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CD 511 The Pastor and Christian Discipleship

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Course Syllabus, Fall 2007
Thursday, 1:00 – 3:45 p.m.

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***** This syllabus is subject to change prior to the first day of class.
Text book list will not change.**

**CD511
THE PASTOR AND CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP**

CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION

Explores roles and responsibilities of the “pastor as teacher,” including foundational studies in teaching, program planning, and teacher development, with special focus on nurturing, facilitating, administering, and coordinating the church’s educational ministries. (A new definition will be out in the Fall. I will explain in the classroom. You will get the better picture of my class from the course goals and objectives. I very much enjoy teaching this class! I believe it has the potential to enrich and expand your vision and skills for the educational discipleship ministry in the church.)

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Teaching Goals

1. To explore and evaluate the dynamics of Christian discipleship through the disciplines of Scripture/theology, history, philosophy, education, developmental psychology, and Christian spirituality.
2. To expand understanding of the dynamics of Christian discipleship in relationship to: one’s personal/individual Christian journey; the Christian community context; and the larger social context. (The nature and dynamics of Christian formation and transformation will be explored.)
3. To define Christian discipleship, and identify the relationship between one’s definition of Christian discipleship, and the various approaches used in the educational ministry of the church.

4. To propose, explore, and deepen visions for Christian discipleship within the congregation, with special attention to discipleship from a Wesleyan perspective.
5. To reflect on the relationship between evangelism and educational ministry.
6. To enable articulation of a personal philosophy of pastoral discipleship leadership appropriate to the milieu in which the student plans to serve.

Student Outcomes

When you have completed this course, you should be able to:

1. Understand the historical, philosophical, educational, psychological, and spiritual issues that shape your understanding of Christian discipleship.
2. Identify the dynamics of Christian discipleship in your personal Christian journey, the Christian community context, and the larger social context.
3. Define Christian discipleship and name the approach/(es) used in the educational ministry of the church that correspond to your definition.
4. Articulate a vision and strategy for Christian discipleship in relationship to a specific church ministry context, including a personal philosophy of pastoral leadership, and integration of the course concepts, theories, and issues presented.

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 a 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, openness to growth, and enthusiastic participation in all class activities will determine the value of your learning experience.

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. **Personal Faith Journey Reflection** (10%)
Three (five maximum) page paper. **DUE September 14.**
Write a description of your own spiritual-educational discipleship experience, including an overview, and a few specific incidents, to provide a clear picture. This paper must include an identification and analysis of the views of discipleship (Christian education or spiritual growth) and factors (events, places, people) that shaped your experience.

Identification = “*What* influenced my Christian faith journey”?

(Discipleship/educational methods or practices, events, people, books etc.)

Analysis = “*How* and *why* were these methods and factors (people, events, books etc.) influential in my Christian faith journey”?

The purpose of this assignment is to help you become more consciously aware of the dynamics involved in the discipleship process. As you identify and name these dynamics in relationship to your own personal journey it is intended that you will develop a deeper understanding as

well as the ability to wisely and constructively evaluate these dynamics. It is also intended that your new insights and abilities will contribute toward the enrichment and facilitation of your vision for discipleship ministry.

3. **Church Observation and Reflection** (20 %)

Six to eight-page paper. **DUE: October 5.** Describe the spiritual-educational discipleship experience of a church community. This may be your present religious community or another congregation you would like to study. Choose a community which will offer the most to your learning, e.g., one in which you now minister, one that you especially value, one that disturbs you, or one that you have some other reason to study. It is important that you choose a congregation where you can attend or participate in the services and educational programs. It is also necessary that you are able to maintain some meaningful connection with the congregation you choose throughout the semester.

In this paper you will answer the following questions:

- a. What actions and interactions (vision, services, programs, events, relationships etc.) within this congregation are contributing to faith formation and transformation of individuals and the congregation as a whole?
- b. What actions or interactions between the congregation and the larger social context are contributing to the formation and transformation of Christian faith?
- c. What specific needs are being addressed via the educational programs such as Sunday School, small groups, confirmation classes, covenant groups, membership classes, and evangelism/mission groups?
- d. Select one or two programs of interest such as the Sunday School or small groups. Describe how (specifics are essential) the educational ministry practices in the program, are contributing to the formation and transformation of faith within the congregation. What are the strengths and limitations of the specific educational practices you observe?

Teamwork is strongly recommended but it is not required. A team would consist of two to three students who choose the same congregation to study. Each participant of the team will contribute a section to this paper as well as the

final project. Team papers should demonstrate team effort such as breadth and depth of observations, insights, and analysis.

The purpose of this assignment is to develop your ability to identify, describe, and constructively analyze the faith forming and transforming educational practices in a congregation. This assignment will also provide a concrete realistic example for class reflections and dialogue. You will be given opportunities in class to discuss the relationship between the material presented and the congregations you study. This paper will provide the foundation for your final paper.

4. **Reading & Research Reflection Papers (20%)**

Reading reflection papers will be assigned for each of the required texts. The reading reflection will include several specific questions provided by the professor. You will also be required to acquire and analyze (in class) a formal discipleship method/strategy. Specific questions for the analysis will be provided by the professor, and will involve some in-class group discussion and comparison. See class schedule for specific due-dates.

4. **A Vision for Discipleship**

Fifteen to twenty page paper. **First Draft (Outline and List of Resources) Due: Nov. 2 (15%). Final Paper Due: Dec 8 (25%)** In this paper you will put forth a vision of discipleship in relationship to the educational ministry of the congregation you chose to study for your **Church Observation and Reflection** paper. The vision for discipleship may apply to the entire congregation/Christian community, or to a particular program within the larger church community context. The vision must include a description of the context, a clearly articulated philosophy of discipleship, strategy, goals, methods, and specific activities. The relationship between the philosophy of discipleship and all other aspects of the vision **must** be demonstrated in this major paper. Also, the vision **must reflect significant integration of course concepts from class discussions and required readings.** It is recommended that you take notes in class and reflect on the relationship between the class material and discussions and the congregation you study. This paper must also demonstrate significant integration of research sources (at least five) other

than the required texts. The first draft of this paper is **DUE: Nov 2** (15%). Final paper **DUE: December 7** (25%).

Your teamwork will continue with the final project if you choose to work as a team.

This assignment will demonstrate your ability to develop and clearly articulate a vision for Christian discipleship in relationship to a specific church ministry context. This assignment should also demonstrate evidence of a thoughtful, integrated, and congruent philosophy and strategy for discipleship.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Basics of Christian Education by Karen B. Tye

The Younger Evangelicals by Robert Webber

John Wesley's Class Meeting: A model for making disciples by Michael Henderson

Making All Things New: An Invitation to the Spiritual Life by Henri Nouwen

The Big Little School: Two Hundred Years of The Sunday School by Robert W. Lynn and Elliott Wright

Growing in the Life of Faith: Education and Christian Practices by Craig Dykstra

Management Essentials for Christian Ministries by Michael J. Anthony and James Estep, Jr. (editors)_Specific chapters will be assigned to each student for in-class project.

*On Reserve - Leading the Congregation: Caring for Yourself While Serving the People by Norman Shawchuck and Roger Heuser

Christian Religious Education: Sharing Our Story and Vision by Thomas Groome

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 alternative 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%

Personal Faith Journey Reflection (10%)

Through the description and analysis in this paper, you will demonstrate understanding of the dynamics of Christian discipleship in relationship to your personal Christian journey.

Church Observation and Reflection (20%)

Through this paper you will demonstrate conscientious and comprehensive observation and insightful reflection on current church educational practices.

Reading and Research Reflection Papers (20 %)

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

Major Paper 40 % total

Your grade will be determined according to the following criteria: organization, including appropriate form and style; thorough and insightful description of the specific ministry context; clear articulation of vision (strategy, goals, philosophy, methods, and specific activities); and **integration of course concepts, ideas, issues, and theories.**

Through this major paper, you will demonstrate your ability to identify the philosophical, psychological, educational, theological, and spiritual principles that shape your views of discipleship. Through this paper you will also demonstrate your ability to define discipleship and articulate a vision for discipleship in relationship to a particular church ministry context.

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 assignments; 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.

KEY QUESTIONS

Throughout the course schedule you will find several "Key Questions". These questions are for your personal reflection in preparation for in-class discussions and activities. These questions are intended to enrich and focus the in-class learning experience.

CLASS SCHEDULE

- Sept. 6 *Introduction*
Creating a Learning Conversation
Questions to Begin Our Conversation:
Will Our Children Have Faith?
How Do You Spell Discipleship?
What Makes Education Christian?
Why Do We Educate in the Church?
- Sept. 13 *The Dynamics of Christian Formation: understanding your personal faith journey*
DUE: Personal Faith Journey Reflection Paper
DUE: Reading Reflection #1- Growing in the Life of Faith
- Sept. 20 *Discipleship Strategy and Foundational Issues: Basic World View, View of Scripture, Theology, and Truth, View of Church and Education*

Discipleship Strategy and Foundational Questions: integrating theory with practice

DUE: Reading Reflection #2 - The Younger Evangelicals, Part 1, Pages 13-106.*Bring book to class.**

DUE: Bring example of a formal (in print) discipleship method to class.

Sept. 27

History – Formative Leaders: Augustine to Wesley

DUE: Reading Reflection #3– John Wesley’s Class Meeting

History – Movements: Everybody ought to go to Sunday School?

Key Question: Are traditional Sunday School structures valid? Be prepared to debate this question in class.

DUE: Reading Reflection #4– The Big Little School

Oct. 4

The Dynamics of Christian Community and Culture

DUE: Reading Reflection #5 - The Younger Evangelicals

,
Part 2, Pages 107-243.

DUE: Church Observation & Reflection Paper

Oct. 11

Developmental Theory and Discipleship: life cycle development

Key Question: What is the relationship between growth in faith and our emotional, cognitive, and moral development?

Developmental Theory and Discipleship: Structural development – Cognitive & Moral

DUE: Reading Reflection #6 – Basics of Christian Education

Oct. 18

Developmental Theory and Discipleship: Structural development - Faith

Developmental Theory and Discipleship: Relationship between developmental theory and Christian formation

Oct. 25

Developmental Theory and Discipleship: Dialectical process and the transformation of faith

Key Question: What are the pros and cons of modeling as a method of Christian discipleship?

- Nov. 1 *Teaching for Transformation: the five components of shared praxis*
 Read Chapters 9 & 10 of Christian Religious Education by Thomas Groome This will be on reserve in the library.
Teaching for Transformation: the five movements of shared praxis
DUE: Major Paper, First Draft (Outline & List of Resources)
- Nov. 8 *Learning Styles and Discipleship Practices*
- Nov. 15 *Discipleship and the Spiritual Life: creating space for God*
 Key Question: What external and internal dynamics enable or encourage spiritual growth?
DUE: Reading Reflection #7 – Making All Things New
Discipleship and the Spiritual Life: ancient practices vs. contemporary disciplines
 Key Question: Are early church practices appropriate for spiritual growth today? What disciplines enrich your life of faith?
- Nov. 22 **Reading Week - No Class**
- Nov. 29 *Evangelism and the Educational Ministry of the Congregation*
 Key Question: What is the purpose of church education, evangelism or nurture?
**** Bring text to class: *Management Essentials for Christian Ministries***
Building Visions and Implementing Change
 Key Question: What are the steps for making visions reality?
Required Reading:
 On Reserve in Library – Leading the Congregation: Caring for Yourself While Serving the People by Norman Shawchuck and Roger Heuser, Chapters 5, 10, & 12.
- Dec. 6 *Building Visions and Implementing Change Continued*
A Vision to Envision

Due: Major Paper, Final Draft

Dec. 10-14 Final Exam Week, No Class

