



## DM-N609, Engaging Local Schools, 3 semester hours May 31-June 3, 2016, Syllabus

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### Course Information

#### Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Ann A. Michel and Lovett H. Weems, Jr.  
Office: Kresge Academic Complex  
Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
Phone number: 202-885-8582 (Michel) and 202-885-8621 (Weems)  
Email: [amichel@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:amichel@wesleyseminary.edu) and [lovettw@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:lovettw@wesleyseminary.edu)

### Course Description

Engaging Local Schools builds on the historic ties between religious communities and public education, particularly in the Wesleyan tradition. The theological and historical aspects are considered alongside the changing place of both churches and public education in the United States. Creative examples of engaging schools will be explored alongside the literature of engaging schools. A variety of contexts are considered using a variety of learning methods.

### Wesley Curricular Objectives

See the Curriculum section of Wesley's catalog.

### Course Objectives

1. Gain an understanding of the current state of public education.
2. Understand the historical context of the relationship of churches and public schools.
3. Consider the biblical and theological rationale for engaging schools.
4. Learn how churches are engaging public schools in creative ways.
5. Develop the categories needing assessment for any decision to engage public schools.
6. Identify best practices that are emerging in current engagement by churches with public schools.
7. Understand and articulate why proper engagement with public schools does not compromise the integrity of schools as places where no religious preference is shown.
8. Develop plans for school engagement that fit their contexts.

### Required Text Books and Course Materials

- *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools* by Jonathan Kozol (New York: Broadway Books, 2012, reprint edition), ISBN 978-0770435684
- *Educating All God's Children: What Christians Can--and Should--Do to Improve Public Education for Low-Income Kids* by Nicole Baker Fulgham (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2013), ISBN 978-1587433276

## Technical Requirements

### Microsoft Windows 7 or Higher

- Windows 7, Windows 8, 8.1, or 10
- Intel Pentium 4 2.33 GHz or faster CPU and at least 4 GB memory is recommended
- Up-to-date version of [Adobe Flash Player](#)
- Up-to-date version of [Microsoft Windows Media Player](#) (or other software that can play videos)
- Up-to-date Word processor and presentation package (Word and PowerPoint 2010 or newer)

### Mac OS/X

- Mac OS X 10.8x or newer
- Intel processor and at least 4 GB of RAM
- Up-to-date version of [Adobe Flash Player](#) (or see VLC below to play Adobe Flash FLV/F4V files)
- Up-to-date word processor and presentation package (Mac Office 2011 or new or iWorks 09 or newer – must be able to save documents as .doc file)
- One of the following media players
  - [VideoLAN VLC media player](#)
  - [Up To Date Quick Time](#)

## Student Learning Outcomes/Goals

Students are expected to meet the learning objectives for the course through active participation in the online portion of the course through their personal assignments and their interactions with other students in response to their contributions. Students will also be expected to come to the in-person class sessions prepared and to contribute to their learning and that of their colleagues through active engagement in the classroom. Students will also have the opportunity to demonstrate reaching the goals through their papers prepared for the class.

## Topic Outline and Schedule

Why Schools Matter to the Church Historically and Today

Overview of Church-School Partnerships

Developing a Heart for the Needs of Children and Schools

Program Options

- Helping Students Succeed
- Supplying Student Needs
- Supporting and Affirming Teachers
- Advocacy

Discerning a Vision for Supporting a Local School

All assignments and schedules will be posted on Blackboard well ahead of any deadlines.

## Graded Activities/Assignments/Late Work

Activities that will be graded include discussion board entries, discussion board responses, journal entries, reports, and papers. Most writing assignments require previous reading, viewing videos, or other ways of gathering information. All graded assignments will have the points available for the assignment clearly stated with the instructions. The final assignment will carry more points than others in that it gives the student an opportunity to draw from the entire learning experience. Work received after the due date may receive partial credit if the work fulfills the assigned task. All credit is based on the assignments being completed successfully. Grades will be on Blackboard and can be accessed by clicking MyGrades in the course menu.

## Grade schema

94 – 100 = A (Excellent/Outstanding)

90 – 93 = A- (Excellent/Outstanding)

87 – 89 = B+ (Very Good)

84 – 86 = B (Good)

80 – 83 = B- (Adequate)

77 – 79 = C+ (Adequate)

74 – 76 = C (Adequate)

70 – 73 = C- (Substandard)

67 – 60 = D (Inadequate/Poor)

59 – 0 = F (Unacceptable)

## Course Expectations

- students are expected to learn how to navigate in Blackboard Learn
- students are expected to address technical problems immediately
- students are expected to keep abreast of course announcements
- students are expected to use their Wesley Seminary email as opposed to a personal email address
- students are expected to keep instructor informed of class related problems, or problems that may prevent the student from full participation
- students are expected to observe course netiquette at all times
- students are expected to come to class prepared and to engage fully in class discussions
- students are expected to show respect for classmates as co-learners while sharing differing perspectives

## Inclusive Language Policy

Bearing in mind that language reflects, reinforces, and creates social reality, the Seminary expects class conversation and written work to employ language that respects the equal dignity and worth of all human beings. In particular, linguistic sexism and racism are to be avoided. (from Student Handbook)

## Weather Policy

If the Seminary is open, we will have class. If the Seminary is closed, class is cancelled. If the Seminary is closed, there will be an announcement on the Wesley web site as well as a recorded message at the main switchboard number: 202-885-8600. I will also send the class an email via Blackboard, which uses your Wesley email address.

## Accommodations/Disability Support

Once admitted to Wesley, students needing accommodations are encouraged to communicate with the Associate Dean for Community Life. Students should submit to the Office of Community Life relevant, current documentation from a qualified professional, which will be evaluated by a consultant with a degree in special education. All accommodations for classes are made by the Office of Community life on behalf of the student.

## Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism is regarded as a serious offence and will result in substantial penalties, including the possibility of academic dismissal. Wesley Theological Seminary regards the following as forms of plagiarism or dishonesty:

- Copying from another student's paper
- Giving or receiving unauthorized assistance to or from another student during an examination
- Using unauthorized material during an examination
- Borrowing and presenting as one's own (i.e., without proper attribution) the composition or ideas of another, whether from books, a friend, or the Internet.
- Submitting as one's own work a paper written (or partially written) by another.

In questions of academic dishonesty (including cheating on exams or papers and plagiarism), the professor will report the circumstances of the case to the Dean. In first instances of proven plagiarism or dishonesty, the student will receive a "Fail" grade for the course. Second instances will result in automatic separation from the Seminary. Please see the Wesley Theological Seminary Catalog for further details.

## SafeAssign

You may be asked to submit one or more of your writing assignments to Blackboard's SafeAssign plagiarism prevention service. Assignment content will be checked against Internet sources, academic journal articles, and the papers of other Wesley Theological Seminary students for common or borrowed content. SafeAssign generates a report that highlights any potentially unoriginal text in the submitted paper. The report may be submitted directly to the instructor or the instructor may elect to have students submit initial drafts through SafeAssign so that you will receive the report allowing the opportunity to make adjustments and ensure that all source material has been properly cited.

## Blackboard Tracking

Blackboard Learn automatically records all student and faculty activities including: the first and last access to the course, the pages accessed, the number of discussion messages read and sent, chat room discussion text, and posted discussion topics. This data can be accessed by the instructor to evaluate class participation and to identify participants having difficulty, or to verify academic honesty.

## Technical Support

Students must attempt to solve technical problems, and contact their instructor when technical problems do arise. If you experience technical problems, please exercise one or all of the following options:

- Blackboard Training Materials
- Call Blackboard Support at (202) 885-6091
- Email Blackboard Support at [edtech@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:edtech@wesleyseminary.edu)

If you have lost your password, or have a problem that is not specifically Blackboard related, please contact SolutionWorx at [support@solutionworx.com](mailto:support@solutionworx.com) or by phone at (703) 961-1840

## Other Resources

- Library hours: <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/en-us/library/generalinformation.aspx>
- Off campus database access: <http://wesleyseminary.libguides.com/content.php?pid=137050&sid=2514395>