This course focuses on discovering and practicing multiple ways of teaching and learning the Bible, as a means of interpreting and confessing the Word of God in a variety of contexts. The goal is to prepare leaders to meet the pressing challenge of inviting others into deep yet critically sustaining relationship with the Bible as the Book of Faith. The method will be intentionally inter-disciplinary, drawing on diverse practices of pedagogy and theological interpretation. Students will reflect on how their own experiences and the experiences of Christian communities shape the teaching and learning of Scripture for the sake of the world.

Full course, meets the I/C core requirement.

The essential questions this course takes up:

What does it mean to teach and learn the Bible with adults? How does engaging the Bible in learning community lead us to interpreting and confessing the Word of God? When we are choosing texts, when we are choosing methods of pedagogy, what explicit, implicit and null implications are there for interpreting and confessing? What resources and strategies exist for supporting these processes? What challenges and conflicts arise in doing so?

Ideas and concepts central to understanding:

Christian leaders and communities are called and shaped by a living God who initiates relationships with people of all ages in a world of many cultures. The Bible as Word of God is at the heart of that call, and fundamentally shapes those relationships. Leading learning with the Bible requires interpreting and confessing the Word, both personally (in one’s own life) and communally in a congregation (or other shared setting).

Ideas and concepts that are important to know and to do:

- know what a Christian learning community is (and can be)
- articulate a clear statement of your history with Scripture, and how it shapes and nourishes your faith and your teaching/learning with the Bible
- articulate a clear statement of your community/tradition’s history with Scripture and how it shapes and nurtures your corporate faith and teaching/learning with the Bible
• what is important about teaching and learning with the Bible? Why would you do it? Why would a community, should a community, care about it?
• articulate a clear vision for providing leadership in learning and teaching the Bible – both at home and in community
• know how a biblical imagination shapes and challenges our encounter with the world, and broadens and deepens our understanding of what teaching and learning Scripture is
• know how to ask good and meaningful questions that catalyze learning
• know what your tradition’s theological relationship to engagement with culture is, and how to teach and learn within and beyond it in relation to Scripture
• listen carefully to a community and assess the Bible learning challenges present in that community
• know something about leading change, and how to support and nurture change
• know how to move a community from expert-centered teaching to lay-centered learning
• understand something of the complexity of teaching and learning the Bible in a world of many faiths, and many traditions within those faiths, which reverence different sacred texts and in different ways
• understanding something of the insights gained from inter-cultural and inter-religious conversation

Ideas and concepts that are worth being familiar with:

• a variety of forms of biblical interpretation
• a variety of denominational/doctrinal commitments to biblical engagement
• information about brain function, psychological and social development in adults in relation to learning
• information about pedagogy and curriculum design for adult learning
• information about the sacred texts of other traditions (particularly the Tanakh of Judaism, and the Koran of Islam) and how different faiths relate to their sacred texts

REQUIRED READING/VIEWING

Christine Blair, *The Art of Teaching Bible to Adults*
Jacobson, Powell, Olson. *Opening the Book of Faith*
Kegan & Lahey, *How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work*
Assorted articles (see individual weeks of the course schedule) on e-reserve
Assorted web presentations (see individual weeks of the course schedule)
COURSE CALENDAR
(Our assumption is that assignments will be completed in time for class.)

February 9 / Introductions and orientation

What are some of the major challenges of engaging the Bible in the world today? What do you think and where are you in relation to teaching and learning the Bible with adults? What is your vision of where you would like to go?

February 16 / Learning Scripture in today’s world

What are some of the main challenges of engaging Scripture in the world today (part two)?

Assignments:  read *Opening the Book of Faith* (Jacobson, Powell, Olson)
watch Rolf Jacobson’s Book of Faith Jubilee talk:
(http://www.luthersem.edu/jubilee/previous_years/2009/default.aspx)

February 23 / Congregations as learning communities formed by Scripture

What would it look like if a congregation was a learning community formed by Scripture? Where do we want to get to? What are we aiming towards?

Assignments:  read *The Art of Teaching the Bible* (Blair)
Read the four scenarios piece from the journal *Lifelong Learning*
(http://www2.luthersem.edu/mhess/FF 2020 Focus Group Handout.pdf)

March 2 / Reading the Bible devotionally

(both faculty are out of town, this week you will meet in pre-assigned small groups)

read Martin Luther, “Preface to the Wittenberg Edition of Luther’s German Writings” (1539)
review the BoF section on devotional reading
watch “The Possibility,” Diane’s interview with Eugene Peterson at the Book of Faith Jubilee event:
(http://www.luthersem.edu/jubilee/previous_years/2009/default.aspx)

As per the instructions handed out in class the week before, meet in your small group and use the devotional practice you’ve chosen to engage Luke 24:13-35. Compile your group’s insights and post them to the ning site by Sunday, March 7th
March 9 / Reading the Bible historically

Assignments: review the BofF section on historical reading
read the handout on “Questions gone wrong” in designing Bible study
read the article on adult learning from the Lifelong Learning journal (pp. 89-102, Vol 1.3, Fall/Winter 2007)
search for resources that engage the Luke 24:13-35 text from an historical/critical angle and come to class prepared to share whatever insights into the text you’ve gained from that process (make sure you’ve searched at least three appropriate resources, and bring along citations to document your insights)

March 16 / Reading the Bible through a literary lens

Assignments: review the BofF section on literary reading
Read Scott Cormode on “gardening leadership” ([http://arl-jr1.org/Volumes/CormodeFA02.pdf](http://arl-jr1.org/Volumes/CormodeFA02.pdf))
search for resources that engage the Luke 24:13-35 text from a literary angle and come to class prepared to share whatever insights into the text you’ve gained from that process (make sure you’ve searched at least three appropriate resources, and bring along citations to document your insights)

March 23: Reading Days (no class)

March 30 / Reading the Bible from a Lutheran theological stance

Assignments: review the BofF section on Lutheran theological reading
read:


OR, if you are not Lutheran, search for resources that engage the Luke 24:13-35 text from the theological angle of your own community, and come to class prepared to share whatever insights into the text you’ve gained from that process (make sure you’ve searched at least three appropriate resources, and bring along citations to document your insights).

Easter Break: April 1 – 5

April 6 / Engaging the Bible through art, music, film: part one (representationally)

Assignments: review Blair, The Art of Teaching Bible to Adults
read Mary’s piece from the journal Lifelong Faith (pp. 45 -57), Vol 2.3, Fall 2008
watch “The Response” by Deanna Thompsons from the Book of Faith (http://www.luthersem.edu/jubilee/previous_years/2009/default.aspx)
bring to class at least one rendering of the Emmaus text in art, music, film or literature that appeals to you (with a readiness to engage the interpretation that that piece offers)

April 13 / Engaging the Bible through art, music, film: part two (resonance and allusion)

Assignments: bring to class your analysis of the adult learning event
read Reel Spirituality: Chapters 3 and 4 (pp. 55 – 115), Robert Johnston, Baker Academic, 2006
bring to class at least one scene, chapter, image, etc. from a book, film, art or music that is not explicitly the Emmaus text, but which invites us into some aspect of that text’s meaning through contrast or comparison or resonance

April 20 / Embodied learning approaches to the Bible

Assignments: Teaching the Bible in the Church, Chapter 1 (pp. 42), Tye and Bracke, Chalice Press, 2003.
April 27 / Learning Scripture in inter-faith dialogue

Assignments: explore scriptural reasoning website: http://www.scripturalreasoning.org/ (we’ll pick one theme for class)

May 4 / Learning into the future: facing adaptive challenges

Assignments: Kegan & Lahey, How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work

May 11 / Closing rituals

Assignments: share your revised version of “where am I in relation to Scripture and teaching Bible” essay, making sure that you have also included some sense of what your dreams are for how you’ll lead in this arena in your next place of leadership.

ASSIGNMENTS

20%
(1) Write a short essay that articulates where you are in relation to Scripture. You will do a free write of this essay in the first week of the class, to be handed in at the end of the class, and then you will revisit it at the end of the course, and at that point your revised version will be made public and shared on May 11th. The final version should be no more than three pages.

10%
(2) Interview at least one person who is not from your church about their relationship with Scripture. Write up a short reflection (again, no more than 500 words) that notes what you learned from that engagement – and what, if anything, you think the person you talked with, learned. This reflection should also inform your final revision of your own statement on your relationship with Scripture (see assignment #1 above). This is due on April 6th.

30%
(3) Commit to the texts of the Sunday lectionary informing your week. Your lens for the week are these texts, and every week you have to show some place in your life that one or more of those texts resonated with or could be brought into conversation with that moment (images, films, music in particular are highly valued in this). Each week you need to post to the class ning site a short written reflection (500 words or less) that
identifies that moment and explains, briefly, its connection or resonance with the lectionary text(s). This is due each week by Saturday at midnight, on the previous Sunday’s text.

10%
(4) Attend at least one adult learning event in some context other than Luther Seminary, and hand in an analysis based on the template we’ll give you. That event does not have to take place in a religious context or have explicit theological elements, but it does have to be an event explicitly geared to adults. This assignment is due April 6th, and you should bring it to class with you that day.

30%
(5) Participate in the various weekly assignments that require you to search appropriate literatures, and bring your insights to class.