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**1531 CURRICULUM: ORGANISING
THE WORLD FOR LEARNING**

Winter 2011

Syllabus

Curriculum: organising the world for learning

Aims

Participants in the course will:

- reflect critically on the nature of curriculum and the process of curriculum development;
- evaluate approaches to the structure of the curriculum from a Christian perspective;
- design a course that embodies a Christian curricular orientation and is consistent with the vision and goals of the developer's school;
- articulate a model for course design that is faithful to a biblical worldview;
- engage in dialogue with other educators to reflect communally on matters of mutual concern.

Rationale

Curriculum is the selection and organisation of experience for pedagogical purposes. The criteria that determine what is selected and how it is organised articulate fundamental values about the nature of the world and our calling in it. This course will encourage critical evaluation of the criteria that are commonly employed and of how the curriculum can be shaped to better reflect a Christian worldview.

Curriculum is conceived not as a static collection of materials, but as a dynamic plan that directs the learning process and governs the organically developing relationship between teachers and learners. Teachers are curriculum workers, charged with reflective responsibility as they conduct themselves in their profession. Whether adopting and adapting an externally prescribed curriculum or designing a curriculum from its inception, Christian teachers have a responsibility to ensure that the curriculum reflects a biblical worldview, in structure as well as in content, and that learners are invited to respond from their hearts in obedience to the call of God in Christ, Scripture and creation.

Outline

1. Getting oriented: what do we understand by "curriculum", what are some of the different approaches to curriculum structure and design; situational analysis of own school.
2. Worldview: what is a Christian worldview, and how does it relate to curriculum development?
3. Curriculum orientations and objectives: Eisner's summary of orientations, Van Brummelen's proposal for a Christian orientation, a consideration of the role of objectives in the process of curriculum planning.
4. Knowledge, understanding, wisdom: a biblical view of knowledge, an integral curriculum model, a biblical view of wisdom, exploratory-understanding-level teaching and learning.
5. Maps: mapping culture for the purposes of curriculum selection, and maps of how students learn, essential first steps before moving to that of organisation of educational experiences.
6. Design: reflection on a number of approaches to curriculum design, and initial formulation of a model for a biblical approach to course planning.

7. **Meaning:** the importance of teaching for meaning, recognising the coherence and interrelation of all things in Christ.
 8. **Narrative:** the role of story in the development of understanding; the teacher's own curriculum narrative, connecting a student's own story to the biblical story.
 9. **Theory and practice:** what role do theory and method play in the process of curriculum construction? How do teachers actually go about the task?
 10. **Spirituality, justice and moral education:** these topics are considered in the broader context of education for the formation of Christian character.
 11. **The future:** prognoses for curricular tasks in general, and in specific relation to the Christian school.
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Assignments

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| 1. | On-line discussion forum | 30 % |
| 2. | Curriculum model and design project | 70 % |
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Texts

- Van Brummelen, H. (2002). *Steppingstones to curriculum: a biblical path* (2nd ed.). Colorado Springs, CO: Purposeful Design Publications.
- Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (2004). *Understanding by design* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
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Readings

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- Bigge, M. L., & Shermis, S. S. (1999). How does exploratory-understanding-level teaching and learning proceed? *Learning theories for teachers* (6th ed.). New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 264-297.
- Caine, R. N., and Caine, G. (1997). Teaching for meaning and the expansion of dynamical knowledge. *Education on the edge of possibility*, Ch. 6. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 116-125.
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- Eisner, E. W. (2002). The centrality of curriculum and the function of standards. *The arts and the creation of mind*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 148-177.
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- Lauritzen, C., & Jaeger, M. (1997). Narrative curriculum: the planning template. *Integrating learning through story: the narrative curriculum*. Albany, NY: Delmar Publishers, 123-154.
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- Marshall, P. (1998). The wonder of learning. *Heaven is not my home: learning to live in God's creation*. Nashville, TN: Word Publishing, 51-69.
- Ornstein, A. C., & Hunkins, F. P. (2004). Curriculum design. *Curriculum: foundations, principles, and issues* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc., 235-270.
- Posner, G. J., & Rudnitsky, A. N. (2001). Getting oriented. *Course design: A guide to curriculum development for teachers* (6th ed.). New York, NY: Addison Wesley Longman, 1-21.
- Pratt, D. (1994). Curriculum and human well-being. *Curriculum planning: a handbook for professionals*. Forth Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1-33.
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