Please submit the requested assignments via email to the COS office by May 5, 2014

Course Description
This course examines the ministry of the church as a means of nurturing faith, Christian values, and ways of life among members of the congregation and community. Skills for evaluating, planning, and designing educational experiences are stressed, as well as the pastor’s role as mentor and servant.

Course Objectives
- Emphasis on pastor’s identity as servant and mentor, highlighting the need for pastors to be both teachers and learners
- Examination of faith development in the light of location, economics, gender, ethnicity, age, generation, and human relationships
- Survey of the major methodologies for educating Christians, with special stress on developing small-group ministries and on teaching scripture, confirmation, and the basic doctrines of the Christian faith
- Reflection upon the work of the church as formative for Christian discipleship (personal piety and social justice) and development of an action plan for transforming the life of discipleship and the congregation and community
- Development of the ability to critically assess curricular materials for theological content and appropriateness to ministry setting

Required Textbooks
- Krau, Carol F. Keeping in Touch: Christian Formation and Teaching. Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 1999. (note: this book is out of print, but will be furnished upon registration.) (ISBN 9780881772487 a few copies are available on amazon.com.)

These texts are available as a free download at www.GBOD.org or for purchase
Assignment 1
   A. Read all of the Karen Tye book and the Carol Krau book.

Assignment 2
Provide a detailed written description, assessment, and evaluation of your current educational ministry.

Part 1: Complete the 80 question assessment provided (Note: if you are appointed to a multi-point charge please choose only one congregation on which to do this assignment.)

Then:
   • Describe your congregation with particular attention to the education ministries you have.
   • Begin with a general description of the congregation and setting, including a brief explanation of the community demographics and how these are represented in your congregation.
   • Describe the way the congregation teaches. Include all educational programs like worship, Sunday School and Bible Studies or other small groups, special events like Vacation Bible School, retreats, confirmation classes, etc.
   • Be complete in your descriptions with number and size and age group of participants, teachers & curriculum materials used, events in the congregation, and other activities that help explain your situation.
   • Conclude with a brief description of worship, describing how your worship is educational for children, youth and adults. Explain how you plan and order worship, and why you choose this structure for your worship. (3 to 4 pages)

Part 2: Discuss/share the Assessment and your evaluation with at least one lay person in your congregation. Write your reflection on this conversation, paying particular attention to the lay person’s response to the evaluation. What new insights or information have you gained from this conversation? (1 to 2 pages)
(6 to 9 pages total) **Assignment is due on or before May 5, 2014** (25% of course grade)

Assignment 3: Read *This Holy Mystery* and *By Water and the Sprit*.
Write a 2 to 3-page reflection on one of these documents, answering the following questions:
   • How does your congregation understand the sacrament?
   • How does your congregation’s understanding differ from what you have read?
   • What changes do you need to make in the practice of baptism or communion to address the denominational understanding in your congregation?
(2 to 3 pages total) **Assignment is due on or before May 5, 2014** (25% of course grade)
Guidelines for Written Assignments

- All papers should be typed, double-spaced, on 8 ½” by 11” paper, unless the instructor has asked for a different format specifically within the precourse work. Font should be Times New Roman or something similar and no larger than size 12. Margins are to be 1” on all four sides of each page.
- All papers must include a page number and the last name of the student in either the header or footer of every page.
- You should note the question you are answering at the beginning of each new section of materials.
- All papers should provide citations for all quoted material. You may use MLA, Turabain, APA or Chicago Style.
- Punctuation should be consistent; clarity of meaning is the primary purpose of punctuation. Edit and retype material as needed and check spelling in a standard dictionary.
- All papers should attempt to eliminate discriminatory language—for example: racism, ageism, sexism, classism, and prejudicial usage concerning handicapping conditions.

Inclusive Language Covenant

The faculty of Emory Course of Study School has adopted a covenant statement encouraging inclusiveness in the use of language, as follows:

The Inclusive Language Covenant is designed to create a linguistic environment in which all students, staff, and faculty can grow in understanding and appreciating the rich diversity of God’s people. The COS faculty commits itself—through continued discussion, reflection, and exploration—to using language in such a way that we respond to the fullness of God’s presence among us as much by our choice of words as by our care for one another. Recognizing that our experience with inclusive language is an integral part of theological formation, we invite students and others to share as partners with us in this learning process.

We understand “covenant” more in terms of its biblical and theological meaning than in a legal or contractual context. Covenant signifies the common commitment of a community of faith in response to God’s revelation and in partnership with one another. The values implied in the covenant have morally persuaded us to try to generate patterns of speech and behavior that bond the members of the community in mutual respect. We expect all members of the community to address issues of diversity constructively. The entire Inclusive Language Covenant can be found on the COS website, and you are encouraged to read the whole covenant.
Directions to Email Precourse Assignments

Please read all the directions below before emailing your assignments to the COS Office, any emails received that do not follow the directions below will not be accepted. You will receive an email confirmation of receipt and if your email is not submitted correctly an email indicating you will need to resend your assignments.

1) Email only michelle.levan@emory.edu do not email instructors precourse assignments.

2) Email must be received no later than 11:59pm on the deadline of May 5th.
   a. Please note that the cut off time is EASTERN STANDARD TIME zone, so email your assignments accordingly.
   b. Any precourse work received after May 5th at 11:59pm will be subject to a late penalty.
      • Precourse work received between May 6th – May 12th is 1 letter grade deduction.
      • Precourse work received between May 13th – May 15th is 2 letter grade deductions.
      • You will be drop from any course for which precourse work has not been received by 11:59pm on May 15th and you will not be refunded registration fees.

3) The course number and the phrase “precourse work” should be the subject of your email:
   Example - Precourse Work 113
   a. You will need to send a separate email for each course you are registered to attend.

4) Precourse work must be sent as an attached document and not in the body of the email.
   a. Any version of Microsoft Word will be accepted; PDF and Mac-Pages documents will not be accepted.
   b. All assignments for each course must be in one document, multiple documents are not acceptable. You should send only one attachment with all course assignments.

5) Your FULL name, phone number and email, should all be clearly included at the beginning of your email. See Example

6) Plagiarism Policy and Plagiarism Defined
   The plagiarism Policy and Defined paragraphs below must be included in the body of your email (both are below), not within your precourse work. The inclusion of the policy and definition in the body of the email, verifies that you agree to it and your email will represent your signature (which is a requirement). If the email does not include the plagiarism policy and definition it will not be accepted. Your email, with the plagiarism policy and definition will be printed and used as the cover sheet for your precourse assignments, because it has the verification of date and time received, and your agreement to the plagiarism policy and definition.

   Plagiarism Policy - I have read the plagiarism definition below and verify that this assignment represents my own work, except where credit is given.

   Plagiarism Defined: “You plagiarize when, intentionally or not, you use someone else’s words or ideas but fail to credit that person, leading your readers to think that those words are yours. In all fields, you plagiarize when you use a source’s words or ideas without citing that source. In most fields, you plagiarize even when you do credit the source but use its exact words without using quotation marks or block indentation” (201-202). Booth, Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. The Craft of Research, Second Edition. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

7) If you do not follow the procedure your precourse work WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED!
(The First) 80 Guiding Questions to Assess the Education Ministry of the Church
by Dr. Diana L. Hynson

Use these questions, and others you identify, to assess your understanding and practice of the ministry of Christian education and formation in your church. Because of the voluntary nature of participation in Christian formation activities and opportunities, it is difficult to know who should know what by when. But despair not! There are ways to assess what you are doing and where you are going. These initial 80 questions can take you a long way.

**Vision**

1. Do you have a vision statement for the Christian education and formation ministry of the church? If so, who developed it and when?
2. Does it get checked and updated as needed?
3. Is it widely understood and agreed upon by the leaders and participants in the education and formation ministries of the church? How can you tell?
4. Does the congregation as a whole value and support Christian formation and its leaders?
5. In what ways is the vision made plain?
6. Are Scripture, theology, and practice integrated?
7. Is the Christian formation aspect of ministry integrated with worship, service, and fellowship?
8. Do teachers and other education/formation leaders talk to one another (and the church council) about what they want to accomplish together?
9. Do you have an overall learning plan rather than a collection of learning options?
10. Is there an understanding that the goal of the learning plan is faith formation and disciple making that is evidenced in daily life?

**What Settings for Education Are Offered?**

11. Do you have opportunities for study and for Christian formation on Sunday morning?
12. On Sunday afternoon or evening?
13. During the week? If so, when and for whom?
14. Do you have Christian education and formation opportunities somewhere other than in the church facility? If so, what are they and when do they meet?
15. Do you offer Christian education and formation opportunities other than in person, such as through the church website or by e-mail? If so, what are they and how often are they offered?
16. What other small-group education and formation opportunities (such as DISCIPLE or Companions in Christ) are offered?
17. Do you have groups or classes based on the biblical or theological development of the participants? (For example, do you have "entry level" Bible study classes for youth or adults as well as "intermediate," and "upper level"? Do you have "entry level" groups for people completely new to the Christian faith as well as groups that probe into the deeper faith questions for more mature believers?)

18. Do you offer opportunities for confirmation for youth and adults? If so, how often?

19. Do you offer educational opportunities that help people in age-appropriate ways to understand the Christian church, The United Methodist Church and its history and doctrine, or the workings of the various ministries of the church?

20. Do you consider leadership training and development to be a part of the educational ministry of the church?

21. Is there a plan for learning and faith formation with and for the community?

22. Do you have opportunities for learning and faith formation through direct service, such as local mission, justice, or advocacy ministries?

Who Participates?

23. What are the age-level groupings of classes for children, youth, and adults on Sunday?

24. How many people are in each class?

25. What are the age-level groupings of other groups or classes that meet other than Sunday morning?

26. Is any age grouping unrepresented or under-represented?

27. Who participates in opportunities in the educational settings mentioned above?

28. What plan is in place to help children, youth, and adults progress from one class or group to the next so that they are challenged to grow spiritually?

29. Are there any barriers to participation, such as accessibility issues (mobility, sight, hearing, comprehension level), transportation, timing, or other?

30. As new people come into the church, is there new assessment to ensure that they are able to participate in new or existing education and formation settings?

31. As current members grow or life circumstances change, is there any assessment that ensures they are able to participate in new or other education and formation settings than the ones with which they are familiar?

32. Is there any outreach to the community or any groups/classes that meet away from the church?

Who Leads and Teaches?

33. Do the people who recruit teachers and group leaders present an honest picture of the complexity, importance, and blessings of the teaching/nurturing role?

34. Are people recruited based on their gifts and Christian character (or because they consent to fill a slot)?
35. Are there stated (or written) expectations for teachers and leaders?
36. If expectations are not stated, how do teachers and leaders know what they are?
37. Do you have teachers and leaders for each needed education and formation group or class?
38. Do you have to curtail needed groups for lack of leadership or settle for unqualified leaders?
39. Is the leadership the responsibility of a few "experts," or is leadership shared?
40. Do you have any set criteria by which you evaluate the teacher or leader's qualifications (i.e. a person of demonstrated Christian character, good rapport with the age group, proven teaching skills, responsible and dependable in attendance and preparation, and so on)?
41. Do you attend to the security/safety issues regarding adults working with minors or vulnerable adults?
42. Are these leaders willing to participate in ongoing "Safe Sanctuary" training?
43. Is training offered? If so, how often, when, and by whom?
44. By what criteria do you evaluate the skill of the trainers?
45. Do people who indicate a willingness to attend continuing education events and training also follow through and attend?
46. Are they encouraged, expected, even challenged, to attend?
47. Will you/do you accept teachers and leaders who refuse to participate in training? (If you do, in what ways are you evaluating whether they are sufficiently skilled and equipped?)
48. Is the pastor involved in (or supportive of) the Christian education and formation ministries?
49. Does he or she make available the fruits of his or her biblical/theological education to the teachers and leaders?
50. Does the pastor take interest and active involvement in "upper level" Christian education and formation opportunities that require or would benefit from the pastor's theological and biblical expertise?

What Do You Do?

52. Do teachers and leaders know their group members?
53. Do classes and groups incorporate the spiritual disciplines?
54. Are teachers and leaders knowledgeable of multiple intelligences and skilled enough to apply them in their classes or groups?
55. Is there a balance between teaching/learning experiences that inform, form, and transform?
56. Do teachers and group leaders challenge and expect participants to live out what they experience in their teaching/learning settings?
57. Are group members encouraged to nurture and support one another both in and out of the group setting?
58. Are leaders and group members hospitable?
59. How are people -- particularly people new to the community, church, class -- greeted and integrated to the group? Are they taught about the group culture?
60. Are people attentive to "insider language" -- church jargon, use of first names that newcomers don't know, theological language that is not defined, and so on?
61. Are teachers/leaders trained to welcome and teach people with special needs?

Results

62. Do you have a way to evaluate whether the programs, classes, ministries, and faith formation opportunities actually make any impact? Do you ask for feedback?
63. What qualitative measures do you use (reported change in lifestyle, cultivation of Christian practices, attendance and participation patterns, growth toward leadership positions, acceptance of healthy mentoring opportunities, greater depth of personal relationship with God)?
64. Do you follow through on the impact awareness feedback that you get so that future planning cares for surfaced needs and weaknesses and so that success factors are identified and replicated where appropriate?
65. Is "impact awareness" a part of your worship, service, and fellowship ministry as well, and is the congregation mindful of this integration?
66. Does the Christian education and formation ministry continue to "grow in grace and strength" as the congregation grows so that there is always an arena for continuing Christian formation?

Facilities/Institutional Issues

67. Do you have in place a sufficient and working policy for the safety and protection of leaders and participants?
68. Do you do security checks on people who work with minor children? If not, why not?
69. Do you have adequate insurance and liability coverage? How recently has your insurance been reviewed?
70. Do you have enough space for all the groups and classes you need?
71. Is space evaluated and allocated according to the needs and circumstances of the participants? (For example, do senior adults have to climb a lot of steps? Does a class that has dwindled in size still keep the largest room? Do children meet in rooms with adequate furnishings for small people? Are they close to bathrooms? Are rooms or
learning spaces large enough to accommodate the amount of movement and activity needed for the age group?
72. Are rooms clean, well lit, and equipped with supplies necessary to the lesson?
73. Is the facility in compliance with policies for accessibility?
74. Is the facility equipped for people with special needs?
75. Is the signage sufficient for people to find their way around easily?
76. Is the space sufficiently quiet and free of distraction so participants can hear, see, and pay attention?
77. Is the space attractive enough to be inviting to guests?
78. Is good use made of the room or space arrangement for setting a suitable ambiance for learning?
79. How is the Christian education and formation ministry funded?
80. How do you evaluate the financial costs against the needs and benefits in order to allocate funds?