

Conrad Grebel University College
TS 621 – Pastors’ Theology Seminar
The Skill of Learning and the Soul of Teaching
Fall 2016 to Winter 2017

Fall dates: September 14; October 19; November 9; November 30

Winter dates: January 11; February 8; March 8; April 5

Additional dates for credit students: October 26; November 16; January 25

Time and location: 9:00 – 11:50am in CGUC 4224

Instructor: Matthew Bailey-Dick • mrbailey@uwaterloo.ca • 519-885-0220 ext. 24267

Office hours: 1:00 – 3:00pm following each class in CGUC 2124, or by appointment

Description

As Christian learners and teachers, we dwell in the land of things known and things unknown, things teachable and things that just make us scratch our heads. How can we learn about the limitlessness of God? How can we teach others about the way of Jesus? What are the educational tools that can help us to build the church in the 21st century Canadian context? In this course we will explore an Anabaptist approach to Christian education, we will try out some specific teaching methods, and we will revel in God’s gift of learning.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Describe a variety of biblical and theological approaches to education.
2. Look back on a variety of in-class teaching and learning experiences (including individual and group-based exercises) and recognize both successes and failures.
3. Explain how the role of the pastor intersects with the roles of learner and teacher.
4. Identify points of synergy and areas of tension between critical pedagogy and the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition.
5. Evaluate the goals and the impacts of curriculum within a congregational setting.
6. Articulate some questions about the relationship between epistemology (theory of knowledge) and Christian faith, and explain why these questions are difficult to answer.

Required texts

1. Bible (various English translations will be used).
2. Estep, James, Roger White, and Karen Estep. *Mapping out Curriculum in Your Church: Cartography for Christian Pilgrims*. Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2012.
3. Roth, John D. *Teaching that Transforms: Why Anabaptist-Mennonite Education Matters*. Waterloo: Herald Press, 2011.
4. Online readings (available through UW/Grebel library system).

Credit students and audit students

Ordinarily, this course includes both *audit students* and *credit students*. Audit students are usually pastors from within the constituency of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada (MCEC). Credit students are usually graduate students within the Master of Theological Studies program at Conrad Grebel University College. Both audit students and credit students are expected to attend all eight regular classes, examine assigned readings, and participate in class discussions and activities. Each in their own way, students are expected to contribute toward an atmosphere of mutual respect, critical engagement, fascination, and spiritual growth. In addition to these minimum expectations, credit students must complete four scheduled assignments and attend three additional classes as noted near the top of the syllabus (agenda for these three classes will be clarified with the instructor at the beginning of the term).

Assignments

- 1. Learning paper (20%)** – This assignment consists of a written paper (10 pages double-spaced) in which you take stock of your own experience as a learner. Use the following questions as a rough guide for organizing your thoughts: (1) What are some key biblical texts and/or Christian theological traditions that have shaped your own personal view of the nature of learning and how the learning process works? (2) Of the learning theories presented in class, which theory resonates most with you and why? (3) How would you describe the relationships between learning, knowledge, experience, and wisdom? (4) Within your current vocational path (e.g. as a student, as a pastor, etc.), what are two or three substantive lessons you need to learn, why do you need to learn these lessons, and how would you describe your own “spirituality of learning” as you reflect on these lessons? The primary focus of this paper is your own experience and your own perspective; external sources should be kept to a minimum. Due October 26, 2016.
- 2. Train-the-pastor workshop (25%)** – This assignment consists of a combination of written materials and presentation/teaching practice, all based on your reading of Roth’s *Teaching that Transforms*. All credit students will read Roth’s book early in the fall and begin to formulate plans for teaching certain ideas and themes from the book. Mid-way through the fall, credit students will meet with the instructor to coordinate their teaching plans – this might consist of dividing up various themes from the book, collaborating on certain topics, sharing pedagogical ideas and training strategies, and so on. The assignment culminates on November 30 when credit students lead a “train-the-pastor” workshop for the audit students. Grading will be based on written presentation materials, teaching technique/effort, and written reflections on the coordination/collaboration process. Due November 30, 2016.
- 3. Curriculum project or Song project (25%)** – *Option A:* This assignment involves using evaluative and reflective tools from Estep, White, and Estep’s *Mapping Out Curriculum in Your Church* (and/or other tools as appropriate) to critically assess a Christian educational curriculum of your choosing. Use the following questions to guide your work: (1) Does this curriculum succeed in meeting its objectives? Why or why not? (2) To what extent is this curriculum denominationally-based? To what extent does this matter? (3) What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of this curriculum from

the perspective of a teacher/facilitator, from the perspective of a learner/participant, and from the perspective of pastors/church staff? (4) In a church setting, for whom would this curriculum not work, and why? (5) How would you describe the underlying “soul” of this curriculum? *Option B*: Choose a selection of hymns and/or worship songs (preferably from one hymnal or one particular song source) and critically assess this selection of music as a curriculum, using the above questions as a basis. For either *Option A* or *Option B*, the resulting paper should be 15 pages double-spaced. Due February 15, 2017.

4. **Dialogue project** (30%) – This assignment is one-part research, one-part conversation, and one-part introspection. In the fall, we will encounter a specific dialogue-based approach to educational methodology, and we will read several examples of educational theorists whose writing literally consists of dialogue among two or more people. In light of biblical and theological materials, we will explore how dialogue can be utilized and embodied within Christian educational settings. In the new year, students will form dialogue pairs (or triads or, if necessary, you can propose an individual-based approach) who will then work collaboratively on a specific topic pertaining to Christian education. Each dialogue pair will create a dialogue-based strategy for engaging this topic, including the use of external research sources. The end result will be a written transcript-type document (35 pages double-spaced) based on the dialogue and, if necessary, individual reflections submitted as addenda by dialogue participants. Due April 5, 2017.

Expectations for all written assignments

- Title pages, notes, and bibliographies are not included in overall page counts.
- Submit all assignments in hard copy (12-point Times New Roman or equivalent font; one-inch margins; double-spaced text).
- Use Chicago-style notes and bibliography (*not* author/date). See the following webpage for quick reference guide: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html
- Assignments printed on used, one-sided paper are welcome but not required.
- Late assignments: Students are expected to complete the assignments by the dates indicated. Extensions will be granted only under extenuating circumstances as determined in consultation between the student and the instructor. When an extension has not been granted, late assignments are subject to a penalty of 5% for each additional day beyond the due date (including each day of a weekend).

General rubric for marking

- **Highest marks** – for exceptional writing that demonstrates strong insight vis-à-vis course materials, outstanding analytical skills, and a clear and active writing style
- **Good/average marks** – for passable writing showing a fair understanding of the material and some analytical skill, but lacking a degree of focus, elaboration, or editing
- **Below average marks** – for weak writing that suffers from vagueness, poor grammar, rhetorical confusion, lack of analysis, and/or regular inattention to the matter at hand
- **Low marks** – for poor writing that demonstrates little knowledge of the relevant materials and/or does not follow the instructions of the assignment

Schedule and readings

Seminar 1 – *September 14* – **Orientation and opening communion**

- Setting the stage and gathering our questions about education
- Definitions: knowledge, learning, teaching, wisdom, epistemology, bread
- Celebrating communion
 - No readings

Seminar 2 – *October 19* – **The pastor, the learner, the teacher**

- Taking inventory of our educational styles and preferences
- Biblical and theological foundations for education
- How does the role of pastor intersect with the roles of learner and teacher?
 - Online readings: Griffiths; Foster; Matthaëi and Moss; James, Martinez, and Herbers.

Seminar 3 – *November 9* – **Critical pedagogy**

- Education for liberation – e.g. Paulo Freire and those following
- Jesus as a critical pedagogue?
- The skill and the soul of exploring race, class, and gender
 - Online readings: Freire; hooks; Darder; Hinga

Seminar 4 – *November 30* – **What about Anabaptist-Mennonite education?**

- Train-the-pastor workshop (topic: Roth's *Teaching that Transforms*)
- Is there something distinctive about Mennonite education?
- Education in the context of Advent
 - Book reading: Roth
 - Online reading: Egan

Seminar 5 – *January 11* – **Curriculum and the church – part 1**

- Biblical, theological, and historical perspectives on curriculum
- The need for educational maps in the church
- Designing curriculum vs. adopting curriculum
 - Book readings: Estep, White, and Estep – pp. 1 to 236

Seminar 6 – *February 8* – **Curriculum and the church – part 2**

- At issue: What we study vs. how we study (vs. what God is doing)
- The relationship between curriculum and worship
- Curriculum clinic – i.e. time for show-and-tell
 - Book readings: Estep, White, and Estep – pp. 239 to 313

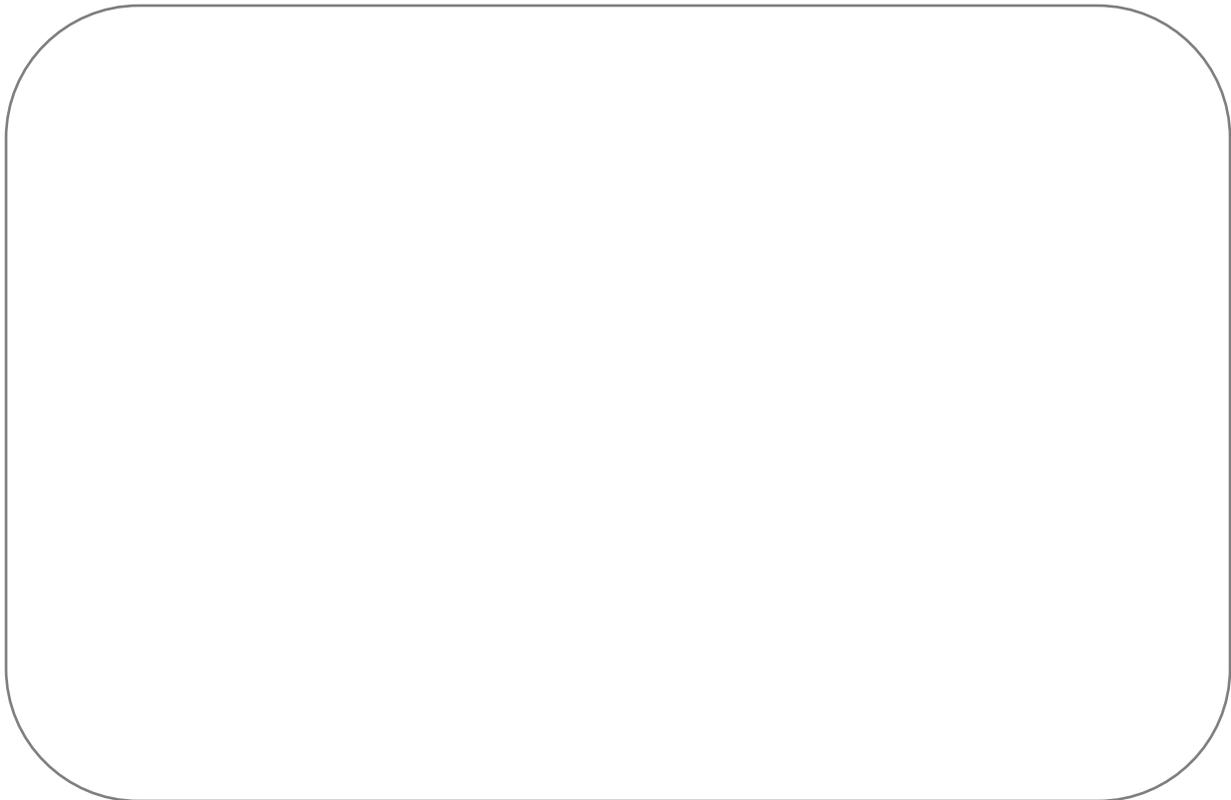
Seminar 7 – *March 8* – **The endless classroom of peace**

- Peace education from a Christian perspective
- The prospective lessons of forgiveness, nonviolent atonement, and the cross
- Education in the context of Lent
 - Online readings: York, Musekura, Guth, Hinojosa

Seminar 8 – *April 5* – **Knowledge mobilization and closing communion**

- Telling the story/Story as a way of mobilizing ourselves for faithful action
- Evaluating the journey of learning
- Celebrating communion
 - Online readings: to be announced

Concept map



“Imagine a circle drawn on the ground. What we call the ‘centre’ is of course the exact middle of the circle. Imagine that the circle is the world; the centre is God; and the radial lines, like spokes, are people's different ways of life. When people want to come closer to God and so come toward the centre of the circle, as they get nearer to the middle, they get closer to one another at the same time as they approach God. The closer they get to God, the closer they get to one another; and the closer they get to one another, the closer they get to God.” – *Dorotheus of Gaza (6th century C.E.)*

Online readings

- Darder, Antonia. "Conscientização: Awakening Critical Consciousness." In her *Freire and Education*, 80-131. New York: Routledge, 2015.
- Egan, Kieran. "Wonder, Awe, and Teaching Techniques." In *Wonder-Full Education: The Centrality of Wonder in Teaching and Learning Across the Curriculum*, ed. by Kieran Egan, Annabella Cant, and Gillian Judson, 149-161. New York: Routledge, 2014.
- Foster, Charles R. "Congregations as Catechetical Cultures." In his *From Generation to Generation: The Adaptive Challenge of Mainline Protestant Education in Forming Faith*, 96-119. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2012.
- Freire, Paulo. "Chapter 1." In his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed (30th anniversary edition)*, translated by Myra Bergman Ramos, 43-69. New York: Continuum, 1970 (2000).
- Griffiths, Paul J. "From curiosity to studiousness: Catechizing the appetite for learning." In *Teaching and Christian Practices: Reshaping Faith and Learning*, ed. by David I. Smith and James K.A. Smith, 102-122. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2011.
- Guth, Karen V. "Reconstructing Nonviolence: The Political Theology of Martin Luther King Jr. after Feminism and Womanism." *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 32(2012): 75-92.
- Hinga, Teresia. "Teaching to Transform: Theological Education, Global Consciousness, and the Making of Global Citizens." In *Teaching Global Theologies: Power and Praxis*, ed. by Kwok Pui-Lan, Cecilia González-Andrieu, and Dwight N. Hopkins, 125-142. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2015.
- Hinojosa, Victor J. "A Christological Social Science? Reflections from a Political Scientist on Future Directions in Mennonite-Anabaptist Peace Studies and Theology." *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 81(2007): 97-106.
- hooks, bell. "Paulo Freire." In her *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*, 45-58. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- James, Glenn, Elda Martinez and Sherry Herbers. "What Can Jesus Teach Us About Student Engagement?" *Journal of Catholic Education* 19(2015): 129-154.
- Matthaei, Sondra Higgins with Jami Moss. "Pedagogical Issues in Theological Education for Diverse Peoples and Divergent Thinkers." In *Proleptic Pedagogy: Theological Education Anticipating the Future*, ed. by Sondra Higgins Matthaei and Nancy R. Howell, 111-129. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2014.
- Musekura, Célestin. "Putting on Christ." In *Forgiving as We've Been Forgiven: Community Practices for Making Peace*, co-authored by L. Gregory Jones and Célestin Musekura, 59-84. Downers Grove: IVP Books, 2010.
- York, Tripp. "Conclusion: A Faith Worth Dying For: A Tradition of Martyrs Not Heroes." In *A Faith Not Worth Fighting For: Addressing Commonly Asked Questions about Christian Nonviolence*, ed. by Tripp York and Justin Bronson Barringer, 207-225. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2012.

Instructor

The instructor is expected to contribute toward an atmosphere of mutual respect, critical engagement, fascination, and spiritual growth. The instructor is expected to provide facilitation skills, nurture scholarly interaction among students, offer pedagogical variety (i.e. use a variety of teaching-and-learning formats), and advance a spirit of collaboration and pastoral care within the classroom community. Furthermore, the instructor is expected to bring chocolate to class on at least two occasions.

Cross-listed course

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage](#) and the [Arts Academic Integrity webpage](#) for more information.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](#), Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72 - Student Appeals](#).

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Note for students with disabilities: The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.