

# CE 502 Teaching For Biblical Faith

Tentative Syllabus : subject to revision!

Fall 2021 Thursday

8:30- 10:30

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*The classroom, with all its limitations, remains a location of possibility. In that field of possibility we have the opportunity to labor for freedom, to demand of ourselves and our comrades, an openness of mind and heart that allows us to face reality even as we collectively imagine ways to move beyond boundaries, to transgress. This is education as the practice of freedom.*  
*bell hooks*

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, participants will engage in critical and emancipatory ways of reading, understanding, interpreting, and teaching the Bible in communities of faith. Considering teaching as a sacramental and prophetic vocation, students will explore teaching strategies for Bible studies that address contemporary challenges and encourage personal and collective growth. From a holistic view of the teaching-learning process, participants are invited to live their faith in engaging, affirmative, transformative, and life-giving ways.

This course meets the requirements for United Methodist professional certification in Christian Education, Youth Ministry, Music Ministry, Evangelism or Spiritual Formation. It is a foundational course in Christian Education for the M.A. and M. Div. degrees. Lay persons who teach in their congregations, pastors seeking to strengthen their teaching skills, and lay professionals seeking certification will find this course useful in their future ministry.

## **COURSE GOALS**

### **Knowing**

Understand how theology and the internal dynamics of the congregation are part of a broader system that is influenced by socio-cultural contexts.

Deepen the knowledge of the prominent authors, themes, concepts, and variety of teaching and learning approaches appropriate for a specific religious community.

Expand the pastoral and ecclesial imagination while exploring how the teaching-learning process can generate a new theological vision for the Church and expand its faithful testimony and mission in the world.

### **Doing**

Articulate the teaching-learning process and biblical reading from a nuanced theological approach, paying attention to contextual issues and concerns that inspire liberating approaches

Create ministerial resources that exemplify pedagogies that are contextually appropriate for the faith community to increase the capacity for interpretation and awareness of the prophetic role of the Church in society.

### **Being**

To be a theological educator who seeks to empower people to be co-creators of the kin-dom of God in our religiously and culturally diverse environment.

To understand oneself as a critical and open participant in a continuous process of a collaborative effort for the transformation of the world.

## **PEDAGOGICAL GOAL AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Our goal in this class is to foster a collaborative and decolonial learning community so that all participants can critically learn from the course content and strengthen their skills as leaders. From engaging critically, creatively, and constructively with course material, participants will be able to gain new theological and educational perspectives to promote innovative, engaged, and contextual ways of teaching-learning and growing in faith communities.

## **REQUIRED BOOKS**

1. Bracke, John M., and Karen B. Tye. *Teaching the Bible in the Church*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2003. ISBN 0827236433. (\$16.71)
2. Moore, Mary Elizabeth Mullino. *Teaching as a Sacramental Act*. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2004. ISBN 082981647x. (\$28.79)

3. Seymour, Jack L. *Teaching Biblical Faith*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2015. ISBN 978-1-63088-430-7. (\$15.81)
4. Tran, Mai-Anh Le. *Reset the Heart: Unlearning Violence, Relearning Hope*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2017. ISBN 9781501832468. (\$28.40)
5. A Study Bible – Preferred NRSV HarperCollins, NRSV Oxford, or The CEB Study Bible.

**Supplemental** Texts for Teaching/Learning Experiences. (Students should choose two books from this list. Each student will teach from one of these books).

1. Zirschky, Andrew. *Teaching Outside the Box: Five Approaches to Opening the Bible with Youth*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2017. ISBN 9781501823893 (\$16.99)
2. Helsel, Carolyn B. *Anxious to Talk about It: Helping White Christians Talk Faithfully about Racism*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2018. ISBN 978-0827200722 (\$19.99)
3. Mosley, Dan. *Faith Beyond Borders: Doing Justice in a Dangerous World*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2016. ISBN 978-1426707896 (\$15.99)
4. Lee, Deborah Jian. *Rescuing Jesus: How People of Color, Women, and Queer Christians are Reclaiming Evangelicalism*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2015. ISBN-13: 9780807075074 (\$19.99)
5. Gench, Francis Taylor. *Back to the Well: Women's Encounters with Jesus in the Gospels*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004. ISBN-13: 9780664227159. (\$14.16)
6. Caldwell, Elizabeth F. *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2018. ISBN 9780664262914 (\$25.00)
7. Bird, Jennifer Grace. *Permission Granted: Take the Bible into Your Own Hands*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015. ISBN 978-0664260408. (\$13.53)
8. Morgan, J. Nicole. *Fat and Faithful: Learning to Love Our Bodies, Our Neighbors, and Ourselves*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2018. ISBN-13: 9781506425221. (\$18.99)
9. Weems, Renita J. *Just A Sister Away: A Womanist Vision of Women's Relationships in the Bible*. Philadelphia: Innisfree Press, 1988. ISBN-13: 978-0931055522. (\$6.48)
10. Romero, Robert Chao. *Brown Church: Five Centuries of Latina/o Social Justice, Theology, and Identity*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020. ISBN-13 978-0830852857 (\$20.99)
11. Pazmiño, Robert W, and Octavio J Esqueda. *Anointed Teaching: Partnership with the Holy Spirit*. Salem, OR: Publicaciones Kerigma, 2019. ISBN 978-1948578233 (\$15.00)

12. Lund, Sarah Griffith. *Blessed are the Crazy: Breaking the Silence about Mental Illness, Family, and Church*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2014. ISBN- 978-0827202993 (\$17.99)

13. Brueggemann, Walter. *Interrupting Silence: God's Command to Speak Out*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2018. ISBN 978-0664263591 (\$14.00)

14. Brueggemann, Walter. *Chosen?: Reading the Bible Amid the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015. ISBN 978-0664261542. (\$11.79)

## GENERAL INFORMATION AND COURSE PRINCIPLES

Each class is more than a gathering; it is an exchange of thoughts and worldviews, which can lead participants to an engaging and vibrant learning experience. Teamwork, attentive listening, empathy, enthusiasm, emotional maturity, kindness, and consideration towards other people's concerns are essential to accomplish this task. Please bring these qualities and values with you to class. Each of you is an adult learner and, therefore, this class will place your own experiences at the heart of the learning process.

This syllabus is only a guide, and as such, it is subject—at any time—to change by the instructor as a response to the classroom interactions and learners' pressing concerns. Any changes will be announced in class, and it is your responsibility to be aware of all such changes.

### Getting Acquainted with the On-line Course

This course will be conducted via Zoom and Moodle. The instructors will provide a Zoom invitation a week prior to the first gathering. We will meet on Zoom for our "in-person" sessions. On Moodle you will find a copy of the course syllabus, additional materials for class, and the work schedule. Make sure to have access to internet with bandwidth that supports video conferencing and document sharing. Avoid connecting via cellphone unless it is your only resource. Make sure you choose a working space with limited interruptions, as much as possible. Our synchronous gatherings during the semester will last two hours each Thursday, beginning at 8:30 am. We expect to start on time and have short breaks to balance virtual fatigue. So, please be certain you can log on to Moodle and Zoom before the course begins.

### Minimum Technological Requirements

Given the use of information technology to deliver this course you will need to be certain you have sufficient technological ability to access and participate in this course. It is the student's responsibility to have sufficient technology to access and participate in the course. So, please make sure you have reliable technological ability so you can actively participate in the course without interruptions. The instructor will assume this and is not obligated to take technological difficulties into account when assessing the student's work.

- Web Browser – You will need the latest version of the web browser you are using. Note that not all browsers work equally well with Moodle, so you may need to experiment with them if you have difficulty using all the functions on the site.
- Operating System – In order to use the latest browser, you will need to have an operating system that is up-to-date enough to handle it. Please be certain you have such an operating system.
- Internet Connection – You will need a high-speed internet connection that is sufficient to run streaming video with no difficulty. If your home internet connection is not sufficient to provide this kind of connection, you will need to find access to a computer that does have this connection.
- Hardware – Bear in mind that you will need sufficient computing power in terms of memory, speed, audio, and video for the different aspects of this course to work well. Make certain that you have all of these in place so that you can run the necessary software and fully participate on-line.

### **Course Overview Concerning Assignments, Academic Policies, and Evaluation Criteria**

All students are required to abide by the academic policies detailed in the Academic Handbook for the current academic year. The following elements are of particular importance to the successful completion of one's coursework:

#### **1. Participation**

Our virtual classroom aspires to become a collaborative, critical, and decolonial environment. It builds on a dialogical perspective in which all participants engage in class discussions and activities thoughtfully. Thus, it will be essential that participants perceive themselves as co-learners and co-leaders during this time together. Furthermore, conscious participation does not mean just talking. Still, it presupposes preparation, careful listening, meaningful attempts to interpret content, constructive verbal contributions to class discussions, active involvement, and critical thinking. While the instructor acknowledges the challenges imposed by a virtual environment and how it affects students differently according to their learning styles, she also understands that the best way to process the information obtained in this class is through dialogue with others. Furthermore, the professor believes that each person has something to contribute to the topic at hand, and not offering that contribution diminishes the class's ethos.

#### **2. Reading**

The intentional, ongoing personal formation of a person is critical for ministry effectiveness and necessarily involves a critical reflection of the assigned materials. The aim of this course is not the transmission of data but rather a transformative learning experience. Therefore, if you haven't read the material, you won't be able to engage in discussion with class members constructively, and chances are, you will not have the opportunity for personal and ministerial transformation.

#### **3. Written Work**

##### **Academic integrity and plagiarism:**

All students are expected to do their work to the best of their ability. "Garrett-Evangelical takes the question of academic integrity and plagiarism very seriously. All incoming students are required to complete an online tutorial designed to help them identify and avoid plagiarism" (HDBK 1718, 69f). Please refer to the seminary's Academic Handbook and online tutorial for additional information and support. (See

19-20 Handbook, 12, 78-83). All professors are required to respond to all suspected incidents of academic dishonesty, especially plagiarism. Repeated incidents of plagiarism or academic dishonesty may result in dismissal from the school.

**Writing and citations:** The Turabian Manual for Writers and the Chicago Manual of Style footnote/bibliography format provide the standard formats for all introductory courses. Basic information on these formats is available online. In advanced courses an instructor may require another style guide appropriate to the discipline (such as APA). (19-20 Handbook, 84).

**Writing support:** The Writing Center at Garrett-Evangelical offers programs to support all students' theological research and writing. See [https://www.garrett.edu/student-life/student-services "Writing Center"](https://www.garrett.edu/student-life/student-services/Writing-Center) for more detailed information.

Please be mindful that, when writing papers, inclusive language for humanity is required; it is standard for academic writing. Use terms like people, world, us, human being, humanity, etc. instead of the terms man, mankind, and men. You are encouraged to explore the rich resources of religious traditions for naming God in inclusive ways. If you have questions about this matter, please feel free to consult with the instructors.

#### **4. Inclusive Language and Preferred Pronouns**

Students are expected to use language in classroom discussions and written work that shows respect for differences and diversity in human life and experience avoiding any racist, sexist, and discriminatory language. Except when quoting from other writings, students are urged to use inclusive language. Thus, this course affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. If you prefer to be called a different name than what is on the class roster, please let us know. Feel free to correct us on your preferred gender pronoun. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

#### **5. Disabilities Policies and Procedures**

Your experience in this class is important for us. The seminary aims to provide reasonable accommodation for qualified individuals with a disability (based on clinical documentation) to ensure their access to and participation in seminary programs. For details, see "Accessibility, Special Needs, and Disabilities policy and process" in the Academic Handbook (19-20 Handbook, 12). Please contact the registrar for inquiries regarding accommodations.

#### **6. Class Attendance**

Class attendance is mandatory. If you cannot attend for any reason, written notification must be given to the instructors before class. Students who miss more than 20% of class sessions (for example, more than two classes) will compromise the course's continuation. (See Handbook 19-20, 19).

#### **7. Communication**

The preferred method of communication is through e-mail during weekdays. However, if students need assistance or want to discuss a relevant matter, they can arrange a virtual appointment or leave a voicemail message. My office number is 847-866-3930. The instructors and the students are expected to keep the

content of this course confidential. Any post on the Internet, personal network, or social media sites should obtain the explicit permission of class participants and instructors.

### **8. Course Assignments Expectation:**

Successful completion of this course requires careful preparation, creativity, collaborative skills, thoughtful individual and group participation, and shared responsibility. The final grade will represent more than the sum of grades for different tasks. It will reflect the instructor's assessment of the student's overall performance throughout the course.

A – will be given to exceptional work that demonstrates comprehensive field knowledge and fully integrates all parts in a comprehensible way.

B – will be assigned to work that exhibits a good understanding of the field, presents good articulation and communication of ideas, and evidence of proper integration of concepts.

C – will be given to average work that presents adequate knowledge of the field, with a regular articulation of ideas, and some integration with subjects discussed.

D – will be given for work that presents some gaps, demonstrates basic knowledge of critical ideas, and minimal articulation of the content discussed.

F – will be given to an insufficient graduate work, which exhibits little evidence of an understanding of the field, shows unclear expression of ideas, and little evidence of integration.

A (100-97), A- (94-96), B+ (90-93), B (87-89), B- (83-86), C+ (80- 82), C (77-79), C- (73-76), D+(70-72), D (67-69), D- ( 63-66), and F (below 60).

**9. Course Organization and Schedule** (Assignments will be explained in detail in the Weekly Schedule (TBA) and will be discussed in the First Day of Class).