

**The Art and Practice of Teaching**  
**CE 315-3 Spring 2010**  
**Instructor: J. Bradley Wigger**  
**Mondays 2-4:50, Schlegel 123**

**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 baptism, the Lord's Supper, worship, and life together in the community of faith. The class will research the practice and art of teaching through historical review, contemporary contextual analysis, and examination of learning and teaching theory and practice.

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 toward ever greater excellence and value for the church's life together and God's mission to the world.

**Prerequisite:**

There are no prerequisites and the course fulfills the Christian education requirement for the M.Div. If you choose a teaching project for your final project, you will need an appropriate ministry setting (e.g., field education position, a family, a church study group, study group on campus, or an appropriate clinical setting as so deemed by MFT faculty and advisors).

**Objectives:** At the end of the course, students:

1. will have an understanding of the concept of "the practice of teaching," particularly within the community of faith;
2. will be able to identify key dimensions of growing in the practice of teaching in the community of faith;
3. will have considered their own gifts and abilities in relationship to identified "measures of excellence" related to teaching and learning;
4. will have considered the role, its power and authority, of a teacher, particularly in the context of Christian faith and life in the community of faith
5. will have experienced 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 (1-2 page only) writing 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, (including hooks/Tye) 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 a 2 page reflection on either Tye or hooks, entitled “Why education matters,” 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 evaluation by the student reflecting upon their 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.

### ***Teaching Sessions (Preparing, Doing, Reflecting)***

With further guidance from the professor, students will teach in class twice and as part of teaching teams. The size of the teams depends upon the class size. Before the first teaching session (1-2 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 2 pages) 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, with various options. The 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; 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 methods)

*Conducting qualitative research*

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

*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, audio- 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 15**, including time and writing estimates for work involved. A progress report is due **April 19**.

*For students taking the course for D.Min. credit, an additional 10-page research paper will be required on a subject related to the course and chosen in consultation with the instructor.*

## **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](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*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

*The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15<sup>th</sup> ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

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](mailto: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.

### **From the Dean's Office:**

#### *Plagiarism and Documentation Policy*

“According to the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, plagiarism is defined as using ‘another person’s ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source’ (Gibaldi, MLA Handbook, Fourth ed., p. 26). Students in this course are required to abide by the Seminary’s academic honesty policy and are directed to observe the guidelines cited in the above-mentioned MLA Handbook which include matters of proper documentation and citation, use of work from a previous course, and collaborative work (pp. 26-29).” ... “where citations are required, they shall follow the form of the latest edition of **Turabian/Chicago Manual of Style**, except in Pastoral Care and Counseling courses, for which students may use APA form.”

**Bibliography (Reading will be selected from the following):**

**Primary**

- Armstrong, Thomas. *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2000.
- Harris, Maria. *Teaching and Religious Imagination*. New York: Harper & Row, 1987. (Chapter 2 only, "Teaching," on library reserve shelf)
- 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," *The Thoughtful Christian*.  
<http://www.thethoughtfulchristian.com/PDFs/ArtofAsking.pdf>
- Wigger, J. Bradley. "Learning as We Teach: Christian education is about Teaching Mysteries," *The Thoughtful Christian*.  
<http://www.thethoughtfulchristian.com/PDFs/Learning%20as%20We%20Teach.pdf>
- Wigger, J. Bradley. "Multiple Intelligences: Understanding the Many Ways We Learn," *The Thoughtful Christian*.  
<http://www.thethoughtfulchristian.com/PDFs/Multiple%20Intelligences.pdf>
- Wigger, J. Bradley, "Why do you Teach?" *The Thoughtful Christian*.  
<http://www.thethoughtfulchristian.com/PDFs/Why%20do%20you%20teach.pdf>
- Wimberly, Ann. *Soul Stories: African-American Christian Education*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994.
- Wink, Walter. *Transforming Bible Study: A Leader's Guide*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1980.

**Choose one:**

- hooks, bell. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- hooks, bell. *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*. New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Tye, Karen. *Basics of Christian Education*. St. Louis: Chalice, 2000.

**Secondary**

- Campbell, Linda; Bruce Campbell; and Dee Dickinson. *Teaching and Learning through Multiple Intelligences*, 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

## Calendar

February 15

### ***Introduction***

Course expectations and syllabus  
Thinking about your groups  
*Small Wonders*

February 22

### ***Teaching as Vocation***

The heart of teaching  
Teaching and identity

Read Palmer, Intro, chs. 1-3  
Notebook  
Establish groups

March 1

### ***Multiple Intelligences***

Teaching rhythms  
Lesson plans

Read Armstrong (carefully chs. 1-6, review rest)  
Wigger (MI article)  
Notebook

March 8

### ***Teaching Sessions***

Group 1: Method: a particular intelligence from MI  
Content: a theological idea/doctrine (e.g. The Trinity in visual art)  
Group 2: Method: a particular intelligence from MI  
Content: a justice issue (e.g. peacemaking through music)  
*(If teaching you may delay reading/notebooks assignments 1 week)*

Read Palmer ch. 4, TT articles, Harris, (if not teaching)  
Notebook

March 15

### ***Teaching Session***

Group 3: Baptism through MIs  
Group 4: Communion through MIs

Notebook  
(project idea)

March 22—Research and Study, no class

March 29

**Teaching sessions**

Group 5: Prayer through MIs

Wigger: teaching with soul stories

Wimberly: carefully read pp. 13-48, review rest

Notebook

April 5

**Teaching Sessions**

Group 6: Soul Stories/Bible

Group 7: Soul Stories/Bible

Palmer, 5-6

Notebook

April 12

**Teaching Sessions**

Group 1: Soul Stories/Bible

*Transforming Bible Study*

Wink, all

April 19

**Teaching Sessions**

Group 2: Wink/parable or narrative

Group 3: Wink/parable or narrative

Work on projects

project progress

April 26

**Teaching Session**

Group 4: Wink/parable or narrative

Group 5: Content and method open (hybrid/intergenerational)

Work on projects

May 3

**Teaching Sessions**

Group 6: Content and method open (hybrid/intergenerational)

Group 7: Content and method open (hybrid/intergenerational)

Work on projects

May 10

**Reflections and Wrap-up**

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

Notebooks due

**Final Projects due: Seniors May 17**

**Others, May 19**