



AMBROSE
SEMINARY

**THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN
AND THEIR SPIRITUAL FORMATION
ED 645**

**MAY 24-28, 2011
TUESDAY THRU SATURDAY, 9:00AM- 4:00 PM**

PROFESSOR SCOTTIE MAY
scottie.may@wheaton.edu

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the nature and spirituality of children in light of biblical, theological, and developmental perspectives. It analyzes current ministry practices, considering cultural trends, as well as addressing the faith experiences of children. During the course, you will consider concepts and theories in the assigned readings and from lectures. Discussions about implications will be ongoing. We will begin with a theology of children, and progress to their development, cultural influences, and ways the church ministers with children. There also will be a focus on practical issues.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Nurturing children is a spiritual discipline. In this course we shall seek to—

1. Gain insights into the nature and needs of children from birth to age twelve—including how they think, and learn—and to consider ways to help them want to be disciples of Jesus Christ.
2. Esteem children personally; realize the need for advocates within the Christian community—the need for people with vision and passion for nurturing children.
3. Explore issues and possibilities in church-based ministries with children, including basic philosophies of ministry and their practical implications.
4. Develop skills for equipping adults who work with children in local church settings.
5. Examine ways to support parents in the task of nurturing their children.
6. Identify ways of working with children in crisis and discipline issues.
7. Observe, create, and participate in learning experiences for children, enabling them to encounter the person of God and his truths.
8. *Own* an identity and *be formed* as a shepherd and ministry leader with children—a process that requires making space for the Spirit of God to be present with us in this course.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All written assignments must be emailed to the instructor at:
scottie.may@wheaton.edu

A. REQUIRED TEXTS

May, Scottie, et al. *Children Matter: Celebrating their place in the church, family, and community*. 2005. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Stonehouse, Catherine. 1998. *Joining children on the spiritual journey: Nurturing a life of faith*. Grand Rapids: Baker.

B. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES

1. Required Reading and Class Participation: Because the following readings lay the foundation for the course, read them carefully PRIOR to May 24, 2011. Take notes as you read, and come prepared to ask questions of the texts for discussion. (10%) (Note: Both texts must be read in entirety prior to the course.)

Children Matter: Introduction and Part I-Foundations Matter.

Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey: Chapters 3-6.

2. Research Paper: Select an issue related to children's ministry that interests you. Investigate that issue or problem using the selected bibliography beginning on page 3 of this syllabus. Read at least 200 pages from various sources on that list (academic journal articles may also be included), and then write a 5-6 page research paper that includes the significance of your findings for your ministry. (25%) Due July 23.

3. Observe a Children's Ministry Setting in a church two times and critique it according to class guidelines. Hand in a 6-7 page paper that includes a brief description of the setting and a recommendation or strategy that you would present to a pertinent church committee. Select the setting and obtain permission to do the observation ASAP. This assignment will provide experience in analyzing and critiquing children's ministry settings. (25%) Due July 23.

4. Final Paper: Write a 10-15 page paper that synthesizes what you have learned from this course through the readings, class sessions, and assignments. You will describe a hypothetical or real context of your choice of ministry with children that you will either create or revitalize. It may be a church, parachurch, outreach, or camp context. This description will include a purpose statement that flows from your theology of children, your philosophy of ministry, and the experiences you will create for the children. (40%) Due July 23.

C. GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

1. Submit written work in a style consistent throughout with the model set out by Kate L. Turabian in *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. Written work ought to be free of spelling mistakes, punctuated correctly, and adhere to basic rules

of grammar. The work should be submitted in a clear, straight-forward style and demonstrate clear organization, argument and coherent thought. Ensure that you have accurately and fully documented source used in your paper (footnotes are preferred, but parenthetical references may be used). Please double space all written work and use 12-point font. Submit papers electronically to the Scottie.may@wheaton.edu. The papers ***must*** be sent in word.doc format. That is the only format that will be accepted.

2. Students should consult the current Academic Calendar for Academic Polices on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System. The Academic Calendar is posted on www.ambrose.edu

D. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Required Reading and Class Participation	10 %
Interviews of children	25 %
Ministry observation and analysis	25 %
Final Paper	40 %
Total grade	100 %

E. EXPECTATIONS

Attendance: Attendance and engaged participation are expected. Unexcused absences will lower the “subjective assessment” portion of the student grade. Gross disregard for class attendance and participation could result in failure of the course.

Participation: We will attempt to establish a collaborative environment in which you will be invited to share openly with your peers from your own experience and your own developing theoretical perspectives. I look forward to getting to know you as we learn together.

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

Before, the course begins, please read *Children Matter*, giving special attention to the first section

- 5/24 AM— Overview of course; metaphors of children’s ministry
PM— Foundations. Learning experiences in theory and simulation.
- 5/25 AM— Theology of the child
PM— Faith experiences of children; different traditions. Children and worship.
- 5/26 AM— Context and Content. Sunday morning experiences for children.
PM— History of childhood and parenting. Frankena model.
- 5/27 AM— Development of children and their cognition
PM— Implications from neurobiology
- 5/28 AM— Models of Ministry: To, For, and With Children
PM— Models of Ministry cont.

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anthony, Michael, ed. 2006. *Perspectives on children's spiritual formation: Four views*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman.
- Berryman, Jerome W. 1995. *Teaching godly play: The Sunday morning handbook*. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Bunge, Marcia J. 2008. *The child in the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Carter, Erik. 2010. Faith formation and people with developmental disabilities. *Shaped by God*, Robert Keeley, ed. Grand Rapids: Faith Alive, 127-137.
- Castleman, Robbie. 1994. *Parenting in the pew*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press.
- Cavalletti, Sofia. 1992. *The religious potential of the child*. Oak Park: Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.
- _____. 2002. *The religious potential of the child 6 to 12 years old*. Oak Park: Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.
- Coles, Robert. 1990. *The spiritual life of children*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Duckworth, Eleanor. 1972. The having of wonderful ideas. *Harvard Educational Review* 42 (2), 217-31.
- Edie, Fred. 2010. Living Mysteries: Sacraments and the education of Christians. *Shaped by God*, Robert Keeley, ed. Grand Rapids: Faith Alive, 81-96.
- Duckworth, Eleanor. 1972. The having of wonderful ideas. *Harvard Educational Review* 42 (2), 217-31.
- Gundry-Volf, Judith M. 2001. The least and the greatest. *The Child in Christian Thought*, Marcia Bunge, ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, pp. 29-60.
- Hay, David, with Rebecca Nye. 1998. *The spirit of the child*. London: Fount Paperbacks.
- Kohn, Alfie. 1986. *No contest: The case against competition*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- _____. 1999. *Punished by rewards: The trouble with gold stars, incentive plans, A's, praise, and other bribes*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.
- May, Scottie, et al. 2004. Children's ministry models. *Children's Spirituality: Christian Perspectives, Research, and Applications*, ed. Donald Ratcliff. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 403-08.
- Ratcliff, Donald. 2008. "The spirit of children past": A century of children's spirituality research. In *Nurturing Children's Spirituality*, ed. Holly Catterton Allen. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008, 21-42.
- _____, (ed.). 1992. Discipline, development, and spiritual growth. *Handbook of Children's Religious Education*. Birmingham: REP, 143-63.
- Stonehouse, Catherine, and Scottie May. 2010. *Listening to children on the spiritual journey: Guidance for those who teach and nurture*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1-9.
- Westerhoff, John H. III. 2008. The church's contemporary challenge: Assisting adults to mature spiritually with their children. In *Nurturing Children's Spirituality: Christian Perspectives and Best Practices*, ed. Holly Catterton Allen. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 355-65.
- Yust, Karen Marie. 2004. *Real kids, real faith: Nurturing children's spiritual lives*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Important Notes/Dates:

Registration and payment in full is open up to the morning of the first day of class.

Students may drop this class and receive a full refund only prior to the second class session (i.e., before 1 pm on Tuesday, on the first day of class). No tuition refund will be issued after this deadline.

Students may voluntarily withdraw or change their registration from credit to audit, without academic penalty, only prior to completing 70% of the course (i.e., before 1pm on Friday, or the fourth day of class). Withdrawal from courses after the Registration Revision period will not be eligible for tuition refund. 'W' grades are not included in grade point average calculations. A limit on the number of courses from which a student is permitted to withdraw may be imposed. Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

All registration changes must be made through the Registrar's Office by completing a Registration Revision Form. Forms are available in the Registrar's Office or on the website at www.ambrose.edu/registrar.

Electronic Etiquette

Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to engage in electronically-enabled activities unrelated to the class during a class session. Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops should be used for class-related purposes only. Please do not use iPods, MP3 players, or headphones. Do not text, read or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. The professor has the right to disallow the student to use a laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Calendar. Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Extensions

Although extensions to coursework up until the final assignment deadline are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after July 15, 2011 unless they have received permission for a "Course Extension" from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by June 30. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University College as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to give credit to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar and the Student Handbook that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Students are advised to retain this syllabus for their records.