



Philosophical Foundations CEEF6301

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Christian Education Division

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The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

Purpose of the Course

The purpose of this course is to study educational philosophies that have influenced Christian education because of their respective responses to the metaphysical, epistemological and axiological questions. The study provides an investigation into the contemporary influence of alternative philosophies on the ministry of Christian education.

Core Value Focus

Doctrinal Integrity – Knowing that the Bible is the Word of God, we believe it, teach it, proclaim it, and submit to it. The doctrinal statements used in our evaluations are our Articles of Religious Belief and the Baptist Faith and Message Statement.

Spiritual Vitality – We are a worshiping community, with both personal spirituality and gathering together as a Seminary for the praise and adoration of God and instruction in His Word.

Mission Focus – We are not here merely to get an education or to give one. We are here to change the world by fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

Characteristic Excellence – What we do, we do to the utmost of our abilities and resources as a testimony to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Servant Leadership – We follow the model of Jesus and exert leadership and influence through the nurture and encouragement of those around us.

Annually, the President will designate a core value that will become the focus of pedagogy for the year. For 2014-2015 academic year that Core Value is *Spiritual Vitality*.

Curriculum Competencies Addressed

This course will address the following curriculum competencies:

1. *Theological and historical perspective:* Students will develop a personal view as they compare and contrast secular philosophies with Christian, biblical and historical positions and perspectives.
2. *Disciple making:* Principles and practices of education and underlying theories will be explored and applied to contemporary disciple making methodologies and Christian education programs.
3. *Spiritual and character formation:* Students will compose a personal philosophy of Christian education integrating the concepts, principles, and ideas introduced in this course with their own experiences.

Course Description

This course is a study of educational philosophies that have influenced Christian education because of their respective responses to the metaphysical, epistemological and axiological questions. The study provides an investigation into the contemporary influence of alternative philosophies on the ministry of Christian education.

Learning Objectives

The student involved in this course should be able to accomplish the following:

1. Apply their knowledge and comprehension of the basic philosophical questions of metaphysics, epistemology, and axiology; and knowledge of the major philosophical movements and their educational implications in order to provide a foundation for the practice of Christian Education in the church.
2. Value the study of philosophy and its implication in the practice of Christian education.
3. Be able to formalize and communicate a personal philosophy of education.

Required Readings

The following texts and resources are required reading for class discussions and are to be read in their entirety unless otherwise specified.

Required Texts

Estep, James R., Michael R. Anthony and Greg R Allison. *A Theology for Christian Education*, Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2008

Knight, George R. *Philosophy & Education: An Introduction in Christian Perspective*, 4th ed. Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2006

Optional Texts

Groome, Thomas H. *Christian Religious Education: Sharing Our Story and Vision*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980.

Pazmiño, Robert W. *God Our Teacher: Theological Basics in Christian Education*, 3rd. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.

Course Teaching Methodology

A variety of teaching-learning methods will be employed in this course. Students will engage in personal research, presentations, and class discussions. The professor will present foundational material through lecture and interactive class experiences.

Units of Study

A THEOLOGY for CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

- Unit 1: Theology and Christian Education
- Unit 2: Biblical Principles for Christian Education
- Unit 3: Doctrinal Foundations and Christian Philosophy Pt 1
- Unit 4: Doctrinal Foundations and Christian Philosophy Pt 2
- Unit 5: Doctrinal Foundations and Christian Philosophy Pt 3
- Unit 6: The Christian Educator and Theology

PHILOSOPHY and EDUCATION

- Unit 7: Philosophic Issues in Education
- Unit 8: Philosophies and Education Pt 1
- Unit 9: Philosophies and Education Pt 2
- Unit 10: Theories of Education Pt 1
- Unit 11: Theories of Education Pt 2

PHILOSOPHY and CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

- Unit 12: A Christian Approach to Philosophy
- Unit 13: A Christian Approach to Education
- Unit 14: Refining a Personal Philosophy of Education

Delivery Format

The course will be delivered in the 8-time hybrid format with online assignments and eight class sessions.

Assignments and Evaluation Criteria

Assignment Format

All assignments are to be typed, double-spaced with 12-point font (Times New Roman preferred) and 1-inch margins unless otherwise indicated. Assignment pages should be stapled together with a Turabian format cover page that includes name, date of submission and assignment title. A Turabian style guide is available on the NOBTS web site at <http://www.nobts.edu/resources/pdf/Extensions.Old/turabiantutor7thjan08.pdf>.

1. **Reading.** Students will read *A Theology for Christian Education*, as well as *Philosophy and Education*. Students will be expected to discuss the content of the two texts as well as incorporate ideas and principles presented in these texts into their *Personal Philosophy of Education* paper. Readings should be completed prior to participating in the Discussion Threads and the next class session. **Due Date: See Assignment Schedule**
2. **Black Board Discussions.** Students will respond to two discussion board threads posted on Blackboard prior to class sessions 2-6. Students should thoughtfully provide three posts per thread and be prepared to discuss further in class. The Discussion Board is not a personal opinion forum. It is a venue to present answers based upon Scripture, textbook readings, and other appropriate resources. Late entries will not be graded. **Due Date: See Assignment Schedule**
3. **Philosophy/Theory Handouts.** Students will be assigned two class presentations: One of the philosophies (chapters 3-4) detailed in *Philosophy and Education* and one of the educational theories discussed in Knight's text (chapter 6). Students will prepare a 3-page handout on each assigned philosophy or theory. Students should draw on sources beyond the primary texts. Content (2 pages) should include brief history, key personalities, principles and ideas, classical and modern expressions and examples of the philosophy or theory. The third page should include implications for contemporary Christian education. Handouts are expected to be available to other students via discussion boards. Format does not have to be Turabian. Creativity in design and layout is encouraged. **Due Dates: 10/20 and 11/3**
4. **Reaction Papers.** Students will also generate two 2-3 page reaction papers detailing how their assigned philosophy and theory relates to the other philosophies and theories. Analyze, compare and contrast the principle ideas. **Due Dates: 11/17**
5. **Personal Presentations.** Students will prepare and present to the class one philosophy and one educational theory. Presentations will be assessed on content and delivery. Specific instructions will be provided in class. **Due Date: 10/20 and 11/3**
6. **Personal Philosophy.** Students will write a *Personal Philosophy of Education*. This work (10-12 pages) should be typed and double-spaced following the guidelines of the 6th edition of *Turabian* with the proper NOBTS cover page. See the guide included in this syllabus for further instructions. **Due Date: 12/1**
7. **Participation.** Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions and online. A grade will be assessed based upon attendance, attentiveness, and attitude.

Grading

Discussion Board		10%
Philosophy Handout		10%
Education Theory Handout		10%
Reaction Papers	2@5%	10%
Presentations	2@10%	20%
Personal Philosophy of Education		30%
Participation		10%

The course will use the NOBTS grading scale as listed below:

A	93-100
B	85-92
C	77-84
D	70-76
E	Below 70

Course Policies

Netiquette: Appropriate Online Behavior. Each student is expected to demonstrate appropriate Christian behavior when working online on Discussion Boards or whenever interaction occurs through web, digital, or other electronic medium. The student is expected to interact with other students in a fashion that will promote learning and respect for the opinions of others in the course. A spirit of Christian charity is expected at all times in the online environment.

Academic Honesty Policy

All graduate and undergraduate NOBTS students, whether on-campus, internet, or extension center students, are expected to adhere to the highest Christian standard of honesty and integrity when completing academic assignments for all courses in every delivery system format. The Bible provides our standard for academic integrity and honesty. This standard applies whether a student is writing papers, completing Discussion Boards, or any other course requirement.

Absences

Class attendance is essential for effective learning. Class periods missed because of late enrollment will be counted as absences. Arriving late to class or leaving class early will count as ½ of an absence. The maximum number of absences without failure for an 8X hybrid is two. A grade of “F” will be assigned to students who fail to attend class the minimum number of hours.

Classroom and On-line Decorum

Classroom participation is required for *every class session*. A positive attitude can only enhance the learning experience. Therefore, for the purposes of this class, a *positive attitude* and *participation* are defined as productive and interactive engagement with classroom presentations and classroom dialogues throughout a full class session. You cannot participate effectively if you are not focused on the subject matter while in the classroom. Consequently, the student is expected:

- To come to class with a constructive point of view, prepared to interact with the readings and resources on the course topic in discussion groups and classroom dialogues.
- To dress appropriately and in accordance with the NOBTS Student Handbook.
- To turn off cell phones and not to accept any phone calls during class.
- To use laptops, iPads and other electronic devices appropriately to enhance class participation and abstain from social media (i.e., Face Book, messaging, etc.) and ministry responsibilities (e-mails, web site updates, etc.) during class sessions.

Assignment Schedule

Session	Date	Special Topic / Assignment due <i>(Listed reading should be completed PRIOR to the class meeting in order to enhance discussion during the session)</i>
1	8/25	Introduction & Overview <i>(A Theology of Christian Education)</i>
2	9/8	Read Estep/Anthony, chapters 1-4 Complete Discussion Threads 1-2
3	9/22	Read Estep/Anthony, chapters 5-8 Complete Discussion Threads 3-4
4	10/6	Read Estep/Anthony, chapters 9-11 and the Conclusion Complete Discussion Threads 5-6
5	10/20	Read Knight, chapters 1-4 Complete Discussion Threads 7-8 Philosophy Handout due Philosophy Presentation due
6	11/3	Read Knight, chapters 5-7 Complete Discussion Threads 9-10 Educational Theory Handout due Educational Theory Presentation due
7	11/17	Read Knight, chapters 8-10 Reaction Paper due
8	12/1	Personal Philosophy Paper due Personal Philosophy Presentations

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Personal Philosophy of Education Guide

1 Peter 3:13-16 says, *Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled, but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.*

The purpose of this work is to cause you to think through the things that you believe and to be able to make a biblical defense of those concepts. Answer each of the following questions **completely** giving scriptural proofs for your reasons. Quote the Scripture, and explain how it backs your position.

Metaphysical Questions:

1. What is ultimately real?
2. Where did the universe come from?
3. Why do we exist?

Epistemological Questions:

1. What is true?
2. Is truth relative or absolute?
3. Is knowledge subjective or objective?

Axiological Questions:

What is of value?

Ethics:

1. What is good?
2. Are ethical standards and moral values absolute or relative?
3. Does the end ever justify the means?
4. Who or what forms the basis of ethical authority?

Aesthetics:

1. What is beautiful?
2. What is “good” art? By what standard, if any, can art be labeled “beautiful” or “ugly?”
3. Does beauty inhere in the art object itself, or does the eye of the beholder supply beauty?

Educational Principles:

1. What is the purpose of education?
2. What is the role of the teacher?
3. What is the role of the learner?
4. What is the appropriate curriculum for education?

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