

The Task of Teaching in the Church **PLMA Fall 2017 Class**

This course will help students become better teachers and life-long learners in our communities of faith. The task of **How to Teach** in the church will be examined by looking at why we educate, where we educate, whom we educate, how we educate, how we evaluate, what we need to know, and what stands in our way.

Goals:

- Students will explore the theology and practice of Christian education—what has worked in the past, what isn't working now and what the future holds.
- Students will become familiar with Stages of Faith as well as different learning styles leading to an understanding of why a variety of approaches to Christian Education is necessary.
- Students will take a look at how to prepare for teaching a class, how to review and adapt curriculum to be consistent with theological standards, and how to evaluate where their individual community is as a learning community.

Learning Outcomes: Students will embrace a vision of teaching in the church that

- Is transformative
- Shows teaching and learning as relational
- Evokes spiritual growth and a deeper faith commitment
- Leads to life-long learning
- Inspires joyful living and serving in the world

Expectations of Students:

To come to each class prepared to be active learners and willing teachers, open to the power of the Holy Spirit for inspiration and guidance as we learn how best to equip ourselves and others to be life-long learners in the Christian faith.

September: “Gathered to Learn” (Assignments due to Instructor by October 17th)

Read: “The Task of Teaching our Faith in the Church” (provided by instructor)

Assignment #1:

Describe Christian Education/Teaching Our Faith in your church context (minimum one page), using **one** of the following as your outline:

- Expand upon the Why, Where, Who, How and What that Tye addresses as well as what obstacles may stand in the way.
- Expand upon how the teaching arenas in your church fit/don’t fit into the three movements described in this paper: 1) tradition-centered/religious education; 2) person-centered education/personal development and socialization; and 3) mission-centered education/liberation—becoming a prophetic activity in the world.

Read: Part 1: Chapters 1-3 of The Church As Learning Community

Assignment #2:

Choose one reflection question in each of the three chapters to answer (**total of 3 reflection questions**). These can be found throughout the chapters in boxes.

Reflection boxes for Chapter 1: p 26, 32, 33, 36, or 40...choose **1 question in 1 box!**

Reflection boxes for Chapter 2: p 61-62, 80, 95, 98, or 99...choose **1 question in 1 box!**

Reflection boxes for Chapter 3: p 105, 107, or 146...choose **1 question in 1 box!**

Read: Griggs — Chapters 1-4

* * * * *

October: “Challenged to Grow” (Assignments due to instructor by November 14th)

Read: Part 2: Chapters 4-6 of The Church As Learning Community

Assignment #1:

Choose **one age-group**, in which you are most interested, involved as a leader/teacher, or concerned about in your context. **For Adults**, choose one of the case studies on pages 161 - 171 (Mark, Mounoy, Marilyn, Mel, or Young Adults) and answer all the reflection questions in the corresponding reflection box. **For Children**, choose one of the case studies on pages 176-183 (Maria, Matthew, Jason, Jessica, or Justin) and answer all the reflection questions in the corresponding reflection box. **For Youth**, respond to the Case Study beginning on page 216 by answering the reflection questions on pages 221-222.

Read: Griggs — Chapters 6-9

Assignment #2:

You will be given a lesson plan with Goals and Objectives, and your task will be to come up with activities appropriate for different age groups, detailing those activities such that each of the learning styles (multiple intelligences) are being met.

Assignment #3:

Reflect on your church educational context with regard to different learning styles. Explain what kinds of methods or models of teaching have been/are being tried that answer to individuals' particular needs, where might there be teaching/learning opportunities overlooked for particular learners, and what challenges do you face in leading your congregation as a learning community. (Maximum - 1 page)

* * * * *

November: “Sent to Serve” (Final Assignment due to instructor by December 15th)

Read: Part 3: Chapters 7-9 of The Church As Learning Community

Read: Griggs - Chapter 13

Final Assignment — please choose from one of the three following options:

- Take an already published/written curriculum for adults (one lesson). In a 3-6 page paper, evaluate it's appropriateness with regard to Lutheran theology and make suggestions for changes, if needed, to accommodate any missing concept. Also, evaluate its appropriateness to be used as a lesson for youth, later elementary students, early elementary students and preschool students. List the main focus for each age group and list objectives for each age group. After this paper, choose **one** age group for which to adapt the adult curriculum and prepare a detailed lesson plan using the Invite, Inform, Investigate, Illustrate, and Inspire format given in class. Please be detailed in describing your activities, and label them according to which learning style is being used.
- Plan a 3-hour teacher training or enrichment event that introduces teachers (specify your age group for teaching) to Multiple Intelligence Theory and equips them to incorporate different learning styles into their teaching. This paper should be 3-6 pages and should include: preparation planning with necessary communications, purpose, resources needed (space, time, set-up), objectives, and scriptural references. In your planning, include and describe an activity that will help the teachers know what kind of learner they, themselves are, and how that affects their teaching.

- Reflecting mostly on chapters 7 and 8 in The Church As a Learning Community, evaluate the educational ministry in your congregation with regard to mission and vocation. In a 3-6 page paper, describe where you see or don't see teaching in your congregation as a conduit for reaching out and applying faith to daily living. How is education in the church a means to serving in the world? How might your congregation be more explicit in planning so that both mission and ministry can work "in tandem?" What other religious education arenas have you seen that can connect daily life with faith (p 292)? Use the reflection questions on pages 259 and 268 as a basis for your remarks. How does mission shape learning? How do actions shape beliefs? Give an specific example of how you might adapt a piece of curricula in order to be able to successfully answer the progressive evaluative questions on page 260 (particularly numbers 4 and 5).

Required Texts:

The Church As Learning Community by Norma Cook Everist
(Abingdon Press ISBN 978-0-687-04500-6)
\$22.80 (Amazon) \$14.99 (Kindle)

Teaching Today's Teachers to Teach by Donald L. Griggs
(Abingdon Press ISBN 0-687-04954-7)
\$22.16 (Amazon) \$21.05 (Kindle)

Additional Reading: (articles provided by Instructor)

The Task of Teaching Faith in the Church by Cathy Monkman
How Our Reformed Faith Informs Our Teaching (Adults) by Jann Treadwell

Recommended Texts:

The Basics of Christian Education by Karen B. Tye
(ISBN 978- 0827202296/Kindle)
\$15.81 (Amazon) \$9.99 (Kindle)