Course Syllabus

TRP3405 / 6405 – Renewing Catechesis and Discipleship: Teaching, Learning and Living the Faith in the Contemporary Church

Trinity College

Toronto School of Theology

Fall (September to December) 2025

Instructor Information

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Course Identification

Course Number:	TRP3405 / 6405
Course Name:	Renewing Catechesis and Discipleship: Teaching, Learning and Living the Faith in the Contemporary Church
Course Format:	*In-person, Online-Asynchronous,* or *Online-Synchronous*
Course Location:	TBD *(and online section)*
Class Times:	Wednesdays, 7pm to 9pm (or asynchronous)
Prerequisites:	None

Course Description

From the beginning, Christianity has been at its heart a religion of learning. The Greek word rendered in English as “disciple” is not originally a religious word but simply means a “learner.” Christ thus charges his apostles to “Go out and make *learners* of all the nations” (Matthew 28.19). In this course, students will face up to the crisis of catechesis and Christian formation within a contemporary church struggling to come to terms with the secularity and diversity of a post-Christendom world. Drawing on insights from ancient Christian tradition as well as contemporary authors and thought, students will creatively explore what it means to teach, learn and live the Christian faith today.

Course Resources

Required Course Text

- Heywood, David. *Kingdom Learning: Experiential and Reflective Approaches to Christian Formation.* London: SCM Press, 2017.

All other assigned readings, whether chapters from books or articles, will be posted on the course website.

Course Website

- Quercus: https://q.utoronto.ca/

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at https://q.utoronto.ca/ and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701.

Selected Bibliography

Excerpts from some the following books and articles assigned for reading will be available on the course website. Students will choose one of the books in this list for their critical book review. The materials will also be useful for further study as well as for researching and developing the catechetical/Christian formation project.

Anglican Church of Canada. *Becoming the Story We Tell: Renewing Our Engagement with Christ Crucified and Risen.* Web resource from the Primate's Task Force to the House of Bishops on Christian Hospitality and Christian Initiation and Formation: https://www.anglican.ca/primate/tfc/becoming/

Arnold, Clinton E. "Early Church Catechesis and New Christians' Classes in Contemporary Evangelicalism." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 47/1 (March 2004), 39-54.

Audinet, Jacques. "Catechesis." In *Encyclopedia of Theology: A Concise Sacramentum Mundi,* Karl Rahner, ed., 171-178. London: Burns and Oats, 1975.

Ball, Peter. *Adult Believing.* Mowbray, 1988.

_____. *Journey into Faith.* London: SPCK, 1984.

Barnes, Elizabeth. *The Story of Discipleship: Christ, Humanity, and Church in Narrative Perspective*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995.

Behr, John. *The Mystery of Christ: Life in Death.* Crestwood, NY: SVS Press, 2006.

Benedict, Daniel T., Jr. *Come to the Waters. Baptism and Our Ministry of Welcoming Seekers and Making Disciples*. Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 1996.

Bibby, Reginald. *There's Got to be More! Connecting Canadians and Churches*. Kelowna, British Columbia: Wood Lake Publishing, 1995.

_____. *Restless Gods.* Toronto: Stoddart, 2002.

_____. *Beyond the God's and Back: Religion's Demise and Rise and Why It Matters.* Lethbridge, AB: Project Canada Books, 2011.

_____. *A New Day: The Resilience and Restructuring of Religion in Canada*. Lethbridge, Alberta: Project Canada Books, 2012.

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Discipleship (Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works,* Vol. 4). Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2003.

Boojamra, John. "Socialization as a Historical Model for Christian Integration." In *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly.* Vol. 25, no. 4 (1981): 219-237.

Boyle, John. "The Teaching Office of the Church." In *The Gift of the Church: A Textbook on Ecclesiology in Honour of Patrick Granfield, O.S.B.,* Peter C. Phan, ed., 355 – 371. Collegeville, MN: A Michael Glazier Book, The Liturgical Press, 2000.

Brookfield, Stephen. "Transformative Learning as Ideology Critique." In *Learning as Transformation,* Jack Mezirow and Associates, 125-148. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000.

_____. *Understanding and Facilitating Adult Learning.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992.

_____. "Praxis." In *International Encyclopedia of Adult Education,* L.M. English, ed., 504-508. New York: Palgrave, 2005.

Brown, Raymond. *The Churches the Apostles Left Behind.* Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2002.

Brown, Sally. "Hermeneutical Theory." In *Practical Theology,* Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, ed., 112-122. West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

Browning, Don S. *A Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals.* Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991.

Brueggemann, Walter. *Cadences of Home: Preaching among Exiles*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997.

Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. *On Good Soil: Pastoral Planning for Adult Catechesis.* Ottawa, ON: CCCB, 2011.

_____. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.* Ottawa, ON: CCCB, 1987.

Cavalletti, Sophia. *The Religious Potential of the Child: Experiencing Scripture and Liturgy with Young Children.* Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1993.

_____. *The Religious Potential of the Child 6 to 12 Years Old: A Description of an Experience.* Oak Park, IL: Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Publications, 2002.

_____. *Ways to Nurture the Relationship with God.* Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2010.

Clarke, Brian, and Stuart Macdonald. *Leaving Christianity: Changing Allegiances in Canada since 1945*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017.

Collinson, Sylvia Wilkey. *Making Disciples: The Significance of Jesus's Educational Methods for Today's Church*. Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2004.

Congregation for Divine Worship. *The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.* Vatican City: Vatican Press, 1972.

Coyle, Suzanne Murphy. *Uncovering Spiritual Narratives: Using Story in Pastoral Care and Ministry*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014.

Cranton, Patricia. *Understanding and Promoting Transformative Learning: A Guide for Educators of Adults,* second edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006.

_____. "Musings and Reflections on the Meaning, Context, and Process of Transformative Learning: A Dialogue Between John M. Dirkx and Jack Mezirow." In *The Journal of Transformative Education,* Vol. 4 no. 2, (April 2006): 123-139.

Crites, Stephen. "The Narrative Quality of Experience." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* Vol. 39, no. 3 (1971): 291–311.

Dirkx, John M. "Nurturing Soul Work: A Jungian Approach to Transformative Learning." In *The Handbook of Transformative Learning*, Edward Taylor and Patricia Cranton, eds, 116-130. San Francisco: John Wiley and Sons, 2012.

_____. "After the Burning Bush: Transformative Learning as Imaginative Engagement with Everyday Experience." In *Challenges of Practice: Transformative Learning in Action, The Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Transformative Learning*, C. A. Wiessner, S. R. Meyer, & D. A. Fuller, eds, 247-252. New York: Teachers College Press, 2000.

Dujarier, Michel. *A History of the Catechumenate: The First Six Centuries.* New York: William H. Sadlier, 1979.

_____. *The Rites of Christian Initiation.* New York: William H. Sadlier, 1979.

Dunlap, Judith. *Practical Catechesis: Visions and Tasks for Catechetical Leaders*. Cincinnati: St Anthony Messenger Press, 2001.

Dunning, James B. *Echoing God's Word: Formation for Catechists and Homilists in a Catechumenal Church.* Arlington, VA: 1993.

_____. *Ministries: Sharing God's Gifts.* St Mary's Press, 1980.

_____. *New Wine, New Wineskin.* New York: William H. Sadlier, 1981.

Eastman, A. Theodore. *The Baptizing Community.* Seabury Press, 1982.

Ellinger, Andrea. "Continuing Education for Lay Ministry: Providers, Beliefs, Issues and Programs." In *Canadian Journal of University Continuing Education,* V. 28, N.1 (Spring, 2002): 11-30.

_____. "Adult Education of the Laity: A Church Concern." In *Theoform,* Vol.41, No.1. (2010): 131-145.

Ellinger, Andrea and Marie Gillen, eds. *Addressing the Spiritual Dimensions of Adult Learning: What Educators Can Do.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000.

Ellinger, Andrea and Elizabeth J. Tisdell, "Spirituality and Adult Education." In *Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education,* Carol E. Kasworm, Amy D. Rose, Jovita M. Ross-Gordon, eds, 285-295. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2010.

Ferguson, Everett. *The Early Church at Work and Worship - Volume 2: Catechesis, Baptism, Eschatology, and Martyrdom*. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2014.

Field, Anne. *From Darkness to Light: How One Became Christian in the Early Church*. Conciliar Press, 1997.

Fleischer, Barbara, Ministering "Community as Context for Religious Education: A Case Study of St. Gabriel's Catholic Parish." In *Religious Education,* Volume 101, Number 1, (Winter 2006): 104-122.

_____. “Mezirow's Theory of Transformative Learning and Lonergan's Method in Theology: Resources for Adult Theological Education.” In *The Journal of Adult Theological Education,* Vol. 3, Issue 2, (Oct. 2006): 147-161.

Fowler, James. *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000.

_____. *Faithful Change: The Personal and Public Challenge of Postmodern Life*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996.

_____. “Faith Development at 30: Naming the Challenges of Faith in a New Millennium.” In *Religious Education,* 99(4)*,* (September 2004): 405-421.

_____. *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development*. New York: Harper Collins, 1995.

Gittins, Anthony. A *Presence That Disturbs: A Call to Radical Discipleship.* Liguori, MI: Liguori Press, 2002.

_____. *Encountering Jesus: How People Come to Faith and Discover Discipleship*. Liguori, MI: Liguori, 2002.

_____. *Come, Follow Me: The Commandments of Jesus; Invitations to Discipleship*. Liguori, MI: Liguori Publications, 2004.

Graham, Elaine. *Words Made Flesh: Writing in Pastoral and Practical Theology.* London: SCM Press, 2009.

Graham, Elaine and Francis Ward. *Theological Reflections: Methods.* Norwich: SCM Press, 2005.

Grant, Robert M. "Development of the Christian Catechumenate." In *Made, Not Born: New Perspectives on Christian Initiation and the Catechumenate,* Murphy Centre for Liturgical Research, 32-49. South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976.

Groome, Thomas*. Sharing Faith: A Comprehensive Approach to Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry.* San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1991.

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Harakas, Stanley. “Extending the benefit of theological education beyond the ordained ministry to the people of God.” In *St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly,* Vol. 23, no.2 (1979): 101-117.

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Heywood*, David. “*Faith Development Theory: A Case for Paradigm Change.” *Journal of Beliefs and Values*, Volume 29, Number 3, (December, 2008): 263-272.

_____. *Reimagining Ministry*. London: SCM Press, 2011.

Hill, John W.B. *Making Disciples: Serving Those Who Are Entering the Christian Life*. Toronto: The Hoskin Group/Anglican Book Centre, 1991. Also web resource: https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/Making-Disciples.pdf

_____. *Thinking about Baptism*. Toronto: The Hoskin Group/AnglicanBook Centre, 1994.

Holland, Scott. *How Do Stories Save Us? An Essay on the Question with the Theological Hermeneutics of David Tracy in View*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007.

Hopko, Thomas. *Speaking the Truth in Love: Education, Mission, and Witness In Contemporary Orthodoxy.* Crestwood, NY: SVS Press, 2004.

Horell, Harold Daly. *Cultural Postmodernity and Christian Faith Formation. Horizons and Hopes: The Future of Religious Education*. New York: Paulist Press, 2003.

International Council for Catechesis. *Adult Catechesis in the Christian Community: Some Principles and Guidelines.* Vatican City: Vatican Press, 1990.

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Jarvis, P. *Adult Education and Lifelong Learning*, 3rd ed. London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2004.

Johnson, Maxwell E. *The Rites of Christian Initiation: Their Evolution and Interpretation.* Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999.

Kavanaugh, Aidan. *The Shape of Baptism: The Rite of Christian Initiation*. Collegeville, MN: Pueblo Publishing Company, Inc. 1978, 1991.

Krindatch, Alexei. *Research on Orthodox Christian Communities in the United States.* Web resource: http://orthodoxreality.org

Lakeland, Paul. *Postmodernity: Christian Identity in a Fragmented Age.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997.

Lakey Hess, Carol. "Religious Education." In *Practical Theology,* Bonnie Miller-McLemore, ed., 299-307. West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

Loughlin, Gerard. *Telling God's Story: Bible, Church, and Narrative Theology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Lupi, J. "Catechetical Instruction in the Church of the First Two Centuries." *Melita Theologica* Volume 9 (1956): 64-71.

MacIntyre, Alasdair. *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory.* Third Edition. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007.

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Mazza, Enrico. *Mystagogy: A Theology of Liturgy in the Patristic Age.* New York: Pueblo, 1989.

McKenna, Megan. *We Live inside the Story*. Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2010.

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Meyendorff, John. "Theological education in the patristic and Byzantine eras and its lessons for today." In *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, Vol. 31 no. 3 (1987): 197-213.

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Miller, Vincent. *Consuming Religion: Christian Faith and Practice in a Consumer Culture.* London: Continuum, 2004.

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Moschella, Mary Clark. *Ethnography as a Pastoral Practice: An Introduction.* Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2008.

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North American Association for the Catechumenate. *Journey to Baptismal Living.* Web resource: https://journeytobaptism.org/

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_____. *A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey Toward an Undivided Life*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004.

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Ruth, Lester. *Accompanying the Journey: A Handbook for Sponsors*. Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 1997. (accompanies *Come to the Waters* by Benedict, above)

Sahas, Daniel. *Catechesis: The Maturation of the Body.* Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1984.

Scheib, Karen. *Pastoral Care: Telling the Stories of Our Lives*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2016.

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Shenouda III, Pope. *Discipleship.* Alexandria, Egypt: Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate, 1990.

Singer, Sue. "We Break this Bread: Christian Practices, Critical Reflection, and the Construction of Adult Religious Identity." Paper given at the meeting of the Religious Education Association, 2006. http://old.religiouseducation.net/member/06_rea_papers/Singer_Sue.pdf

Slagle, Amy. *The Eastern Church in the Spiritual Marketplace: American Conversions to Orthodox Christianity*. Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2011.

Smith, James K. A. *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing, 2011.

_____. *How (Not) To Be Secular.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014.

_____. *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing, 2013.

_____. *Who's Afraid of Postmodernism? Taking Derrida, Lyotard, and Foucault to Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006.

_____. *Who's Afraid of Relativism? Community, Contingency, and Creaturehood*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014.

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Stroup, George W. *The Promise of Narrative Theology: Recovering the Gospel in the Church.* Atlanta: John Knox, 1981.

Sykes, Stephen. "The Grammar of Narrative and Making Sense of Life." *Anglican Theological Review* 67, no. 2 (April 1985): 117–126.

Tanner, Kathryn. *Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997.

Tawfik, Wedad A. "Discipleship Transforming the World: A Coptic Orthodox Perspective." *International Review of Mission,* Volume 106, Issue 2 (December 2017): 268-279.

Taylor, Charles. *A Secular Age.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.

Ter Kuile, Casper. *The Power of Ritual: Turning Everyday Actions into Soulful Practices.* San Francisco: HarperOne, 2020.

Tomlin, Graham. "Evangelism as Catechesis, Hospitality and Anticipation: A Study of the Alpha Course." *Christian Education Journal (CEJ)* Series 3 Volume 10 (2013), s92-s102.

Tracy, David. *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism.* New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1981.

Vasiljevic, Maxim. "An existential interpretation of dogmatics: theological language and dogma in the face of the culture of pluralism." In *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly.* Vol.51, no. 4 (2007): 395-422.

Vasiljevic, Maxim. *Theology as a Surprise: Patristic and Pastoral Insights.* Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2018.

Vlachos, Hierotheos. *Entering the Orthodox Church*. Translated by Marina Mary Robb. Levadia, Greece: Birth of the Theotokos Monastery, 2006.

Webber, Robert E. *Celebrating Our Faith: Evangelism through Worship.* Harper & Row, 1986.

Wells, Samuel. *Being With, Book 1 – The Core Course: Exploring Life and Faith Together.* Canterbury Press, 2025.

Wells, Samuel. *Being With, Book 2 – Courses for Living: Exploring Life and Faith Together.* Canterbury Press, 2025.

Wells, Samuel. *Improvisation: The Drama of Christian Ethics.* Baker Academic, 2018.

Westerhoff, John H. *Building God's People.* Seabury Press, 1983.

Westerhoff, John H. and O.C. Edwards, eds. *A Faithful Church: Issues in the History of Catechesis.* Wilton, CT: Morehouse-Barlow, 1981.

Whitehead, Jo. "Towards a Practical Theology of Whole-Person Learning: Enriching Youth Ministry Formation through Pneumatological Perspectives." In *Journal of Adult Theological Education*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (May 2014): 61-73.

Wilde, James A., ed. *A Catechumenate Needs Everybody.* Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1988.

_____. *Before and After Baptism: The Work of Teachers and Catechists.* Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1988.

_____. *Parish Catechumenate: Pastors, Presiders, Preachers.* Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1988.

Williams, Cassandra. *Learning the Way: Reclaiming Wisdom from the Earliest Christian Communities.* Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 2009.

Woodill, Joseph. *The Fellowship of Life: Virtue Ethics and Orthodox Christianity.* Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1998.

Wotton, Sally Armour. *We the Storytellers: Blending Our Stories with God's Story*. Eugene, OR: Resource Publications, 2013.

Wright, John. *Telling God's Story: Narrative Preaching for Christian Formation*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007.

Yarnold, Edward. *The Awe-inspiring Rites of Initiation: The Origins of the RCIA.* Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2006.

Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Basic Degree Level

Students successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes.

(A) IN RESPECT OF GENERAL ACADEMIC SKILLS

- to work with both primary and secondary sources and to gather, analyse and prepare materials for reflection and engaged class discussion
- to prepare and deliver a seminar presentation and lead a class discussion
- to write a critical book review
- to evaluate (or develop) a syllabus and curriculum materials within a Christian formation project

(B) IN RESPECT OF THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTENT OF ONE OR MORE THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINES

- to investigate and appraise the complicated and diversified cultural context of the church today, and evaluate the church's current teaching mission in relation to it
- to describe the New Testament and early Christian approaches to catechesis and discipleship and evaluate their ongoing relevance and applicability to the contemporary church
- to critically examine insights from recent authors and postcritical thinkers and propose how the church might meaningfully engage with them in renewing the activities of teaching, learning and living the faith today
- to describe and effectively employ a 'pastoral cycle' model of experience and theological reflection, understanding that ongoing learning is essential to the church's teaching ministry

(C) IN RESPECT OF PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

- to manage their own learning
- to demonstrate behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility

(D) IN RESPECT OF MINISTERIAL AND PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

- to demonstrate qualities and skills necessary for ministry, further study, and community involvement
- to exercise initiative, personal responsibility, and accountability in both personal and group contexts
- to work effectively with others

Advanced Degree (Graduate) Level

GRADUATE "DEGREE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS"	CORRESPONDING COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES	CORRESPONDING COURSE ELEMENTS / ASSIGNMENTS
EXPECTATIONS: ***In this course students are expected to demonstrate the following:***		
1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge is defined as a set of increasing levels of understanding within a student's area of specialization, methodologies, primary & secondary sources, historical developments and inter-disciplinarity.	To describe the New Testament and early Christian approaches to catechesis and discipleship	Class discussions/participation
2. Research and Scholarship is defined as the ability to identify a new or unresolved question, to locate that question within a corpus of scholarly research & assess critically the relevant literature, to adopt a methodology(-ies), and to then formulate a thesis and reasoned argument(s) on the basis of the evidence.	To investigate and appraise the complicated and diversified cultural context of the church today	Class discussions/participation Seminar presentation Critical book review
3. Level of Application of Knowledge is defined as the ability to engage in self-directed or assisted research, and the ability to produce innovative or original analysis within the context of graduate seminars and courses. In some cases this includes the application of a research language.	To evaluate the church's current teaching mission in relation to the context of the contemporary church To evaluate the ongoing relevance and applicability to the contemporary church of New Testament and early Christian approaches to catechesis and discipleship To describe and effectively employ a 'pastoral cycle' model of experience and theological reflection, understanding that ongoing learning is essential to the church's teaching ministry	Class discussions/participation Seminar presentation Critical book review Final education project

GRADUATE "DEGREE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS"	CORRESPONDING COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES	CORRESPONDING COURSE ELEMENTS / ASSIGNMENTS
4. Professional Capacity or Autonomy is defined as the ability to translate the knowledge gained in other research or professional settings, e.g., to undertake further studies in their area of concentration; or to enter or return to other professional vocations for which an advanced understanding of Theological Studies is necessary or beneficial.	To demonstrate an ability to summarise and evaluate theoretical work and communicate this learning in a clear and accurate manner	Class discussions/participation Seminar presentation Critical book review Final education project
5. Level of Communication Skills is defined as the ability to communicate complex and/or ambiguous ideas, issues, and conclusions clearly and effectively.	To communicate the ideas and conceptual and methodological frameworks of Christian education and formation to a variety of audiences (including to basic degree students and advanced degree peers)	Class discussions/participation Seminar presentation
6. Awareness of the Limits of Knowledge is defined as the recognition that Theological Studies is a complex discipline, comprising: a broad array of subject areas; methods and sources; various ecclesiastical traditions and social contexts; and insights from other disciplines.	To critically examine insights from recent authors and postcritical thinkers and propose how the church might meaningfully engage with them in renewing the activities of teaching, learning and living the faith today	Class discussions/participation Seminar presentation Critical book review Final education project

Evaluation

Basic Degree Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in four areas:

1. *Class Participation (15%):* students will be evaluated on their overall class attendance and participation in class discussions on the weekly required readings. *Online students will participate via online activities and discussion forums on the course portal.*
2. *Seminar Presentation (15%):* students will each be assigned one of the weekly readings on which to prepare and lead a class discussion. The 12-15 minute session should consist of a summary of and commentary on the author's thought, along with two or three good questions to stimulate class discussion. A 1-2 page handout should be submitted to the instructor at least one day in advance of the class. In addition to discussion in class and the discussion forms around these questions, the seminar leader should take a lead in managing the social reading and annotation for the given text. *Presentations by online students will be prerecorded and shared with the class via the course portal.*
3. *Critical Book Review (30%):* students will each complete a 1,000 to 1,250-word critical review of one of the books chosen from the course bibliography (to be agreed with the instructor). The review will briefly summarise and critically engage with key themes in the text and then discuss their applicability to aspects of church catechesis and Christian formation today. The book review is due in week 9.
4. *Final Education Project (40%)*: students will either:

    a. describe and critically evaluate an existing catechetical or Christian formation curriculum, examining its theological rationale and assumptions, and assessing it in light of the church's need for Christian formation and discipleship today,

    or:

    b. develop a creative catechetical or Christian formation project, providing a full overview and theological rationale for the project (based on the materials and themes covered during the course), along with adequate sample curriculum or teaching materials to demonstrate the scope and content of the project.

    The total project should not exceed 3,000 words in length. Each of the projects will be briefly presented (10mins) in the final class *(including by prerecorded presentation for online students)* and these presentations will account for 10% of the overall project grade. The final written projects will be due at the end of the examination period.

Advanced Degree (Graduate) Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in four areas:

1. *Class Participation (15%):* students will be evaluated on their overall class attendance and participation in class discussions on the weekly required readings. Advanced degree students will need to demonstrate in class discussion an ability to summarise and evaluate theoretical work and communicate this learning in a clear and accurate manner. *Online students will participate via online activities and discussion forums on the course portal.*
2. *Seminar Presentation (15%):* students will each be assigned one of the weekly readings on which to prepare and lead a class discussion. The 15-20 minute session should consist of a summary of and commentary on the author's thought, along with two or three good questions to stimulate class discussion. Advanced degree students will need to demonstrate a high level of critical engagement with the text and facility in guiding students in the class discussion. A 1-2 page handout should be submitted to the instructor at least one day in advance of the class. In addition to discussion in class and the discussion forms around these questions, the seminar leader should take a lead in managing the social reading and annotation for the given text. *Presentations by online students will be prerecorded and shared with the class via the course portal.*
3. *Critical Book Review (30%):* advanced degree students will each complete a 1,500 to 2,000-word critical review of one of the books chosen from the course bibliography (to be agreed with the instructor). The review will briefly summarise and critically engage with key themes in the text and then discuss their applicability to aspects of church catechesis and Christian formation today. An element of creative and original engagement with the themes and connection with a wider theological and pedagogical perspective will be expected of advanced degree students. The book review is due in week 9.
4. *Final Education Project (40%)*: students will either:

    a. describe and critically evaluate an existing catechetical or Christian formation curriculum, examining its theological rationale and assumptions, and assessing it in light of the church's need for Christian formation and discipleship today,

    or:

    b. develop a creative catechetical or Christian formation project, providing a full overview and theological rationale for the project (based on the materials and themes covered during the course), along with adequate sample curriculum or teaching materials to demonstrate the scope and content of the project.

    The total project should not exceed 4,000 words in length. Advanced degree students will need to demonstrate in their projects a fluency with the main philosophical, theological, and pedagogical themes of the course, including engagement with the post-critical authors and frameworks discussed. Each of the projects will be briefly presented (10mins) in the final class *(including by prerecorded presentation for online students)* and these presentations will account for 10% of the overall project grade. The final written projects will be due at the end of the examination period.

Grading System – Basic Degree Level

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalents	Grade Point	Grasp of Subject Matter	Other qualities expected of students
A RANGE: Excellent: Student shows original thinking, analytic and synthetic ability, critical evaluations, and broad knowledge base.				
A+	90-100	4.0	Profound and Creative	Strong evidence of original thought, of analytic and synthetic ability; sound and penetrating critical evaluations which identify assumptions of those they study as well as their own; mastery of an extensive knowledge base
A	85-89	4.0	Outstanding	
A-	80-84	3.7	Excellent	Clear evidence of original thinking, of analytic and synthetic ability; sound critical evaluations; broad knowledge base
B RANGE: Good: Student shows critical capacity and analytic ability, understanding of relevant issues, familiarity with the literature.				
B+	77-79	3.3	Very Good	Good critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; good familiarity with the literature
B	73-76	3.0	Good	
B-	70-72	2.7	Satisfactory at a post-baccalaureate level.	Adequate critical capacity and analytic ability; some understanding of relevant issues; some familiarity with the literature
FZ	0-69	0	Failure	Failure to meet the above criteria

Grading System – Advanced Degree (Graduate) Level

All 5000, 6000 and 7000 level courses use the following alpha grading scale:

A+	(90-100)	Profound & creative
A	(85-89)	Outstanding
A-	(80-84)	Excellent
B+	(77-79)	Very Good
B	(73-76)	Good
B-	(70-72)	Satisfactory at a post-baccalaureate level
FZ	(0-69)	Failure

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

Late work (Basic Degree). Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. Penalties will not be applied to students with medical or compassionate difficulties; students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor. The absolute deadline for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course. Students who for exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness) are unable to complete work by this

date may request an extension (SDF = "standing deferred") beyond the term. An SDF must be requested from the registrar's office in the student's college of registration no later than the last day of classes in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

Late work (Advanced, Graduate Degree). The prima facie deadline for the completion of work in a course is the last day of the examination week for the trimester in which the course is taken. Students are expected to meet the course deadlines of the instructor offering the course and are advised to plan their research projects accordingly. Students who find themselves unable to meet deadlines for completing coursework can, under certain conditions, receive extensions for completing the work after the dates set by the college in which the course is offered.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/grading.htm) or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks (linked from http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871. A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm.

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of *Behaviour on Academic Matters* http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm.

Back-up copies. Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

Obligation to check email. At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer

questions you may have about your UTORid and password. *Students should check utoronto email regularly* for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder. Students in non-conjoint programs should contact the Registrar of their college of registration.

Email communication with the course instructor. The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students in conjoint programs should be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses for students in conjoint programs. Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.

Generative AI tools

Generative AI represents a significant technological shift whose long-term effects on learning and theological thinking are still being debated. While these tools are now widely available, their use in theological education requires careful discernment. This policy aims to help you navigate these tools thoughtfully while prioritising the formation of your own theological capacities and critical thinking skills.

The goal of this course is not simply to produce polished written work, but to cultivate curiosity, critical thinking, theological reflection, and deep engagement with primary sources and lived experience. Any use of generative AI tools must support, not replace, this formative journey.

When AI Use May Support Learning

You may choose to use generative AI tools when they help you engage more deeply with course material, but only after you have begun your own theological work:

- Initial brainstorming to organise preliminary thoughts after you have already engaged with relevant theological sources
- Clarifying complex concepts to better understand readings, provided you then develop your own theological response to those concepts
- Research organisation to help map connections between sources you are already reading and analysing yourself
- Structural assistance in organising your thoughts, particularly if you have learning differences that affect writing organisation
- Language support for improving grammar, clarity, and coherence after you have developed and expressed your own theological arguments

When AI Use Undermines Learning

In order to support your learning journey, AI should not be used to bypass the intellectual and spiritual struggles that build theological understanding:

- Generating theological arguments without your own prior engagement with source materials
- Producing counterarguments or alternative perspectives without first wrestling with opposing viewpoints yourself
- Using AI to simulate intellectual processes (such as considering multiple perspectives or analysing texts) rather than developing these capacities
- Summarising readings you haven't actually read and grappled with yourself
- Creating content about theological ideas you haven't personally wrestled with
- Producing substantial portions of final drafts without demonstrating your own understanding of the material

A Note on Confidence and Formation

Be mindful that over-reliance on AI tools may undermine confidence in your own theological thinking abilities. The struggle of working through complex ideas independently—while often difficult—is itself formative for developing as a theological thinker. If you find yourself feeling less capable or more anxious about your own thinking when using these tools, this may be a sign to step back and focus on developing your own capacities first.

Assessment and Accountability

Rather than policing AI use through detection software, this course emphasises authentic forms of engagement:

- Oral discussions about your engagement with primary sources as well as your own written work will be a regular part of the learning process
- Reflection assignments will ask you to explain your research journey and thinking development
- You will be expected to demonstrate genuine familiarity with the sources and ideas in your written work through class discussion and follow-up questions

Decisions about appropriate AI use will consider your specific learning context. Students with learning accommodations may find certain AI applications particularly helpful for accessing course content. If you're uncertain whether a particular use case supports or undermines your learning goals, please discuss it with your instructor.

Important Considerations

You remain fully responsible for your learning and the theological positions you develop. Unlike language, culture, or theological tradition—which are integral to human communication and thinking—AI tools are commercial products designed for profit, not educational goals or human flourishing. Their use is a choice that should be made deliberately based on educational value.

Please note that AI tools are not vetted by the university and might not meet university guidelines for privacy, intellectual property, security, accessibility, and records retention. They may produce inaccurate information or false citations, and are subject to service changes without notice.

Ethical Considerations

Your use of AI tools in this course should align with broader ethical principles that reflect Christian values and care for creation. Consider these dimensions when deciding whether and how to use AI:

Human Dignity and Flourishing: Does your use of AI support or undermine human dignity? Avoid uses that devalue human creativity, expertise, or the inherent worth of intellectual struggle. Consider whether your AI use might contribute to the devaluation of human skill and thoughtful work more broadly.

Authentic Relationships: AI tools can create an illusion of relationship or understanding that lacks the authenticity central to Christian community. Be transparent about AI use to avoid inadvertent deception, and ensure that AI does not substitute for genuine engagement with classmates, instructors, or theological conversation partners.

Care for Creation: AI systems have significant environmental costs, including substantial energy consumption and fresh water usage for data centre cooling. Consider whether your use serves a purpose significant enough to justify these environmental costs. Ask yourself: Is this use necessary or merely convenient? Could I accomplish this task through less resource-intensive means?

Justice and Equity: Be aware that AI development often involves exploitation of labour in the Global South, mining of rare earth minerals on Indigenous lands without consent, and unequal distribution of both benefits and environmental costs. The communities most harmed by AI's environmental impact often have the least access to its benefits. Consider how your use participates in or challenges these systems of inequality.

Responsible Stewardship: When you do use AI tools, minimise environmental impact by:

- Using smaller, task-specific models when possible rather than large general-purpose models
- Crafting precise prompts to avoid unnecessary back-and-forth
- Reusing generated content rather than regenerating similar material
- Batching multiple questions into single requests
- Considering whether existing resources (open educational resources and materials licensed under creative commons, or previously created content) could serve your needs

The Bottom Line

Most importantly, over-reliance on these tools will almost certainly prevent you from developing the deep theological reflection and critical thinking skills you'll need as a minister, scholar, lay church leader, or thoughtful Christian. The formation of theological wisdom requires personal engagement with Scripture, tradition, and contemporary questions—work that cannot be delegated to any tool or technology.

Course Schedule

Week 1 – Course Introduction

- Course methodology
- Contemporary issues and problematics (including bridging theology and parish, demographic realities and rise of 'nones', challenges of post-Christendom church, overcoming clericalism/professionalisation of ministry)
- Underlying principles of Christian pedagogy and learning
- Purpose of adult catechesis: empowering mature Christian disciples
- Discipleship and ministry
- Ministry in the whole of life
- Investigating the development and landscape of our secular age
    - Application of Charles Taylor's secularisation thesis

Required Reading

- David Heywood, *Kingdom Learning: Experiential and Reflective Approaches to Christian Formation,* pp 1-22

Further Reading

- Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Belknap Press, 2007) or James K.A. Smith, *How (Not) to Be Secular: Reading Charles Taylor* (Eerdmans, 2014)
- Gerald Sittser, "The Early Church Thrived Amid Secularism and Shows How We Can, Too," *Christianity Today* (16 October 2019)
- Angie Thirston and Casper ter Kuile, *How We Gather* (executive summary)

Week 2 – Context of the Contemporary Church: Challenges and Opportunities

- Postmodern influences
    - Nothing outside the text? Derrida, deconstruction and scripture
    - Where have all the metanarratives gone? Lyotard, postmodernism and the Christian story
    - Power/knowledge/discipline: Foucault and the possibilities of a postmodern church
- Effects of relativism and pragmatism
    - Community as context: Wittgenstein on 'meaning as use'
    - Who's afraid of contingency? Owning up to our creaturehood with Rorty
    - Reasons to believe: Making faith explicit after Brandom

Further Reading – Background to the Lecture

Themes in week 2 will be presented mainly by lecture and discussion, but background or further reading could include:

- James K.A. Smith, *Who's Afraid of Postmodernism?*
- James K.A. Smith, *Who's Afraid of Relativism?*
- Paul Lakeland, *Postmodernity: Christian Identity in a Fragmented Age*

Week 3 – New Testament Foundations and Models

- Learning from Jesus and his 'action-reflection' approach
- Discipling model of the early church
- Personal and corporate identity transformation
- Conformity to Christ and practical wisdom (*phronesis*)
- Evaluating discipleship as an educational practice for today's church

Required Reading

- Heywood, pp 25-38
- New Testament texts:
    - Gospel of Matthew
    - Gospel of Luke and Book of Acts
    - Epistles of Paul
    - Gospel and Epistles of John

Further Reading

- Excerpts from Sylvia Collinson, *Making Disciples: The Significance of Jesus' Educational Methods for Today's Church*

Week 4 – Early Christian Foundations and Models

- Critical engagement with the tradition of catechetical teaching, liturgical mystagogy and Christian formation in the early church
- Applicability of models within early tradition to the contemporary church

Required Reading

- Excerpts from early Christian texts:
    - *Didache: The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*
    - *Epistle from a Disciple to Diognetus*
    - Clement of Alexandria, *The Paedagogus (Christ the Educator),* Book I, chapters 7 & 12
    - Cyril of Jerusalem, *Procatechesis and Mystagogical Catecheses* 1 to 3

Week 5 – Adult Learning in God's Kingdom

- The adult learner and the kingdom of God
- Visions of adult learning
- Characteristics of adult learning
- Recovery of virtue and character
- Learning character
- 'Teleological way of life' (*aka* 'virtue ethics') — narrative, telos, community, mentoring, practice and virtue — as a *model of formation*

Required Reading

- Heywood, pp 38-71

Further Reading

- Joseph Woodill, "Virtue Ethics and Its Suitability for Orthodox Christianity," *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 41.1 (1997): 61-75

Week 6 – Learning to Connect Life and Faith

- Theological reflection and learning, Christian formation
- 'Pastoral cycle'
- Use of narrative in pastoral practice

Readings

- Heywood, pp 75-116
- Lois Malcolm and Janet Ramsey, "On Forgiveness and Healing: Narrative Therapy and the Gospel Story" in *Word & World* 30 (1) (2010): 23–32

Further Reading

- Mary Clark Moschella, *Ethnography as a Pastoral Practice: An Introduction (*Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2008)
- Mark Yaconelli, *Between the Listening and the Telling: How Stories Can Save Us* (Minneapolis: Broadleaf Books, 2022)

Week 7 – Leading the Learning Community

- Experiential learning
- Planned programmes *vs* learning in the life of the church
- Church as community 'practice' (*cf* MacIntyre) integrating knowledge, skills and virtues in unified whole
- The process of transformative learning
- Forming a learning community
- Cultural and intercultural aspects of community learning

Required Reading

- Heywood, pp 119-176
- Jack Mezirow, "Learning to Think Like an Adult: Core Concepts of Transformation Theory"
- Excerpts from Craig Ott, *Teaching and Learning Across Cultures*

READING WEEK

Week 8 – Learning for Ministry Together

- Ministry as a community practice
- Reimagining leadership, knowledge and theology to meet new challenges
- Shared Christian praxis
- Further consideration of cultural and intercultural aspects of community learning (possible guest lecture)
- Discussion of catechetical/Christian formation project (scope, format, and other requirements)

Required Reading

- Heywood, pp 179-220
- Jane Regan, "Adult Formation in the Faith Community" (part 3, chapters 5-7), from *Toward an Adult Church: A Vision of Faith Formation* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2002), pp 143-208

Week 9 – Liturgy, Formation and Desire

- Liturgy as narrative signification
- Formative power of enacted narrative
- Transformation through embodied participation
- Reflective formation: re-cognition and re-narration

Required Reading

- Susan Wood, "Participatory Knowledge of God in the Liturgy," *Studia Liturgica* 29, no 1 (1999): 29-52
- David Stosur, "Narrative Signification and the Paschal Mystery: Liturgy, Participation, and Hermeneutics," *Questions Liturgiques* 96, no. 1–2 (2015): 41–63
- James K.A. Smith, "Restor(y)ing the World: Christian Formation for Mission," chapter 4 of *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013

Further Reading

- "Is Liturgy Working? James K. A. Smith and Geoffrey Ready on Secularization, Pluralism, and Christian Formation," *The Wheel* 28/29 (Winter/Spring 2022): 20-34
- Geoffrey Ready, "Towards a New Mystagogy," chapter 2 of *Living God's Story: Strengthening Liturgical Participation and Christian Formation through the Renewal of Enacted Narrative in the Orthodox Divine Liturgy*

Week 10 – Christian Life as Faithful Improvisation

- Christian life as improvised enacted drama
- Skills for life: forming habits, assessing status, accepting and blocking, questioning givens, receiving gifts (overaccepting), and reincorporating the lost

Readings

- Samuel Wells, "Improvisation in the Theatre as a Model for Christian Ethics" from *Faithful Performances: Enacting Christian Tradition* (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 147-165

Further Reading

- Samuel Wells, *Improvisation: The Drama of Christian Ethics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018)

Week 11 – 'Being With' and Nurturing Faith in Children and Young People

- 'Being With' Christian formation programme
- Discipleship and children
- Critical evaluation of 'Sunday school'
- 'Catechesis of the Good Shepherd'
    - God and the child
    - Education to wonder and the kingdom of God
    - Moral formation, method of signs, and anthropological catechesis
- Whole person learning and formation of young people

Required Reading

- "Being With" website and excerpts from Samuel Wells, *Being With, Book 1 – The Core Course: Exploring Life and Faith Together*
- Excerpts from Sophia Cavalletti, *The Religious Potential of the Child: Experiencing Scripture and Liturgy with Young Children*
- Jo Whitehead, "Towards a Practical Theology of Whole-Person Learning: Enriching Youth Ministry Formation through Pneumatological Perspectives"

Further Reading

- Anglican Church of Canada, "Becoming the Story We Tell"
- 32 Points of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Week 12 – Course Review and Presentations

- Review of course themes
- Oral presentation of catechetical/Christian formation projects (final written projects due on the final day of exam period)

Please note that this syllabus is subject to change in accordance with the regulations in the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and TST *Graduate Conjoint Degree Handbook*.