

Biblical Interpretation Course

Course Description

Courses in Biblical Interpretation are designed to highlight the historic commitment of the Presbyterian tradition to the Scriptures, tying together an understanding of the "word of God written" (Confession of 1967, I.C.2) with "the true word of God" (Second Helvetic Confession 5.001-2). Presbyterian Christian Educators need a foundational comprehension of Scripture as well as the tools to appropriately exegete and interpret the Bible for the context in which they are serving. Courses will teach the basic principles of biblical interpretation through the lens of the Reformed Tradition and teach at least one exegetical method. Exegetical models will encourage historical and cultural readings of texts, and instructors will encourage and equip educators to do research using resources from various reputable sources, modern and historical. The goal of these courses is to ground educators in the method required to make them servants "rightly handling the word of truth" in accordance with the certification standards of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Course Standards

Competencies Dimensions	Theoretical Perspective	Skills	Contextual Awareness	Self-Critical Awareness
Historical Dimension	Possess working knowledge of at least two approaches to interpreting the Bible	Ability to analyze interpretive principles at work in Reformed historical documents (e.g. curriculum, catechisms)	Show understanding of Reformed biblical interpretation in a variety of historical contexts (e.g. slavery, gender, nationalism)	What are your strategies of interpretation? Where do they stand in relation to Reformed interpretative principles?
Contemporary Dimension	Demonstrate awareness of several current approaches to biblical interpretation	Use two or more interpretive principles to teach a particular biblical text or theme	Convey the ability to see the interaction between text and a particular setting	How does your social location inform the reading of a biblical text and how aware are you of these influences while interpreting a text? Give examples.
Reformed Identity Dimension	Familiarity with five main ways that Presbyterians understand the authority of	Articulate several distinctive themes of a Reformed approach to interpretation of	Compare teaching of biblical texts in 2 or more Reformed congregations	How do you apply the Reformed biblical principles in your interpretation?

	Scripture	Scripture		
Educational Dimension	Identify direct or implicit aspects of particular books and texts	Develop learning experiences for particular texts	Assess operative interpretive principles in a context	How do your interpretive commitments and biases of the key texts shape your reading of these texts?
Theological Implications Dimension	Articulate themes to connect biblical interpretation to theological reflection	Analyze ways that theological convictions arise from biblical texts	Bring biblical principles to theological commitment in context	How does your own theological understanding influence your reading of the texts?

Suggested Resources

Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All its Worth*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014.

Ferguson, Duncan S. *Biblical Hermeneutics: An Introduction*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1986.

Mayfield, Tyler D. *A Guide to Bible Basics*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2018.

Presbyterian Understanding and Use of Holy Scripture and Biblical Authority and Interpretation. Louisville: Office of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 1999.

Webster, John. *Holy Scripture: A Dogmatic Sketch*. New York: Cambridge, 2003.

Human Growth and Faith Development Course

Course Description

Courses designed to fulfill the Human Growth and Faith Development content area need to acknowledge that educational ministry encompasses people of every age. Across the lifespan our learners' thinking, moral reasoning, and faith expressions change as they age. This course explores historical and contemporary developmental theories from a faith perspective. Participants are asked to critique and apply the theories to their educational ministry with all ages.

Course Standards

Competencies Dimension	Theoretical Perspective	Skills	Contextual Awareness	Self-Critical Awareness
Biological Dimension	Identify psychological and faith development theories that offer age specific perspectives across the life span.	Articulate key features of each theoretical framework.	Attend to individual and collective abilities in a particular learning environment	How does your age and gender shape your understanding of faith?
Socio-cultural Dimension	Psychological and faith development are shaped by socio-cultural dimensions.	Identify techniques and skills related to communicating effectively across a range of cultural diversity.	Analyze and appreciate cultural specificity in a particular ministry context.	How does your ethnicity and cultural identify shape your understanding of faith?
Educational Dimension	Identify how theoretical foundations of faith and human development impact educational design.	Design and evaluate an educational event that demonstrates understanding of theoretical foundations of faith and human development.	Map concrete learning environments	How does psychological and faith perspectives impact your personal teaching/learning?
Faith	Critically reflect on	Analyze curriculum	Engage and	How has your faith

Dimension	intersections of psychological and faith development theories	resources using psychological and faith frameworks.	reflect upon faith in particular situations and experiences	grown over time?
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Suggested Resources

Broderick, Patricia and Blewitt, Pamela. *The Life Span: Human Development for Helping Professionals, 5th edition*. (NY: Pearson, 2020.)

Life Long Faith Associates:

Lifelong Faith Journal Collection <https://www.lifelongfaith.com/lifelong-faith-journal.html>

“Reimagining Faith Formation” <http://www.reimaginefaithformation.com/>

“Faith Formation Learning Exchange” <http://www.faithformationlearningexchange.net/>

Presbyterian Polity, Program, and Mission Course

Course Description

The courses in Presbyterian polity, program, and mission will integrate the study of the Presbyterian Constitution (Book of Confessions and Book of Order) and Program and Mission of the PCUSA into the context of the educator. Scripture, polity, and the structure, mission and program of the PCUSA, as it is described and resourced by presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly, usually provides the content for this certification course. Critical examination, guided exploration, and careful integration of those key resources provides educators an opportunity to draw upon the richness of the Presbyterian tradition as they take leadership roles in their congregations and ministries. The course will provide opportunities for educators to explore how the polity, program, and mission of the PCUSA will impact, guide, and influence their educational programs and events.

Course Standards

Competencies Dimensions	Theoretical Perspective	Skills	Contextual Awareness	Self-Critical Awareness
Historical Dimension	Articulate overall history of PCUSA: its mission and purpose	Take key practices of polity and identify its historical origins	Compare and contrast with other Protestant bodies	What does the Reformed Faith mean to you? Give three highlights
Theological Dimension	Summarize each Historical Principle in one sentence per principle	Illustrate a practical application for each Historical Principle	Show examples of how Historical Principles interface in your ministry	How does your theological convictions impact your practice of polity and mission?
Integrative Dimension	Define the interrelatedness of Presbyterian Polity and Mission	Be able to use the PCUSA Constitution as a resource for addressing a particular issue in ministry	Assess how polity informs and supports ministry in your setting	In what ways does the PCUSA polity and mission impact your leadership?
Contemporary Mission and Program Dimension	Identify the six program agencies of the PCUSA and their purpose	Articulate how polity supports mission and program in the church	Explore how PCUSA councils enable the PCUSA mission and program to occur in particular settings	How does PCUSA program and mission affect your involvement in the denomination?

Educational Dimension	Determine an educational theory congruent with polity and mission	Teach members and leaders the basic principles of Presbyterian polity	Assist leaders in accessing resources for the program and mission of the PCUSA	What leadership skills in polity and mission do you bring to the PCUSA?
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Suggested Resources

The Book of Order, current edition

May be downloaded from <http://www.pcusa.org/oga/boo/boo-online.htm>

Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government, adopted by 195th General Assembly (1983) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/historic-principles-conscience-and-church-governme/>

Principles of Presbyterian Polity, Carlos Wilton, 2016, Geneva Press

Presbyterian Church (USA) Planning Calendar, current edition

Reformed Theology Course

Course Description

Courses in the area of Reformed Theology are designed to provide Presbyterian Christian educators with a clear understanding of the theology of the Reformed Tradition, especially as it is expressed in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Book of Confessions. Courses explore the content of those confessions, the historical contexts out of which they arose, and the contemporary significance those confessions have for the life of the church today. By means of varied teaching methods and learning activities (e.g., lectures, small group exercises, discussions, and personal research), students will be able to gain a personal understanding of the Reformed theological tradition. Courses will also allow participants to gain a balanced understanding of the broad landscape of Reformed theological understandings today. It is expected that a course will, minimally, include in-depth study of the Book of Confessions and/or cover extensive reading in the works of Reformed theologians.

Course Standards

Competencies Dimensions	Theoretical Perspective	Skills	Contextual Awareness	Self-Critical Awareness
Historical Dimension	Express major features of one or more pre-21 st century Reformed theologians or confessions	Demonstrate ability to interpret historical theological themes in historical context	Show an understanding of at least two confessional expressions of the Reformed tradition in their historical context.	What would you define as your “essential tenets” in the Reformed tradition
Contemporary Dimension	Articulate 3-4 themes of a contemporary Reformed theological perspective or theologian	Use two or more theological themes to address contemporary issues in church or society	Analyze a dominant Reformed theological theme(s) guiding your ministry context	How is your own understanding of church and society influenced by your Reformed theological point of view?
Educational Dimension	Identify direct or implicit educational aspects of	Develop learning experiences for particular	Use one or more themes of the Reformed tradition	How does your own theological approach inform

	particular theological themes	theological themes	in your educational ministry.	educational ministry within the Reformed tradition?
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Suggested Resources

Book of Confessions: Study Edition, revised. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2017.

Burgess, John P. *Confessing our Faith: The Book of Confessions for Church Leaders*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2018.

Guthrie, Shirley C. *Christian Doctrine*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2018.

Kerr, Hugh T., ed. *Calvin's Institutes: A New Compend*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1989.

McKim, Donald K., ed. *Calvin's Institutes: Abridged Edition*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000.

McKim, Donald K. *Introducing the Reformed Faith: Biblical Revelation, Christian Tradition, Contemporary Significance*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001.

Rigby, Cynthia L. *Holding Faith: A Practical Introduction to Christian Doctrine*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2018.

Rogers, Jack. *Presbyterian Creeds: A Guide to the Book of Confessions*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1985.

Religious Education Theory and Practice Course

Course Description

Courses in Religious Education and Practice should be designed to provide Presbyterian Christian Educators with an understanding of the theory and theology that informs their basis of choice for education methods and materials. Courses should explore multiple theories for religious education and engage in reading of current literature in religious education theory and practice. They should encourage critical engagement of practical experiences or situations to inspect the underlying theory and practice of education. A successful class participant will be able to relate their own educational activities with a religious education theorist.

Course Standards

Competencies Dimensions	Theoretical Perspective	Skills	Contextual Awareness	Self-Critical Awareness
Theological Dimension	Identify theological and biblical perspectives of teaching and learning.	Design educational events with attention to biblical and theological perspectives.	Engage in reading and reflection on current literature in religious education theory and practice from a multiplicity of contexts.	What are the faith dimensions of your experiences of teaching and learning?
Social Science Dimension	Become familiar with multiple definitions and approaches to Religious Education	Articulate key features of each theoretical approach	Identify the specific context of the theoretical perspective. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of theoretical perspectives in specific learning environments.	How do your personal theoretical perspectives compare/contrast with other approaches?
Educational	Design and	Develop detailed	Assess	How would you

Dimension	evaluate educational events that demonstrate understanding of theoretical foundations and best practices in educational ministry.	lesson plans that convey all information needed for excellent teaching events. Engage participants in evaluation and reflections on teaching and learning.	effectiveness of educational plans for particular ministry contexts.	describe your self-reflections as a teacher/learner?
Integrative Dimension	Explore a variety of teaching practices and identify their theological and social science perspectives.	Develop best practices for teaching a variety of age groups.	Analyze effectiveness of teaching strategies in particular ministry contexts.	What are your preferred and uncomfortable teaching practices? How are these practices effective?

Suggested Resources

Seymour, Jack L. *Teaching the Way of Jesus: Educating Christians for Faithful Living*. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2014.)

Elias, John L. *A History of Christian Education: Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox Perspectives*. (Malabar FLA: Krieger, 2002.)

Noddings, Nel. *Philosophy of Education, 3rd edition*. (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2012.)

Roberto, John. *Reimagining Faith Formation for the 21st century*. (LifelongFaith Associates, 2015.)

Particular Theorists

Caldwell, Elizabeth. *God's Big Table: Nurturing Children in a Diverse World*. (Pilgrim Press, 2011.)

Dykstra, Craig. *Growing in the Life of Faith: Education and Christian Practices*. (Westminster/John Knox, 2005)

Foster, Charles. *From Generation to Generation: The Adaptive Challenge of Mainline Protestant Education in Forming Faith*. (Cascade Books: 2012.)

Wimberley, Anne Streaty. *Nurturing Faith and Hope*. (Wipf and Stack Publishing, 2010)

Web Resources

Life Long Faith Associates:

“Reimagining Faith Formation” <http://www.reimaginefaithformation.com/>

“Faith Formation Learning Exchange” <http://www.faithformationlearningexchange.net/>

Worship and Sacraments Course

Course Description

Courses offered in the area of worship and sacraments explore the theology and practice of Christian worship and sacraments from a Reformed perspective. In addition, courses explore the relationships between worship, sacraments, and education in a congregational context. Courses aim to enhance the participants' participation in, leadership of, preparation for, and teaching about worship and sacraments.

Course Standards

Competencies Dimensions	Theoretical Perspective	Skills	Contextual Awareness	Self-Critical Awareness
Theological Dimension	Identify doctrine(s) which undergird Reformed understandings of worship	Using the Directory for Worship, assist leadership in understanding PCUSA theology of worship	Compare and contrast with 3 other denominations the understanding of worship	How does your personal theology impact you in the area of worship and sacraments?
Liturgical Dimension	Define worship and sacraments in the Reformed tradition	Using the Directory for Worship, outline the practice of the Lord's Supper, Baptism, and Prayer in the PCUSA	Identify the similarities and differences in your context with Reformed worship as outlined in the Directory for Worship	In what ways does your worship life feed your spiritual well-being?
Educational Dimension	Define an educational theory and method that is conducive to the teaching of worship and sacraments	Develop a learning experience around the teaching of worship and sacraments (i.e. baptism, communion,	Explore the educational and missional aspects of worship in your context	In what ways do you function as a liturgical educator?

		worship liturgy)		
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Suggested Resources

PCUSA Constitution: *Book of Confessions* and *Book of Order* (particularly Directory for Worship)

Reformed Worship, Rice and Huffstutler

Worship for the Whole People of God, Ruth Duck

Beyond the Worship Wars, Tom Long

Introduction to Christian Worship, James White

The Future of Protestant Worship and *Beyond the Worship Wars*, Ron Byars