

The Art and Practice of Teaching
CE 315-3, Spring 2016
Tuesday/Thursday 1:30-2:50, Schlegel 123

Instructor: J. Bradley Wigger (bwigger@lpts.edu)

Description

In this course students will explore the practice of teaching in relation to the life of faith, including ways in which scripture is studied and learned, the traditions of the church are examined and put into contemporary practice, and children and adults are equipped to participate in the life and community of faith. The class will research the practice and art of teaching through the examination of learning and teaching theory and through practice itself.

Ultimately, the class will work toward practical wisdom that will enable students to discern gifts of teaching in themselves and others, to identify excellence in the art of teaching, and to suggest ways by which a community can encourage its members in their practice of teaching for the church's life together and God's mission to the world.

Prerequisite:

There are no prerequisites and the course fulfills the Teaching Ministry requirement for the MDiv.

Objectives: At the end of the course, students:

1. will have a deepened understanding of the role of "practice" in teaching, and be able to identify key dimensions of growing in the practice of teaching in the community of faith;
2. will have considered their own gifts and abilities related to teaching and learning;
3. will have reflected upon the role of a teacher—its power and authority—in the context of the community of faith;
4. will have experienced and reflected deeply upon the art and practice of teaching both as teacher and learner.

Course Work

Very specific guidance will be given in class for the required work.

Evaluation

1/3 course engagement (weekly reading, notebook assignments, participation)

1/3 teaching sessions (in class)

1/3 final project

Course Engagement

To encourage careful reading and reflection, as well as high quality, respectful seminar discussion, for each reading there will be short assignments accompanying the reading (such as answering a question based on the reading, designing discussion questions, or other reflective exercises). In notebooks students will log their reading and carry out

assignments in relation to the reading or other relevant subjects. We will use these in class in various ways.

The notebook will include short (one paragraph) reflections upon each of the student-led teaching sessions, in addition to a two-page reflection on either Tye or hooks, entitled “Hopes for Educational Ministry,” summarizing the author’s perspective as well as your own.

For many reasons relevant to the nature of this particular course, these notebooks will operate on a self-evaluated honor system (with the professor retaining the responsibility for adjusting the grade if blatantly necessary). The last notebook assignment will be a one page self-evaluation reflecting upon your own engagement with the course and will include the “class engagement” grade. Notebooks are turned in on the last meeting of the class.

More detailed guidance will be provided as needed, but in general, the following should be used:

- A= 95% of the reading and weekly assignments, finished on time (before class), with thoughtfulness and reflection.
- B=85%
- C=75%
- D=65%

Attendance and participation are assumed—adjust your grade for unexcused absences, leaving class early, doing email in class, or other forms of non-participation.

Electronic Technology Policy

This is a low-to-no technology course during class time. There will rarely, if ever, be a need for using laptops, tablets, phones, or any other technology that takes attention away from the classroom. A paper notebook will be sufficient. If there is an overwhelming need for use of a laptop, please request permission from the professor. You may use such technology for homework and when you teach (for example, using PowerPoint, recorded music, or video clips). Even so, students may want to challenge themselves to be low-tech as they may find themselves teaching in places that do not have the resources for technology (for example, rural or small churches, low-budget organizations, coffee shops, developing countries, outside).

In-class Policy

Please turn off and stow phones so they are neither visible nor accessible. For more information and research regarding the ways even the visible presence of a phone inhibits learning see Sherry Turkle’s *Reclaiming Conversation* (Penguin, 2015).

Teaching Sessions (Preparing, Doing, Reflecting)

With further guidance from the professor, students will teach in class twice, as part of teaching teams. The size of the teams depends upon the class size. Before the first

teaching session (two weeks prior), students will meet briefly with the professor, typically before or after class, to discuss ideas for teaching.

At the time of teaching, preparation materials and a lesson plan will be turned in. Reflection papers (roughly 600 words) from each member of the teaching team evaluating the teaching/learning experience are due one week after teaching. Because thoughtful preparation and honest self-evaluation are essential dimensions of the practice of teaching these will be considered part of the “teaching” grade.

Final Project

Students will design their own final projects. Projects must be of obvious relevance to teaching and the church’s educational ministry. The work involved should be roughly the equivalent of the time and energy involved in a 20-page research paper, but practice-oriented projects are highly valued as well. The time could be spent teaching, writing, interviewing, organizing, or providing resources for your project. (Typically a 20-page paper is calculated at approximately 20 to 30 hours of work. Some possibilities are:

Writing a curriculum for a Christian educational setting

(e.g. 6-week adult Bible study; new member preparation; parent-child classes for communion; anti-racism and society workshops; church officer training; teacher education)

Writing a research paper on a relevant subject

(e.g. learning theory, history of curriculum materials, critical pedagogy, Parker Palmer’s educational philosophy)

Conducting qualitative research

(e.g. interviewing Sunday school teachers, parents, or children; interviewing seminarians about attitudes toward Christian education)

Designing or carrying out a teaching project intentionally using multiple intelligences

(Perhaps artwork, music, dance, videos, can be used in conjunction with words in a project. E.g. teaching children to drum or dance for worship; working with a sewing circle to design stoles or paraments; creating an educational video with a youth group)

Teaching and reflecting upon Sunday school class sessions

(e.g. design the session, videotape the experience; provide written reflection and evaluation, much as we will do in the course teaching sessions, but this time done alone)

Students must get approval for their projects and a plan will be submitted by **March 22**, including time and writing estimates for work involved. A progress report is due **April 12**. Final Project is due **May 12, 5:00 p.m.**

Bibliography (reading will be selected from the following):

Primary

Armstrong, Thomas. *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2000.

- Baum, L. Frank. *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Chicago: George M. Hill Company, 1900.
(but any edition is fine)
- Harris, Maria. *Teaching and Religious Imagination*. New York: Harper & Row, 1987.
(Chapter 2 only, "Teaching")
- Palmer, Parker. *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998.
- Walker, Joyce MacKichan. "The Art of Asking Good Questions: The Role of Questions in Discussion," and "Ways to Get Adults to Talk," *The Thoughtful Christian*.
- Wigger, J. Bradley. "Multiple Intelligences: Understanding the Many Ways We Learn," "Learning as We Teach: Christian education is about Teaching Mysteries," and "Why do you Teach?" *The Thoughtful Christian*.
- Wimberly, Ann. *Soul Stories: African-American Christian Education*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994.

Choose one:

hooks, bell. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge, 1994. (if you have already read this, then consider bell hooks' *Teaching Community* or *Teaching Critical Thinking*.) Emphasis is upon critical pedagogy.

Or

Tye, Karen. *Basics of Christian Education*. St. Louis: Chalice, 2000. Emphasis is on a general outline of congregational educational ministry.

Secondary

- Campbell, Linda; Bruce Campbell; and Dee Dickinson. *Teaching and Learning through Multiple Intelligences*, 3rd edition. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2003.
- Dykstra, Craig. *Growing in the Life of Christian Faith*. Louisville: Geneva Press, 1999.
- Farley, Edward. *The Fragility of Knowledge*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1988.
- Eisner, Elliot. (Ed.) *Learning and Teaching the Ways of Knowing*. National Society for the Study of Education. Chicago: 1985.
- Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of Hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum, 1994.
- Freire, Paulo. *Teachers as Cultural Workers: Letters to Those Who Dare Teach*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1998.
- Harris, Maria. *Women and Teaching: themes for a spirituality of pedagogy*. New York: Paulist Press, 1988.
- Heschel, Abraham Joshua. *The Insecurity of Freedom: Essays on Human Existence*. New York: Schocken, 1966.
- Hodgson, Peter. *God's Wisdom: Toward a Theology of Education*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1999.
- Joyce, Bruce, and Weil, Marsha. *Models of Teaching*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1995.
- Little, Sara. *To Set One's Heart: Belief and Teaching in the Church*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1983.

- Moran, Gabriel. *Showing How: The Act of Teaching*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 1997.
- Melchert, Charles. *Wise Teaching: Biblical Wisdom and Educational Ministry*. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1998.
- Wink, Joan. *Critical Pedagogy: Notes from the Real World*. White Plains, NY: Longman Press, 1997.
- Wink, Walter. *Transforming Bible Study: A Leader's Guide*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1980.

School Policies

Inclusive Language

In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible's images for God. See for further assistance, http://www.lpts.edu/Academic_Resources/ASC/avoidinggenderbiasinlanguage.asp.

Academic Honesty

All work turned in to the instructors is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Use of another's language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy, and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and may result in failure of the course. Multiple occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues relating to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For the Seminary policy, see The Code of Student Conduct, 6.11; the Student Handbook, p. 19.

Citation Policy

Citations in your papers should follow the Seminary standard, based on these guides:

Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

The Chicago Manual of Style, 16th ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center.

Special Accommodations

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center (kmapes@lpts.edu) during the first two weeks of a semester and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Attendance Policy

According to the Seminary catalog, students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify the instructor of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. Missing 1/4 of the course or more may result in a low or failing grade in the course.

Calendar

Thursday, February 4

Introduction

Course expectations and syllabus
Thinking about your groups

Tuesday, February 9

Small Wonders

Read Wigger, “Why do you teach”
Create Reading Log



Why do you
teach.pdf

Thursday, February 11

Art and Practice

Notebook: Film
Teaching Team Sign-up

Tuesday, February 16

The Mystery of Teaching

Wigger, “Learning as we teach” and
Harris, chapter 2
Notebook assignment



Learning as We
Teach.pdf



The mystery of
teaching.pdf

Thursday, February 18

Multiple Intelligences

Wigger (“Multiple Intelligences” article)
Armstrong (carefully chs. 1-6, review rest)



Multiple
Intelligences.pdf

Tuesday, February 23

Plan, Perform, Reflect

Notebook assignment

Thursday, February 25

Brains, Heart, Courage

Baum, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*
Notebook assignment

Tuesday, March 1
Good Question

Walker, (both *TC* articles)
Notebook assignment



ArtofAsking.pdf



WaysAdultsTalk.pdf

Thursday, March 3
Soul Stories

Wimberly
(Carefully read pp. 13-48, review rest)
Notebook assignment

Tuesday, March 8
The Heart of Teaching

Palmer, Intro., chs. I - IV
Notebook assignment

Thursday, March 10
Planning and Consultation

Provisional Teaching Plan

Each teaching team will come to class with a provisional plan for their first teaching session and have time to consult with professor.

March 14-18 Research and Study

Teaching Sessions Begin: Round 1

Tuesday, March 22

Email Project Idea

Group 1. Method: One particular intelligence from MI (besides linguistic)
Content: A theological idea/doctrine (e.g. The Trinity in visual art)
Setting/Audience: open (e.g. adult or children SS class, youth group, workshop etc.)

After each teaching group session—make a Notebook entry about the session.

Tuesday, March 29

Group 2. Method: Harris
Content: prayer

Thursday, March 31

Group 3. Method: Soul Stories
Content: Bible

Tuesday, April 5

Group 4. Method: One particular intelligence (besides linguistic)
Content: worship (or particular sacrament)

Thursday, April 7
Group 5. Method: Soul Stories
Content: Bible

Tuesday, April 12
Courage and Soul

Palmer, chs. V-VII
Notebook assignment

Teaching Sessions Round 2

The second time teams teach, choose a subject and a method of structuring the session different from the first time you taught. Try to find a subject that lets your own gifts for ministry, your vocation, shine. The context does not have to be congregational or with adults. And/or, this is a good time to try a method that you wanted to do in round 1, but was given to another team.

Continue notebook reflections on sessions

Thursday, April 14
Group 1.

Email project progress report

April 19
Group 2

Start Tye/hooks; work on projects

April 21
Group 3

Work on projects

April 26
Group 4

Work on projects

April 28
Group 5

Work on projects

May 3-5

Notebooks due

Reflections and Wrap-up

What have we learned about the art and practice of teaching in the community of faith?

**Final Projects due: Thursday, May 12, 5:00 p.m.
Turn in at Gardencourt 306 or electronically**

Reading Log

Reading

Date Completed
(mark "late" if not in time for class)

Tuesday, February 9
Read Wigger, "Why do you teach"

Tuesday, February 16
Wigger, "Learning as we teach"
Harris, chapter 2

Thursday, February 18
Wigger ("Multiple Intelligences" article)
Armstrong (carefully chs. 1-6, review rest)

Thursday, February 25
Baum, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*

Tuesday, March 1
Walker, (both *TC* articles)

Thursday, March 3
Wimberly (Carefully read pp. 13-48, review rest)

Tuesday, March 8
Palmer, Intro., chs. I - IV

Tuesday, April 12
Palmer, chs. V-VII

May 3
Tye or hooks, all.