your classmates, argue for why the Sunday School is or is not needed today. Your argument will be based on ideas and insights gleaned from the history of the Sunday School movement (18th century through early 20th century). You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss some of the formational dynamics of the Sunday School and explain the significance of these dynamics for the church today.

5. One Major Seminar-Type Research Report

First Draft (Outline & Bibliography) Due: November 15 (10%)

Final Draft Due: December 6 (40%)

This research paper will focus on a major figure or movement in the history of Christian religious education. The report must include significant biographical information and a thoughtful discussion of the figure's beliefs and practices regarding Christian education as well as the relationship between the biography and their theory and practice of Christian education. In other words, it would be beneficial to identify the ways in which people, events, historical context, and other gave shape to their expression of Christian education. The reports must also demonstrate the historical impact of these major figures including the significance of their life and work in contemporary practice of Christian education. Include in your paper a description of the person/movement, the impact of the vision, and practices/discipline/activities/strategy/passion that enabled the birth/realization of the vision. The written report should be twelve to fifteen pages and must include a minimum of **eight** scholarly sources other than (or in addition to) the required texts.

Each participant is asked to take an intensified research and teaching role for one of the seminar topics. The participant will take responsibility for teaching that topic on the assigned day. The teaching should include biographical exploration and discussion of the related historical context, significant contributions and developments, and supplementary bibliography. Various methods/tools (such as dramatic speech, role play,

power point, or other) may be employed, and the teaching must include a four to five page report to be copied for all class participants. The report and teaching must demonstrate the historical impact of the major figure/movement, particularly for contemporary practice of Christian education. It is important that you identify the ways in which your study challenges your current/future theory and practice of Christian education. Time will be allotted for presentations according to the number of participants enrolled in the class.

The purpose of these seminar reports is for you to become well acquainted with the major movements and figures in history of Christian education. These learning activities enable awareness of the possible ways in which historical studies may inform contemporary Christian education practice. The reports also aid in the development of skills for critical analysis of Christian education theories including understanding of the historical, theological, and philosophical bases

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Libraries: ATS; Asbury College; Lexington Theological Seminary; and University of Kentucky.

Interlibrary loan services are also available and they may require two to four weeks to acquire the books and articles requested. I recommend that you gather all your research materials early in the semester. Appropriate resources will enable quality research projects.

On-Line Databases such as Religious & Theological Abstracts: On-line data bases are relatively easy ways to access the available literature about your research topic.

Personal Contacts: There are ways to contact the contemporary writers through your professor and other faculty at ATS. You may also consider locating close friends, relatives, or former students of the contemporary writers. **Planning ahead and asking for assistance will be essential to your success with personal interviews.**

GRADING POLICY

Papers

All papers must be typed, double-spaced, 1" margin all around, using a 12-point font, such as Times New Roman. Papers must adhere to MLS format according to Slade [available in the ATS bookstore and in the library].

Papers will be returned within one week of submission. Substantial feedback will be provided on all papers **except** reading reflections and mini assignments. Papers are expected to be submitted on their due date. **Late papers** must be approved by the instructor and may **not** be returned within one week and/or may **not** include feedback from the instructor. Late paper grade deductions will be made at the professor's discretion. If you need to negotiate an alternate due date, please see your professor **BEFORE** the assignment is due.

Incomplete Policy

A grade of “I” denotes course work has not been completed due to an **unavoidable** emergency, which does not include failure to turn in course work or attending to church work or other employment. See the Asbury Seminary Catalog for further clarification.

GRADING CRITERIA

Professor’s Assessment of Your Attendance & Participation 10%

One Short Paper 15%

Through these papers you will demonstrate meaningful and visionary reflections on significant aspects of the history of Christian education.

Reading Reflection Papers 25 %

Reflection papers will demonstrate comprehension and engagement of texts and research data.

Major Seminar-Type Research Paper 50 % total

Your grade will be determined according to the following criteria: organization, including appropriate form and style; thorough and insightful description/reflections of the biography, historical context, significant contributions, bibliography, demonstration of historical impact on contemporary practice, and engaging teaching presentation.

Through these reports, you will demonstrate your understanding of a major figure/movement in the history of Christian education as well as the significance of this figure/movement in contemporary practice. These reports will aid in the development of critical analysis skills and provide insights on the historical, theological, and philosophical bases for a professional understanding of Christian education.

GRADING PROCEDURES

The grade descriptions written in italics have been determined by the faculty at Asbury Theological Seminary and provide the guidelines for grading. The explanations that follow clarify the meaning of each grade designation.

A (5) = Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives

Exceptional work is constituted by such things as: substantive reflection that reveals engagement of the “big ideas” of Scripture/theology or the “big ideas” represented in the existing body of knowledge from the social sciences in a particular area of study and represented via assigned texts and presentations; thorough and penetrating personal insight gained from consideration of one’s experience through the lifespan thus far; creativity in translating assignments into useful pedagogical presentations; and excellence in grammatical, stylistic, and communicative aspects of writing.

B (4) = Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives

Good work is constituted by: solid reflection on the assigned readings and presentations in response to the given guidelines for a particular assignment; the capacity to utilize classroom discussions and readings to understand and critically engage one’s own story; accurate ability to name specific ministry implications from one’s processing of information; and carefulness in grammatical, stylistic, and communicative aspects of writing.

C (3) = Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives

Acceptable work is constituted by: obvious acquaintance with the assigned readings and classroom discussions at a level that allows for theological and pedagogical thought in response to the guidelines for a particular assignment; references to one’s own story at a level that makes application of truth and would interest a congregational member in the insights being expounded; capacity to communicate grammatically and stylistically without detracting from the presentation.

D (2) = Marginal work: minimal or inadequate achievement of course objectives

Cursory reading of the texts that fail to represent the author’s intent; a flat restatement of the author’s work void of any personal appropriation of the material; grammatical or stylistic errors that frustrate the reader and detract from the thought of the paper; or other failures to fulfill reasonable expectations flowing from a seminary course of this nature.

F (1) = Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives

Unacceptable work is usually willful, unexplained, or inexcusable lack of fulfillment of class assignments.

CALENDAR

A calendar for the teaching roles and project presentations will be determined in class on September 6 & 13. The list of suggested figures and movements are as follows. Although I do not expect all of them to be selected, they need to be presented in class in the order listed.

1. Jesus _____
2. The Desert Fathers/Mothers _____
3. Monastic Education _____
4. Martin Luther _____
5. John Calvin _____
6. Radical Reformers/Anabaptists _____
7. Ignatius of Loyola _____
8. The Impact of the Enlightenment on C.E. _____
9. John Wesley's Legacy in C.E. _____
10. Robert Raikes S.S. Movement _____
11. Stephen Paxson (American S.S. Pioneer) _____
12. The Illinois Band (S.S. Movement) _____
13. Influence of Women Prior to 20th Century _____
14. Horace Bushnell _____
15. George AlbertCoe _____
16. Sophia Fahs _____
17. Hulda Neibhur _____
18. Randolph Crump Miller _____
19. Iris Cully (or Sara Little) _____
20. Lois/Mary LeBar _____
21. Henrietta Mears _____
22. Larry Richards _____
23. John Westerhoff _____
24. Thomas Groome _____
25. Mary Elizabeth Moore _____
26. Robert Pazmino _____
26. African American Sunday School _____
*See Note Below
27. Other (W/Prof Approval) _____

*Note: I am currently working on an article related to the History of the African American Sunday School. If you are interested in this topic and would like to assist me in my research, please let me know. Only one student can sign up for each topic.

CALENDAR

September 6

Course introduction

Everybody Ought to go to Sunday School?

Begin Reading: Augustine and the Catechumenate

Begin Reading: A History of Christian Education - Read this book at your own pace throughout the semester. It is recommended that you read the chapters as they correspond with the focus of each week. Reading Reflection paper #8 for this book is due: November 29.

September 13

Space for Fresh Vision: issues, trends, and challenges in the history of Christian education

Due: Reading Reflection #1 - *Didache (Teaching) of the Twelve Apostles*, Sourcebook, pp. 11-14.

September 20

*The Catechumenate and Catechetical Schools
Cyril of Jerusalem and Early Church Education*

Due: Reading Reflection #2 – *On the Instruction of Beginners*, Sourcebook, p. 61-76. *On Christian Teaching*, Sourcebook, p. 77-125.

September 27 *Augustine's Contributions to Education*

Due: Reading Reflection #3 – Augustine and the Catechumenate

Due: Short Report – *The Ancient Catechumenate and the Postmodern Church*

October 4 – Student Teaching Begins

1. Jesus

2. The Desert Fathers/Mothers

3. Monastic Education

Due: Reading Reflection #4 – “The Rule of Benedict”, Select Chapters, Source Book, pp. 139-143 and Bernard of Clairvaux: “Lily of the Valley” sermon, pp. 154-156.

October 11

4. Martin Luther

5. Radical Reformers/ Anabaptists

6. John Calvin

7. Ignatius of Loyola _____

Due: Reading Reflection #5 - "Introduction to the Shorter Catechism," Source Book, pp. 173-178.

October 18

The Turn of the Century S.S.

The Rise of Progressive Evangelicals?: the unsolved challenges of 20th century Christian education

8. The Impact of the Enlightenment on C.E. _____

9. John Wesley's Legacy in C.E. _____

10. Robert Raikes S.S. Movement _____

Due: Reading Reflection #6 – The Big Little School

October 25

In-Class Sunday School Debate

11. Stephen Paxson _____

12. Illinois Band (SS Movement) _____

13. Influence of Women Prior to 20th Century _____

14. African American Sunday School _____

15. Horace Bushnell _____

November 1

The Influence of Liberal Theology

16. George Albert Coe _____

17. Hulda Neibhur _____

Due: Reading Reflection # 7 "Christian Nurture" (Excerpt), Source Book, PP. 285-298.

November 8

- 18. Randolph Crump Miller _____
- 19. Iris Cully or Sara Little _____
- 20. Lois/Mary LeBar _____

November 15

- 21. Henrietta Mears _____
- 22. Larry Richards _____

Due: First Draft of Major Paper

November 22 **Reading Week, No Class**

November 29

- 23. John Westerhoff _____
- 24. Thomas Groome _____

Due: Reading Reflection #8 - A History of Christian Education

December 6

Where Do We Go From Here?: your vision and the future of Christian education

- 25. Mary Elizabeth Moore _____
- 26. Mary Boys _____
- 27. Other _____

Final Draft of Major Paper Due: Tuesday, December 6th

CD651 Professional Foundations of Christian Education
COURSE GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS

Name:

ATS mail box #:

E-mail address:

1. What is your previous ministry experience?
2. What do you think this course is about?
3. Why are you at ATS?
4. What would you like to learn from this course?
5. What kinds of strengths or abilities do you bring to this course?
6. How do you think you learn best?
7. What do you hope doesn't happen in this course?
8. Please write any additional comments which would help the instructor make the course most meaningful to you.

Asbury Theological Seminary

Student Questions about the Nature of the Church

DEFINITIONAL QUESTIONS

1. What are the needs that a church should address?
2. Are traditional Sunday School Structures valid?
3. How are our church structures reflections of our ecclesiology and view of persons?
4. How important is the local church?
5. Are clergy biblical?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. How does church structure affect the method of education used?
2. What should be church involvement with secular social groups?
3. How effective is the church in fulfilling its purpose?

TECHNICAL/PRACTICAL QUESTIONS

1. How does a church evaluate the needs of the community?
2. Can we truly change the traditional church?
3. How do you encourage church renewal in a traditional church?
4. When should you start your own church?
5. How important are denominational ties?

