

Competency Exercise

Leading the Church in Formation and Interpreting the Faith of the Church

For the competency exercise joining Leading the Church in Formation and Interpreting the Faith of the Church, the student will prepare and lead a one-session Sunday School lesson lasting approximately one hour in her or his congregational setting on a date negotiated with the faculty. The student will choose a specific theological question around which to address the Sunday School lesson. This theological question will be chosen in consultation with the faculty administering the competency exercise.

Before the Sunday School lesson, the student will turn in to the faculty a portfolio of the following materials:

- a critically written credo (2000 words) concerning the relation of theology and formation, which includes
 - a reasoned hermeneutic;
 - a statement of the importance of theology in formation;
 - an expression of the purpose of educational ministry for formation within the community of faith;
 - and a reasoned pedagogical approach to using theology for formation.
- a theological research paper related to the doctrine in which the theological question is located (3000 words) that demonstrates facility with hermeneutical methods, includes conversation with historical and contemporary theologians, and synthesizes the results of their study in terms of the theological value of the doctrine and the question for the church;
- an annotated lesson plan of the Sunday school lesson (1500 words for these annotations; the word count for the annotations does not include scripture text, texts of prayers, etc.) that provides:
 - an introduction to the congregational setting and audience for the lesson and an explanation of the ways in which this theological question and its exploration is important for the faith formation of this audience
 - one learning objective for what is to be accomplished in the lesson
 - a description of the pedagogical methods used to meet that learning objective, written to the level of specificity that someone other than yourself could teach from the lesson plan; and
 - the educational, theological, and/or pastoral rational for each pedagogical action.

Please note: The purpose of the lesson is not to teach the congregation everything that the student learns and writes about in their theological research paper. The purpose of the lesson is to help the congregation engage this particular theological question in relation to their own lives. As such, it will help if the student writes one clear learning objective and then uses this learning objective to guide choices about what information to include in the lesson as well as what teaching techniques to use. Faculty will be looking for depth of engagement with the theological question much more so than breadth.

Further, the student is not expected to stick to the lesson plan word-for-word as she or he conducts the Sunday school lesson.

These materials are due at least one week prior to the date of the Sunday school lesson. They should be e-mailed as attachments to the faculty administering the exam.

The date of the Sunday School lesson must be determined when the student receives the approval of their theological question from the IF member of the faculty. The student may petition to change this date up to two weeks before the proposed date of the presentation.

Following the Sunday School lesson, the student will upload to an internet dropbox (different than the dropbox in LTS Online) a video recording of the lesson following instructions provided by the Director of Technology. The URL for the video must be supplied to the faculty *no later than one week after the lesson has been conducted.*

As part of their evaluation and grading of the exercise, the two faculty (one from Leading the Church in Formation and one from Interpreting the Faith for the Church) will take into consideration

- A self-evaluation: After completing the Sunday School lesson and reviewing the video, the student will write a self-evaluation (approx. 1,000 words, due one week after the Sunday School lesson), which includes:
 - General observations from the video;
 - Identification of how you addressed the theological topic;
 - Self-evaluation of your teaching (including reflections on the pedagogical method you used and its effectiveness);
 - Reflection on the behavior (responsiveness, engagement) of the group to your lesson;
 - A reflection on what you would do differently if you were to repeat this training, and why.
- An evaluation form filled out by a lay committee in the congregation; and
- An evaluation form filled out by the student's onsite mentor.

Students will receive two grades for the exercise—one for each area covered. As part of the feedback provided to the student, the attached rubric will be used to signal to the student her or his strengths and weakness in the two areas. As stated in the common syllabus, a competency exercise not turned in by the required time will be lowered a letter grade *immediately* after the deadline passes and will be lowered by a letter grade for every day that follows. As stated above, the written portfolio elements (credo, research paper, and annotated lesson plan) are due one week prior to the date of the Sunday School lesson and the recording of the event and the self-reflection is due one week after the date of the lesson. Given that students receive 1.5 credit hours for successfully completing this exercise, they should devote no less than 60 hours to completing the work assigned. The work will be evaluated with the expectation that at least that much work has gone into the project.