WHAT IS CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT?

TRADITIONALISTS vs. PROGRESSIVISTS
SYLLABUS and CURRICULUM

What do you think is the difference?
A general overall plan of the content that the school should offer the student by way of qualifying him for graduation or certification or for entrance into a professional or vocational field.

Good, 1973:149
Curriculum definitions

- Curriculum is a dynamic, ever-changing series of planned learning experiences.
- Curriculum is everything learners experience in school.
Curriculum is a cultural reproduction in a structured way. It is even more: It should also value independent thinking in the context of the widest sense of social responsibility.

- Smith, Stanley & Shores
Definition by Tanner & Tanner

Tanner & Tanner (2007:121) offers the following definition, derived from Dewey’s definition of education;

“That reconstruction of knowledge and experience that enables the learner to grow in exercising intelligent control of subsequent knowledge and experience”

Dewey viewed education as a generative process – that is, a process through which the learner extends and deepens the capability of exercising intelligent control over changing conditions in life.
Curriculum a wider concept

- Curriculum derived from Latin verb *curere* = to run
- Portuguese: *Corrida* = race
Curriculum = an academic and social learning race

Who do you think forms part of the curriculum race at your institution?
TEACHING STAFF

- Academic Committee
- Permanent and temporary lecturers
Management Committee

- Executive Committee
- Board members
The Internal Quality Evaluation Committee (IQEC)
Quality administration:
- Curriculum information
- Registration
- Rules
- Tests and Exam results
- Evaluation forms
Traditional way and Progressive way of Curriculum Development.

What do you think is the difference?
THE TRADITIONAL WAY

- Schools need to return to basic education and high standards – back to the **essentials**.
- Schools must systematically teach basic knowledge and not be afraid to stress hard work and discipline.
- Knowledge consists of facts, concepts and skills that must be mastered through memorization and drill.
Knowledge is generally regarded as an objective, impersonal, many times value-free commodity to be grasped.

Outcomes are very specific.

Lecturers are the technicians whose task is solely to follow the step-by-step instructions in their manuals.
Emphasize on relevant curriculum content.

The progressivists see knowledge as more than a product that has to be mastered.

Students, they believe must interact with the world around them and interpret it.
Questions that progressivists ask

- What should be the overall aims of education?
- How can education help humanity achieve a just and compassionate society?
- What is the right (moral) thing to do?
Other characteristics of Progressivists

- They consider curriculum just to be a general guide.
- They see human beings as important subjects rather than mere objects.
- Rather than “mastering” knowledge, students establish meaning for their lives through understanding and interpretation.
Interaction and meaning

- Curriculum involves *interaction* between teachers and learners, between learners and learners, between learners and curriculum content.
- The focus of teaching is more the making of *meaning* through learning than the transmission of concepts and skills.
Take the following into consideration

- No one has all the truth
- Human nature and human learning are complex
- Curriculum documents are only guides. Teachers use their professional and considered judgement in determining what is best for a particular situation
Paul Freire – a progressivist

- He opposes “banking education” and “narration sickness” by which teachers deposit information into the passive minds of their pupils.
- Learners should not only be active participants, but in doing so should develop a critical consciousness.
REFLECTION

• What kind of curriculum orientation represents your Theological Institution?
• What kind of curriculum orientation do you think your Theological Institution should follow?
• How?
The “basics” of the academic traditionalist orientation are not always Biblical basics. The Bible says that basic knowledge does not primarily mean *knowing* the facts of church history, doctrine, liturgy, missiology etc.

According to the Bible a lack of basic knowledge means not acting justly and not having mercy etc. i.e. ignoring biblical norms (Hosea 4:6; Micah 6:8)

Knowledge is in the first place an affair of the heart.
A stance in favour of a Progressive approach

- If a curriculum team shares common beliefs and values, a progressive orientation with its emphasize on understanding and meaning and critical thinking linked to life situations, it will yield a more thoughtful approach to curriculum planning than all the other orientations.