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CE 642 Curriculum Theory, Development, and Selection

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CE 642 CURRICULUM THEORY, DEVELOPMENT, AND SELECTION

Explores the process of curriculum development and design, and principles for selecting curriculum to meet the needs of learners and of the church. Includes systematic evaluation of available curricula and development of criteria for curriculum selection for a comprehensive ministry in the local church.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students who complete the course with basic competency will:
1. Examine the role of the faith community as curriculum for faith development.
2. Understand the elements important in curriculum design.
3. Continue to formulate and refine their philosophy of education and understanding of human learning and formation. These perspectives will be reflected in curriculum they develop.
4. Clearly articulate educational objectives for curriculum. Use the Bloom/Krathwohl taxonomies of educational objectives for both the cognitive and the affective domains to understand the learning tasks involved in Christian education and to identify the priority, high level objectives which must permeate the life of the church if they are to be accomplished.
5. Design and write curriculum materials which:
   a) Are appropriate for a particular age-group of learners -- their needs, interests, and developmental capabilities;
   b) Reflect the valuing of affective learning and awareness that life in the community of faith is the context of learning.
   c) Make possible the accomplishing of specified cognitive, affective, and behavioral objectives;
   d) Implement an instructional model that enhances the learning of persons with varied learning style preferences.
6. Evaluate Christian education curriculum critiquing the educational philosophy encouraged by the materials, their learner appropriateness, teacher usability, and doctrinal soundness.
7. Develop skills for helping lay volunteers to select and effectively use curriculum.
8. Be aware of vocational and avocational opportunities in the field of curriculum development.

ASSIGNMENTS

Reading

Complete reading assignments prior to the class session listed with each assignment. Bring to class texts and notes on the reflection questions and be prepared to discuss the material.

*Fashion Me a People: Curriculum in the Church* by Maria Harris. (Read by January 6.)
**Reflection Questions:** What do you see as the most significant insights from Harris?
- How does Harris define education?
- How would you explain her concepts to your lay volunteer teachers?
- How does Harris define curriculum?
- What challenges will we face in our effort to shape the whole life of the church as the curriculum?
- What will we gain if we succeed?

**Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Handbook II: Affective Domain** by David R. Krathwohl et al, pages 24-91. (Read by **January 11**.)

**Goal Analysis** by Robert Mager. (Read by **January 11**.)

- **Processing:** Using Mager's instructions, prepare and bring to class objectives for a sample session.
  - Using insights from Krathwohl, include affective objectives as well as cognitive.

**The 4 MAT System** by Bernice McCarthy. (Read by **January 13**.)

- If you have already read McCarthy, read Learning Styles by Marlene D. LeFever.

**Reflection Questions:** What kind of learner are you?
- Which learning styles are served best by the kind of teaching usually experienced by the learners for whom you are designing your curriculum materials?

Invest four hours in reading and research that expands your knowledge of teaching methodologies. (Read by **January 12**.)

**On the due dates, submit a card indicating that you have completed the required reading.**

**Field Trip**

- The class will travel to Nashville TN to meet with curriculum designers and editors at the United Methodist Publishing House. The date will be announced later.

**Teaching Demonstration**

- Design the first session of your curriculum unit to incorporate the principles of the course.
  - From your reading on teaching methods, select creative teaching methods appropriate for the age group for whom you are preparing your curriculum resources. Try to include a method with which other class members might not be familiar. You will have 30 minutes to teach your session to the class on **January 18**.

**Grading Criteria**

- Creativity and effectiveness of teaching methods
- Adequacy of scope and sequence
- Effectiveness of student involvement
- Age-level appropriateness

**Design of Curriculum Unit**

- Design a four-session unit of curriculum materials for the age-level of your choice which accomplishes course objectives four and five. The curriculum should include all the elements one
would want to see in published materials designed for the intended audience, to accomplish the designated objectives.

Prepare a statement of rationale for your curriculum unit. The rationale should identify the understandings and commitments that have guided the curricular decisions.

**Grading Criteria**

1. Age level appropriateness of subject matter.
2. Clarity and significance of objectives.
3. Adequacy of session plans for accomplishing the objectives.
4. Appropriateness of scope and sequence in the unit.
5. Effectiveness of learning model used.
7. Adequacy and clarity of teacher guidance.
8. Significance and workability of suggestions for facilitating affective and relational aspects of the learning experiences.

**Due Dates**
Throughout the course students will be asked to begin initial work on their curriculum project.
The assignments will relate to implementing concepts discussed in class. Initial work is to be brought to class in shareable form. Class members will review and offer feedback.

- First draft of objectives – **January 11**.
- First draft of rationale, session 1, and outlines of sessions 2-4 – **January 17**.
- Completed curriculum unit – **January 27**.

**Curriculum Evaluation A**
Evaluate two sets of Christian education instructional materials for one age-level. Select materials from your denominational source (if your denomination has curriculum materials) and comparable materials from another publisher. The evaluation will be based on the materials for one quarter and information pieces that give a broad overview of the total curriculum.

Using an evaluation guide distributed in class and the criteria you add, evaluate your selected materials. Prepare a 20-minute presentation on the materials you evaluated to be given in class **January 24**. Address the class as a group of Christian educators who are seeking new curriculum resources. Summarize the findings of your evaluation and present them in a way that would cause the audience to want to use the materials, if they are good, know what adaptations they will need to make, or know that they do not want to use those resources. Submit your curriculum evaluation work sheets to the professor for review.

**Grading Criteria**

1. Grasp of important Biblical/theological issues.
2. Identification of key educational concerns.
3. Significance of evaluation relating to learner needs.
4. Insightfulness of evaluation relating to teacher needs.
Curriculum Evaluation B

Select 2 publishers of Christian education resources. If possible, one should be your denominational publisher. Identify the full line of resources produced by each publisher for a given age-level. Discover the intended use and focus of each resource. Describe a full curriculum for the age-level, using resources from each publisher (one curriculum for each publisher).

Evaluate and compare the two sets of resources. How well do each publisher’s resources complement one another to make an effective curriculum for the age-level? Are there resources missing which are needed in the curriculum designed for your selected age-level? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the resources offered by each publisher?

Suggested procedures: Call the 2 publishers and request catalogues, brochures, and any samples they could send to help you see and understand their full offerings for the age-level you specify. A list of curriculum source phone numbers is on the reserve shelf in the library. Many suppliers have 800 numbers. After reviewing the materials you receive, gain more information on the items through a telephone interview with someone at the publishing house. Or, if a church in the area is using the resources, examine samples of what they are using and talk with the CE leader about the use and focus of the materials. You might be able to see the resources and get further information on them from a local Christian bookstore. After learning what you can about the resources, put together your two full curriculum designs.

Prepare a 20-minute presentation of your two curriculum designs --each using the resources from one of the publishers-- to be given in class January 24. Address the class as a group of Christian educators who are seeking new curriculum resources. Briefly explain the purpose of each component in your design and its importance to the learners. If the publisher does not provide some items you consider essential for ministry to the age-level, identify the additional resources you would need to find to complete your curriculum. Summarize the findings of your evaluation and present them in a way that would cause the audience to want to use the curriculum designs, know what adaptations they will need to make, or know that they do not want to use resources from a certain source. Submit the materials you used in your evaluation to the professor for review.

Grading Criteria
Awareness of learner needs
Insightfulness of evaluation
Adequacy of the full curriculum design (X 2)

All Projects are to be typed and double spaced.
Inclusive language is to be used in all writing and in class discussions.

GRADING

The grade will be based on the average of grades for the demonstration and the curriculum presentation, and the curriculum unit. The grading for the curriculum unit gives it double weighting.
Class attendance, the completion of assigned reading, and the doing of daily work assignments are expected. Failure to complete these expectations or unexplained absences from class will influence the final grade.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

January 4 – Introduction, Definitions, and The History of Christian Education Curriculum
January 5 – Basic Beliefs and Curriculum
  **Due:** Notes on “What I believe about teaching and learning.”
  Harris Part I
January 6 – The Big Picture and the Unplanned Curriculum
  **Due:** Harris Part II
January 10 – The Process of Curriculum Design
  **Due:** Teaching Outline
January 11 – Objectives: Cognitive, Affective, Behavioral
  **Due:** Krathwohl, pp. 24-91
  Mager
  First draft of objectives
January 12 – Scope and Sequence
  **Due:** Reading on teaching methods
  Recommendation of a book on teaching methods
January 13 – Learning Styles and Teaching Models
  **Due:** McCarthy or LeFever
January 17 – Writing Words that Work; Format and Design
  **Due:** First draft of rationale, session 1, and outlines of sessions 2-4
January 18 – Methods, Feedback on Sessions Taught, and Individual Conferences
  **Due:** Teaching Demonstration
January 19 and 20 – Writing Days
January 24 – Local Church Curriculum Selection, Planning, and Evaluation
  **Due:** Curriculum Evaluation Presentation
January 25 – Nashville
January 26 – Curriculum Change and People Change
January 27 – Wrap Up and Curriculum Sharing
  **Due:** Curriculum Unit