

Competency Exercise

Leading the Church in Formation and Interpreting the Past for the Church

For the competency exercise joining *Leading the Church in Formation and Interpreting the Past for 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. This lesson should focus on an element of church history (an event, person, or period from the Second through the mid-Twentieth century) and its implications for or connections to the life of the church today. This historical element must also be negotiated with the faculty.

At least one week before the lesson, the student will turn in to the faculty the following materials that will inform the way she/he designs and leads the lesson relating to an historical element:

- A critically written credo (2000 words) concerning the relation of Church History and Formation, which includes:
 - A statement concerning the significance and value that the Church's past should hold for contemporary congregational life and the formation of individuals;
 - A statement of the role that the Church's past (e.g., events, periods, denominations, persons, figures, doctrine, tradition, etc.) should play as a theological authority for the church;
 - An expression of the purpose of educational ministry for formation within the community of faith; and
 - A reasoned pedagogical approach to using church history for formation.
- A research paper (2000 words) that focuses on the historical element in which the student 1) uses both primary resources {documents from the element's historical period} and secondary resources {scholarly work on the historical element that utilizes contemporary critical methodology} to provide basic historical information, context, and setting of the element (60% of the paper); 2) highlights the relevance of the subject for today's individual Christians, congregations, and/or the Church universal (40% of the paper).

By the Friday before the planned Sunday school lesson, the student will submit the following:

- An annotated lesson plan of the Sunday school lesson (1500 words for these annotations; the word count for the annotations does not include direct quotations, etc.) that provides:
 - An introduction to the congregational setting and audience for the lesson and an explanation of the ways in which this historical element 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 follow the lesson plan; and
 - The educational, theological, and/or pastoral rationale for each pedagogical action. This means explaining why you are choosing to teach the lesson in this way.

Please note: The purpose of the lesson is not to teach the congregation everything that the student learns and writes about in the historical research paper. The purpose of the lesson is to help the congregation engage this particular aspect of church history 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 and what teaching techniques to use. Faculty will be looking for depth of engagement with the historical topic much more so than breadth of information passed on to the Sunday school class.

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

Within one week of 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 Ben Wyatt. The URL for the video must be supplied to the faculty.

Also within one week of the Sunday school lesson, the student will review the video of the lesson and will submit:

- A self-evaluation of the Sunday School lesson (approx. 500 words), which includes:
 - General observations from the video;
 - Identification of what went well in the lesson;
 - Reflection on what you would do differently the next time and why; and
 - Whether you learned anything about yourself as a historian or educator through this process.

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 Past for the Church) will take into consideration:

- An evaluation form filled out by a lay committee in the congregation; and
- An evaluation form filled out by an onsite church leader, such as a senior pastor or a work supervisor.

Students will receive two grades for the exercise—one for each area covered. Given that students receive 1 credit hour for successfully completing this exercise, they should devote no less than 40 hours to completing the work assigned. The work will be evaluated with the expectation that at least this much work has gone into the project. As part of the feedback provided to the student, the attached rubric will be used to signal to the student her/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 and research paper) are due one week prior to the date of the Sunday School lesson; the lesson plan is due the Friday before the lesson; and the recording of the event and the self-reflection is due one week after the date of the lesson.