

New media in faith education

EL4535

Luther Seminary

Fall 2017

D R A F T syllabus – final version to be handed out in class

Instructor Information

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Course Identification

Course Number: EL4535
Course Name: New media in faith education
Course Location: TBD
Class Times: Fridays 8:00 to 10:50 am
Prerequisites: None

Course Description

This course explores emerging media as environments in which people “create, share and believe.” Particular attention is given to new cultures of learning, and digital storytelling as a constructive form of faith formation. Students explore the role of leaders in supporting digital media literacy, participate in media production in faith contexts, and develop theological rationales for participating in emerging media spaces. The class utilizes short lectures, significant reading and viewing assignments, in-class and outside-of class collaborative participation, and a final research or curriculum project. Students from a variety of degree programs are welcomed. Assignments are structured according to a personal learning plan each student develops early in the semester.

Course Learning Objectives

Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

- define and support faith formation and religious education
- articulate a vision for educational leadership in a community of faith or related setting

- grasp the ways in which the dynamics of authority, authenticity and agency in community are shifting as digital tools become ubiquitous
- articulate the basic principles of digital media literacy and explain how they function within the context of faith formation
- use at least two digital tools to support the “create/share/belief” circle of faith formation
- articulate a theological rationale for engaging – or discouraging – a community of faith’s approach to digital media

Sample connections to program learning outcomes in the overall curriculum:

- MDIV: Students will recognize with urgency the Holy Spirit’s new opportunities for mission here in ever more diverse North American contexts.
- MDIV: Students will seek out opportunities for encounters and shared projects with neighbors that surround their faith communities.
- MDIV: Students will learn ways to foster in the people they serve an ability to speak meaningfully about their faith.
- MDIV: Students will be familiar with ways to help people in their communities of faith speak about how their own callings—rooted in Baptism—are ways of loving God and their neighbors and about how those callings generate meaning in a post-Christian, multi-religious age.

If there are other specific program outcomes you wish to engage and which you believe fit into this class (especially MA degree program outcomes), please do not hesitate to be in conversation with me about how best to do so.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts

Books:

- Kegan, R. and Lahey, L. *How the way we talk can change the way we work* (Jossey-Bass, 2001)
- Rogers, Frank. *Finding God in the graffiti* (Pilgrim Press, 2011)
- Ross, C. and Bevans, S. *Mission on the road to Emmaus* (SCM, 2015)

Articles:

- Bushe, G. Marshak, R. eds. PDF excerpt from *Dialogic organization development* (Berrett-Koehler, 2015)
- Campbell, H. “Understanding the relationship between religion online and offline in a networked society,” in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, November 2011.

- Hess, M. "A new culture of learning: Digital storytelling and faith formation," in *Dialog*, Vol. 53, #1, Spring (2014)
- Hess, M. "Finding peace on the road to Emmaus: Religious education in the aftermath of Ferguson, MO," paper delivered to REA in 2014
- Hess, M. "Learning with digital technologies: Privileging persons over machines," in *Journal of Moral Theology*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (2015)
- Hess, M. "White religious educators resisting white fragility: Lessons from mystics," forthcoming in *Religious Education*.
- Jenkins, H. et. al. "Confronting the challenges of participatory culture: Media education for the 21st century," (MIT Press, 2009)
- Lotan, G. "Fake news is not the only problem," (Data Points, 2016: <https://points.datasociety.net/fake-news-is-not-the-problem-f00ec8cdfcb#.x8fzhkn4i>)
- Mitchell, J. Chapter 7, "Re-describing media violence," in *Media violence and Christian ethics* (Cambridge, 2010)
- Scharer, M. and Hilberath, B. "Chapter two: The communicative God of Christian revelation and God's communication in history," in *The practice of communicative theology* (Crossroad, 2008)
- Zull, J. Chapter 10, "The connecting thread: Metacognition and the integrated mind," in *From brain to mind: Using neuroscience to guide change in education* (Stylus, 2011)
- Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013)
- Pope Francis, *Laudato 'Si* (2015)

Recommended Background and/or Supplementary Texts

- Anderson, K. *The digital cathedral: Networked ministry in a wired world* (Morehouse, 2015)
- Drescher, E., *Choosing our religion* (Oxford, 2016)
- Drescher, E. and Anderson, K., *Click2Save* (Morehouse, 2012)
- Jennings, W. J. *The Christian Imagination* (Yale, 2010)
- McGonigal, J. *Reality is broken* (2011)
- Palmer, P. *To know as we are known* (Harper, 1993)
- Palmer, P. *Healing the heart of democracy* (Jossey-Bass, 2011)
- Rheingold, H. *NetSmart* (MIT, 2012)
- Rushkoff, D. *Program or be programmed* (OR Books, 2010)
- Thomas, D and SeelyBrown, J. *A new culture of learning* (CreateSpace, 2011)
- Thompson, D. *The virtual body of Christ in a suffering world* (Abingdon, 2016)

Evaluation

Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in three areas.

(1) Preparation, participation and personal learning plan (30 points total, 10 points at each submission) – Students write, follow and assess a personal learning plan. A draft of this plan is due September 15th, a revision on October 13th, and a final assessment is due on December 8th

(2) Weekly exercises (30 points) – Students are expected to complete each of the weekly assignments noted on the course schedule on time. There are six such exercises (apart from the learning plan submissions), each of which contributes 5 points.

(3) Final project (40 points) – A curriculum plan which engages the central content of this class with appropriate scope and sequence structured for a specific context in which students are teaching (roughly 15 pages, including instructions for at least one specific learning event and a resource list); a research paper on some topic raised in class (roughly 15 pages); or some other equivalent final project agreed to in advance with the instructor. Due on December 8th

Late work. Students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. Late assignments will result in a lowering of grade, proportional to the delay. This penalty is not applied to students with medical or compassionate difficulties.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register with the Office of Student Services, and communicate the specific accommodation to the instructor by the first day of class.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written and/or digital material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes, endnotes, and/or credits. In written work 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. Specific procedures for dealing with suspected plagiarism are outlined in the Student Handbook.

Back-up copies. Please make back-up copies of assignments 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 are required to have a valid Luthersem email address. *Students should check Luthersem email regularly* for messages about the course.

Email communication with the course instructor. The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students within 48 hours. *All email communications from students should be sent from a Luthersem 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.

Use of digital devices within the classroom. The instructor welcomes the use of personal digital devices within the classroom for learning purposes. If a student's use of such a device distracts other students, however, the student will be asked to cease the distracting behavior. If the behavior persists, the instructor reserves the right to remove the device from the student's access during the remainder of the class session.

Use of twitter and other public social media. Students are welcomed to tweet, snapchat, and in other ways share out from the class into their social media stream with the provisos that they are only sharing their own experiences, and that the sharing enhances their learning and does not distract other students. Class agreements on confidentiality supersede this permission. Sharing of other people's comments should always be done *only with permission*.

Course Schedule

Week 1

Friday, Sept. 8

Map of the semester ahead

Definitions, processes and assumptions of the course, personal introductions, working with a personal learning plan

Reading

Course caveats

Week 2

Friday, Sept. 15

We live in a "post-church" world

The challenge of sharing faith in a multi-religious, yet secularizing world

Reading

Bevans and Ross, "Introduction: Mission as Prophetic Dialogue," in *Mission on the road to Emmaus* (SCM, 2015)

Bevans and Ross, "Part 1: Christology: The Mission of Jesus as Prophetic Dialogue" in *Mission on the road to Emmaus* (SCM, 2015)

Jenkins, H. et. al. "Confronting the challenges of participatory culture: Media education for the 21st century," (MIT Press, 2009)

Assignments

Self assessment and draft of personal learning plan

Week 3

Friday, Sept. 22

We know through experience and relationship

Epistemological challenges and the power of narrative

Reading

Rogers, *Finding God in the graffiti* (2011)

Hess, M. "Learning with digital technologies: Privileging persons over machines," in *Journal of Moral Theology*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (2015)

Zull, J. Chapter 10, "The connecting thread: Metacognition and the integrated mind," in *From Brain to Mind: Using Neuroscience to Guide Change in Education* (Stylus, 2011)

As background

Palmer, P. *To know as we are known* (Harper, 1993)

Jennings, W. J. *The Christian imagination* (Yale, 2010)

Assignments

Learning interview

Week 4

Friday, Sept. 29

Our experience is limited and limiting

Mediated and networked spaces, the illusion of the "world wide web"

Reading

Bevans and Ross, "Part 5: Anthropology: Mission as What it Means to Be Human" in *Mission on the road to Emmaus* (SCM, 2015)

Kegan and Lahey, "Part One: The Internal Languages," in *How the way we talk can change the way we work* (Jossey-Bass, 2001)

Lotan, "Fake news is not the only problem" (Data Points, 2016)

As background and/or supplement

Rushkoff, D. *Program or be programmed* (OR Books, 2010)

Rheingold, *NetSmart* (MIT Press, 2012)

Assignment

Digital news quest

Week 5

Friday, Oct. 6

God is social and beyond our full knowing

Embracing and being embraced by the social Trinity in the midst of digital media: Communicative practices and the promise of transformative learning

Reading

Bevans and Ross, "Part 4: Soteriology: Salvation as Prophetic Dialogue," in *Mission on the road to Emmaus* (SCM, 2015)

Hess, M. "A new culture of learning: Digital storytelling and faith formation," in *Dialog*, Vol. 53, #1, Spring 2014. (cf. course website)

Scharer, M. and Hilberath, B. "Chapter two: The communicative God of Christian revelation and God's communication in history," in *The practice of communicative theology* (Crossroad, 2008)

Assignment

Trinity naming reflection

As background and/or supplement

Thomas, D and SeelyBrown, J. *A new culture of learning* (CreateSpace, 2011)

Week 6

Friday, Oct. 13

Continuing work with the ideas thus far.... Particularly communicative theology

Reading

Bevans and Ross, "Part 4: Soteriology: Salvation as Prophetic Dialogue," in *Mission on the road to Emmaus* (SCM, 2015)

Hess, M. "A new culture of learning: Digital storytelling and faith formation," in *Dialog*, Vol. 53, #1, Spring 2014. (cf. course website)

Scharer, M. and Hilberath, B. "Chapter two: The communicative God of Christian revelation and God's communication in history," in *The practice of communicative theology* (Crossroad, 2008)

Assignment

Mid-course self assessment and work on your goals

Week 7

Friday, Oct. 20

We need to see structures

The power of systems in a networked world: Frameworks humans have devised for refusing relationality

Reading

Bevans and Ross, "Part 3: Eschatology: Our Future in Light of the Planet" in *Mission on the road to Emmaus* (SCM, 2015)

Campbell, H. "Understanding the relationship between religion online and offline in a networked society," in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, November 2011.

Hess, M. "White religious educators resisting white fragility: Lessons from mystics," (*Religious Education*, 112 (1) Winter 2017, pp. 46-57)

Mitchell, J. Chapter 7, "Re-describing media violence," in *Media violence and Christian ethics* (Cambridge, 2010)

Assignment

Personal map of networked connections

Week 8

Friday, Oct. 27

Christianity is deeply flawed yet can break us open

From "missionary" to "missional": Repentance, forgiveness, living with and learning from history

Reading

Bevans and Ross, "Part 2: Ecclesiology: The Mission of the Church as Prophetic Dialogue" in *Mission on the road to Emmaus* (SCM, 2015)

Hess, M. "Finding peace on the road to Emmaus: Religious education in the aftermath of Ferguson, MO," paper delivered to REA in 2015.

Kegan and Lahey, "Part Two: The Social Languages," in *How the way we talk can change the way we work* (Jossey-Bass, 2001)

Assignment

Start to identify what you'll do for your final project and send me a brief (250 words or less) description of your plans

Week 9

Friday, Nov. 3

We need to listen in ways that open us up

Pragmatic practices for "living in the tragic gap": Respectful conversation, liberating structures, and other pedagogical tools for engaging 21st century contexts; debate/dialogue comparisons

Reading

Bevans and Ross, "Part 6: Culture: Mission and Culture in Prophetic Dialogue" in *Mission on the road to Emmaus* (SCM, 2015)

Palmer, P. *Healing the heart of democracy* (Jossey-Bass, 2011)

Assignment

Complete one 4-column map for yourself from the Kegan/Lahey book on an issue that arises for you as you read Bevans and Ross.

Week 10

Friday, Nov. 10

We need to build counter memory, counter community

Storying faith: Circles of trust, developing resilience and resistance for grounded evangelization

Reading

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013)

Pope Francis, *Laudato 'Si* (2015)

Assignment

Create a short digital video piece on one theme from our readings (Note: we will be exploring various options for this assignment well in advance of its due day)

Week 11

Friday, Nov. 17

Storying faith in various digital processes

Continued work with storying faith

Assignment

Begin to do your personal learning plan final assessment and continue to work on your final project

Fall break, US Thanksgiving

Week 12

Friday, Dec. 1

We learn within and through personal and social transformation

Dialogic organizations: An “everyone culture” and leading/learning through change

Reading

Kegan, R. and Lahey, L. “Part 3: Carrying on the work,” in *How the way we talk can change the way we work* (Jossey-Bass, 2001)

PDF excerpt from Bushe, G. Marshak, R. eds. *Dialogic organization development* (Berrett-Koehler, 2015).

Assignment

Seek help if you need it as you concentrate on your final project!

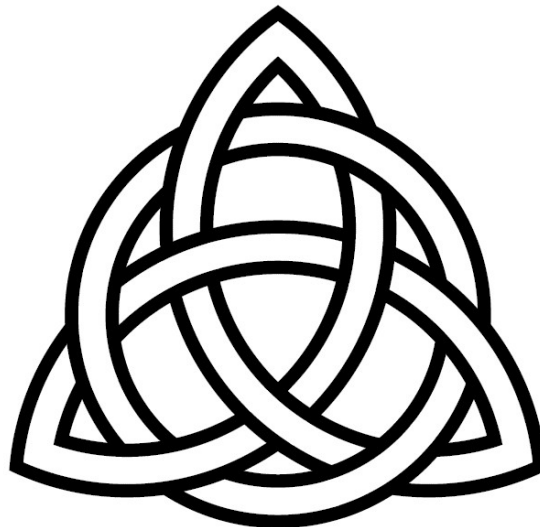
Week 13

Friday, Dec. 8

Walking on the road to Emmaus

Pulling it all together as we walk upon this road... Sharing our projects and looking to the future.

(I’m leaving this week’s assignments/activities unannounced, and using this as a space to allow some flexibility in our time together.)



Weekly Assignment Instructions

Weekly assignments are due by the beginning of class in the week in which they are listed on the calendar (but you can always send them earlier!). Instructions for these assignments are available online, along with any necessary templates. Please email me your assignments (mhess@luthersem.edu). I accept .txt, .rtf, .pdf, .doc, .docx, .xls, .numbers, .pages, and .mov files. If you need to use a different file format, please check with me first.

Exercises

Self assessment and personal learning plan (due September 15)

Mid-course self-assessment (due October 13th)

Final self assessment (due December 8th)

Learning interview recording/transcript (due September 22)

Digital news quest (due September 29)

Trinity naming reflection (due October 6)

Personal map of networked connections (due October 20)

4 – column map on a personal learning challenge (due November 3)

Digital video piece on one theme from the week's readings (due November 10)

Rubrics

Weekly assignments will be assessed primarily in terms of whether or not you engaged the specific exercise as directed. Although each one is worth 5 points in the grading schema, I will give feedback on a 10 point scale.

I will use the following writing rubric for research papers, and the following project rubric for offering feedback on projects. In the writing rubric, full points are awarded for being in the proficient column. In the project rubric, full points can be awarded starting in the top two rows. I reserve the right to develop an additional rubric for students undertaking different final assignments – always in consultation with me.

Your learning plan final assessment will include your proposal for what you think your grade for the semester should be.

Writing Rubric (drawn from one created for SAGES at CWRU)

		Proficient	Acceptable	Developing	Unacceptable
Engagement	Content/Ideas	Thoroughly engages a relevant and focused question or problem to reveal significant—perhaps even highly original—insight(s)	Thoroughly engages a relevant and mostly focused question or problem to reveal somewhat important insight(s)	Partially engages a relevant and somewhat focused question or problem to reveal some insight(s)	Inadequately engages a question or problem or merely reports what is already known
	Purpose, Context, and Audience	Thorough and nuanced attention to purpose, context, and audience	Attends to purpose, context, and audience, though sometimes inconsistently or partially	Attends to purpose, context, and audience, though often inconsistently or partially	Little or no attention to purpose, context, and/or audience
Argument	Thesis Statement	Articulates argument through clear, focused, and precise thesis statement	Articulates argument through clear thesis statement, though it may be somewhat imprecise or broad in focus	Thesis statement only partially articulates argument or is too general	No thesis statement or thesis statement unrelated to the argument
	Reasoning/ Development	All parts of the argument (major and sub-claims) are developed thoroughly, deeply, and logically	Claims mostly developed, though contains one or two partially developed claims, or minor logical inconsistencies that do not seriously affect overall argument	Many claims are only moderately developed, or argument contains several minor—or one major—logical inconsistencies	Develops all claims superficially, repeats ideas, or wanders from the argument
Evidence	Quality	Always uses relevant evidence from reliable and properly documented sources	Mostly uses relevant evidence from reliable and properly documented sources	Uses evidence from somewhat reliable sources documented to ensure retrievability	Evidence is missing, irrelevant, unreliable, or undocumented
	Use	Consistently integrates and fully explains evidence to support all claims thoroughly and carefully	Mostly integrates and explains evidence to support the primary claim(s)	Uses some evidence, but may struggle to integrate it logically or smoothly into the argument, or to explain it fully	Does not use evidence, merely reports it without explanation, or plagiarizes
Readability	Arrangement	Consistently uses sophisticated transitions to enhance the coherence of sentences and paragraphs	Mostly uses effective transitions to enhance the coherence of sentences and paragraphs	Simple transitions reduce the coherence of sentences and paragraphs	Does not use transitions, or sentence and paragraph arrangement interferes with logical coherence
	Sentence Level Correctness and Style	Sentences always mechanically correct and stylistically sophisticated; reader comprehension never impeded	Sentences almost always mechanically correct and stylistically clear; reader comprehension rarely and minimally impeded	Sentences usually mechanically correct and clear; reader comprehension occasionally impeded, though not critically	Mechanically incorrect or stylistically unclear sentences critically impede reader comprehension

Project Rubric (based on the work of Wiggins/McTighe in *Understanding by Design*)

Explanation	Interpretation	Application	Perspective	Empathy	Self-Knowledge
<i>Sophisticated:</i> an unusually thorough, elegant, and inventive reflection; fully supported, verified, and justified using artifacts; deep and broad; goes well beyond basic reflection.	<i>Profound:</i> a powerful and illuminating interpretation and analysis of the meaning or significance of the student's experience in relation to an outcome; tells a rich and insightful story; sees deeply and incisively any ironies in the different interpretations which could be made of a given artifact	<i>Masterful:</i> fluent, flexible, and efficient grasp of the outcome; demonstrates knowledge and skill in adjusting understanding for novel, diverse, and difficult contexts.	<i>Insightful:</i> demonstrates a penetrating and novel reflection on their experience in relation to the outcome; effectively critiques and encompasses other plausible perspectives; takes a long and dispassionate, critical view of the issues involved.	<i>Mature:</i> reflection on the outcome demonstrates that the student is disposed and able to see and feel what others see and feel; unusually open to and willing to seek out the views of the neighbor both near and far,	<i>Wise:</i> reflection upon outcome demonstrates that the student is deeply aware of the boundaries of one's own and others' understanding; able to recognize prejudices and projections; has integrity
<i>In-depth:</i> an atypical and revealing account, going beyond what is obvious or what was explicitly taught; makes subtle connections; well supported by argument and evidence; novel thinking displayed.	<i>Revealing:</i> a nuanced interpretation and analysis of the meaning or significance of the student's work with the outcome; tells an insightful story; provides a telling history or context; sees subtle differences, levels, and ironies in diverse interpretations.	<i>Skilled:</i> competent in the outcome, clearly uses their knowledge and skill to adapt their understanding in a variety of appropriate and demanding contexts.	<i>Thorough:</i> demonstrates a revealing and critical reflection on the outcome; makes own view more plausible by considering the plausibility of other perspectives; makes apt criticisms, discriminations, and qualifications.	<i>Sensitive:</i> reflection demonstrates that the student is disposed to see and feel what others see and feel; open to the unfamiliar and different.	<i>Circumspect:</i> reflection demonstrates awareness of the limits of personal understanding
<i>Developed:</i> an account that reflects some in-depth and personalized ideas; the student is making the work her own, going beyond the given – there is supported theory here, but insufficient or inadequate argument or evidence.	<i>Perspective:</i> a helpful interpretation or analysis of the meaning or significance of the student's experience in relation to an outcome; tells a clear and instructive story; provides a useful history or context; sees different levels of interpretation.	<i>Able:</i> able to demonstrate the specific outcome with knowledge and skill in a few key contexts, albeit with a limited repertoire, flexibility, or adaptability to diverse contexts.	<i>Considered:</i> a reasonably critical and comprehensive reflection on the outcome; makes clear that there is plausibility to other points of view.	<i>Aware:</i> reflection demonstrates that the student knows and feels what others see and feel differently; is somewhat able to empathize with others, but may have difficulty making sense of odd or alien views.	<i>Thoughtful:</i> reflection suggests that the student is generally aware of what is and is not understood; beginning to be aware of how prejudice and projection can shape one's views.
<i>Intuitive:</i> an incomplete account but with apt and insightful ideas; extends and deepens some of what was learned; some "reading between the lines"; but has limited testing, and evidence in support of the argument.	<i>Interpreted:</i> a plausible interpretation or analysis of the meaning or significance of a student's experience in relation to an outcome; makes sense of a story; provides history and context.	<i>Apprentice:</i> has a limited grasp of the outcome; is beginning to perform it in familiar or simple contexts, with perhaps some needed coaching;	<i>Aware:</i> reflection demonstrates that the student is aware of different points of view and somewhat able to place their own view in perspective, but there is still weakness in considering the worth of another perspective, and their own tacit assumptions.	<i>Developing:</i> reflection shows that the student has some capacity and self-discipline to "walk in another's shoes" but is still primarily limited to one's own reactions and attitudes	<i>Unreflective:</i> reflection upon the outcome is generally ignorant of student's own specific context; generally unaware of how subjective prejudgments color or limit their understandings.

<i>Naïve</i> : a superficial account; more descriptive than analytical or creative; a fragmentary or sketchy account of facts/ideas or glib generalizations; a black-and-white account; less a theory than an unexamined hunch or borrowed idea.	<i>Literal</i> : a simplistic or superficial reading of the student's experience; mechanical attention to the outcome, a decoding with little or no interpretation; no sense of wider importance or significance; a restatement of what was taught or read.	<i>Novice</i> : is not yet able to demonstrate anything of the outcome, perhaps does not yet understand what it is about	<i>Uncritical</i> : unaware of differing points of view in relation to what the outcome might entail; prone to overlook or ignore other perspectives; has difficulty imagining other ways of seeing things; prone to egocentric argument and personal criticisms.	<i>Egocentric</i> : reflection demonstrates little or no empathy beyond intellectual awareness of others; sees things through own ideas and feelings; ignores or is threatened or puzzled by different feelings, attitudes, or views.	<i>Innocent</i> : reflection demonstrates that the student is completely unaware of the bounds of their own understanding and prejudice
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