

The Educational Ministry of the Church
Reformed Theological Seminary, Atlanta
September 21–22, October 12–13, November 16–17
Dr. Brian H. Cosby

COURSE PURPOSE

According to the RTS course catalogue, the purpose of The Educational Ministry of the Church is: “A study of the pastor’s role as teacher and administrator within the educational program of the church. Careful attention is given to philosophy, history, organization, curriculum, recruiting and training teachers, and the special needs of each age group.” These matters will be covered, but we will also be taking a holistic look at the pastor’s (and other church leaders’) responsibility to lead in the discipleship of the entire church to maturity in Christ against the backdrop of the diverse ways in which churches carry out discipleship today.

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Brian H. Cosby serves as senior minister of Wayside Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Signal Mountain, Tennessee. He holds degrees from Samford University (B.A.), Beeson Divinity School (M.Div.), and the Australian College of Theology (Ph.D.). Brian has taught at several seminaries and universities, including RTS Atlanta, where he has taught since 2014. He is the author of over a dozen books and serves as an assistant editor for The Gospel Coalition. He is currently editing the complete works of the puritan, John Flavel (The Banner of Truth Trust, *forthcoming* 2020).

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Understand the pastor’s vital leadership role in the entire Christian education and discipleship ministry of the church.
- Understand that the foundation of all discipleship and Christian education is the gospel of grace, which underlies justification, sanctification, and ministry.
- Learn the process of recruiting and equipping volunteers and teachers for the educational ministry of the church.
- Understand theories of church organization in the local church.
- Understand a biblical ministry to the various age groups in the church (children, youth, adults, etc.)
- Gain expertise in the criteria for evaluating curriculum for use in the local church
- Understand the vital place of small groups and discipleship groups in the church

REQUIRED READING

1. Michael Horton, *The Gospel Commission: Recovering God's Strategy for Making Disciples* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2011).
2. Brian H. Cosby, *Giving Up Gimmicks: Reclaiming Youth Ministry from an Entertainment Culture* (Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2012).
3. Gloria Furman and Kathleen Nielson, eds., *Word-Filled Women's Ministry: Loving and Serving the Church* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2015).
4. William Still, *The Work of the Pastor*, revised edition (Ross-Shire, UK: Christian Focus, 2010).
5. Randy Pope, *Insourcing: Bringing Discipleship Back to the Local Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Reading & Attendance

- Read the five course textbooks and attend all classes.

2. Book Review (25%)

- Write a book review on *The Work of the Pastor* by William Still
- The review should be between 800 and 1,000 words, Turabian or Chicago footnote style, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt. font.
- It should be well written and should include information about the author, the purpose of the book, the audience, an overview of the content, and your evaluation.

3. Compare/Contrast Paper (25%)

- Compare and contrast *The Gospel Commission* by Michael Horton and *Insourcing* by Randy Pope
- It should be between around 1,500 words, Turabian or Chicago footnote style, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt. font.
- It should be well written and should include information about the authors, the goals of each book, the audience, an overview of the content, and your evaluation of the pros and cons of each approach to discipleship. Are they compatible with each other? If so, how could they complement one another?

4. Educational Ministry Paper (25%)

- Write a paper researching what the Bible has to say about educational ministry in the local church.
- Items to include: the various educational ministries, secondary resources, classroom lecture material, and an evaluation of your own church's educational ministry (this last point will be discussed in class).
- The paper should be around 2,000 words, Turabian or Chicago footnote style, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt. font. Please include a bibliography.
- The papers should be well written, organized, and should demonstrate your understanding of the subject matter.

5. Curriculum Evaluation & Presentation (25%)

- This is a group assignment. Your task will be to evaluate either a children's or youth educational (e.g., Sunday school) curriculum. I will have some samples for you to choose from (if you would like) and you will be given some time in class to work on this.
- You will write up a review of it and give a PowerPoint presentation to the class as a group presenting your findings.
- Types of questions to address:
 - Does it take a biblical or a topical approach?
 - What is the theological position of the curriculum?
 - What is the educational methodology of the curriculum?
 - Is it teacher-friendly and learner-sensitive?
 - What overall lessons do you see the curriculum trying to present?
 - Is it gospel-driven or legalistic, or are there elements of both?
 - Is it geared for a traditional classroom or for a small group format? What are the advantages of disadvantages of the approach?
 - How effective are the colors and graphics (if any)?
 - Does it have ways to involve the parents?
 - Does it have ways to involve other leaders in your church?
 - What kinds of activities does it encourage?
 - How much would it cost for your children's or youth ministry (for 50 children or youth)?
 - What are the strengths of the curriculum? What are the weaknesses?
 - Write up in your findings in a summary and/or outline form—as a handout—and then produce a PowerPoint presentation, which you will present to the class detailing your findings. Turn in both the summary/outline and the PowerPoint presentation to me via email.

SCHEDULE

September 21–22

- **Due:** Look over *The Work of the Pastor* and be prepared to discuss

October 12–13

- **Due:** Look over *Insourcing* and *The Gospel Commission* and be prepared to discuss

November 16–17

- **Due:** Curriculum Presentations; Look over *Word-Filled Women's Ministry* and *Giving Up Gimmicks* and be prepared to discuss

All papers are due by Monday, December 3, 2018

COURSE EVALUATION & GRADING

Book Review	25%
Compare/Contrast Paper	25%
Educational Ministry Paper	25%
Curriculum Presentation	25%
<hr/> TOTAL	100%

MY CONTACT INFO

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RTS EXTENSION POLICY

All assignments and exams are to be completed by the deadlines announced in this syllabus or in class. Extensions for assignments and exams due within the normal duration of the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. Extensions of two weeks or less beyond the date of the last deadline for the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. A grade penalty may be assessed. Extensions of greater than two weeks but not more than six weeks beyond the last deadline for the course may be granted in extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness, family emergency). For an extension of more than two weeks the student must request an Extension Request Form from the Student Services Office. The request must be approved by the Professor and the Academic Dean. A grade penalty may be assessed. (RTS Catalog p. 42 and RTS Atlanta Student Handbook p. 14). Any incompletes not cleared six weeks after the last published due date for course work will be converted to a failing grade. Professors may have the failing grade changed to a passing grade by request. (RTS Catalog p. 42).

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Educational Ministry of the Church

Professor: Dr. Brian H. Cosby

Campus: Atlanta

Date: May 14, 2018

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
<p><i>In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None 	
Articulation (oral & written)	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Strong	The student will give an oral presentation as well as submit three written assignments.
Scripture	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)	Moderate	The student will research what Scripture has to say about educational ministry in the church. This will take a moderate amount of exegesis.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	The student will need to understand how Reformed theology dovetails with Reformed methodology.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	In evaluating his or her own educational ministry, the student will need to seek the Lord and His Word throughout the course. Also, the class will include a devotional element.
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Strong	As this is (by nature) a practical course, the student will strive to bring all aspects of education and discipleship under the guidance and authority of Scripture.
Winsomely Reformed	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)	Moderate	The approach taken in class will introduce a broad approach to educational ministry, while giving an appeal to the Reformed model.

Preach	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Minimal	The student will learn how the preaching ministry is at the heart of Christian education in the church, but will not spend much time on homiletics.
Worship	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Minimal	The student will learn how worship is central to Christian education in the church, but will not spend much time on the forms of worship.
Shepherd	Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.	Strong	The student will learn the importance and the practice of shepherding toward the Christian maturity and discipleship of the "flock."
Church/World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Minimal	The student will mainly deal with Christian education in the local church.