

33-837 Approaches to Christian Education

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

SPRING 2025

Tuesday Afternoons 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Room 207

DRAFT

Instructor: Dr. Reginald Blount

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Description – An examination of key leaders, perspectives, and practices in Christian religious education in relationship to students' vocations and practices of educational leadership. The class explores contemporary scholarship in the field of Christian education as a ministry and academic discipline for discipleship and mission.

Specific Goals – These goals are chosen from those developed by the Christian education field for the MA in Christian Education, the contribution of CE to the MDiv curriculum, and the PhD concentration in CE.

- A. **Knowing:** To know practices and disciplines of Christian education and formation and to reflect on how these are affected by differing cultural contexts.
- B. **Doing:** To examine, assess, and lead a variety of approaches to teaching and learning appropriate to a particular faith community. Additionally, for PhD students – To conduct research in educational ministry and to prepare for teaching and leadership in a seminary, college, and/or the church.
- C. **Being:** To be a theological educator who seeks to liberate and empower persons to be co-creators of the reign of God in our multi-cultural and multi-faith environment. This goal includes the following:
 1. To be a reflective teacher and leader who can empower others in the congregation to be reflective and open to transformation.
 2. To be a Christian disciple who continues to engage in the practices that develop and deepen faith.
 3. To understand oneself as a critical and open participant in an ongoing theological tradition; and for PhD in an academic discipline.

Required Texts:

CLASSIC APPROACHES

Maria Harris. *Fashion Me A People: Curriculum In The Church*. Westminster John Knox Press, 1989. ISBN: 978-0664240523. (Amazon \$26.00)

bell hooks *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*. Routledge, 2003. ISBN: 0415968186 (Amazon \$48.95)

Jack Seymour, ed. *Mapping Christian Education: Approaches to Congregational Learning*. Abingdon Press, 1997. ISBN-13: 9780687008124 (Amazon \$17.09)

Christian Educators of the 20th Century. www.talbot.edu/ce20/

Theorists in Christian Religious Education – See the following journals: **Religious Education, Journal of Christian Education and Information Technology (Korea), British Journal of Religious Education**. Also see the work of the following persons:

- A. Religious Instruction -- Elizabeth Caldwell, Thomas Groome, Sara Little, James Michael Lee, Richard Osmer, Robert Pazmino, Ronnie Prevost, Anne Streaty Wimberly
- B. Spiritual Development – Carol Lakey Hess, James Fowler, Maria Harris, Joyce Mercer, Parker Palmer, Sharon Daloz Parks, Karen-Marie Yust.
- C. Emancipatory Transformation – Mary Boys, Virgilio Elizondo, Paulo Freire, Evelyn Parker, Daniel Schipani, Yolanda Smith, Grant Shockley, Michael Warren, Lynne Westfield
- D. Faith Community – Kendra Creasy Dean, Craig Dykstra, Charles Foster, Maria Harris, Sondra Matthaei, William Myers, Mary Elizabeth Moore, Richard Osmer, Linda Vogel, Brett Webb-Mitchell, John Westerhoff, III, Boyung Lee

CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES (Re-imagining Christian Education from the lens of G-ETS CE PhD Graduates)

Justice

Mai-Anh Le Tran. *Reset the Heart: Unlearning Violence, Relearning Hope*. Abingdon Press; First Edition (May 2, 2017). ISBN: 978-1501832468 (Amazon \$18.19)

Hope

Dori Grinenko Baker. *Girl/Friend Theology: God-Talk with Young People*. Pilgrim Press (September, 2023). ISBN: 978-0829800463 (Amazon \$29.95)

Advocacy

Reginald Blount and Virginia Lee. *Let Your Light Shine: Mobilizing for Justice with Children and Youth*. Friendship Press (June 27, 2019). ISBN: 978-1733075930 (Amazon \$26.95)

Leadership

Anne Wimberly, Annie Lockhart-Gilroy, Nathaniel West. *From Lament to Advocacy: Black Religious Education and Public Ministry*. Wesley's Foundery Books (March 27, 2020). ISBN: 978-1945935749 (Amazon \$39.99)

Requirements:

1) Regular attendance and on time, completion of reading assignments, completion of all papers, and informed participation in class discussions.

2) Class session-group presentation of one of the designated contemporary approaches readings. The presentation (3-4 pages, single-spaced) should include:

- a) A brief synopsis of the major issues or points posed by the readings;
- b) A reflection of how the readings affected the presenter;
- c) A formulation of 2-3 questions to spark class discussion.

(Please provide copies of the presentation for other members of the class.)

2) Final Project (15 – 25 pages): Drawing from the class readings and other research, class discussions and personal reflection and analysis, explore “how do we engage in Christian formation in a way that sets people free?” Engage in the exploration through the lens of your own area of research and passion. (Due May 9th)

CLASS SCHEDULE

January 28	Approaches to Christian Religious Education (Introductions)
February 4 & 11	Classic Approaches I ➤ Reading: Seymour, <i>Mapping Christian Education</i>
February 18 & 25	Classic Approaches II ➤ Reading: Harris, <i>Fashion Me A People</i>
March 4 & 11	Classic Approaches III ➤ Reading: hooks, <i>Teaching Community</i>
March 18	JUSTICE ➤ Reading - Mai-Anh Tran
NO CLASS: March 25	SPRING BREAK
April 1	HOPE ➤ Reading - Dori Baker
April 8	ADVOCACY ➤ Reading - Blount and Lee
April 15	LEADERSHIP ➤ Reading: Wimberly, Lockhart, West
April 22	The Vocation of Christian Education
April 29	Class Wrap-Up

