

## 2CE514/01 Educational Ministry of the Church

Reformed Theological Seminary - Orlando

Spring Semester, 2008

Mondays 10:00am – 12:00pm

Instructor: Rev. Chuck DeGroat

Office Hours: See posted hours at office

Telephone for Chuck DeGroat: 407-461-1366

E-mail for Chuck DeGroat: cdegroat@rts.edu

### PURPOSE

A study of the pastor's role as teacher and administrator within the educational program of the church. Careful attention is given to philosophy, history, organization, curriculum, recruiting and training teachers, and the special needs of each age group.

### OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this course, students will:

1. Understand the significance and purpose of educational ministry
2. Be deepened in their understanding of a teacher's role and identity
3. Be aware of multiple paradigms for Christian education
4. Have concrete models for church education

### FORMAT

Teaching will include lecture, discussion, video and visual aids where applicable, and some student presentation.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Ackerman, John. *Listening to God: Spiritual Formation in Congregations*. **ISBN-10:** 1566992451  
**ISBN-13:** 978-1566992459
2. Gorman, Julie. *Community that is Christian: A Handbook on Small Groups*. **ISBN-10:** 0801091454  
**ISBN-13:** 978-0801091452
3. Foster, Charles R. *Educating Congregations: The Future of Christian Education*. **ISBN-10:** 0687002451  
**ISBN-13:** 978-0687002450

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **PRESENCE** – Come to class. Plan to engage and participate.
2. **READING** – All three books are to be read, and used/integrated in some way in the educational curriculum assignment. By the last day of class, please email me to indicate what percentage of the books you read.
3. **GROUP “CURRICULUM FORMATION” ASSIGNMENT** – This is the major assignment for the class. Your group will be responsible to form a creative educational curriculum for one of the demographics listed below. The group is encouraged to use multimedia or other helpful forms to present their curriculum proposal. This proposal is something that would be presented to the church session/board. The proposal should include the following:
  - a. **A contextually appropriate curriculum that engages the normative/situational/existential**
  - b. **A general summary of courses and content**
  - c. **A distinct methodology – a creative and imaginative role for aesthetics, community building, and teacher-participant interaction, etc.**
  - d. **A mission/purpose statement**
  - e. **A short and long term vision for the educational ministry**
  - f. **A justification of why you’re doing what you’re doing**
  - g. **Anything else you imagine might aid in content, method, presentations, etc...the more creative and thoughtful, the better...**
  - h. **Something to hand-out (perhaps a CD with your presentation, text/image handouts, etc.) for students to take with them as a model for a church they might serve in the future.**

### Demographic choices:

[ *Pointe-less Community Church*: a middle to upper middle class congregation of 400 people with good educational and financial resources for you to use. The church is mostly college educated, but fairly biblically-illiterate. Most congregants worship at your church because they love the preaching and the social atmosphere, but make few commitments to church life beyond that. The pastors are theologically eclectic, but appreciate reformed theology and would like to see more teaching on it. This church seems mired in an addiction to “relevance,” and has most often chosen the pragmatic over the substantial.

[ *Knox Reformed Church*: Knox is a 150-year old church committed to historic, reformed theology. It is a conservative congregation with a rich history, and a congregation well-informed theologically. The session hired you to breathe new life into their educational program which appears mired in “information-dump” mode, and fails to stir the affections. The senior pastor wants to push the envelope with becoming a stumbling block to older Christians who are used to things the way they’ve been.

[ *Crabgrass Church*: Crabgrass is a small congregation of nearly 100. It is made up of a mostly rural demographic. Only 25% of the congregation is college-educated. You are the solo pastor. The church has had a morning Sunday school hour, but nothing more than that. It is

a reformed congregation historically without much of a theological identity today. The two elders are good men who just want to see the church survive.

[ *helio-entensive-xcentric-visio-bod church*: this so-called emergent congregation loves lower-case lettering, creative and artistic young people, authenticity, and messiness. Their motto is “Jesus was messy and so are we.” The pastor is a reformed guy who considers himself post-everything. They are an activist church focused on social justice issues.

[ *St. Archemia Church*: this Anglican congregation has left the mainline Episcopal church to join with an African mission. It is committed to sacramental theology, appreciates all-things Robert Webber and Bishop Wright, and wants to see their educational curriculum reflect their distinctives.

### GRADING SCALE

Listed below are the assignments that will determine your final course grade.

Class Participation	30 points (class attendance is crucial)
Readings (%)	30 points
Presentation	40 points

A (97-100), A- (94-96), B+ (91-93), B (88-90), B- (86-87), C+ (83-85), C (80-82), C- (78-79), D+ (75-77), D (72-74), D- (70-71), F (below 70)

### ACADEMIC STANDARDS

If you should miss a class, you are expected to contact another student regarding the information covered.