

Unit Outline

Worldview Assumptions in Educational Leadership
EDL501



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Worldview Assumptions in Educational Leadership

EDL501

Statement of Purpose

This unit is to provide students with a critical appreciation of the inevitable but often hidden role that worldviews play in human life and specifically in educational leadership. This is so that the students will be able to critically evaluate worldviews that are embedded in educational leadership practice in order to be more effective in achieving the leadership goals of their school communities in a way that is faithful to their Christian faith.

Pre-requisites

N/A

Rationale

Basic to Christian educational leadership practice is a biblically-informed view of the world that shapes every facet of educational leadership practice, and which both shapes and is shaped by, the Scriptures. Such a worldview does not come to us automatically because we have a genuine faith and a sincere desire to serve the Lord. The worldviews that define normal human existence in the world around us exert a constant, subtle pressure to conform our practice to their view of normality.

Faithfulness in Christian educational leadership practice requires a critical understanding of the worldviews that are embedded in what is accepted as normal practice, including what are regarded as normal practices for Christian leaders. It requires us to be self-critical as well as being critical of the secular world in which we live.

The parallel core unit, ED500 Foundations of Christian Education, focuses on providing a deepened understanding of the Scriptures as the indispensable foundation for the practice of the Christian educator and the formation of a Christian worldview.

Building on this foundation, the present unit explores the nature and formation of worldviews in educational leadership practice. In doing this, the unit draws on both Christian and secular sources. The aim is the development of a critical competence that enables students to ground their educational leadership practices firmly in the faith they profess.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit students will be able to:

1. Identify the concept of biblical theology within an understanding of the character and purpose of the Bible.
2. Articulate a clear understanding of the nature of the assumptions underlying educational leadership theory and practice and the factors influencing their formation.
3. Understand the key perspectives and dimensions of a biblically-informed view of the world and life and how this informs and shapes educational leadership practices.
4. Identify the foundational beliefs that are implicit in accepted social and educational norms and practices, including those commonly accepted by Christians.
5. Identify divergent world and life views within contemporary Australian society in terms of their implications for educational leadership practice.
6. Evaluate critically, by testing against biblical revelation, these implicit beliefs and frameworks, with special attention to the student's own educational leadership practice.

Subject Content

1. The nature and formation of our assumptions
2. The relationship of worldviews to educational contexts
3. Scriptural themes fundamental to the development of a biblically informed worldview
4. Critical evaluation of the nature and role of the worldviews that shape contemporary educational practices, including those of Christian educational leaders
5. The implications for Christian educational leaders of worldviews embedded in culture
6. The educational implications of secularism as a worldview
7. Worldviews and biblically informed theory of knowing

Delivery Approaches

	Student Workload
1. Directed reading	60 hours
2. Responses to reading	50 hours
3. Assignment interaction	50 hours
4. Online forum interaction	20 hours
	Total: 180 hours

Assessment

The assignments are integral to the completion of this unit. They are not merely assessment of work done elsewhere in the unit but are themselves a major part of

the learning experience. The final grade for the unit will be determined by the student's performance in the four assessment tasks.

Please note that the due dates outlined below will not apply to Semester 3, as it is a short semester. Please contact your lecturer to negotiate assessment due dates during Semester 3.

General Assessment Criteria

In addition to criteria specific to each assessable task, the following criteria will be used in the assessment of assignments:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| 1. Presentation | 10% |
| 2. Communication | 20% |
| 3. Critical thinking | 25% |
| 4. Adequate coverage | 25% |
| 5. Contextual relevance | 20% |

Please refer to the Assessment Sheets at the back of this Unit Outline for details on what is expected to meet each of the above criteria.

Assessment Tasks

In this unit there are four assessment tasks, plus you are asked to keep a journal as follows:

You should keep a journal that contains reflections on your daily leadership practice. The purpose of keeping this journal is to identify your patterns of leadership, including weaknesses, so that you can critically scrutinise it in worldview terms in order that improvements might be made. This journal is not assessed but the journal will provide a basis for the first assessment task.

Assessment One

Format: Essay
Length: 1500 words
Weighting: 20%
Learning Outcomes: 1 and 2
Due: By the end of Week 6
 (Students enrolled into Semester 3 need to negotiate due dates with their lecturer, as it is a short semester).

With confidentiality considered provide a description of one aspect of your educational leadership practice that attempts to reflect and integrate biblically-informed understandings and perspectives. (500 words)

With reference to the literature, and using Strom's guidelines as outlined in Tutorial 4, analyse the beliefs, values and assumptions that pertain to this leadership practice. (1000 words)

Assessment Criteria for Assessment One

In addition to the general criteria that apply to all units, the following criteria will apply in the assessment of this assignment:

1. Evidence of awareness of one's own leadership practice.
2. A demonstration of application of a biblical perspective to education.
3. Evidence of engagement with literature in analysis of one's own leadership practice.

Assessment Two

Format:	Analysis
Length:	2000 words or equivalent
Weighting:	35%
Learning Outcomes:	2 and 5
Due:	By the end of Week 9 (Students enrolled into Semester 3 need to negotiate due dates with their lecturer, as it is a short semester).

With reference to the Bible and the literature critically analyse the worldview assumptions in a current school policy, such as the school's student welfare policy. Please attach a copy of the policy to your assignment. (2,000 words)

Assessment Criteria for Assessment Two

In addition to the general criteria that apply to all units, the following criteria will be employed in the assessment of this assignment:

1. Evidence of a clear understanding of the nature of worldviews, their formation, and their functions that demonstrates a familiarity with the texts, readings, and study guide.
2. A recognition of the relevance of worldview issues in shaping educational policy.
3. Evidence of thorough investigation and critical evaluation of the documents examined.

Assessment Three

Format:	PowerPoint, overview and evaluation
Length:	2500 words or equivalent
Weighting:	40%
Learning Outcomes:	2, 3, 4 and 5
Due:	By the end of Week 15 (Students enrolled into Semester 3 need to negotiate due dates with their lecturer, as it is a short semester).

(a) Devise a **four** week, 30 minutes per week, staff development program that can be used to enable **teachers, leaders, or board members** to more effectively and biblically think through the foundational assumptions embedded in their responsibilities and decisions.

- Choose a specific target audience and consider their roles, their needs, and any current emphases or issues that might be relevant. You may like to consult with school leadership or management.

Provide an overview of the program as a PowerPoint with between 10 – 20 slides and no more than 2 MB. (500 words).

- Please note the limit of 500 words for the 10-20 slides. The Power Point that you submit is a starting point, not a finished presentation.
- You are asked to submit no more than an overview or “skeleton” that you will then be able to develop more fully, with examples and additional quotes, in your own time.
- You are welcome to include as many words as you like in the presenter notes section under each slide for your own reference; but these will not be considered for assessment.
- Remember that a picture is worth 1000 words and does not contribute at all to your word count! Try to use a variety of active, interactive, and engaging methods of communication.

(b) Evaluate your program with reference to the literature, for its effectiveness for equipping teachers with a **biblical** worldview in education. (2000 words)

- Define your group and your context. Remember that evaluation does not just mean finding problems. It is a justification of value.
- Appraise the value of your sessions based your understanding of a Biblical worldview, on the literature that you have had access to this Semester, and other resources that you have found yourself.
- Write about how you have arrived at decisions and conclusions in regards to the materials and activities you have chosen, and your plan to convey the identified key ideas.

Assessment Criteria for Assessment Three

In addition to the general criteria that apply to all units, the following criteria will be employed in the assessment of this assignment:

1. Use of the preferred style in formatting and font (see the current Morling Education Style Manual); using APA 6th edition referencing style; references relevant books, articles and authors. In general, three different sources (in text references) should be used for every 500 words in an academic essay.
2. PPT presentation is clear and concise.

3. Demonstrate a logical and literary style in a cohesive structure including a well-structured PPT and a suitable introduction and conclusion for the evaluation of the presentation.
4. Demonstrate adequate research of the Bible and the literature by addressing and analysing the key aspects of the similarities and differences of the foundational assumptions embedded in a secularist worldview of education with a Christian worldview of education.
5. Overview of the presentation outlining key foundational assumptions from each worldview that will enable teachers to more effectively and biblically think through the foundational assumptions embedded in each worldview.
6. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the presentation in equipping teachers with an understanding of the similarities and differences of education from a secular and Christian worldview giving full and appropriate reasons with reference to the Bible and the literature.

Assessment Four

Format:	Forum
Length:	500 words or equivalent
Weighting:	5%
Learning Outcomes:	1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
Due:	Throughout the semester

Take part during the appropriate week the forum is scheduled.

Assessment Criteria for Assessment Four

In addition to the general criteria that apply to all units, the following criteria will be employed in the assessment of this assignment:

1. Evidence of personal engagement with the unit.
2. Posting of appropriate number of comments throughout unit
3. Demonstration of critical thinking in posts

Set Text

Goheen, M.W., & Bartholomew, C.G. (2008). *Living at the crossroads: An introduction to Christian worldview*. Grand Rapids: MI: Baker

Required Reading

Bond, P., & Pabst, A. (2006). The problem with secularism. *International Herald Tribune*. Retrieved from:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/21/opinion/21iht-edblond.3974655.html>

Dickson, J. (2007). God's signposts: The Christian worldview. In S. Smart (Ed.), *A spectator's guide to worldviews* (pp. 25–37). Sydney, NSW: Blue Bottle Books.

Edlin, R. J. (2008). Christian education and worldview. *ICCTE Journal*, 3(2). Retrieved from <http://www.icctejournal.org/ICCTEJournal/volume-3-issue-2/christian-education-and-worldview>

Edlin, R. (2014). Inhabiting the mindfield: Why we think the way we do, and what to do about it. In R. Edlin, J. Ireland, & G. Beech (Eds.), *Engaging the culture: Christians at work in education* [2nd ed., Kindle version]. National Institute for Christian Education.

Fennema, J. (2014a). Transforming education: Teachers. In R. Edlin, J. Ireland, & G. Beech (Eds.), *Engaging the culture: Christians at work in education* [2nd ed., Kindle version]. National Institute for Christian Education.

Fennema, J. (2014b). Transforming education: Students. In R. Edlin, J. Ireland, & G. Beech (Eds.), *Engaging the culture: Christians at work in education* [2nd ed., Kindle version]. National Institute for Christian Education.

Goheen, M. (2014). The Gospel and the idolatrous power of secular science. In J. Ireland, R. Edlin, K. Dickens, & G. Beech (Eds.), *Pointing the way: Directions for Christian education in the new millennium* [2nd ed., Kindle version]. National Institute for Christian Education.

Goheen, M. (2004). Celebrating the vision of Christian education: Understanding our cultural context. *The Christian Teachers Journal*, 12.2, 21-26.

Goldsworthy, G. (2012). Biblical theology: Lame duck or eagles' wings. In *Christ-centred biblical theology: Hermeneutical foundations and principles* (pp. 19–37). Nottingham, UK: Inter-Varsity Press.

Goudzwaard, B., Vander Vennen, M., & Van Heemst, D. (2007). In the shadows of progress. In *Hope in troubled times: A new vision for confronting global crises* (pp. 15–30). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Jensen, M. (2011). *The nature of knowing*. Unpublished paper, Anglican Education Fellowship, Sydney.

Roberts, V. (2002). *God's big picture: Tracing the storyline of the Bible* (pp. 13–26). Nottingham, UK: InterVarsity Press.

Sire, J. W. (2009). A world of difference: Introduction. In *The Universe Next Door* (pp. 15–24). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Smith, K. A. (2009). Introduction: Beyond "perspectives": Faith and learning take practice. In *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, worldview, and cultural formation* (pp. 17–36). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Thompson, R. (2014). Genesis and Jesus . . . And Christian worldview. In J. Ireland, R. Edlin, K. Dickens, & G. Beech (Eds.), *Pointing the way: Directions for Christian education in the new millennium* [2nd ed., Kindle version]. National Institute for Christian Education.

Walsh, B. J., & Keesmaat, S. C. (2004). Regimes of truth and the word of truth. In *Colossians remixed* (pp. 96–114). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.

Walsh, B., & Middleton, R. (1984). The rise of the secular worldview. In *The transforming vision: Shaping a Christian worldview* (pp.117-130). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Wolters, A. M. (2005). Discerning structure and direction. In *Creation regained: Biblical basics for a reformational worldview* (2nd ed., pp. 72–95). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans.

Wolters, A. (2009). Appropriating weltanschauung: On Jerusalem's speaking the language of Athens. In J. M. Bonzo & M. Stevens, *After worldviews* (pp. 101–114). Sioux Centre, IO: Dordt College Press.

Recommended Reading

Beare, H. (2006). *How we envisage schooling in the 21st century: Applying the new 'imaginary'*. London: Specialist Schools and Academies Trust.

Blomberg, D. G. (2007). What is this thing called wisdom? In *Wisdom and curriculum: Christian schooling after postmodernity* (pp. 53–62). Sioux Center, IA: Dordt College Press.

Burgis, P. (2014). Christian education in a secular environment. In J. Collier & K. Goodlet (Eds.) *Teaching well: Insights for educators in Christian schools* (pp.117-126). Canberra: Barton Books.

Dickens, K. (2014). Beyond worldview in professional development. *The Christian Teachers Journal*, 22.1

Edlin, R. J. (2009). Keeping the faith: The Christian scholar in the academy in a postmodern world. *Christian Higher Education*, 8(3), 203-224.

Fowler, S. (2001). Contours of a transformational scholarship. In J. H. Kok (Ed.), *Marginal resistance: Essays dedicated to John C. Vander Stelt* (pp. 129–152). Sioux Center, IA: Dordt Press.

Kuehne, D. (2009). *Sex and the iWorld: Rethinking relationship beyond an age of individualism*. Baker Academic (pp. 19-35).

Moreland, J. P., & Craig, W. L. (2003). *Philosophical foundations for a Christian worldview*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Naugle, D. (2002). *Worldview: The history of a concept*. Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing.

Parker, C. (2007). Blogs, phlogs, podcasts and wikis: What in the WWW is happening? *The Christian Teachers Journal*, 15(1), 4–11.

Plantinga, C. (2002). *Engaging God's world: A Christian vision of faith, learning, and living*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans.

Plantinga, A. (2011). *Where the conflict really lies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sire, J. (2004). *Naming the elephant: Worldview as a concept*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Smith, K. A. (2009). *Desiring the kingdom*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Thompson, R. (2005). *A biblical introduction to worldview*. Auckland, NZ: Compass.

Thompson, R. (2012). Teaching and learning in the 21st Century: Gospel musings. *Inaugural Morling Education Lecture*, November, 2012.

Walsh, B., & Middleton, R. (1984). *The transforming vision: Shaping a Christian worldview*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Wilkins, S., & Sanford, M. L. (2009). *Hidden worldviews: Eight cultural stories that shape our lives*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

Wolterstorff, N. (2012). Academic insert: *Fides quaerens intellectum*. *IAPCHE Contact*, September, pp. 1-8.