

Syllabus
Providing Christian Education for All Ages
Virginia District Training Center
D.I.G. Family Camp
June 28 – 30, 2018
8-10:15 a.m. & 1-5 p.m.

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Course Vision Statement

The course is a basic introduction to the field of Christian education. Christian education has its foundations in two primary areas: (1) Christian theology and (2) education. Therefore, we will be exploring the theological roots (both in the Bible and history) of Christian education and the education principles and practices that enable our efforts to be effective and relevant. The primary context in which Christian education takes place is the community of faith, which is most often expressed in the local church. So our study will focus primarily on Christian education in the local church and the various types of educational settings and structures present there.

At the completion of the course, the students and teacher will have a clearer understanding of how Christian faith is nurtured in persons and communities. They will be equipped with some basic skills to create strong educational structures, materials, and practices for use in their own settings. They will also have a growing passion to see children, youth, and adults become Christians and be nurtured in Christian faith.

Educational Assumptions

1. The work of the Holy Spirit is essential to the process of Christian education at any level. We will consistently request the Spirit's presence within and among us.
2. Christian teaching and learning is best done in the context of community (people being and working together). Community is the gift of the Spirit but may be enhanced or hindered by human effort. Communities have common values, stories, practices, and goals. Explicit effort will be invested to enhance community within the class.
3. Students are valued not only as persons who have potential to learn but also as persons who already have significant knowledge and experiences to contribute to the course. Consequently, some of the course assignments will require cooperative efforts among students. Such cooperation is natural in a Christian community of learning.
4. The course focuses on the community of faith expressed in a local church. In order for the purposes of the course to be fulfilled, each student should have a local church in which he or she regularly participates and should project the concepts and applications of the course to that setting.

Reading

Steele, Les L. *On the Way: A Practical Theology of Christian Formation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990.

Course Requirements

1. **Class attendance, attention, and participation** are important for each student. Students are responsible for all assignments and in-class work even for sessions where they are absent. Since this is in a three-day modular format, attendance at all sessions is critical. If more than one teaching segment of the class is missed, the student will fall significantly behind and be unlikely to satisfactorily complete all required work. Extenuating circumstances may be considered, but any

missed segment will require additional assignments. If two or more segments are missed, the student will be required to repeat the entire module at a later date.

2. **Reading.** The assigned book should be read completely. There is a Study Guide for the book *On the Way*, which should be completed as the student reads and turned in no later than July 9, 2018.
3. **Focus Groups.** Each student will be asked to meet each class session with a group of persons working with the same age-group (children, youth, adult) to allow reflection on educational concepts, provide feedback on application of some of the materials presented in class, and to work on cooperative projects.
4. **Sample Teaching Outline.** Each student will be asked to plan a lesson, teach the lesson in a real Christian education setting, and critique both the lesson and their teaching of it. The lesson plan will include vision statement and objectives, educational assumptions, description of the context, session content outline, planned learning methods, and an evaluation plan. This will be turned no later than July 16, 2018.
5. **Two Lesson Observations and Critiques.** Each student will visit two other Christian education settings and observe someone else teaching a lesson. At least one of these settings must be outside the student's home church. In addition, the student will write a critique of his or her own teaching in the lesson that his or her group developed. These written critiques will follow the format given in class. Both lesson critiques will be due on July 23, 2018.
6. **Journal.** Each student will keep a journal or notebook, to be written in after each class session. In this journal, the student will make personal reflections of what he or she is coming to believe about Christian education as well as ideas he or she wants to implement in the classroom.
7. **"I Believe" Statement.** Each student will be asked to write an essay at the close of the class that expresses his or her personal beliefs concerning Christian education and the task of teaching. This essay should be understood as a "work in progress" and should not be considered as the student's final statement on the topic. This is an essay, not a composition. It should be written concisely in less than three pages. It should give evidence that the student has thought through all the major questions of educational philosophy for Christian education. The essay will be due by July 30, 2018.

Course Schedule

The course will meet according to the following schedule:

Session Date	Lesson/Segment
June 28 AM	Introductions/Definitions and Contexts of CE
	Biblical Foundations of Christian Education
June 28 PM	Important Ideas About Learning
June 29 AM	Principles of Developmentalism
June 29 PM	Teaching Models and Practices
June 30 AM	Curriculum Design, Implementation and Evaluation
June 30 PM	Structures and Programs of Christian Education in the Local Church
	Recruiting and Developing Workers/Course Evaluation

Course Evaluation

Five primary means of evaluation will be utilized. Some of the evaluation activities will be during the course. This form of evaluation is called "formative evaluation." Some of the evaluation activities will be conducted after the conclusion of the course. This form of evaluation is called "summative evaluation." The evaluations are for the benefit of both the student and the teacher.

1. Each day at the close of the session, we will discuss which portions of the session were most appropriate and helpful for the students' ministry contexts.

2. Observation of the focus groups will help us see your developing skills in teamwork and group process. Evaluation of your group projects (e.g., job description) will help us see how well you have applied the theory learned in class.
3. An evaluation of the lesson critiques and sample teaching outlines will assist us in knowing how effective the teaching has been.
4. The “I Believe” statement will serve as an evaluation tool of the individual student. The statements will be turned in to the instructor, reviewed, and returned to the student with comments.
5. At the close of the final session, the class will be asked to reflect with the teachers on the course and our teaching. We are interested in how we can improve our teaching skills.

Ultimately, the best course evaluation will occur as the student teaches in the local church with increased skill and enthusiasm. If people are being brought into relationship with Christ, led toward growth in grace, and equipped to serve through the teaching ministries of those who were students in the course, then the course will have fulfilled our goals for it. This final evaluation will, of course, take months and years

Additional Information

Students Needing Assistance—Our commitment is to make a reasonable effort to assist every student to learn. Any student who is having difficulty in following the presentations or understanding the assignments should not hesitate to talk with one of us personally. Together we can discover ways to make our teaching and the course more effective.

Instructor’s Availability—I am privileged to have the opportunity to teach this class. My desire is to be a model teacher in and outside of the classroom. The students enrolled in the class are a high priority in my life. I will be available before and after the class to students.

Chapel Services – Because this is D.I.G. week, all students are expected to attend all chapel services as part of the course requirements.