

United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities
CL442: MINISTRIES WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Autumn, 2005

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DESCRIPTION

This course explores theological, spiritual and practical approaches to ministry with children and families with children, including teaching methods, curricular resources, intergenerational and broadly graded educational ministries, parenting, and child advocacy.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students will:

1. be able to articulate their theology and theory of ministry with children and families
2. be able to articulate a clear understanding of children and spirituality
3. have developed basic competencies of ministry practices with children

TEXTBOOKS

(required)

Elizabeth Caldwell. *Making A Home for Faith: Nurturing the Spiritual Life of Your Children*. United Church Press, 2000.

George E. Conway. *Giving Good Gifts: The Spiritual Journey of Parenthood*. Westminster John Knox, 2001.

Pamela D. Couture. *Seeing Children, Seeing God: A Practical Theology of Children and Poverty*. Abingdon, 2000.

Ron Cram. *Bullying: A Spiritual Crisis*. Chalice Press, 2003

James Garbarino. *Raising Children in a Socially Toxic Environment*. Jossey-Bass, 1995.

Jan Johnson. *Growing Compassionate Kids: Helping Kids See Beyond Their Backyard*. Upper Room Books, 2001

Margaret A. Krych. *The Ministry of Children's Education: Foundations, Contexts and Practice*. Fortress Press, 2004.

Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore. *Let the Children Come: Reimagining Childhood from a Christian Perspective*. Jossey-Bass, 2003.

Karen Marie Yust. *Real Kids, Real Faith: Practices for Nurturing Children's Spiritual Lives*. Jossey-Bass, 2004.

(suggested)

Nathan Dungan. *Prodigal Sons and Material Girls: How Not to Be Your Child's ATM*. Wiley, 2003

Carol Wehrheim. *Getting It Together: Spiritual Practices for Faith, Family and Work*. Westminster John Knox, 2002

Wendy M. Wright. *Seasons of a Family's Life: Cultivating the Contemplative Spirit at Home*. Jossey-Bass, 2003.

REQUIREMENTS

- Assigned readings will be discussed on date assigned; expect to be involved in discussions of readings and course material

- All written assignments must be completed to pass course. Papers must be double-spaced, typed (12 pt with standard margins), and properly footnoted, following Student Handbook guidelines. In addition, note the definition of “plagiarism.” I will not read or grade material that has not been properly prepared and edited. I will not accept late papers unless arrangements are made in advance or if the lateness is due to an emergency.
- Evaluation and grading will be based on attendance and class participation, engagement in discussions, and completion of assignments. More than 2 absences will affect your course evaluation. Extensions beyond the end of the semester will be approved only under extraordinary circumstances (see later in syllabus for policy from the Student Handbook).

Information from *Student Handbook*

Extensions

The work for a course is terminated at the end of the final class session. The performance in the course is evaluated on the basis of the work submitted by that time, unless an exception is made by the instructor, in which case a formal petition for extension must be approved by the instructor by the end of the final class session. Extensions (of course work) beyond the end of the semester will be approved only under extraordinary circumstances. Each instructor will include this policy on each course syllabus as well as the criteria by which she or he will grant such an extraordinary exception. BAK approves extensions because of personal or family illness or other emergencies.

Academic Integrity

Writing papers, preparing oral and written presentations, and conducting scholarly research are an important part of seminary education. When students use the ideas or words of others they must acknowledge their sources in accordance with a standard form for footnotes, such as the Social Science Style Sheet, or Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers and Dissertations*.

Plagiarism is defined as follows: “Plagiarism is the dishonest act of presenting the words or thoughts of another writer [or person] as if they were your own ... If you quote from anything at all ... you must put quotation marks around it, or set it off from your text. If you summarize or paraphrase an author’s words, you must clearly indicate where the summary or paraphrase begins and ends. In every instance you must formally acknowledge the written source from which you took the material.” Plagiarism is a serious offense. Ignorance concerning the proper citation of sources does not exempt the student from the consequences of plagiarism. If plagiarism is detected, consequences may include an “F” or “NC” for the assignment or exam in question, or an “F” or “NC” for the course. Repeated offenses may be grounds for dismissal from the student’s program.

Seminary Policy on Inclusive Language

Exclusive language is any form of communication which demeans, discounts, or ignores the experiences and full humanity of a group of people on the basis of gender, race, ethnic group, class, age, sexual orientation, or differing abilities and hence fosters oppression and injustice. Language shapes relationships between persons and shapes the

self-image of persons. UTS seeks to affirm the human community in all its diversity. In a tradition of seeking justice as an educational community and while embracing the diversity of faith traditions, UTS strongly encourages all of its members to use language in writing and speech that is inclusive in regard to gender, race, ethnic group, class, age, sexual orientation, or differing abilities.

ASSIGNMENTS

“Response sheets” will be distributed and collected in most class meetings. These are designed to assess your preparation and grasp of the course material.

- #1: A 5-page paper, drawing upon class material through October 6, addressing “What is the role of the Church in the lives of children?” Due: October 13
- #2: Prepare: a 4-5 minute "time with children" to be presented in class (videotaped). For Barbara, prepare a one-page report, including:
- story/topic presented
 - objective/purpose of presentation
 - any visual aids used, or ways children engaged
 - why this is appropriate, given the course material
- Due: November 3
- #3. Research and present one topic for class discussion. Prepare material to complement the course readings; you will have 10 minutes to present and 20 minutes to lead discussion. Bring bibliography and appropriate handouts.
- Bullying* _____
- Poverty and children* _____
- Materialism and children* _____
- Street violence* _____
- Media and children* _____
- Drugs and children* _____
- #4 A 10-to 12-page paper, on a topic of your choice relating to ministry with children and families, showing
- your ability to work with at least 3 of the assigned texts and one additional source
 - an integration of theology, theory and practice of ministry with children
- This will be presented to the class on December 20; please bring a one-page synopsis with bibliography for each class member.

SCHEDULE

- 9/15 Introductions to course and each other
- 9/22 Theology of childhood
Read: Miller-McLemore
- 9/29 Development of children and faith
Read: Caldwell *and* in Krych: Hymans (2) and Everist (3)
- 10/6 Spirituality and faith
Read: Yust
- 10/13 Parenting and families
Read: Conway *and* in Krych: Hughes (4)
Due: **Assignment #1**
- 10/20 Ministry practices: education and worship
Read: in Krych: Krych (7), Jacobson (8), McArver (9), and Frambach (10)
- 10/27 Reading week
- 11/3 Ministry practices, continued
Due: **Assignment #2**
- 11/10 Ministry practices, continued
- 11/17 Challenges of a toxic environment
Read: Garbarino *and* Couture
Poverty and children _____
Materialism and children _____
Drugs and children _____
Street violence _____
- 11/24 Thanksgiving
- 12/1 Media Impact on children
Read: in Krych: Hess (5)
Media and children _____
- 12/8 Compassionate kids or bullies?
Read: Johnson *and* Cram
Bullying _____
- 12/15 What is the church's ministry with children and families?
- 12/20 (Monday): Assignment # 4 presentations and course evaluation