

COURSE SYLLABUS
EM 5150 Urban Educational Ministries
Miriam Charter

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introductory course to the urban educational ministry of the church, with emphasis on philosophy of ministry, bible teaching skills, human development, and thinking theologically about educational issues. It was also address the program (educational) needs of administration and teaching in urban ministry contexts.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

1. The student should develop a broad understanding of the educational process as it relates to spiritual growth and development, and the place of teaching in the ministry of the church. The goal is not to acquire a list of program *how to's* but to develop a philosophy of ministry applicable to a variety of settings.
2. The student should learn to think theologically about educational ministry. The goal is for theology to become a functional basis for thinking about educational questions and broader ministry concerns.
3. The student should gain an appreciation for the social sciences as a valid source of information and insight for ministry. The goal is that students will understand social science as an inquiry into general revelation.
4. The student should grow in his/her ability to teach the bible for spiritual growth in the learner. The goal is that students might teach scripture in ways that relate to life issues of the learner and help the learner discover ways to respond in obedience to God's word.
5. The student should appreciate the importance of educational ministry for persons of all ages. The goal is that ministry to children, youth, and adults will be valued.
6. The student should contextualize the concerns and issues of the course to the urban realities of the 21st century.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Downs, Perry G. *Teaching for Spiritual Growth: An Introduction to Christian Education*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994

Love Sr., James R. 2002. *The Gathering Place: Empowering Your Community Through Urban Church Education*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.,

SUGGESTED SUPPLEMENTARY READING

Bakke, Ray with Jim Hart. 1987. *The Urban Christian: Effective Ministry in Today's Urban World*. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Blue, Kevin. 2006. *Practical Justice: Living Off-Center in a Self-Centered World*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books

Freire, Paulo. 2005. *Education for Critical Consciousness*. New York: Continuum

_____. 1993. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum

Keller, Timothy J. 1997. *Ministries of Mercy: The Call of the Jericho Road, 2nd Ed.* Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing.

Ortiz, Manuel. 1996. *One New People: Models for Developing a Multiethnic Church*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Press

Rogers, Donald B. (ed.) 1989. *Urban Church Education*. Birmingham: Religious Education Press.

Sider, Ronald J., Philip N. Olson and Heidi Rolland Unruh. 2002. *Churches That Make A Difference: Reaching Your Community with Good News and Good Works*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Washington, Raleigh and Glen Kehrein. 1993, *Breaking Down Walls: A Model for Reconciliation in an Age of Racial Strife*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press.

Wilkerson, Barbara (ed). 1997. *Multicultural Religious Education*. Birmingham: Religious Education Press.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. A Reflection Paper -- Read *Teaching for Spiritual Growth* in its entirety. As you read keep in your mind this simple but important statement: **To effectively minister to people we must understand them.** Keep a note pad beside you as you read, making careful/reflective notes of reflections as they come to mind. Then write a brief (five page) reflection paper on the book, reporting on what you thought about as you read. The purpose is **not** to restate what the book says – the instructor knows what's in the book! Rather it is to report how the book affected your thinking. Try to focus on the book *as a whole*, and not only on one or two isolated thoughts. **How might this book contribute to the developing of educational processes/interventions for a specific context?** (Instructions on how to organize such a paper will be given during the first class session.; paper due at the start of Weekend #2)

2. A Reaction Paper -- Write a brief (five page) reaction paper to *The Gathering Place*. How do you see this book fitting with the previous text? How do these books complement one another, and where might they be in conflict? What does the book

contribute to your understanding of education? As you think about your ministry context, are there areas in which this book is helpful in what you are doing? How? Does it raise concerns for your context? In what way? Paper due at the start of Weekend #3.

3. “I Believe” Paper

1. Read one of the books on the **Suggested Supplementary Reading** list (or a book of your choice, approved by the instructor, and distinctly relating to the topic at hand or the central concern of your own situation.)
2. Write an “I Believe” statement, an essay of 4-5 succinct pages that expresses your personal and growing belief/understanding concerning the educational and teaching task (mission) of the church. This is NOT a research paper, though ideas gleaned from readings may be used (if documented). This essay should be understood as a “work in progress” and should not be seen as the student’s final statement on the topic. This paper should be written concisely in no more than five, well-used pages (no space wasted by excess verbage; every word counts). It should give evidence that the student has thought through the major questions of educational philosophy for Christian education, reflected on class lectures, discussions with your student colleagues, readings and their importance for his/her personal situation. The statement will be due on May 1st or as the class negotiates.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE :

We will meet on three weekends:

February 1, 2

March 7, 8

April 18, 19

A schedule of content for each weekend will be distributed on the first weekend.

FINAL NOTE

The course grade will be based on both the quality of the written work, and the quality of involvement in class discussions. The course will be taught in an interactive mode and student participation is expected. The class time will be low pressure and non-threatening. Our goal will be to experience what it means to be a *learning community* in the fullest sense of that term. We will discuss together urban realities, and how the content of this course can be given expression in an urban context, with insights shared from student ministry contexts. Because of the nature of the class experience, students are expected to attend all sessions of the class. It will not be possible for students to miss class and receive credit for the course.