



Birmingham Theological Seminary
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CE1715 Instructional Strategies & Technology Syllabus

Semester: Summer 2026

**Course: CE1715 Instructional Strategies
& Technology**

Day & Time: Tuesday, 5:30-7:20 (Bi-weekly)

Room: VC

Professor: Cheryl Blackmon, Ed.D.

Credits: 2

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Course Note: This course is scheduled to meet bi-weekly via ZOOM beginning June 2. There may be assignments due on dates between scheduled meetings.

Course Description: This course equips students with practical skills for effective teaching in Christian education settings by combining proven instructional strategies with the thoughtful use of technology. Students will explore various teaching methods, including lecture, discussion, collaborative learning, project-based learning, and experiential approaches, with attention to different age groups and learning styles. Emphasis is placed on selecting and integrating educational technologies that enhance learning while maintaining biblical and pedagogical integrity. Through hands-on activities and lesson planning, students will develop the ability to design engaging, Christ-centered instruction for both in-person and online environments.

Course Objectives:

- List benefits and limitations of five teaching methodologies.
- List four learning styles and describe how each affects lesson planning.
- Determine appropriate instructional strategies for various content lessons.
- Express biblical foundations for the use of selected instructional strategies.
- Evaluate benefits and risks of regularly integrating technology with instruction.
- Contrast the uses of generative and search engine technologies.
- Design units of instruction that incorporate research-based instructional strategies and appropriate technologies with biblical insight and illumination.
- Appreciate and value the use of technology in a Christian school.
- Develop confidence in choosing appropriate technologies that enhance learning.
- Compose communications with parents related to the use of unfamiliar instructional strategies and the use of technology to extend learning.

Required Texts:

Bible: you may use the translation of your choice; however, the ESV will be used by the professor.

Marzano, Robert J. *The Art and Science of Teaching*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press, 2017. (135 pages) ISBN: 978-1-943874-96-5

Poth, Rachelle Dene. *What the Tech?: An Educator's Guide to AI, AR/VR, the Metaverse and More*, Arlington, VA: International Society for Technology in America, 2005. (159 pages) ISBN: 979-8-88837-020-9

Poth, Rachelle Dene. *How to Teach AI: Weaving Strategies and Activities Into Any Content Area*, Arlington, VA: International Society for Technology in America, 2024. (178 pages) ISBN: 979-8-88837-035-3

Smith, David I. *Everyday Christian Teaching: A Guide to Practicing Faith in the Classroom*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2025. (227 pages) ISBN: 978-0802883001

Witwer Mark T. and Karen S. Gray. *Teaching Christianly: A Brief Introduction for Teachers*. Colorado Springs, CO: Purposeful Design Publications, 2026. (66 pages) ISBN: 978-1-58331-669-6

Collateral or Recommended Texts:

Coley, Kenneth S., Deborah L. MacCullough and Martha E. MacCullough. *Transformational Teaching: Instructional Design for Christian Educators*, Brentwood, TN: B&H Academic: 2023.

Marzano, Robert J. *The Handbook for The New Art and Science of Teaching*, Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree, 2019.

Khan, Salman, Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey, James Marshall, and Meghan Hargrave. *Teaching Students to Use AI Ethically & Responsibly: Exploring AI With Intentionality, Curiosity, and Care*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2026.

Kolb, Liz. *Learning First, Technology Second in Practice*, Arlington, VA: International Society for Technology in Education, 2020.

Reinke, Tony. *God, Technology, and the Christian Life*, Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2022.

Smith, David I. and Kara Sevensma, Marjorie Terpstra, Steven McMullen. *Digital Life Together: The Challenge of Technology for Christian Schools*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2020.

Van Brummelen, Harro. *Walking With God in the Classroom: Christian Approaches to Teaching and Learning*, 3rd ed., Colorado Springs, CO: Purposeful Design Publications, 2009.

Course Requirements and Assessments:**Project 1: Due June 9**

For each chapter of *Teaching Christianly*, list 3 bullet points of information that you consider significant. After completion of the text, write a paragraph that expresses how you plan to implement “take-aways” from the text.

Project 2: Due June 23

After reading each chapter in *Everyday Christian Teaching*, write a one-paragraph personal reflection. If desired, you may use the “Exercises” at the end of each chapter to prompt your reflection.

Project 3 - Capstone Project: Due August 14

Develop a five-day unit of instruction for the content area and grade level of your choice. Create plans that you will use in your classroom. The five-day plan should include the following:

- 5-6 student objectives for the unit (i.e., The student will be able to . . .)
- A minimum of 5 distinct instructional strategies (from Marzano)
- Technology use that enhances the instruction
- The biblical worldview foundations that undergird the purposes for this instruction or the biblical illumination revealed through the lessons

Lesson Elements for each day include:

- Biblical worldview focus
- Student objectives for the day
- Materials (including devices)
- Instructional Strategy/Strategies
- Introduction, direct instruction/activity, assessment (formative)
- Reflection and wrap-up

COURSE REQUIREMENT	GRADE WEIGHT	COMMENTS
Preparedness, In-Class Participation, “Exit Slips”	10%	For each class be prepared to discuss a point of interest from the assigned reading.
Project 1: Bullet Points & Take-away Implementation	20%	Due June 9
Project 2: Chapter Reflections	30%	Due June 23
Project 3: Capstone Project: Unit/Lesson Plan Development	40%	Due August 14

BTS Format, Style, and Writing Standards:

All research papers must be formatted in accordance with Turabian Chicago standards including the title page. All papers are to be #12 font Times New Roman and Double-Spaced. Any paper not conforming to these standards will automatically be dropped one letter grade. Please see the BTS Turabian Style Guide for more information on turning in papers and assignments.

The BTS Turabian Style Guide and other resources are available on the BTS Writing Center webpage: <https://www.btswritingcenter.net/>

In addition, the Writing Center runs 2-3 Writing Workshops every semester. They are very helpful and highly recommended.

BTS Plagiarism / Generative AI Policy

In addition to the BTS plagiarism policy, BTS is implementing a new Generative AI policy. Unless clearly directed by the instructor, the students should submit their own work, independent of artificial intelligence tools. Use of generative AI to write papers or to write significant portions of assignments is considered an ethical violation of our Student Code of Conduct and to be a violation of general academic integrity, which could result in a zero on the assignment and/or a lowered letter grade for the course by the professor. If determined to be an egregious violation, it could lead to further sanctions administered through the Academic Committee, including expulsion from BTS.

Course Schedule:

DAY	DATE	ANTICIPATED AGENDA	ASSIGNMENTS
Tuesday	6/2/26	Student Introductions Syllabus Review/Class Format Review: Christian Philosophy of Education	The reading schedule is below. Students should be prepared for class discussions as noted in the anticipated agenda. Related articles and podcasts may also be assigned for discussion.
Tuesday	6/16/26	Discussion: <i>Teaching Christianly and A&S</i> Guest Speaker	
Tuesday	6/30/26	Discussion: A&S and Tech Learning Styles Cognitive Interaction	
Tuesday	7/14/26	Discussion: Tech & AI Guest Speaker	
Tuesday	7/28/26	Discussion: AI	
Tuesday	8/11/26	Discussion: Reflections	

READING SCHEDULE

Assignment	Due Date
<i>Teaching Christianly pp. 1-61; A&S pp. 1-35</i>	June 9
<i>Everyday Christian Teaching pp. 1-100+</i>	June 16
<i>Everyday Christian Teaching pp. 100-227; A&S pp. 37-64</i>	June 23
<i>A&S pp. 65-102; Tech pp. xi-27</i>	June 30
<i>Tech pp. 29-72; AI pp. X-46</i>	July 7
<i>Tech pp. 73-116; AI pp. 47-96</i>	July 14
<i>Tech pp. 117-142; AI pp. 97-133</i>	July 21
<i>AI pp. 135-145</i>	July 28
<i>Review for Project</i>	August 4
<i>Review for Project</i>	August 11

Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to demonstrate punctuality and attend all class sessions. Any absences should be communicated to the professor beforehand. Students may miss up to three classes with impunity.

Class Policies and Procedures:

- BTS highly recommends using handwritten note taking methods in class and keeping computer usage to a minimum.
- Other electronics should be used sparingly.
- All assignments must be submitted by email by 11:59 (CDT/CST) on the due date.
- Late assignments will incur a -3 point deduction per weekday after the due date, except in cases of emergency communicated to the professor.
- Missed tests/exams may only be made up with an excused absence, preferably in advance of class. Excused absence tests/exams must be made up before the final day of the semester.

Video Conference Policies and Procedures:

- Please utilize the BTS “Best VC (Video Conference) Practices” information for the course.
- Laptops/Desktops are the preferred method of attending a video conference course. Information will be shared on the screen, so phones will be less useful.
- In Video Conference, it is preferable for the student to keep their video on (when possible) so that students and faculty may engage with one another. Extended periods of dark screen will result in follow-up and potential removal from class.
- Other electronics should be used sparingly.

GRADING CRITERIA AND ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

A to A-	B to B-	C to C-	D to D-
Correct spelling and grammar/punctuation	Minor errors in spelling or grammar/punctuation	Multiple errors in spelling or grammar/punctuation per page	Difficult to read due to English writing errors
Smooth writing that provides for effective and efficient reading	Writing is acceptable, but not as organized and coherent	Writing is not smooth, sometimes confusing and inconsistent	Writing lacks clarity, focus, structure, and is incoherent
Person and format are proper for assignment	Person and format are inconsistent	Person and format are not appropriate	Person and format are totally inappropriate
Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are appropriately used, cited, and clearly supports main argument	Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are appropriate but need more depth and use of critical thinking	Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are inadequate for main argument and do not reflect understanding	Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are improperly used, over used, under used, or cited in error
Paper completely conforms to <i>Turabian's Manual for Writers</i>	Paper generally conforms to <i>Turabian's Manual for Writers</i>	Paper somewhat conforms to <i>Turabian's Manual for Writers</i>	Paper does not conform to <i>Turabian's Manual for Writers</i>

BTS Outcomes Evaluation

Please rank each outcome on a scale of 1-5

1: this outcome is not covered in this class

2: this outcome is only touched on in this class

3: this outcome is discussed in conjunction with class material

4: this outcome lightly assessed as part of course assessment (one assignment)

5: this outcome is fully integrated into the assessment of this course (multiple assignments)

1. Scripture: Students will effectively articulate the truth of Scripture and Scripture as truth, engaged with learning biblical knowledge and reformed principles of the supremacy of Scripture as God’s word.
2. Reformed Theology: Students will be able to engage and reproduce the primary and essential elements of Reformed Theology.
3. Local Church: Students will be engaged in applied ministry projects in the local church
4. Wisdom: Students will grow in character; increasing in their demonstration of wisdom and its fruits.
5. Discipleship: Students will be able to understand and articulate the nature and importance of discipleship—both ordinary (means of grace) and extraordinary (biblical counseling).
6. Communication: Students will grow in the efficacy of their communication (articulation, teaching/speaking, and preaching—respective to various departments) both in content knowledge and rhetorical strategies.
7. Worldview: Students will demonstrate a growing ability to apply God’s word to all spheres of life, evidenced through class discussion and other assigned assessments.
8. Leadership: Students will grow in their understanding of godly leadership and ability to lead others in service of the local church.

Outcome	Rank	Rational (one sentence)
Scripture	5	Biblical foundations and illumination is essential to worldview implications in Christian education classes.
Reformed Theology	2	Biblical Theology and Covenants will be part of Christian Philosophy of Education review.
Local Church	1	On their own students may seek to apply principles in their church.
Wisdom	5	Students will consider the spiritual implications of teaching ethical standards for technology in the classroom.

Discipleship	2	Students should grow in their heart-felt modeling of Christian discipleship in their own classrooms.
Communication	4	Students will participate in reflection and summarization during each class, as well as in presenting personal projects.
Worldview	5	This is primary in the content of any Christian education class.
Leadership	4	Students will grow in leadership as Christian school educators.