

**CEDF 5100 Christian Education
and Formation in the Church
(3SH)**
Fall Semester, 2026



NORTH PARK
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Instructor: Carolyn Poterek **Class Days/Times:** M-F 8am-5pm, F 8am-3pm PST
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Course Catalog Description

CEDF 5100 Christian Education and Formation in the Church (3SH). This course will introduce the tensions and dimensions of historical, theological, and pedagogical foundations of Christian Formation. Time will be given to discussing leadership concerns as pastors of Christian Formation. Students will be encouraged to engage the material realizing other courses will pursue the topics in more detail. This course will facilitate a broad awareness of Christian formation in the Church.

Required Course Texts

1. Palmer, Parker. *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*. Jossey – Bass, 1998.
2. Fowler, James W. *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*. Harper Collins, 1981.
3. Everist, Norma Cook. *The Church as Learning Community: A Comprehensive Guide to Christian Education*. Abingdon Press, 2002
4. Vella, Jane. *Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach: The Power of Dialogue in Educating Adults*. Jossey-Bass, 2002.
5. Cardoza, Freddy, ed. *Christian Education: A Guide to the Foundations of Ministry*, Baker Academic, 2019.
6. A sixth required book for this course is one of your choice. Choose a book you've been hoping to read that will help you in the area of your greatest need or interest as a ministry leader that explores methods of teaching, learning, and/or formation.

Course Objectives

Students will be able to:

1. Summarize factual knowledge including historical, theological, and pedagogical foundations of Christian education and formation by discussing their reading with groups, writing reading reflection papers, and presenting to the class. (Bloom – 2)
2. Explain the fundamental principles, generalizations, and theories of Christian education and formation by writing and outlining their learning on a test and in reflection papers. (Bloom – 4)
3. Synthesize educational, organizational, and spiritual models and theories of Christian education and formation by designing an integrative plan for a year of Christian formation in the student's ministry context. (Bloom – 6)

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Evaluate models and theories of Christian education and formation in the student's ministry practice by proposing enhanced strategies. (Bloom – 5)
2. Apply specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the Christian ministry field by illustrating how students will employ them in their ministry contexts. (Bloom – 3)

Course Assignments

1. Reading Reflections: 50 points
2. Essay test on models and theories from reading and course discussion – 50 points
3. Participation: Attendance, Presentations, (4) Posts – 75 points total
4. Reflection Papers: Two post course reflection papers – 25 points each, 50 points total
5. Project: Final integration project – 75 points total

***NOTE – please bring your textbooks to class, and do as much reading or skimming as you are able to before coming to class.**

Grading

Letter grades will be assigned according to the scale printed in the Seminary Catalogue, p. 18 as follows:

Superior work (A = 95–100; A- = 93–94)

Above average (B+ = 91-92; B = 88-90; B- = 86-87)

Average (C+ = 84-85; C = 80-83; C – = 78-79)

Unsatisfactory (D+ = 76-77; D = 72-75; D – = 70-71)

Failure (69 and below)

Proposed Schedule

<u>Schedule and Topics Covered</u>	<u>Activities</u>	<u>Homework for next class session</u>
Pre-Course	No Activities.	1-Order textbooks 2-Read as much as possible, focus on Parker Palmer and textbook you will present to the class.
Monday, September 21 *Introduction, Review of Syllabus, Coursework and Course Objectives	*Share introduction information *Discussion on course reading *Small group – cooperative learning exercises	*Reading reflection paper on Parker Palmer *Reading preparation for Fowler and Cook – Everist
Tuesday, September 22 *What is curriculum? *Why do you think a lesson/series will work?	*Student presentations *Teaching, learning, and formation discussion	*Reading reflection paper on Fowler and Cook – Everist *Reading preparation for Cordoza and Vella
Wednesday, September 23 *The ministry teaching role *What does effective teaching and formation look like in the church?	*Student presentations *Teaching, learning, and formation discussion	*Reading reflection paper on Cordoza and Vella *Review for reading exam *Bring “show and tell” book on Thursday afternoon
Thursday, September 24 *History, theology of Christian pedagogy, education and formation in the church. *Ministry context matters *	*History and formation discussion *Christian formation research *“Show and tell” book presentations *Fieldtrip in afternoon	*Study for exam
Friday, September 25 *Integrating theories, models, practice, and strategies *Strategic Christian formation	*Exam in AM *Integration Activity *Cooperative Learning and Sharing *Final project overview *Debrief	(1) Website reflection paper (2) Fieldtrip reflection paper (3) Complete final project (4) Response posts on Canvas after projects are submitted
Post-Course *Optional online assignment check-in’s: - October 1st 4:30PM PST - October 12th 7PM PST - November 9th 7PM PST		(1) Website reflection paper – 10/3 (2) Fieldtrip reflection paper 10/24 (3) Complete final project 11/21

		(4) Response posts on Canvas after projects are submitted 12/7
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Criteria for Grading Reflection Papers				
This criterion is linked to a Learning Outcome Content	20.0 to >18.0 pts Advanced Writing connects answers with the information directly related to (1) knowledge of models and theories of small group formation, and (2) analyzing the strategies and practices that were implemented.	18.0 to >15.0 pts Proficient Writing is thorough in connecting answers with clear and appropriate information in an accurate way of (1) employing your knowledge of models and theories of small group formation, and (2) analyzing the strategies and practices that were implemented.	15.0 to >10.0 pts Developing Writing presents minimal information in a partial and basic way as they relate to (1) knowledge of models and theories of small group formation, and (2) analyzing the strategies and practices that were implemented.	10.0 to >0 pts Unacceptable Written information is inadequate and lacking quality and content. Answers provide no relevance to (1) knowledge of models and theories of small group formation, and (2) analyzing the strategies and practices that were implemented.
This criterion is linked to a Learning Outcome Mechanics	5.0 to >4.0 pts Advanced High quality, fluid writing; easily fixed mechanical errors.	4.0 to >3.0 pts Proficient Effective and clearly written; easily fixed mechanical errors.	3.0 to >2.0 pts Developing Acceptable, rudimentary writing; errors involve substantive revision.	2.0 to >0 pts Unacceptable Inadequate development and writing; significant revision required.

Rubric/Grading Criteria	Fully Meeting Expectations – 12 pts	Approaching Expectations – 9 pts	Not Yet Meeting Expectations – 6 pts
Explanation of Ideas & Information	Presents information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically. Selects information, develops ideas, and uses a style appropriate to the audience	Presents information, findings, and supporting evidence in a way that is not always clear, concise, or logical. Attempts to select information, develop ideas, and use style appropriate to the audience, but does not fully succeed.	Does not present information, findings, or supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically. Selects information, develops ideas and uses a style that is inappropriate to the purpose, task, and audience (may be too much or too little information)
Organization	Meets all requirements for what should be	Meets most requirements for	Does not meet requirements for what

	included in the presentation. Has a clear and interesting introduction & discussion questions. Organizes time well; no part of the presentation is too short or too long Handout is informative and helpful.	what should be included in a presentation. Has an introduction and discussion questions, but they are not clear or interesting. Generally, times presentation well, but may spend too much or too little time on a topic. Handout is complete, but not informative or helpful.	should be included in the presentation. Does not have an introduction and/or discussion questions. Uses time poorly; the whole presentation, or part of it, is too short or too long. Handout is not complete, or is confusing – lacking information and not helpful.
	Fully Meeting Expectations – 6 pts	Approaching Expectations – 4 pts	Not Yet Meeting Expectations – 2 pts
Eye Contact Body, & Voice	Keeps eye contact with the audience most of the time. Uses natural gestures. Speaks clearly; not too quickly or slowly. Speaks loudly enough for everyone to hear	Makes infrequent eye contact; reads notes or slides most of the time. Uses a few gestures or movements, but they do not look natural. Speaks clearly most of the time.	Does not look at audience, reads notes or slides. Does not use gestures or movements. Mumbles or speaks too quickly or slowly.

Grading Rubric for CEDF 5100 Final Project

Criteria	Ratings					Points
	Highly Proficient	Capable	Adequate	Limited	Inadequate	
Context explanation for educational formation curriculum	A highly descriptive theology with seminal influences of your congregational context are present 10 pts	A thorough description of the theology and seminal influences of your congregational context are present 8 pts	A good description of the theology and seminal influences of your congregational context is present 6 pts	Missing elements of congregational context, theology, or seminal influences 4 pts	Several elements of congregational theology, context, and influences are missing 2 pts	
Curriculum Formational process includes: evaluation, Formational elements	Complete, <u>thorough</u> , and <u>thoughtful</u> processing of formation and includes evaluation with all essential formational elements. 15 pts	Complete processing of formation process and includes evaluation with essential formational elements. 12 pts	Partial processing of formation process and includes evaluation of essential formational elements. 9 pts	Missing elements of formational process and evaluation of essential formational elements. 6 pts	Incomplete integration of formational process and missing evaluation of essential formational elements. 3 pts	
One – Year Curriculum Design	Exceptional understanding and application of integration of all essential elements in curriculum design. 25 pts	Good understanding and application of integration of the essential elements in curriculum design. 22 pts	Basic understanding and application of integration of some essential elements in curriculum design. 19 pts	Minimal understanding and application of integration of some elements in curriculum design. 16 pts	Work does not demonstrate understanding and application of integration of the essential elements in curriculum design. 5 pts	
Justification of curricular decisions includes: domain theory, learning models, faith stages, scriptures, strategies	Excellent application of domain theory, learning styles, teaching methods, faith stages, scripture, models, additional theoretical knowledge, and strategies. 25 pts	Good application of domain theory and integration of most required elements needed to support known curriculum planning. 22 pts	Basic application of domain theory and integration of required elements known to support curriculum planning. 19 pts	Minimal application of domain theory and integration of required components known to support curriculum. 16 pts	Lacking application of domain theory and any elements integral to supporting curriculum development. 5 pts	
Total Points =						

Additional Course Guidelines

1. **Attendance.** Class attendance on all five (5) days is required. Students preparing to become ministry leaders must demonstrate the characteristics for good ministry. Being prompt to class and attending class demonstrates such characteristics for effective ministry leaders. Not being present in class, or being tardy to class will affect your grade for the course.
2. **Assessment Submission**
 - All paper submissions should be submitted on Canvas by 11:59PM on the date indicated in the syllabus.
 - Work submitted late without prior arrangement will receive a grade reduction of 5% per day. Work submitted over two weeks late will not receive a grade.
3. **Communication.** Please email me with any questions or concerns, and I will respond within 24 hours, M-F. Before emailing with a question, be sure the answer is not contained in the course syllabus or on Canvas.

ACADEMIC HONESTY¹

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park University is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating will receive a failing grade on the assignment and are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion. Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

1. Plagiarism – the use of another’s work as one’s own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet.
2. Copying another’s answers on an examination.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one’s answers or work.
4. Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present.
5. Use of ChatGPT or other AI composition software to impersonate individual assignments.

For additional information, see the [Seminary Academic Catalog](#), pp. 25–26.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Your experience in this class is important to me. North Park is committed to creating inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have already established your accommodations, please share your accommodation letter with me so we can discuss how your accommodations will

¹ Institutional policies. Syllabus includes standard text for policies on academic honesty, accommodations, and Title IX.

be implemented in this course. If you have not yet established services and have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations, please email the Disability Access Specialist or contact by phone (773-244-5737). Student Engagement facilitates the interactive process that establishes reasonable accommodations.

INCOMPLETE GRADES

If, due to extenuating circumstances (specifically, pregnancy, illness, personal and family issues, military assignment, etc.), a student anticipates they will be unable to complete course work within the allotted time, that student may request a grade of incomplete from the course instructor before the last week of class clearly stating the reason(s) for this request. Overscheduling and/or lack of self-discipline are not considered extenuating circumstances. If the request is timely and meets the criteria, student and instructor will submit the incomplete grade form and the grade for that class will be listed as “I” until the last day of the following semester. If coursework is not submitted by the last day of the following semester the listing of “I” will automatically be changed to “F.” For the full policy, see page 15 of the [Seminary Academic Catalog](#).

Coursework Policy

Students preparing to become ministry leaders must demonstrate the characteristics for good ministry. Being prompt to turn in assignments is a responsibility of effective ministry leaders. Therefore, it is expected that all student work be turned in at the appropriate due dates. Late coursework will reduce your grade as stated above.

Cell Phone/Laptop Policy

Students are required to turn off all cell phones before the start of class. If you are expecting an emergency call, please see your instructor prior to the start of class. Laptops are to be used in class for classwork only.

Disabilities Resources: Graduate and Seminary Students

Students with a disability who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact your program's office (Education: 773-244-5730; Business: 773-244-6270; Nursing: 773-244-5680; Community Development: 773-244-5774; Seminary: 773-244-6209; Music: 773-244-5625). Please do so as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. For further information please review the following website: <http://www.northpark.edu/ada>

Title IX Reporting Policy:

In accordance with Title IX, North Park employees who become aware of any incident of sexual violence are required by law to notify North Park University's Title IX Coordinator, Elizabeth Fedec at TitleIX@northpark.edu. Additionally, individuals who are experiencing pregnancy-related medical conditions in need of adjustments to their living, learning, or working environment should contact the Title IX Coordinator. [Information regarding NPU's Title IX Policies, Procedures, Rights, Options can be found online.](#)

Social Media Policy

While North Park University encourages the use of social media, all users should remember that social media tools are a powerful form of communication that can have a significant impact on organization professional, and individual reputations. Lines between personal and professional content and between public and private content, are often blurred. Remember that the internet is not anonymous, nor does it forget.