

COURSE SYLLABUS

Increase Meaning: A Wholistic Approach to Christian Education

Seattle Pacific University Distance Learning Course EDCT 5247

Online Registration:

<http://ce.spu.edu/search/publicCourseSearchDetails.do?method=load&courseId=699089>

(Course code is EDCT 5247)

College Credits: 5 credits through Seattle Pacific University are awarded for completing this course. SPU is on a quarter system. The semester equivalent of 5 quarter credits is 3.33 semester credits. The transferability of these SPU credits is at the discretion of the receiving institution. If you are an undergraduate student, this 5000 level class may not transfer into your program. This is a continuing education class that is considered an elective, and is primarily used for professional development.

Cost: Please check the current SPU Distance Learning Online Catalogue for the most current tuition fee by going to <http://ce.spu.edu/search/publicCourseSearchDetails.do?method=load&courseId=699089> (course code is EDCT 5247). In addition to the SPU tuition fee, students purchase required texts and resources through Worldview Matters®. To order, call 425-246-5386, or e-mail info@worldviewmatters.com, specifying that you are a student enrolled in the *Increase Meaning* course.

Materials: The following texts and articles are required:

Texts: *Assumptions That Affect Our Lives*, by Christian Overman, and *LifeWork*, by Darrow L. Miller

Articles: "A Church Without A View: Jonathan Edwards And Our Current Lifeview Discipleship Crisis," by David Scott, and "Calvin and Geneva: Nation-Building Missions," by Thomas Bloomer

Resources: *The Difference One Life Can Make*, by Christian Overman, and *God's Pleasure At Work*, by Christian Overman

Course Description: Explore how an understanding of the "bigger picture" of a biblical worldview can bring greater meaning and purpose to the study of academic subject matter (K-12), and how the biblical worldview can bring meaning to extracurricular activities of students, teachers and administrators. Practical learning tools will be presented, including a mind mapping technique for incorporating the biblical worldview into academic lesson plans using an "Integration Conversation Starter"; a "Truth and Baloney Detector" for developing higher level thinking skills relative to comparative worldview analysis; a "DADI Plan" tool for aligning biblically-informed beliefs with activities in and out of the classroom, and practical ways for making theology of work an integral part of the K-12 curriculum.

Practicum: Participants will make presentations to either students (any grade level), or peers, or parents of students, incorporating various concepts presented in this course.

Time: Different students require different amounts of time to complete the assignments in this course, but you should plan on spending about 50-60 hours.

Course Rationale: Dr. Marti MacCullough, chair of the Department of Teacher Education at Philadelphia Biblical University in Langhorne, Pennsylvania, an internationally recognized expert in the field of biblical worldview integration, in her article, "Worldview Integration: A Key Teaching Tool" [published in Christian

School Education, by ACSI, updated July 25, 2011] states: *“The authentic Christian school teacher must include biblical worldview integration in the design of the curriculum. It cannot be just a nice thing to talk about, to espouse on Back-to-School Night, or to include in the school brochure... [W]e must align [knowledge found in every area of human inquiry] with God’s perspective in order to help our students not only view life coherently and biblically but also ultimately hold firmly to a personally accepted biblical philosophy of life.”*

In *The Soul of Education: Helping Students Find Connection, Compassion, and Character at School* (published by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2000) Rachael Kessler writes: *“Before we explore the opportunities in the classroom for meaning and purpose, we must ask why educators rarely welcome students’ ‘big questions’ into the classroom. What happens if there is no forum, no safe place for young people to air their questions? What are the consequences for students when schools exclude their quest for meaning from the curriculum?”* Kessler goes on to say: *“Without meaning in their lives, students’ motivation to learn is imperiled. Many students today cannot focus, listen, or even feel the will to learn. Helping these students find their own motivation is increasingly important. Young people who have the opportunity to discover what has meaning for them and who feel they are going somewhere in life can be more easily engaged in learning and persisting through obstacles and setbacks. ‘Deep meanings are the source of most intrinsic motivation,’ write Renate and Geoffrey Caine (1997) in Education on the Edge of Possibility.”*

This course is about attaching “deep meanings” to math, science, history, literature and baseball, in the context of Christian schools, where there is freedom to make connections between such subjects and something bigger and grander: *the biblical view of God, creation, humanity, moral order and purpose*. Done properly, this can bring extraordinary meaning and purpose to academic learning, as well as to numerous endeavors outside of the classroom that constitute “work worth doing,” whether in the present or the future.

Course Objectives/Anticipated Outcomes:

1. Learners (and their respective students) will make relevant connections between academic subjects and the “bigger picture” of a biblical worldview, enabling students to grasp a higher sense of meaning and purpose in connection with academic learning.
2. Learners will provide their respective students with practical tools that will enable them to connect their own daily activities and academic learning with the “bigger picture” of a biblical worldview, both in and out of the classroom setting, nurturing the life-long skill of engagement with the Cultural Mandate [Gen. 1:26-28] and the Great Commandment [Matt. 22:36-40], both effectively and meaningfully.
3. Learners will comprehend the essential concepts and applications of “worldview” in general, and “biblical worldview” in particular, showing evidence of an ability to distinguish the biblical worldview from other views of reality, gaining insights and discernment, as well as the ability to pass on this skill to students, peers, or parents.
4. Learners will comprehend the unique role of education in equipping students to engage in the Cultural Mandate of Gen. 1:26-28 [God’s “First Commission,” to steward and manage the material world], and show evidence of their ability to assist students in making intentional connections between academic knowledge and that Commission.
6. Learners will be motivated and equipped to include “Theology of Work” in the standard Christian school curriculum at all grade levels, with age-appropriate instruction.
7. Learners will show evidence of thinking “integratively” according to a biblical worldview, and do critical analysis of literature, the media and/or other forms of input—and train students to do the same.

Student Expectations:

- a) View twelve lectures online (recorded for viewing at the student’s convenience).

b) Read the following two books and two articles: *Assumptions That Affect Our Lives*, by Christian Overman; *LifeWork*, by Darrow L. Miller; “*Calvin and Geneva: Nation-Building Missions*”, by Thomas A. Bloomer [article], and “*A Church Without A View: Jonathan Edwards And Our Current Lifeview Discipleship Crisis*,” by David Scott [article].

c) Write four 3-4 page [double-spaced] “reflection and response” papers (one for each of the books/articles listed above), identifying aspects of the book/article that were especially meaningful to you, with comments about *why* it was particularly meaningful, including any personal applications you want to make or implications you see for your life, in electronic format.

d) Learners will submit the following evidences of understanding analytical concepts taught in this course: 1. A comparative worldview analysis of a film or TV program using the “Truth and Baloney Detector” introduced in this course; 2. A document that determines alignment between the learner’s work as an educator and the bigger picture of a biblical worldview, using the “DADI Plan” template introduced in this course.

e) Learners will participate in the following experiential activities (practicum): 1. Teach a group of students, peers, or parents of students how to use the “Truth and Baloney Detector,” and submit a 1-2 page report on how it went; 2. Teach a lesson to a group of students, peers, or parents that makes relevant connections between academic subject matter and the “bigger picture” of a biblical worldview, and submit a copy of the lesson plan to the instructor [including the “Integration Conversation Starter” introduced in this course], along with a 1-2 page report on how it went; 3. Teach a group of students, peers, or parents how to use the “DADI Plan” to make intentional alignments between the biblical worldview and either academic or non-academic activities (you may use a modified version of the “DADI Plan” for younger students, called the “Awesome Activator”); 4. Teach a group of students, peers, or parents a lesson that incorporates concepts of theology of work found in two resources by Christian Overman: *God’s Pleasure At Work* and/or *The Difference One Life Can Make*

f) Learners will complete a short vocation-related Bible study on the topic of “Education,” or the vocation of choice, as presented at <http://www.mondaychurch.org/theology>

Instructor: Dr. Overman holds a B.A. in Music from the University of Washington (1972), a B.A. in German Language and Literature from the University of Washington (1976), a M. Ed. from Seattle Pacific University studying under Dr. Albert E. Greene, Jr, (1984), a D. Min. from Bakke Graduate University (2007), and he is a Commissioned Centurion, studying under Chuck Colson (2009). He has authored several books, including *Different Windows*, published by Tyndale House Publishers in 1989 and re-published as *Assumptions That Affect Our Lives* in 1996, *God’s Pleasure At Work*, *The Difference One Life Can Make*, and *Making the Connections: How To Put Biblical Worldview Integration Into Practice*.

He was a school teacher in both public and private schools, and principal for 14 years at a Christian school in Seattle, Washington. He is currently the Director of “Worldview Matters,” an organization he founded in 2000 (see www.biblicalworldview.com). Contact him any time at overman@biblicalworldview.com. He has been married since 1972 to his wife, Kathy. They have four adult children and ten grandchildren.

Methods of Instruction: Online lectures, video clips, PPT slides, reading, writing, and practical applications.

Course Content:

1. Defining the term “worldview” and understanding how it shapes values and behaviors of people.
2. Recognizing the five basic components of all worldviews (God, Creation, Humanity, Moral Order and Purpose), and how these components serve to shape values and behavior.

3. Understanding critical differences between biblical worldview premises and non-biblical premises as they relate to values and behavior.
4. Comprehending basic contrasts between modernism and postmodernism, and applying this awareness to interpersonal skills.
5. Unifying faith and life by replacing “sacred” and “secular” dualism with a biblical mindset that does not give credence to the idea of a “secular world.”
6. Using the biblical worldview as a frame of reference for creating and developing meaning in human endeavors of all kinds, both in and outside of the classroom.
7. Observing videotape examples of people who have successfully integrated their Christian faith with their work.
8. Designing academic lesson plans that include references to connections with the “bigger picture” of a biblical worldview.

Grading criteria/system and evaluation:

This is a Letter Grade Only course.

To receive an “A” for this course, learners will fulfill the following 9 requirements:

1. Verify in writing that he/she viewed all 12 of the online lectures
2. Verify in writing that he/she read the two required books and two articles
3. Write a 3-4 page [typed, double-spaced] “reflection and response” paper for each of the required books and articles [4 papers]
4. Do a comparative worldview analysis of a film or TV program using a 1-page template introduced in this course, called the “Truth and Baloney Detector,” and teach a group of students, or peers, or parents how to use this tool, submitting a 1-2 page report on how it went
5. Teach a lesson to students, or peers, or parents, that makes connections between a subject of their choice and the bigger picture of a biblical worldview, using a 1-page template introduced in this course, called the “Integration Conversation Starter,” submitting a copy of the lesson plan and “Conversation Starter” along with a 1-2 page report on how it went
6. Show evidence of understanding how to make intentional alignments between one’s work as an educator and the bigger picture of a biblical worldview, by using a 1-page template introduced in this course, called “The DADI Plan,” submitting this completed template to the instructor
7. Verify in writing that he/she has taught a group of students, or peers, or parents, how to use “The DADI Plan” template (or a modified version of this template designed for younger students, called, “The Awesome Activator”), and submitting a 1-2 page report on how it went
8. Teach a group of students, or peers, or parents, a lesson that incorporates theology-of-work-related content from the resources *God’s Pleasure At Work* and/or *The Difference One Life Can Make*, submitting an outline of the lesson plan to the instructor, along with a 1-2 page report on how it went

9. Complete and turn in to the instructor a short vocation-related Bible study on “Education” (or an alternate vocation of choice) as presented at <http://www.mondaychurch.org/theology>

Students who satisfy 7 of the above requirements will receive a B.

Students who satisfy 6 of the above requirements will receive a C.

Students who satisfy 5 of the above requirements will receive a D.

Students who complete less than 5 of the above requirement will receive an F.

Due Dates:

All written work (and verification of fulfillment of requirements) is to be received by the instructor within one year of enrollment.

SEE IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON THE NEXT PAGE

FINAL VERIFICATION TO SUBMIT FOR GRADE

Please initial completed work, as itemized below, scan this page, and e-mail to your instructor of record within eleven months of enrollment (so all grading may be completed by the one-year deadline)

1. I have viewed all 12 of the online lectures in full (initials) _____
2. I have read the two required books and two articles in full (initials) _____
3. I have written a 3-4 page [double-spaced] "reflection and response" paper for each required book and article [4 papers] and e-mailed them to my instructor of record (initials) _____
4. I have done a comparative worldview analysis of a film or TV program using a 1-page template introduced in this course, called the "Truth and Baloney Detector," and taught a group of students, or peers, or parents how to use this tool, submitting a 1-2 page report on how it went to my instructor of record (initials) _____
5. I have taught a lesson to students, or peers, or parents, that makes connections between a subject of choice and the bigger picture of a biblical worldview, using a 1-page template introduced in this course, called the "Integration Conversation Starter," submitting a copy of the lesson plan and "Conversation Starter," along with a 1-2 page report on how it went to my instructor of record (initials) _____
6. I have shown evidence of understanding how to make intentional alignments between my work as an educator and the bigger picture of a biblical worldview, by using a 1-page template introduced in this course, called "The DADI Plan," submitting this completed template to my instructor of record (initials) _____
7. I have taught a group of students, or peers, or parents, how to use "The DADI Plan" template (or a modified version of this template designed for younger students, called, "The Awesome Activator"), and submitted 1-2 page report on how it went to my instructor of record (initials) _____
8. I have taught a group of students, or peers, or parents, a lesson that incorporates theology-of-work-related content from the resources *God's Pleasure At Work* and/or *The Difference One Life Can Make*, submitting an outline of the lesson plan to my instructor of record, along with a 1-2 page report on how it went (initials) _____
9. I have completed a short vocation-related Bible study on "Education" (or an alternate vocation of my choice) as presented at <http://www.mondaychurch.org/theology> and e-mailed a copy of my work to my instructor of record (initials) _____

My name: (please print) _____

Address: _____

(city) _____ (state) _____ (zip) _____

E-mail address: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____