CD 560 The Ministry of Teaching

Beverly C. Johnson-Miller
CD 560: The Ministry of Teaching  
Course Syllabus – Spring 2004  
Tuesday, 1-3:45 pm  
MC 204

Beverly C. Johnson-Miller, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor of Christian Discipleship  
Office: FM 103  
Office Hours: Posted on Office Door  
Beverly_Johnson-Miller@asburyseminary.edu  
858-2092

COURSE DESCRIPTION
  Analytical study of the teaching act and of teaching-learning events, including  
examination of the teaching acts in the ministry of Jesus. Also includes current insights  
furnished by the social sciences and exploration of some implications for developing  
one’s own approach, strategy, and style as a teacher.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
  By the end of this course, you should be able to:  
  1. Understand the significance of the teacher’s selfhood in the educational process.  
  2. Identify and implement comparative theoretical models for teaching.  
  3. Understand some of the biblical, theological, philosophical, and psychological-  
educational principles and theories foundational to the ministry of teaching.  
  4. Recognize and aspire to emulate the purpose, practices, and passion of Jesus as  
teacher.  
  5. Critically reflect on and evaluate the relationship between specific theories of  
teaching and the dynamics of transformation.

REQUIRED TEXTS
Donald M. Joy, Meaningful Learning in the Church. Indianapolis: Light and Life Press,  

John M. Bracke and Karen B. Tye, Teaching the Bible in the Church. St. Louis: Chalice  

Marlene D. LeFever, Learning Styles: Reaching Everyone God Gave You to Teach.  
Learning Styles Inventory

Parker J. Palmer, To Know as we are Known: a spirituality of education. San Francisco:  

Donald L. Griggs, *Teaching Today’s Teachers to Teach.* Abingdon Press, 2003

Kieran Egan, *Teaching as Storytelling.* University of Chicago Press,

*Additional articles may be assigned from time to time throughout the course.

**RECOMMENDED TEXTS**


**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.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. **Active participation** in the class:
   Faithful attendance – your presence in every class is expected and required. This is especially important during the weeks of peer teaching. It should be regarded as a matter of personal integrity to attend and
enthusiastically participate in your colleagues’ teaching modules. Attendance will be taken.

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 reflections**
   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. **Writing Assignments** demonstrating in-depth personal and critical/integrative reflection on assigned readings and course concepts:

   #1 – **Critical Incident Questionnaire: Experiencing Learning** (this assignment is a modified version of Stephen Brookfields suggestion in *The Skillful Teacher*, pp. 32-33.)
   You may complete this assignment in an outline format as long as you include clear descriptions of critical details (3-6 pages). **(DUE: Feb. 17th)**
   Reflect thoroughly on a recent planned educational learning experience (course, workshop, or conference). Describe with clarity and detail the following aspects of your learning experience:
   1. The incident (or incidents) that you recall as being the most exciting and rewarding because it represented a learning “high” for you - a time when you felt that something important or significant was happening to you as a learner.
   2. The incident (or incidents) that you recall as being the most distressing or disappointing for you because it represented a learning “low” – a time when you felt despair or frustration about your learning activities.
   3. The characteristics and behaviors of teachers that you found most helpful to your learning.
   4. The characteristics and behaviors of teachers that you found hindered your learning.
   5. Those times when you felt valued and affirmed as a learner and why this was so.
6. Those times when you felt demeaned and patronized as a learner and why this was so.
7. The most important insights you realized about the nature of effective teaching.
8. The most important insights you realized about yourself as a learner.
9. The most pleasurable aspects of learning you experienced.
10. The most painful aspects of learning you experienced.

Review your responses to the questions above, and analyze according to the following:
1. What common themes emerge from your descriptions of the learning experiences that are most useful to you? (Ex. Perhaps the most useful learning experiences for you always involve dialogue.)
2. What common themes emerge from your descriptions of the learning experiences that are least useful to you?
3. What advice would you give to a teacher concerning methods and behaviors that would be most helpful to learners?

#2 – A four to five page paper (Due: Feb. 24th) in which you reflect on teaching in relationship to the learning styles discussed in the LeFever Learning Styles text. This reflection will be based on your observations/participation in a Sunday School class, small group or other formal educational context. You must thoroughly read the LeFever text before your teaching observation, and your written reflection must include the following:

- A description of the context (church, age of group, focus of class, publisher of printed curriculum, etc.)
- A detailed description of the teaching/learning experience (topic, content, teaching methods, teacher/student interactions, hidden curriculum, etc.)
- Identification of your own learning styles and a description of the personal impact of the teaching methods employed
- An analysis of the teaching methods employed based on the various learning styles described by LeFever (Imaginative, Analytic, Common Sense, & Dynamic, as well as Visual, Auditory, & Tactile/Kinesthetic.)
- Concluding ideas on what could be done differently in order to reach everyone in the class.

#3 Student teaching module and corresponding paper/creative project.
For this assignment you will create and present to the class a formal lesson. The teaching module may be done in pairs of two students, or as solo. Each student or pair of students will have twenty to twenty-five minutes in which they will teach the class on some topic or skill related to Christian
discipleship/ministry. The teaching may be directed toward any age group and
must reflect the insights from class discussions including Learning Styles, the
required LeFever text. The use of technology (power points/videos) and other
creative materials is strongly recommended.

The student teaching modules will be scheduled toward the end of the
semester and part of your grade will be determined by peer evaluations. At the
end of each teaching module, the class will respond with a critique of the
teaching/learning experience. The class will determine in advance, the criteria for
critiquing the student teaching modules. The student teaching module must
include the following:

- A seven to ten page written paper describing your teaching
  plan (the context, the topic, theoretical model to be employed,
  purpose, goals, and related activities).
  - The relationship between the teaching purpose, goals,
    and activities must be described in the paper, and clear
    in your teaching practice.
  - Name your vision, hopes, and concerns for this teaching
    project.
  - A description of your experience as the teacher
    (response of participants, surprises, challenges, fears,
    insights).
  - A response to the question “would you use this
    approach again?” Why?
  - The paper must include a bibliography of sources
    consulted in the development of your teaching plan.
  - Students who choose to team teach, will need to add a
    ½ page statement on the team teaching process,
    including information on individual contributions to the
    process.
    a. A brief outline of the teaching process to be handed out in class (17 copies)
    b. A peer evaluation form will be provided in class.

***** Optional focus for teaching module: The educational programs in congregations
need to be developed and strengthened. There is a tremendous need for nurturing
teachers. It is my hope that some of you will take this class project as an opportunity to
develop a Teacher Enrichment seminar that could actually be implemented in our local
congregations or for your future ministry. There are numerous possible topics and related
resources that could be used. This optional project should be done as a team effort and
must be approved by me, your instructor. I hope that some of you will venture in this
direction.

Due: March 16th, a one page teaching module plan. Outline form is fine.

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 of 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.
$F (1) = \text{Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives}$

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

**Active Participation** = 15%
- Attendance and enthusiastic participation
- Completion of special mini assignments
- Note taking in class

**Reading Reflections** = 15%
- Written Reading Reflections
- Learning Styles Analysis
- Creativity Analysis

**Writing Assignments** = 70 %
- Paper #1 = 15 %
- Paper #2 = 15%
- Teaching Module & Corresponding Paper #3 = 40%
  - Teaching Presentation = 15%
  - Corresponding Paper = 25%

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

Feb. 10  
*Introduction to the Ministry of Teaching: informing or transforming, what’s it all about?*
*Developing a Critical Rationale*

Feb. 17  
*Developing a Critical Rationale Cont.*
*Teaching via Narrative(?)*
Read: Creative Ministry, pp. 1-20, on reserve in library.
**DUE: Writing Assignment Paper #1**

Feb. 24  
*Learning Styles – Class conference with author, Marlene Lefever*
Read: Learning Styles, entire book
**DUE: Writing Assignment Paper #2**
Prepare a list of five questions for conference discussion. (These questions and the learning styles analysis count as Reading Reflections)

Mar. 2  
*Guest Presenter: Dr. Don Joy*
Read: *Meaningful Learning in the Church* by Don Joy (No written Reading Reflection required. Be prepared for discussion with the author.)

Mar. 9    *Creative Teaching Methods- Class conf. with author, Marlene Lefever Lecturing Creatively*  
Read: *Creative Teaching Methods*, Chapters 1-3, on reserve in library  
Complete: Personal Creativity Analysis “How Creative are You?”, to be handed out in previous class. (This analysis counts as a Reading Reflection Activity)

Mar. 16    *Jesus, the Teacher*: mimic his methods or practice his purpose and passion.  
Read one of the four gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John.  
Mini Assignment - As you read, reflect on the following:  
   1. What was the purpose/goal of Jesus teachings?  
   2. What was the relationship between his teachings and his life?  
   3. How did Jesus teach? (approach/methods etc.)  
Read: *Teaching Teachers to Teach* by Donald Griggs  
**DUE:** Reading Reflection #1  

**DUE:** One page teaching module plan.

Mar. 23    *Teaching for Transformation*: an introduction to shared praxis  
*Development of Peer Evaluation Form*  
Read: *Christian Religious Education*, Chapter 10, on Reserve in Library  
Read: *Teaching the Bible in the Church* by Bracke and Tye  
**DUE:** Reading Reflection #2

Mar. 30    Reading Week

April 6    *Teaching Methodology*  
*Preparing Discussions*  
Read: *Teaching and Religious Imagination* by M. Harris  
**DUE:** Reading Reflection #3

April 13    *Teaching via Narrative(?)*  
Read: *Teaching as Storytelling* by Kieran Egan  
**DUE:** Reading Reflection #4

Teaching Modules
April 20  
Read: To Know as We are Known by P. Palmer

DUE: Reading Reflection # 5

Teaching Modules

April 27  
Teaching Modules

May 4  
Teaching Modules

May 11  
Teaching Modules

May 18  
Finals Week  If time is needed to complete teaching modules, class will meet during exam time.
Covenant to Grow

Transformational teaching and learning will only take place in our class if you as a participant are willing to grow. Openness to growth and change is not a passive process of blind acceptance. Rather, openness to growth and change requires personal interest in the subject and a willingness to invest in the learning-experience through positive and personal critical reflection, thoughtful and enthusiastic dialogue, and timely fulfillment of assignments. Growth involves desire, vision, and intentional effort. Growth and change require risk, inconvenience, sacrifice, waiting, and hard work. Growth may even be painful at times. If everything in this class affirms what you already know and believe, then there is no room for growth. Growth will require openness to new ideas and insights, and willingness to actively and enthusiastically explore. I, as your instructor, covenant to enthusiastically facilitate to the best of my ability a transformational learning experience. I will actively pursue opportunities for growth on your behalf, and will joyfully invest in your growth during this course. What about you? Are you ready and willing to grow? If so, please complete the following:

Covenant to Grow

I, _________________________________________, join my instructor and fellow classmates in this covenant to grow during this class experience, CD 560, Ministry of Teaching class, Spring 2004. I am committed to

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Signed:_____________________________________
Date:______________________________________