



Nazarene Theological Seminary

1700 E Meyer Blvd • Kansas City, MO 64131 • 816/268-5400

CED 510 Congregational Discipleship
Fall 2009
Tuesdays 1:30-4:30 pm

Essential Information

Please refer to the following documents for information essential for the successful completion of courses and degree programs at Nazarene Theological Seminary. All of these documents are available at <http://bbwiki.nts.edu>

- NTS Mission Statement & Purpose
- Tips for online learning success
- NTS library services
- NTS bookstore procedures
- Online technical requirements and helpdesk information
- NTS Student Handbook including statements on quality of work, plagiarism, and academic probation
- *A Handbook for Inclusive Language*

Instructor Information

Professor: Dean Blevins, Ph.D.
Office: (816) 248-5481
Office Hours: by appointment

Email: dgblevins@nts.edu
Home/Cell: (913) 523-3857 Please do not call
between 9:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m.

Catalog Description

An exploration of the dynamics of congregational life necessary to disciple persons and communities in Christian faith and life. Attention will be given to the historical and theological dynamics informing Christian education through the processes of formation, discernment and transformation; as well as to pastoral oversight of educational ministries in the local church.

Course Narrative & Rationale

The history of the church remains marked by a call to faithful discipleship both within persons and within Christian communities. If the triune God reveals God-self as essentially relational, then faith exists relationally, developed and nurtured both within and between congregations that make up the Body of Christ. Wesleyan discipleship, known also as Christian education, involves three dynamic and interrelated approaches for faithful educational ministry: formation, discernment and transformation. Formation includes those practices, symbols and relationships that engender faith and holiness through our interaction within the life of the Church (in conversation with other living contexts). Discernment remains the careful exploration of the nature of the Christian faith, in direct conversation with the nature of persons, to engender faithful practice and faithful living in a world that remains diverse and, at times, subversive and destructive. Transformation defines not only the outcomes of God's presence in the lives of believers but also the very practices that believers exercise to become agents of transformation (means of grace) both within and outside the life of the local congregation. This course takes seriously the historic and contemporary life of the congregation seeking faithful discipleship, attending to the responsibility of leaders who must lead and "ad-minister" educational ministry in the church.

However, each of these processes requires a context for implementation so we must first “see” our context through analysis before bringing our ministry (the heritage and theories of discipleship to bear). This class proceeds first and foremost with an exploration the concrete experiences within a local congregation, moves to the traditions that inform Christian education, and ultimately moves to strategies based on “both” personal and social convictions. To guide this journey the course will include texts that help with both contemporary and historical analysis as well as personal application.

Educational Assumptions:

1. The work of the Holy Spirit is essential to the processes of Christian education at any level. I will consistently request the Spirit’s presence within and among us.
2. Christian teaching and learning is best done in the context of community. Christian community remains the gift of the Spirit, enhanced or hindered by human effort.
3. Students are valued not only as persons who have potential to learn, but also as persons who already have significant knowledge and experiences to contribute to the purposes of the course. Consequently, some of the course assignments will require cooperative efforts among students. Such cooperation is inherent in a Christian community of learning.
4. The course focuses on the community of faith expressed in a local congregation or parish. In order for the purposes of the course to be fulfilled, each student should have a local church or parish in which he/she regularly participates or is able to “call to mind” a recent congregation that provides a living context for ministry discussion..
5. This is a graduate course. The quality of thinking, writing, speech, and class participation should reflect a graduate level quality. Higher levels of thought (e.g., analysis, synthesis, and evaluation), writing style, spelling, grammar, as well as faithful attendance, consideration of fellow students and their ideas, and timely submission of assignments is expected.

Special Students

Students not currently enrolled at Nazarene Theological Seminary but desiring to take this class for audit, continuing education, or graduate credit must contact the Admissions Office at 800-831-3011 ext. 234 or online at enroll@nts.edu (see seminary website for more information www.nts.edu). Special students will complete a short application with evidence of an undergraduate degree (transcript).

Students with Disabilities:

It is my commitment to make a reasonable effort to facilitate learning for students capable of graduate level seminary work. Any student who has a condition that may prevent full demonstration of his/her abilities as the course is presently designed should contact me at the beginning of the semester to discuss alternative educational practices that have served the student well in the past, and appropriate, mutually acceptable strategies for the present to insure the student’s maximum participation and appropriate evaluation in the course. Student learning limitations need to be based on sound clinical diagnosis and include referential material to help with assessment.

Course Outcomes

Upon completion of the course students should demonstrate:

1. An ability to define discipleship within the historic life of the church.
2. An ability to explore and understand the formative practices in a church as it pursues discipleship

3. An ability to describe the stages of human development and other aspects of human life and to apply that knowledge in leading people in Christian maturity
4. An ability to envision Christian Education most appropriate for a local church and to assure the development of and empowerment of those serving in it.

Required Texts & Course Materials

Required

- Everist, Norma Cook. *The Church as Learning Community*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2002. ISBN 0-687-04500-02 (347 pp)
- Estep, James Riley, Jr. (Ed.) *C.E.: The Heritage of Christian Education*. Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Company, 2003. ISBN 0-89900-904-2 (293 pp)
- Foster, Charles. *Educating Congregations*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1994. ISBN 0-687-00245-1 (155 pp)
- Halverson, Delia. *The Nuts and Bolts of Christian Education*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2000. ISBN 0-687-07116-X (123 pp)
- Hay Group LSI Learning Style Inventory Questionnaire (\$25.00) available online at http://www.haygroup.com/tl/Questionnaires_Workbooks/Kolb_Learning_Style_Inventory.aspx
- Henderson, D. Michael. *A Model for Making Disciples John Wesley's Class Meeting*. Nappanee, IN: Evangel Press, 1997. ISBN 1-92895-70-1 (191 pp)
- Additional Reading, including assigned articles, through library or online

Recommended but not required

- Nelson, C. Ellis. Ed. *Congregations: Their Power to Form and Transform*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press. ISBN 0-8042-1601-0 (263 pp)
- Les Steele, *On the Way: A Practical Theology of Christian Formation* (Wipf & Stock Reprints)

Course Outline

- Unit 1:** Discerning Discipleship in a Local Congregation (Resource: *Educating Congregations*)
- Unit 2:** Understanding the Nature of Discipleship: historical and theological concerns (Resources: *CE: Heritage of Christian Education, A Model for Making Disciples, Blevins Articles*)
- Unit 3:** Domains of Discipleship for Formation and Transformation (Resource: *The Church as Learning Community*)
- Unit 4:** Designing Discipleship: Congregational Curricular issues (Resource: *The Church as Learning Community*)
- Unit 5:** Discipleship Dynamics: Pastor as Educator (Resource: *The Church as Learning Community, Nuts and Bolts of CE*)

Course Assignments & Requirements *Course requirements include*

1. **Class Attendance and Participation (300 points)** - It is important that each person be in attendance with appropriate reading and assignments completed before class begins. This course relies upon weekly interaction as well as in-depth sharing with a focus group. As ministers it remains both an educationally and a morally responsible act to be present. Further, since a learning community is one of the educational assumptions within the course structure, each student is expected to contribute to each class session.
2. **“Wesleyan Discipleship” Key concerns paper (150 points)** Students will write a 7-10 page review summarizing the readings’ key concerns for Wesleyan discipleship. This assignment must include dialog with D. Michael Henderson’s book *John Wesley’s Class Meeting* as well as with two articles (provided on Blackboard) by Dean G. Blevins

"Practicing the New Creation: Wesley's Eschatological Community Formed by the Means of Grace" *Asbury Theological Journal* 57, no. 2 and 58, no. 1 (Fall 2002/Spring 2003) 81-104.

"Renovating Christian Education in the 21st century: A Wesleyan Contribution" *Christian Education Journal Series* 3, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Spring 2004) 6-29

3. Congregational Assessment and Strategy for Educational Ministry (350 points)- Students will work together to develop a comprehensive plan for nurturing discipleship within a congregation based upon a particular size (small, medium or large) and social location (rural, urban, suburban, inner-city, multicultural, etc.) While not a specific context, the students must identify the general context early since discernment and ministry strategies will be evaluated upon these circumstances. Students may elect a specific context (particular church) with appropriate permissions and use of human subjects (see professor). Ministry project groups will be assigned by the third week of class. Students may elect to "exchange" group members but only with the express permission of the moving students and the professor (have a rationale). Groups will be given some in-class opportunities but will probably need to arrange out of class meetings or postings on Moodle.

This comprehensive project includes an assessment of the local congregation utilizing information from texts in class. The strategy may be diverse but with usability, initiative, breadth and relevance providing significant criteria for assessment. The project should include a congregational educational assessment, a preliminary mission statement consistent with stated theology of educational ministry, and a set of goals for the church that are attainable and can be communicated to the local congregation. In addition students will provide a two year master plan for discipleship along with supporting strategies including curricula and methods of pastoral educational administration (e.g., budgets, recruiting forms, teacher meeting agendas, and curriculum order forms), as well as assorted practical ideas for educational ministries, topical bibliographies, seminar applications, appropriate websites and any other materials or information deemed important to the work of a pastor educator.

Students will present a report to the class as well as post their plan on Moodle as a potential resource. Grading will be based both on process as well as content but each student will receive a similar grade for the project. Students who fail to participate fully may jeopardize aspects of the project as well as their class participation grade.

4). Comprehensive essay (150 points). At the end of the semester the student will write a summative essay (5-7 pages) giving their own approach to congregational discipleship that will guide future ministry. This summative paper may draw from sources within the class but should reflect the student's synthesis of the material presented in class.

5) Oral Final (50 points): Students will be asked to participate in an oral final examination discussing aspects of the class. The professor will initiate the conversation but students will be asked to sustain the conversation. In addition students will be asked to provide assessment of the course (oral and written).

Method for Submitting Assignments

Please use the assignments section of Moodle/CMS unless otherwise directed.

Policy Regarding Late Work

Late posts receive a 15% daily reduction the week of the assignment. Posting after the assigned week will not be graded. All research/project work is due midnight of the date assigned. Late work

without a valid reason (illness or death in family) is reduced by 15% the first week and an additional 10% each week following. No coursework may be submitted after July 31st 2009.

Course Grading

1000-901: A 900-801: B 800-701: C 700-600:D 599 or Below: F

Grade Descriptions

“A”-EXCEPTIONAL WORK (surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives)

“B”-GOOD WORK (strong, significant achievement of course objectives)

“C”-ACCEPTABLE WORK (basic, essential achievement of course objectives)

“D”-MARGINAL WORK (inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives)

“F”-UNACCEPTABLE WORK (failure to achieve course objectives)

See rubrics for major assignments and posting for further information on assessment.

Course Calendar

Date	Week	Assignment
9/15 Unit One	One	Congregational Discipleship Introductory Assignment Read Charles Foster's Educating Congregations pp. 17-35 and reflect on a time when you experienced a "flaw" in Congregational education
9/22 Unit Two	Two	Discerning Discipleship Assignment One Read Charles Foster's Educating Congregations pp. 37-108. Can you identify formative and/or community building processes in your local church? Can you identify meaning making processes in your local church?
9/29	Three	Discerning Discipleship Assignment Two Read Charles Foster's Educating Congregations pp. 109 to the end of the text. Can you identify processes for nurturing hope in your local church? What is the relationship between Foster's four categories? How would you lead a congregation through a self assessment?
10/6 Unit Three	Four	CE Heritage Assignment One Read Estep's CE: The Heritage of the Christian Church pp. 1-1 to 5-17. Describe the intersections between Jewish/Christian discipleship and the secular influences of Greek and Roman education. How have both movements influenced Christian education in our day?
10/13	Five	CE Heritage Assignment Two: Read Estep's CE: The Heritage of the Christian Church pp. 6-1 to 9-21. Describe the development of Christian discipleship from the early Church through the Reformation. How have the different movements influenced Christian education in our day?
10/20	Six	Mid-Semester Reading and Research "Wesleyan Discipleship" Key concerns paper due upon return "Wesleyan Discipleship" Key concerns paper (100 points) Students will write a reflective 5-7 paper summarizing the key concerns for Wesleyan discipleship. Develop a dialog with D. Michael Henderson's book John Wesley's Class Meeting as well as with two articles (provided on Blackboard) by Dean G. Blevins "Practicing the New Creation: Wesley's Eschatological Community Formed by the Means of Grace" Asbury Theological Journal 57, no. 2 and 58, no. 1 (Fall 2002/Spring 2003) 81-104. "Renovating Christian Education in the 21st century: A Wesleyan Contribution" Christian Education Journal Series 3, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Spring 2004) 6-29
10/27	Seven	CE Heritage Assignment Three Read Estep's CE: The Heritage of the Christian Church pp. 10-1 to 16-11. What key developments shaped the content and context of Christian discipleship through the modern period? How will the postmodern world change our approach to Christian Education?

11/3 Unit Four	Eight	<p>Domains of Congregational Discipleship Assignment One. Review the article “Renovating Christian Education in the 21st century: A Wesleyan Contribution” Christian Education Journal Series 3, Vol. 2, No. 1. Read the pages 9-148 of Norma Cook Everist's The Church as Learning Community. How would you summarize her first section? Report on at least one reflective exercise Everist provides in this section that you engaged in using either a current or previous congregation. Be sure to give the page number in the book to help identify the exercise but describe the outcome of this reflection.</p> <p>Assignment: Wesleyan Discipleship Key Concerns Paper due in class</p>
11/10	Nine	<p>Domains of Congregational Discipleship Assignment Two: Read the pages 151-253 of Norma Cook Everist's The Church as Learning Community. How would you summarize her section? Report on at least one reflective exercise Everist provides in this section in relation to your current or previous congregation. Be sure to give the page number in the book to help identify the exercise but describe the outcome of this reflection.</p> <p>Take the learning styles inventory by David Kolb. Review support information on the Moodle site. How does this information intersect with different facets of learning as well as the developmental descriptions mentioned by Everist (from different parts of the last two week's reading)? How would you use this instrument in your teaching in a local church? Website: http://www.haygroup.com/tl/Questionnaires_Workbooks/Kolb_Learning_Style_Inventory.aspx</p> <p>Email a copy of your profile to the professor or leave at assigned location on Moodle</p>
11/17 Unit Five	Ten	<p>Designing Discipleship Assignment One: Read the pages 257-347 of Norma Cook Everist's The Church as Learning Community. How would you summarize her section? Report on at least one reflective exercise Everist provides in this section that you engaged in relation to your current or previous congregation. Be sure to give the page number in the book to help identify the exercise but describe the outcome of this reflection.</p>
11/24 Unit Six	Eleven	<p>Discipleship Dynamics Assignment Two: Review Delia Halverson's Nuts and Bolts of Christian Education. Identify two strategies in her text that you think are important to congregational discipleship in the future. Why are they often overlooked from your perspective? What changes need to be made?</p>
12/1- 12/8	Twelve	<p>Discipleship Dynamics Congregational Discipleship Project Presentations (may take two weeks depending on class size)</p>
12/8	Thirteen	<p>Assignment: Comprehensive essay (100 points) due in class. Class discussion</p>
12/15	Fourteen	<p>Final Exam</p>

Grading Rubrics

Posting Rubric

	Poor	Below Average	Average	Great
Participation and Initiative Shown	Rarely participates in discussion; does not make an effort to participate; seems indifferent	Limited initiative, does not post minimum requirement; occasionally makes meaningful reflection on group's efforts; marginal effort to become involved with group	Posts minimum requirement; attempts to direct the discussion and to present relevant viewpoints for consideration by group	Demonstrates good self-initiative; posts frequently; attempts to direct the discussion and to present relevant viewpoints for consideration by group; interacts freely
Relevance of Posts	Posts responses which do not relate to the discussion content; makes short or irrelevant remarks	Occasionally posts off topic; most responses are short in length and offer no further insight into the topic	Frequently posts responses that are related to discussion content; prompts further discussion of topic	Consistently posts responses related to discussion topic; cites additional references related to topic to further discussion
Clarity of opinions/ideas; connection to topic	Does not express opinions or ideas clearly; evidences grammatical/spelling mistakes	Unclear connection to topic evidenced in minimal expression of opinions or ideas; occasional spelling/grammatical errors	Opinions and ideas are stated clearly; occasional lack of connection to topic; well-written and presented	Expresses opinions and ideas in a clear and concise manner with obvious connection to topic; well-planned
	3 points	10 points	17 points	25 points
Totals				

Congregational Discipleship Assessment Tool

1. "The project should include a congregational educational assessment, a preliminary mission statement consistent with stated theology of educational ministry, and a set of goals for the church that are attainable and can be communicated to the local congregation.
2. Provide a two year master plan for discipleship along with supporting strategies including curricula and methods of pastoral educational administration (e.g., budgets, recruiting forms, teacher meeting agendas, and curriculum order forms), as well as assorted practical ideas for educational ministries, topical bibliographies, seminar applications, appropriate websites and any other materials or information deemed important to the work of a pastor educator. "

Congregational Discipleship Assessment Guidelines					
Domain	Non-compliance	Recognition	Comprehension	Analysis	Synthesis
Assessment	Congregational context ignored	Personality Stated but supplemental support missing	Personality stated and programs with no connection	Personality stated and programs/processes presented to clarify & elaborate	Personality stated programs/processes presented, with synthesis with other class information
75 Possible					
Design	No Mission Statement or goals	Mission Statement but no elaboration and no connection to goals	Mission statement with clear connection to goals and implicit Philosophy CE connections	Mission Statement and Philosophy of CE supporting Statement and goals	Mission Statement and Philosophy of CE with clear connections and goals related to context as well as personal philosophy
75 Possible					
Two Year Strategy	No two year strategy	Two year strategy but not connection to Mission Statement	Two year strategy connected to Mission Statement and goals	Two year strategy with strategic interventions based on analysis (could be small moves but addresses particular needs of congregation)	Two year strategy with strategic interventions that that directly draw upon Personality and programs of congregation
75 Possible					
Practical Ideas and interventions	Incomplete Practical Ideas	Practical ideas but not connected to strategy, limited range	Practical ideas commensurate with strategy and displaying some range of resources	Practical ideas commensurate with strategy, sufficient range, and appropriate to context	Practical ideas that relate to overall strategy, mission and personality/programs revealing a workable approach
75 Possible					
Feedback: 1 or 2 sources 25		Presentation Quality 25		Intangibles (reflects creativity) 30	
Final Total 350					

Grading Rubric for Reading and Research

Student _____

Preliminary Considerations	Cognitive Levels (Reasoning)	Recognition & Recall	Comprehension	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation	Comments
Target Level		1	2	3	4	5	
	Reading/ Research Indicators						
Point/ percentage of writing	Overview of writing or introduction to paper	Able to identify/ state key claim(s) of reading/ paper	Able to explain claims in clear & concise manner	Able to indicate how key claim develops through reading/writing	Relates Key Claim to Class focus	Indicates importance of material to Class focus	
Point/ percentage of writing	Primary review/ development of writing	Identifies primary support claims and backing	Able to define clearly & concisely support claims, backing, and qualifications	Able to identify warrants & assumptions support claims & backing	Relates support claims to each other and to class focus	Able to show relative strengths and weaknesses of support claims	
Point/ percentage of writing	Personal Interaction	Connects specific claims to personal interaction	Demonstrates why claim elicits response	Reflection nuances range of writings support claims	Reflection indicates sources that endorse/dispute writing	Reflection references constructive alternatives or application	
	Argumentation Level	Attention	Structure	Response	Detail	Demand	
Target Level		1	2	3	4	5	
Point/ percentage of writing	Form & Style Level	Demonstrates standard form (pagination) and clear writing style	Consistent outline with headings and subheadings detailing development of argument	Forceful writing with consistent documentation at key claims and clear transitions and anticipates qualifications	Documentation addresses supporting claims & backing internally with detailed transitions and intersects with issues in class	Wide range of academic sources with strong rhetorical skills at each level. Clearly identified audience to elicit response	
	Surprise Factor						
Total point/ percentage							