EM/WM 657 Educational Ministry in Cultural Perspective  
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary  
Fall 2015: Wednesdays 2-5PM  
Dr. Mark Cannister

Course Description:  
This course explores educational ministry in light of the cultural dimensions of life. Students will be challenged to consider how the cultural realities of both the teacher and the learner affect the various aspects of teaching decisions and strategies.

Course Textbooks:  
Required:  

Reference (for curriculum design project):  

Recommended:  

Course Assignments:  
- Attendance and Participation (10%)  
  - Students are expected to be present for each session ready to participate/contribute, and students are responsible to keep up with all the content of the course.  
  - Students should approach the course with intrinsic motivation, initiative, and prayer for fellow course participants and with an attitude of openness and willingness to risk encounter and dialogue. Listen to what others are saying and graciously make your own viewpoint known, even if others do not agree. Gently raise questions about what others share.  
  - Be ready during each class period to share from your weekly reflective journal entries to case studies.
• **Weekly Reflective Journal on Case Study** (30%)
  - Students will participate in a semester-long small group during the class and are expected to participate fully and make every effort to promote a respectful and stimulating atmosphere in the lives of fellow students in the group; and share at appropriate times any part(s) of their journal entry and of their group conversations during the class-wide discussion on the day the case study is due.

  - Students will create weekly journal entries based on the assigned case study for the week. The length of each entry is limited to a maximum of 500 words. The journal entry should include:
    1. **Descriptions** of the issues depicted in the case study;
    2. **Possible themes** that would potentially provide explanations to the issues or situation(s) depicted in the case;
    3. **Salient biblical and theological tenets** that might provide guidance in understanding the issues or situation(s) depicted in the case study in order to “hear” the heart of God on the matter at hand;
    4. How God’s people individually and collectively as the church, might begin to formulate ways and manners in which they should respond to the case through sustained and constructive engagement;
    5. **Self-reflexivity** (at least one of the following options):
       - What feelings surfaced as you were reflecting on the case? Why do you suppose those feelings have risen in you?
       - What particular perspective(s) were you drawn to? And why?
       - Is there anything that God might be impressing upon you through your reflection of the case study?
    6. **Be present for each class session** and bring a print out of the journal assignment for the small group session. At the beginning of the group time, the student is to show his/her work to another student in the group and have that student sign and date his/her name on the top portion of the assignment. This assignment is to be retained in a compilation of weekly journals to be turned in at the end of the semester.
    7. Write and include a reflection (no more than 500 words) of his/her small group experience over the semester as the final journal entry for the compilation of the weekly journals to be turned in at the end of the semester.

**Absence and Incomplete Journals.**

1. Students may miss one class session without any grade deduction.
2. If the student is to miss one session (the one allowed absence), s/he is responsible for making up that week’s work by the next session – indicating “Make-up work for the one allowed absence”) on the top of the assignment. The student is also responsible for completing the assignment for the session at the same time (i.e., the next session after the session missed). Hence, the student is to have two assignments ready for the session following the missed session, as students cannot fall behind in the course schedule.
3. If the student has to be absent for more than one allowed session, s/he will receive no credit for the absence – without exception. However, s/he can still make up the late work by the next session. The maximum credit s/he could get for the make-up work will be the half of the maximum credit s/he could have received if it were handed on time. If the student is unable to complete the make up work s/he needs to write a note indicating his/her absence(s) on a piece of paper and have a student in the group to sign and date the paper at the beginning of the next session. This signed and dated page, too, must be included as a part of the compilation of the weekly assignments at the end of the semester.
4. If the student is present but, did not complete the assignment for the group time, the student is to write down on a piece of paper – i.e., “I was not able to complete the assignment for this week’s session.” Or “I was only able to do ___% of the assignment for this week’s session – and have another student in the group to sign and date it. This signed and dated page must be included as a part of the compilation of the weekly assignments at the end of the semester.
Once the weekly assignment receives a signature and is dated by another student in the group, the student is not to add or subtract from it.

The compilations of weekly assignments must include at least one page for every assignment whether that is the completed assignment, make-up assignment, or note indicating an absence.

**Integrative Essay Examination Exercise (30%)**

Students will take an active role in participating in an essay examination experience by:

1. **Carefully** reading all the course texts;
2. Each group will submit **four** significant essay questions from the required textbooks (one each from Branson, *et al.*, Conde-Frazer *et al.*, Crouch, and Smith). Send in the questions electronically to mark.cannister@gordon.edu with the student’s last name, school initials, and “examQs” as the file title– ex., “RobinsonGCTSexamQs.docx” - **.docx or .doc format only.**
3. Studying the list of edited essay questions emailed to you with classmates.
4. **Individually** writing the essay examination in class.

**Sociocultural Exegesis & Engagement Curriculum Designing Project (30%)**

Each group of four students is to prepare a strategic plan for teaching-learning curriculum in a particular contemporary setting:

1. **Write a reflection paper and begin developing a group curriculum project.**
   a. Each member is to carefully reflect on his/her life before the Lord in prayer.
   b. His/her salient presuppositions/assumptions/patterns through which s/he understands and responds to the “happenings” in the world in general.
   c. How certain people in his/her life and episodes in his/her upbringing, life experiences, and education might have contributed to his/her understanding of the world and his/her life patterns.
   d. Delineate any particular sociocultural issues that s/he has found to be more concerned about in the world as well as in the church.
   e. **Write a summary of his/her reflections. This Reflection Paper is to be no more than 500 words.**
   f. Send their reflections to the group members ahead of their meeting.
   g. As a group, meet for about an 90-minutes or so in class. Share your reflections in a respectful manner.
   h. Prior to the first meeting, be sure to **browse through the required case studies** to explore some ideas for the group project. At the meeting share with one another some of the ideas that interest you.
   i. Based on the sharing of your **reflection paper** decide together the target group (i.e., young adults, parents of young children, intergenerational [youth and their parents], women’s group, teaching leaders in the church, church leaders, etc.) for the group project with the best interest of the others in the group as much as possible.
   j. **Summarize in 200 words** as a group (you might designate a “secretary” for your group meeting):
      - **How the decision about the target group was made** as a group
      - **The overall purpose** of the project
      - **The creative strategies** that will be implored in the curriculum from LaFever and/or McNabb.
      - **The scope and sequence** of the curriculum (i.e., teaching-learning topics, t-l activities, the flow of the session and the series, etc.)
      - **The manner** that the project will be developed by the group (i.e., the “division of labor”, etc.)
(2) Write a detailed outline for each of the 4 lessons (about 500 words per lesson). Be sure to include a few appropriate dimensions of a curriculum.
   - Objectives: Include at least 2 of the 3 types from Eisner article in each lesson.
   - Foundational knowledge
   - Application
   - Integration
   - Human dimension
   - Caring
   - Learning how to learn
   Be sure to draw copiously from the course texts and case study discussions when designing the curriculum (careful citations are required).

(3) Include bibliography and any other materials as appendices (this page(s) may be additional to the 2 pages per lesson).

(4) Request at least two pastoral staff members (for each group) to review and give feedback/recommendations to the group on the project as a whole as well as any part of the project (include up to 500 words describing the feedback in your project).

(5) Each member is to reflect on what s/he has learned about (500 words for each student):
   a. The nature & function of sociocultural exegesis & engagement in the life of the church
   b. The designing of curriculum project
   c. What areas of his/her life as a minister of the Gospel s/he wants to grow deeper in his/her walk with God through the process
   d. What s/he plans to engage in “learning-how-to-learn” in terms of sociocultural exegesis & engagement as a life-long learner
   e. What s/he learned from the experience of working as a group.

- The completed project should be about 23-25 double-spaced pages or 7,000-8,000 words
- 4 reflections from group members that are about 500 words each.
- 1 summary of the groups initial meeting together that is about 500 words.
- 4 lessons from the group that are about 500 words each, plus bibliography and/or appendix.
- 1 description of pastoral staff feedback for the group that is about 500 words
- 4 final reflections from each group member about what s/he learned that are about 500 words each.
- Send in the group project electronically. Students’ last names should be in alphabetical order, with the acronym of the project title—ex., “DurantSimonsKakaTebowCDP.pdf” –.pdf format only.
- Curriculum projects will be sent to the entire class by the professor and students are responsible to download and browse through other classmates’ projects prior to presentations.
- For the day of presentation students are to: (1) present one of the lessons of the project (45 min.) and (2) respond to questions raised by the instructor and/or fellow classmates (5-10min).
- Note: Late Papers will be docked a letter grade for each day they are late. No exceptions.
## Course Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading &amp; Assignment Due for Class</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1 Sep 16</td>
<td>- Introduction &amp; Course Preparation</td>
<td>- Pre-Course Reading: <em>A Many Colored Kingdom</em>, <em>Introduction</em>, chs. 1 &amp; 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>S2 Sep 23</td>
<td>- Sociocultural Perspectives &amp; Culture Making</td>
<td>- <em>A Many Colored Kingdom</em>, chs. 2-4</td>
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<td>- Philosophical Approaches of Curriculum Development</td>
<td>- <em>Churches, Cultures and Leadership</em>, Intro., chs. 4-8</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- <em>Culture Making</em>, <em>Introduction</em>, chs. 1-5</td>
<td>- Reflective Journal on Case Study 1 Due (&quot;How Should Churches and Seminaries Respond to Immigrant Pastors Who Minister in the US Illegally?&quot;)</td>
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<td>S3 Sep 30</td>
<td>- Theology &amp; Culture</td>
<td>- <em>A Many Colored Kingdom</em>, chs. 5-6</td>
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<td>- Experiential Education</td>
<td>- <em>Churches, Cultures and Leadership</em>, chs. 1-3</td>
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<td>- Reflective Journal on Case Study 2 Due (&quot;Religion &amp; Inequality Go Hand in Hand&quot;)</td>
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<td>S4 Oct 7</td>
<td>- Exploring Late- &amp; Post-Modernity</td>
<td>- <em>Who’s Afraid of Postmodernism</em>, chs. 1-5</td>
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<td>- Curriculum &amp; Objectives</td>
<td>- Reflective Journal on Case Study 3 Due (“Eleven Nations up in Arms”)</td>
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<td>Oct 14</td>
<td><strong>NO CLASS - READING WEEK 1</strong></td>
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<td>S5 Oct 21</td>
<td>- The Gospel and Culture</td>
<td>- <em>A Many Colored Kingdom</em>, Conclusion</td>
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<td>- Creativity &amp; Teaching</td>
<td>- <em>Culture Making</em>, chs. 6-11</td>
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<td>- Reflective Journal on Case Study 4 Due (&quot;Timothy George on the Reformers...&quot;)</td>
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<td>S6 Oct 28</td>
<td>- Calling, Culture, &amp; Ministry</td>
<td>- <em>Culture Making</em>, chs. 12-16 &amp; Postscript</td>
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<td>- <strong>Essay Examination Questions Due by Midnight</strong></td>
<td>- Reflective Journal on Case Study 5 Due (“Here Come the Radicals”)</td>
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<td>S7 Nov 4</td>
<td>Reflective Journal discussion</td>
<td>- <em>Churches, Cultures and Leadership</em>, chs. 9-11</td>
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<td>Groups practice presentation</td>
<td>- Reflective Journal on Case Study 6 Due (“Trayvon Martin and Making Whiteness Visible”)</td>
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<td>Study exam questions together</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 11</td>
<td><strong>NO CLASS - READING WEEK 2</strong></td>
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<td>S8 Nov 18</td>
<td>- Integrative Essay Examination Exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>S9 Nov 25</td>
<td>- Curriculum Project Presentations Groups 1 and 2</td>
<td>- All Curriculum Projects Due</td>
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<td>S10 Dec 2</td>
<td>- Curriculum Project Presentations Groups 3 and 4</td>
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<td>S11 Dec 9</td>
<td>- Curriculum Project Presentations Groups 5, 6 and 7</td>
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<td>S12 Dec 16</td>
<td>- Curriculum Project Presentations Groups 8, 9 and 10</td>
<td>- The Compilation of the Reflective Journals on Case Studies Due</td>
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Bibliography
Balmer, Randall. Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory: A Journey Into the Evangelical Subculture in America, 4th ed.
Jones, Preston, ed. Is Belief in God Good, Bad or Irrelevant?: A Professor and a Punk Rocker Discuss Science, Religion, Naturalism and Christianity. Downers Grove: IVP, 2006.


