COURSE DESCRIPTION

Through the lens of religious education, this course examines and challenges the nature of Jesuit pedagogy and its defining Ignatian charism – contemplation-in-action – for professionals who serve today’s Church. We analyze seminal primary texts; critically engage competing perspectives; and develop and evaluate arguments that enrich our understanding of Jesuit education in today’s pluralistic society.

The course begins by developing students’ competencies in the foundations of Catholic higher education and the liberal arts tradition; then, it surveys prominent scholars of Jesuit and religious education as a way to elucidate St. Ignatius’ vision of mindfulness as a guiding principle for a life of intellectual, ethical, and spiritual integrity (wholeness); finally, the course equips one with an understanding of goals and challenges in the embodiment of this vision in contemporary religious education institutions and apostolates.

TEXTS

All required course readings are available on Fordham’s Blackboard site. All other materials are provided free of charge by the professor.

GRADE BREAKDOWN

Your final course grade will be comprised of the following components:

- Attendance, Participation, & In-Class Presentation 30%
- Two 3-page (double-spaced) Critical Response Papers (First due: start of Class #3; Second due: start of Class #5) 30%
- Final Course Integration Paper (15-20 pages (double-spaced) due one week after last class) 40%
COURSE INFORMATION

I. Attendance, Participation:
Students are expected to be on time for classes, fully prepared and up to date with reading and writing assignments, and critically engaged in class discussions and activities.

In-Class Presentation:
At the beginning of classes #2 through #5, each group of assigned students co-present a 20-minute introduction to the readings due that day. This presentation consists of the following: (1) identifying key religious education themes employed in readings; (2) positing a clear and concise question for discussion in response to one of these themes; (3) offering one positive and one negative criticism about one of the assigned readings. Provide a half-page outline for members of our class.

II. The 3-page Critical Response Papers are to be submitted in Times New Roman, double-spaced, 1” margins all around, 12-point, justified text.

Paper #1: DUE at start of CLASS #3
Identify a major religious education challenge for Catholic higher education today:
(1) Unpack: Offer a clear and concise summary of the challenge (2 sentences);
(2) Situate: Explain why this challenge matters to the field of religious education (4 sentences);
(3) Critically Assess: Respond to this challenge by proposing three best practices of its management.
   Be sure to utilize one theme from course reading (remaining length of assignment).

Paper #2: DUE at start of CLASS #5
Identify a major religious education challenge for Jesuit education today:
(1) Unpack: Offer a clear and concise summary of the challenge (2 sentences);
(2) Situate: Explain why this challenge matters to the field of religious education (4 sentences);
(3) Critically Assess: Respond to this challenge by proposing three best practices of its management.
   Be sure to utilize one theme from course reading (remaining length of assignment).

III. The 15-20 page Final Course Integration Paper is to be submitted in Times New Roman, double-spaced, 1” margins all around, 12-point, justified text.
Utilizing three course reading themes, offer a critical reflection on how your current work as a religious educator can be further influenced by the Ignatian charism of contemplation-in-action.
I. **MONDAY: COMPETING CONCEPTS IN LIBERAL ARTS TRAINING**

Readings:


II. **TUESDAY: FOUNDATIONS IN CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Readings:


III. **WEDNESDAY: JESUIT PEDAGOGY AND IGNATIAN CHARISM OF CONTEMPLATION-IN-ACTION**

Readings:


IV. **THURSDAY: ARTICULATING INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND IDENTITY**

Readings:


V. **FRIDAY: WORDS & DEEDS: EMBODIED APPLICATIONS OF THE LIVED JESUIT TRADITION**

Readings:


Interactive presentations:

- Gabriel Moran’s *Showing How* on teaching languages (homiletic, therapeutic, academic)
- College student reflections on Jesuit education and service projects
- NY Province Jesuit Testimonials
- Jesuit *Examen* meditation
- *Eloquentia Perfecta*: Jesuit Religious Education
- Site visit and discussion at Murray-Weigel Hall Jesuit Infirmary

### COURSE EXPECTATIONS

You are expected to attend and be on-time for all classes and with assignments, and actively participate in discussions. Please complete the readings *prior* to each class. Cell phones are to be turned off before entering our classroom. Note Fordham University’s academic integrity policy in the Student Handbook. Retention of the course material as well as your thinking skills will improve the more *engaged* you are with thinking about the religious education themes we study. So, re-read, talk with me, talk with others, ask questions, e-mail me, and allow your mind to be uncomfortable with the challenge of enriched thinking. I pledge to provide this intellectual and ethical sense of friction to you, and I expect the same in return. Since I am also an academic dean, I am around my office often and accessible for consultation. I check voicemail and e-mail throughout the day and look forward to your questions, discussions, and insights. That is why I am here, so that we may learn together. Thank you.
WHAT IS AN INTERLOCUTOR?

The word **interlocutor** derives from two Latin roots: *inter* (between, among) + *loqui* (to speak). An interlocutor intentionally disrupts the flow of the conversation, in order to qualify vocabulary used and spark fuller understanding. The interlocutor proceeds by way of the Socratic Method named after the ancient philosopher and teacher Socrates. An interlocutor offers constructive criticism to clean up sloppy and prejudicial thinking. Genuine interlocutors are not filibusters, abusive, or arguing for argument’s sake. Though spirited, they are discerning and careful listeners. As St. Ignatius Loyola (founder of the Jesuits) learned, true wisdom comes through humility and questioning – an essential combination and life skill for religious educators today.

“Seldom deny, rarely affirm, always distinguish.” - Aristotle

“All of us are experts at practicing virtue at a distance.” - Theodore Hesburgh, CSC

“Dearest Lord, teach me to be generous, teach me to serve you as you deserve, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask for reward, save that of knowing that I am doing Your will. Amen.” - St. Ignatius Loyola

“Young people go forth to marvel at the mountain heights, at huge waves in the sea, at the broad expanse of the rivers, at the wide reaches of the ocean, and at the circuits of the stars, but themselves they pass by.” - St. Augustine

“Fishermen know that the sea is dangerous and the storm terrible, but they have never found these dangers sufficient reason for remaining ashore.” - Vincent van Gogh

**NOTHING IS MORE PRACTICAL**

Nothing is more practical than finding God, that is, than falling in love in a quite absolute, final way.
What you are in love with, what seizes your imagination, will affect everything.
It will decide what will get you out of bed in the morning, what you will do with your evenings, how you will spend your weekends, what you read, who you know, what breaks your heart, and what amazes you with joy and gratitude.
Fall in love, stay in love, and it will decide everything.

[Attributed to Pedro Arrupe, S.J. (1907-1991)
Superior General of the Society of Jesus 1961-1984]