

1-1-2004

CD 651 Professional Foundations of Christian Education

Beverly C. Johnson-Miller

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Beverly C. Johnson-Miller, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Christian Discipleship
Asbury Theological Seminary – Wilmore, KY 40390
Course Syllabus, Fall 2004

CD651 PROFESSIONAL FOUNDATIONS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

***This syllabus is subject to change prior to the first day of class.

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 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. See class schedule for specific due-dates.

3. **Two Short Research Papers (Total 20%)**

Short Report #1 Due: September 23

The Ancient Catechumenate and the Postmodern Church

In this paper 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.

Short Report #2 Due: October 21
Everybody Ought to Go to Sunday School?

In this paper you will write a persuasive argument 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). In this paper you will describe some of the formational dynamics of the Sunday School movement, and explain the significance of these dynamics for the church today. It is expected that you will include

4. reflecting on your Christian formation and formal methods of discipleship. These papers (4-5 pages each) are largely descriptive with some concluding analysis regarding the views of Christian discipleship reflected in the descriptions (Total 20%, each paper 10%).

The first paper, **DUE September 5**, is 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 analysis of the views of discipleship/Christian education/spiritual growth that shaped your experience – views of your nation, religious tradition/theology, ethnic culture, parents, teachers, peers, **pastors**, congregation, yourself, and/or others.

The second paper, **DUE September 19**, is a description of the spiritual-educational discipleship experience of your church community. This may be your present religious community or one of your past. 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. Along with a detailed description, this paper must

include analysis of the discipleship themes, philosophy/theology, and methods employed in the congregation you choose to study.

The purpose of these two short paper assignments 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 and a specific church community context, it is intended that you will develop the ability to critically 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.

4. Major Paper (20 pages) in which you put forth a vision of discipleship in relationship to the educational ministry of a particular church/Christian community context. The vision for discipleship may apply to the entire congregation/Christian community, or to a particular group/s 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. 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: October 31** (20%). Final paper **DUE: December 5** (30%).

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.

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

2. Completion of all readings and related reading reflection reports, projects, and presentations by the date assigned on the course calendar.
3. Two seminar-type reports will be assigned.

Report #1 will focus on a topic, figure or movement, from the first 19 centuries of the church. 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 may be in an outline form. 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.

Report #2 will be the major project of the semester. It will focus on the contributions of a major 20th century thinker in the field of Christian religious education. The report must include a careful description and analysis of your subject's life story, and the relationship of their biography to their theory and practice of Christian education. In other words, you must 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. This report should be fifteen to twenty pages and will be presented in class.

The purpose of these 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

Grades will be assigned on a point basis:

| | |
|------|--------|
| “A” | 95-100 |
| “A-” | 90-94 |
| “B+” | 85-89 |
| “B” | 80-84 |
| “B-” | 75-79 |
| “C+” | 70-74 |
| “C” | 65-59 |

Evidence of your success in fulfilling the objectives of this course will be determined and graded according to the following criteria:

1. Attendance and Participation = 20 points
2. Collateral Reading Reports = 20 points (10 points each)
3. Report #1 = 25 points
 - Organization, including appropriate form and style = 5 points
 - Appropriate information (biography, historical context, significant contributions, bibliography, demonstration of historical impact on contemporary practice) = 15
 - Teaching Presentation = 10
4. Report #2 = 35 points
 - Organization, including appropriate form and style = 5 points
 - Description and analysis of your subject's life story = 10 points
 - Description of your subject's Christian education theory including the significance of their life and work in contemporary practice. = 20 points

Through these reports, you will demonstrate your understanding of a major figure/issue in the history of Christian education as well as the significance of this figure/issue 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.

CALENDAR

A calendar for the teaching roles and project presentations will be determined in class on September 3.

Collateral readings are an essential part of this course. Students will be expected to submit a personal reading plan on September 24.

The outline of the course will follow Burgess, Models.

Reed and Prevost, *A History of Christian Education* is an excellent reading investment. It largely covers the history of Christian education in early centuries. Two copies are on reserve in the library.

CALENDAR

September 3

Course introduction

Everybody Ought to go to Sunday School?

September 10

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

September 17 - Student Teaching Begins

Jesus

The Catechumenate and Catechetical Schools

The Desert Fathers/Mothers

Cyril of Jerusalem and Early Church Education

September 24

Augustine's Contributions to Education

Monastic Education

Martin Luther

John Calvin

October 1

Radical Reformers/Anabaptists

Ignatius of Loyola

The Impact of the Enlightenment on C.E.

John Wesley's Legacy in C.E.

October 8

Robert Raikes (Hannah Ball) and the Rise of the Sunday School

Stephen Paxson (American S.S. Pioneer)

The Illinois Band (S.S. Movement)

Influence of Women Prior to 20th Century

October 15

Horace Bushnell

The Turn of the Century S.S.

Prof. Johnson-Miller

Collateral Reading Report Due

October 22

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

Liberal Theological Model of C.E.

October 29

The Influence of Liberal Theology

George Coe

Sophia Fahs

Mainline Theological Model of C.E.

November 5

Hulda Neibhur

Randolph Crump Miller

Iris Cully (or Sara Little)

Social-Science Model

November 12

“The Social Science Approach to Religious Education” a film by James Michael Lee with Harold Burgess.

The Evangelical Theological Model

November 19

Frank Gaebelein

Lois/Mary LeBar

Henrietta Mears

Larry Richards

November 26

Reading Week

Current Writers in C.E.

December 3

John Westerhoff

Thomas Groome

Mary Elizabeth Moore

James Wilhoit

Les Steele

Michael Anthony

December 10

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

Final Collateral Reading Report Due

Final Paper Due on Exam Date, Thursday, December 12

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?

