

Curriculum typically represents a vision of the future complicated by the effort to retain the past. The problem with curriculum reform is the desire of faculty to keep everything, change nothing, and be relevant.

The theological curriculum inevitably reflects what the faculty and dominant constituents think about the church and the world.

There are outcomes and then there are outcomes. A set of outcomes often shadows the outcomes you show to an accrediting agency and place in the catalogue. Faculty have certain outcomes related to their courses, but the constituency also has outcomes—and students have outcomes. In effect, the problem is too often too many outcomes.

The faculty in essence want their disciplines known; the school does have a mandate from the church or denomination to equip leaders, but that task is often viewed as the responsibility of certain faculty.

What if the instructional design allowed for higher order experiences focused on the sort of capacities needed in vocation?

The reality is that no matter what the curriculum, graduates will always be unprepared. Craig Van Gelder: “Can seminaries prepare leaders for the church? ..... maybe.

What are realistic futures of the theological curriculum?

Culture eats strategy for lunch. John Wenrich

Johnson and Johnson (2014) identify what they believe to be the four important challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in which cooperation will play an important role, including (a) global interdependence, (b) an increased number of democracies and the role of digital citizenship, (c) the need for creative entrepreneurs as well as the role that teaching plays in this, and (d) the challenge of interpersonal relationships both in social media and face-to-face formats.

The overall goal of the constructive controversy procedure is for a group of people to mutually reach consensus on the best reasoned decision to an issue that has at least two (often more) possible alternative courses of action. There are five steps used to operationalize constructive controversy. In Step 1, participants are randomly assigned to groups of four, each group is divided into two pairs, and each pair is assigned a “pro” or “con” position. Then each pair is to prepare, research, and learn about their position. In Step 2, participants present their case in the groups of four as persuasively as they are able, ideally using more than one way to present their case. While pairs are listening to the other side presented, they are to take notes and get clarification when needed, all the while remembering that this is not a debate, as no one wins or loses. In Step 3, the group of four engages in an open dialogue in which critical analysis and

persuasive argument occurs (sides refute and rebut each other's arguments presented) allowing for disequilibrium and requiring the use of higher-level thinking skills. In Step 4, the participants switch perspectives and must present the opposing position (i.e., present what the other pair originally presented and argued in Steps 1-3) by applying perspective-taking skills. Participants can use their notes and any information they may have added to forcefully present this side of the controversy. In Step 5, students engage in discussion by reasoning both sides of the controversy and seeking to find a unique position that integrates both sides. Students are not to compromise, but instead are to engage in reaching mutual consensus. If this exercise is used in a classroom, after groups reach consensus, teachers may ask for one synthesized group report or an individual reflective report from each student based on the group's final conclusions, or give a test on both positions, or process the exercise with the class by highlighting skills needed in constructively managing controversies (Johnson, Johnson, & Tjosvold, 2006).

constructive controversy procedure, which were applied in this study as follows.

**Step 1. Prepare.** Pairs are assigned a position in which they must research and learn the relevant information, then create a persuasive argument and plan how they will effectively present their case in a manner that will be received and heard by the other side.

**Step 2. Present.** Pairs persuasively present their position to the other pair in their group using whatever mediums they choose for persuasiveness and clarity. Students also listen to and take notes on the other pair's presentation so they can have information clarified [,if necessary,?] after both pairs (in the group of four) present their arguments and reasoning.

**Step 3. Open discussion.** The two pairs in the group of four engage in an open dialogue about the issue, while sharing information and forcefully arguing their side of the position. This typically takes the form of refuting and rebutting challenges to what was presented in the previous step. This involves critically analyzing the other position as pairs continue to argue their own position.

**Step 4. Perspective reversal.** Pairs reverse positions and have time to create a case supporting the opposite position. Students can use notes to add to what has not been presented. They then come back to their group of four to present their version of the opposite position, while striving to understand the issue from both perspectives.

**Step 5. Synthesize/Summarize a joint final decision.** At this stage of the procedure, students/pairs end advocating their positions and, instead, seek to find a synthesis in which the entire group can agree on the best reasoned decision or course of action relevant to the issue. Using the best evidence that was presented, the group of four typically comes to a new position that is unique and shares it with the class.