

## Christian Education Online CE 505Z

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Required: *Three credit hours.*

### Introduction

Welcome to the course, **Christian Education**. Although I can't give you a personal welcome, as I might do in my on-campus course, I do want to welcome you warmly to this vital learning experience. I want this course to be a significant and vital part of your seminary education. You are one of many students taking advantage of the alternative delivery of high quality theological education through our EDEN distance learning enterprise. I am available when you need me because we aren't limited by office hours or distance. You can also access course materials and other pertinent information through the EDEN web site located on the seminary web page. I look forward to getting to know you better as we progress through the course materials. Anytime you experience difficulty or have a question about course content or course requirements, please use one of the communication means identified above to reach me. You can also stop by my office in Reid Hall. I pray God's wisdom as you expose yourself to the study of his Word.

*Dr. Steve Lowe*

### Mission Statement

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to educate persons for service in the Christian Church. This course is purposely designed to educate persons so that they can carry out educational ministry in the Christian Church. Specifically in regard to the Master of Divinity degree program this course helps achieve the goal of preparing students to lead congregations in Christian Education with special emphasis on the training of teachers and other lay ministers. In regard to the Master of Arts in Christian Education degree this course helps achieve the goals of articulating a theology of educational ministry arising from Biblical and theological foundations, being prepared to design, administer, and assess educational ministry programs, and being prepared to train teachers and leaders in the Church's educational ministries.

## Course Description

This basic course in Christian Education deals with the theology and practice of educational ministry in the local church. Biblical and theological foundations for Christian education as a servant ministry for all of the local Church's life and mission are examined, and these foundations are developed into models for faithful and intentional educational ministry. Particular attention is given to the responsibility and opportunities pastors and educators undertake as servant leaders in the Church's educational tasks and ministries, and to the spiritual formation of pastors and educators. Required for M.Div. and M.A.E.M. students.

## Course Purpose

The purpose of this course is to provide the student with a comprehensive Biblical framework or paradigm that guides our understanding of the Biblical principles of religious education as contained in the Hebrew Old Testament and the Christian New Testament.

## Course Objectives

1. Provide a biblical and theological basis for Christian Education ministry in the local Church.
2. Provide a blueprint for translating biblical and theological principles into educational practice.
3. Provide several biblical models of education that students may consider for the practice of educational ministry in the local Church.
4. Provide a biblical model of spiritual formation as the goal of all educational ministries in the church.
5. Provide an environment in which students and instructor discuss and debate current issues and perennial problems involving Christian Education ministry in the local Church.

## Course Resources

### REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

You may use [Erskine Seminary's Virtual Bookstore](#) to order your textbooks for this course.

*Introducing Christian Education: Foundations for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Michael J. Anthony, Baker. ISBN: 0801022754.

*You Are My Witnesses: A Mission-Based Model of Christian Education*, Stephen D. Lowe, 2004. This manuscript will be available in the online classroom for this course.

*Education That is Christian*, Lois LeBar. Chariot Victor Publishing, 1998. ISBN: 1564767493.

**Optional: Choose one from among the following:**

*The Nuts and Bolts of Christian Education*, Delia Halverson, Abingdon. ISBN: 0687071164.

*Soul Stories: African American Christian Education*, Anne Wimberly, Abingdon. ISBN: 0687494324.

*Christian Education in the Small Church*, Donald Griggs, Judson Press. ISBN: 081701103X.

### RECOMMENDED TEXTS

- *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, Fifth edition.
- *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing)

### Course Assignments FAQs

1. Students must submit all assignments via e-mail attachment (unless otherwise notified).
2. Please use Microsoft Word when submitting assignments electronically.
3. All assignments should be clearly marked on the e-mail subject line with the student's last name and assignment number.

### Course Platform

Erskine Seminary is accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). According to the ATS Standard 10.3.4.3, "Institutions shall ensure that distance education programs provide appropriate opportunity for collaboration, personal development, interaction among peers within a community of learning, and supervised field or internship opportunities when appropriate to the degree program." It is with this stipulation that EDEN has implemented a web-based learning platform which will serve to provide a number of collaborative learning experiences. The learning platform is Moodle and according to their website, "Moodle is a course management system designed to help educators who want to create quality online courses . . . and create effective online learning communities." Dr. Lowe will provide you with additional information concerning Moodle tutorials, site information, and the peer mentoring program. In order to meet the online discussion component of this course, you will need:

- A computer (or access to a computer)
- High-speed access to the Internet

### Course Topics

Biblical and Theological Foundations – A Mission-Based Model of Christian Education  
Weeks 1, 2, 3

Spiritual Formation as the Goal of Christian Education Ministry – An Ecosystem Model of Christian Nurture  
Weeks 4, 5, 6

Organizing Christian Education Ministries – A Holistic Model of Church Education Ministry  
Weeks 7, 8, 9

Leading Christian Education Ministries – A Collaborative Model of Servant Ministry  
Weeks 10, 11, 12

Evaluating Christian Education Ministries – A Mission-Driven Model of Assessment  
Weeks 13, 14, 15

## Course Components

We will achieve the purpose and objectives of this course through three learning components:

1. **Reading Component:** Exposure to the literature of the field relevant to the topic of this course through required readings as specified in this course syllabus.
2. **Application Component:** Students will demonstrate application through a blueprint for a mission-based Christian education ministry

**Collaborative Component:** The student will participate in guided online discussions. Each student will actively participate in weekly class discussions in the online classroom for this course located on the EDEN web page. Part of your grade relates to your level of participation in the online classroom as stipulated in this syllabus. Students are expected to participate weekly. No post hoc online postings are accepted.

3. These components will provide a well-rounded learning experience for the thoughtful and diligent student producing a time commitment of approximately 120 contact hours to complete the course.

**Please Note:** Courses taken through Erskine's Distance Education Network are self-directed and self-paced within the parameters of the semester in which you enroll for the course. The time constraints of this course are self-imposed to a large degree. However, keep in mind that if you are working toward degree completion you may be bound by a time frame imposed by Seminary policy. Consult your catalog for specific time frames in your degree program. Some variation in time required to complete an assignment is to be expected due to a variety of factors, not the least of which is your own self-discipline.

## Course Grading

Students always need to know what the professor expects of them in any course. This is especially true in distance learning courses.

The following grading scale, from the Seminary catalog assigns a numeric value to each completed assignment. The professor weights each assignment equally. Your final grade is the average of each grade received. You receive a letter grade based on your average raw score using the following grade scale recently adopted by the Seminary faculty:

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| A Level Work = | Exemplary ability to differentiate constituent parts; assess and critique theories, thoughts, ideas, concepts, proposals, and relevant literature; and the ability to reason in a logical and compelling manner.   |
| B Level Work = | Reflects above average grasp of the subject matter; displays a superior ability to use new knowledge in a creative manner; and can demonstrate an above average ability to discriminate among alternative viewpoints.  |
| C Level Work = | Adequate but not exceptional ability to think cogently and clearly; sufficient ability to understand and comprehend subject matter; and a satisfactory ability to integrate and organize course concepts in a logical and coherent manner.                           |
| D Level Work = | Inadequate mastery of basic facts and information presented in the course; insufficient or inappropriate use of common terms and language indicating an inadequate grasp of the material; and an inferior ability to analyze and judge proposals, ideas or concepts. |

### Grade Scale

|    |        |    |       |
|----|--------|----|-------|
| A  | 95-100 | C  | 80-83 |
| A- | 93-94  | C- | 78-79 |
| B+ | 91-92  | D+ | 76-77 |
| B  | 88-90  | D  | 72-75 |
| B- | 86-87  | D- | 70-71 |
| C+ | 84-85  | F  | 0-69  |

## Course Requirements

### 1. Reading Component

After you read each book as directed, please use the *Suggested Format for Reaction Paper* **that you will find in the online classroom** for this course. You will do **one form** for each book.

- You will post\* your completed form (reading report) to the online classroom for other students to read and react to.

- You must read one report from another student per book. The online classroom will have a calendar that will indicate when each reading report is due and when each critical reaction to a reading report is due.
- Offer a critical reaction to each book in the course using the *Suggested Format for Reaction Paper*. A critical reaction doesn't mean that you are necessarily critical or have a negative response to the book. Instead, I'm using the word critical to refer to the method you use to analyze and evaluate the book. A critical reaction is a thoughtful, deliberate, and disciplined analysis of an author's arguments, assertions, and assumptions.

\*Steps to upload your assignment:

1. Find the "Reaction Paper Depot" discussion forum in the online classroom.
2. Click on that link and you will find assignment listed there.
3. Click on "Add a new discussion topic" and this will take you to the upload area
4. Type in your name and reaction paper title (i.e. Joe Smith's Christian Education paper) in the subject line.
5. Type a BRIEF explanation in the message section (i.e. Paper)
6. Click on the "browse" feature at the bottom of that paper and find your paper.
7. Double-click on your document and select "post to forum" shown at the bottom of the screen.

Steps to download (or read) others' assignment:

1. Find the "Reaction Paper Depot" discussion forum in the online classroom.
2. Click on that link and you will find student postings listed there.
3. Click on the title of the student posting listed under Discussion.
4. Click on the Word document in that posting.

## 2. Application Component

Create and produce a Christian Education Ministry Plan for a local Church. This will be your major project for the course. It will serve as a roadmap or blueprint for leading and implementing a mission-based program of Christian Education ministry in a local church. If done properly, it will serve you well as a ready-to-use strategy once you are serving in a full-time ministry capacity (Pastor, Director/Minister of Christian Education, Director of Educational Programs, etc.). You may find details concerning the content of the ministry plan in the online classroom. This assignment also serves as the Student Portfolio piece for this course. Once it is graded and corrected, you should submit this corrected version to the Registrar's Office for inclusion in your seminary portfolio.

## 3. Collaborative Component

I build the learning environment for this course upon the assumptions of adult learning theory as espoused in the andragogical model of Dr. Malcolm Knowles and upon the biblical/theological premise of the priesthood of all believers. In practice, this means that the course will be highly interactive, collaborative, and

participatory. You will experience this dimension of adult teaching and learning through your online participation in the *Going Deeper* sections for each month.

- Respond to each *Going Deeper* question or issue in the appropriate place in the online classroom for this course.
- React to other students and what they have written.

Each week I will have a different question/problem posed in the *Going Deeper* section of the online classroom. Each student posts a series of responses and reactions to my question as well as the comments of other students in the class

## Course Schedule

### LEARNING COMPONENT #1

All work for the first component should be completed four weeks from the semester start date.

| Week | Assignments Due  |
|------|--|
| 1    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>You Are My Witnesses: A Mission-Based Model of Christian Education</i></li> <li>• Interact with course content.</li> <li>• Post a response to <i>Going Deeper</i></li> <li>• Begin working on Reaction Paper 1</li> </ul>   |
| 2    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>You Are My Witnesses: A Mission-Based Model of Christian Education</i></li> <li>• Interact with course content.</li> <li>• Post a response to <i>Going Deeper</i></li> <li>• Look at PowerPoint presentation</li> <li>• Continue working on Reaction Paper 1</li> </ul>   |
| 3    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>You Are My Witnesses: A Mission-Based Model of Christian Education</i></li> <li>• Interact with course content by reading <i>A month of Sundays</i> article</li> <li>• Post a response to <i>Going Deeper</i></li> <li>• Look at PowerPoint presentation</li> <li>• Continue working on Reaction Paper 1</li> </ul> |
| 4    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>You Are My Witnesses: A Mission-Based Model of Christian Education</i></li> <li>• Interact with course content by looking at PowerPoint presentation</li> <li>• Post a response to <i>Going Deeper</i></li> <li>• <b>Reaction paper due.</b></li> </ul>   |

### LEARNING COMPONENT #2

All work for the second component should be completed eight weeks from the semester start date.

| Week | Assignments Due  |
|------|--|
| 5    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>Introducing Christian Education: Foundations for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</i></li> <li>• Interact with course content by reading <i>The Power of the Family</i> article</li> <li>• Post a response to <i>Going Deeper</i></li> <li>• Start working on CE Ministry Plan</li> <li>• Begin working on Reaction Paper 2</li> </ul>   |
| 6    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>Introducing Christian Education: Foundations for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</i></li> <li>• Interact with course content by reading the articles posted about faith maturity; additionally, please review the PowerPoint presentation.</li> <li>• Post a response to <i>Going Deeper</i></li> <li>• Continue working on CE Ministry Plan</li> <li>• Continue working on Reaction Paper 2</li> </ul> |
| 7    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>Introducing Christian Education: Foundations for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</i></li> <li>• Interact with course content by reviewing the PowerPoint presentation and responding to question in <i>Going Deeper</i></li> <li>• Post a response to <i>Going Deeper</i></li> <li>• Continue working on CE Ministry Plan</li> <li>• Continue working on Reaction Paper 2</li> </ul>                    |
| 8    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>Introducing Christian Education: Foundations for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</i></li> <li>• <b>Reaction paper due</b></li> <li>• Continue working on CE Ministry Plan</li> </ul>  |

### LEARNING COMPONENT #3

All work for the third component should be completed twelve weeks from the semester start date.

| Week | Assignments Due  |
|------|--|
| 9    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>Education That is Christian</i></li> <li>• Interact with course content by reviewing the PowerPoint presentation, completing Inventory, and responding to question in <i>Going Deeper</i></li> <li>• Post a response to <i>Going Deeper</i></li> <li>• Continue working on CE Ministry Plan</li> <li>• Begin working on Reaction Paper 3</li> </ul> |

|    |  |
|----|--|
|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read one of the optional required texts</li> <li>• Begin working on Reaction Paper 4</li> </ul>   |
| 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>Education That is Christian</i></li> <li>• Interact with course content by reviewing the PowerPoint presentation</li> <li>• Post a response to <i>Going Deeper</i></li> <li>• Continue working on CE Ministry Plan</li> <li>• Continue working on Reaction Paper 3</li> <li>• Read one of the optional required texts</li> <li>• Begin working on Reaction Paper 4</li> </ul> |
| 11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>Education That is Christian</i></li> <li>• Interact with course content by reviewing the articles</li> <li>• Post a response to <i>Going Deeper</i></li> <li>• Continue working on CE Ministry Plan</li> <li>• Continue working on Reaction Paper 3</li> <li>• Read one of the optional required texts</li> <li>• Begin working on Reaction Paper 4</li> </ul>                |
| 12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post a response to <i>Going Deeper</i></li> <li>• <b>All Reaction papers due</b></li> <li>• <b>CE Ministry Plan due</b></li> </ul>  |

### Relevant Institutional and Class Policies

**Conduct in Theological Discussions:** Erskine Seminary is committed to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, and it expects its students to show respect for all who identify with that one Church. In all written work, oral presentations, and discussions both inside and outside the classroom, the Seminary expects students to conduct discussions of controversial issues in a context of respect for those with whom one disagrees. Please see the Community Life Statement in the Catalog for more information.

**Language about God and Humanity:** Although God transcends the distinction between male and female, the Bible and the Church's historic creeds and confessions use masculine language in reference to God. Thus, the Seminary encourages all students to retain this masculine usage when speaking and writing about God. Furthermore, the Seminary recognizes that all human beings, male and female, are created equally in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27), and believers of both sexes are fellow heirs of the grace of life (1 Pet. 3:7). Accordingly, whenever students are speaking and writing about males and females, they should use language that clearly includes both men and women (for example, by saying/writing "humanity" rather than "man" or "people" rather than "men").

**Late or Incomplete Work:** The grade of "I" or incomplete is given at the

discretion of the professor. A grade of “I” is normally given when a student has substantially completed the requirements for a course but has been prevented by extraordinary circumstances from completing the remainder of the course requirements. A student who wishes to request an incomplete should normally complete an incomplete form prior to the end of the semester and ask the professor to grant the request. (Under unusual circumstances, the student may communicate with the professor by phone or email rather than in person, and the professor may then agree to fill out the form at the student's request. Under exceptional circumstances, the professor may initiate the process by filling out the form on the student's behalf.) If the professor grants the request, he/she will sign the incomplete form and turn it in with his/her final grade report. An “I” in any course must be removed by March 1 for the Fall Term, April 1 for the January Term, August 1 for the Spring Term, and November 1 for the Summer Term. Only the Dean may grant extensions of incompletes beyond the established completion date. Otherwise, these grades automatically become “F.” The Seminary imposes a fee for Incomplete grades to the student's account.

**Drop/Add/Withdrawal:** Once a student has completed, signed, and submitted his/her registration to the Registrar for this class, it is a binding contract, and billing will be based on this registration. If the student decides not to take this class, he/she must complete a “drop/add” form and secure the appropriate signatures prior to the drop/add deadline during the second week of the semester or term. If one wishes to withdraw from the course after the drop/add deadline, one must complete a withdrawal form, and tuition will be refunded on a pro rated basis. Failure to withdraw from the class properly will result in the student's receiving a grade of “F” for the course, and full tuition charges will apply. No exceptions will be made to this policy.

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the use in writing of wording or ideas produced by others without crediting the author and/or source from which the material was taken. As the following statement indicates, plagiarism is a serious offense that undermines both the witness and integrity of the Christian community:

Occurrences of plagiarism shall be considered ‘documented’ when the instructor is able to produce documentary evidence that plagiarism has occurred, and when the instructor has reason to believe that the plagiarism was motivated by a deliberate attempt to receive credit for ideas or work not the student's own. Where such plagiarism involves the theft of the academic work of another student, whether at Erskine or any other institution, it shall be designated ‘documented theft of another student's work.’

The instructor involved, in consultation with the Dean, may recommend measures deemed appropriate. In cases of documented plagiarism or documented theft of another student's work, the offending student will automatically receive the following penalties:

- Failure of the course(s) in which plagiarized or stolen work is submitted
- Dismissal from the Seminary for a minimum of one semester
- Forfeiture of the right to tuition refunds during the semester(s) affected

Before such penalties are imposed, a committee of at least three faculty members must agree that they are appropriate to the case. Appeals in such cases may only be addressed, in writing, to the President of Erskine College and Theological Seminary.

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