

Contemporary Context of Christian Education
CESW 9402
Fall 2008
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Course Description

A survey is made of the social context of Christian education. Special attention is given to the disciplines of anthropology, political science, education, psychology, sociology, medicine, and social work as they influence the development of Christian education. An effort is made to enhance the student's understanding of the world confronting Christian education and to equip the student to impact more effectively this world as a Christian educator. Historical and current issues, and personalities and movements related to social ministry are addressed. Also serves as a missions seminar.

Objectives:

Upon completion of this seminar, students will be able to:

1. Present an overview of past and current cultural trends and discover and evaluate the Church's ministry response to those trends.
2. Identify and interact with salient research in the area of contemporary culture.
3. Forecast future trends in emerging culture.
4. Identify various societal subgroups among American and international cultures and .
5. Discuss in detail one aspect of contemporary culture
6. Suggest ministry implications in light of the presented culture research.

Texts:

Carson, D.A. *The Gagging of God*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002.

Comiskey, Joel. *Cell Church Solutions: Transforming the Church in North America*. Moreno Valley, CA: CCS Publishing, 2005.

Petracca, Michael F. and Madeleine Scrapure. *Common Culture: Reading and Writing about American Popular Culture*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2006

Kimball, Dan. *They Like Jesus But Not the Church*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007.

Kinnamon, David and Gabe Lyons. *UnChristian*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007.

Roehlkepartain, Eugene. *The Teaching Church: Moving Christian Education to Center Stage*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993.

Requirements:

1. Each student must read *The Gagging of God* and lead the seminar in a discussion of the assigned sections of the text. Discussion assignments will be made in the beginning class conference chat.
2. Each student will prepare a critical book review of either *They Like Jesus But Not the Church* or *Cell Church Solutions*. Book assignments will be discussed in the first course chat session. The review will be 10 pages and will include the following: a biographical sketch of the author, a detailed summary of the book's contents, and a critical evaluation of the author's ideas. The seminar will discuss the book at the first seminar meeting.
3. Article reviews: Using indexed journals, select four articles involving current research in the area of applied Christian education ministry. These articles may be selected in anticipation of your major paper topic. A one-page summary of the article is sufficient (please be sure to include a bibliographic reference in the report). A video segment for viewing and discussion may replace an article and report..
4. Seminar paper: A research paper must be prepared by the student and presented to the seminar. This paper should be a minimum of 30 pages in length. The student will research current trends in ministry practice that seek to address the American cultural trend of interest to the student. The work should reflect careful research and analysis and should include a balance of an appropriate review of the current state of research in the area with an analysis of **original research** (quantitative or qualitative) conducted by the student this semester as part of this assignment. This assignment must be prepared in accordance with the *NOBTS Manual for Doctoral Studies* and *Turabian*, 6th edition. Evaluation of the paper will be two-fold. The paper will be critiqued by the professor and fellow seminar participants based upon grammar, style, mechanics, critical thought, appropriate use of research methodology, and thoroughness of research. **One student will be chosen to lead the critique of the paper (both form and content) and a class participation grade will be given based upon the student's performance as an evaluator.** The presentation will be graded by the professor in terms of the student's creativity and evidenced preparation.
5. Students will choose 1 section of the *Common Culture* text to write a 20 page paper related to the contemporary issue mentioned in the book. Since this particular text deals with analyzing and critiquing popular culture from a secular perspective, the student will engage the ideas presented in the text in light of a biblical worldview. Consideration should be given as to how the book relates to the issue chosen as well as how this might inform ministry practice in contemporary culture. The paper should conform to Turabian guidelines and will aid in class discussion on the portion of the text chosen.