338-01 Religious Education and Youth Ministry

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THEO 338 Religious Education and Youth Ministry

Course Description: Religious education and youth ministry are tasks that primarily belong to lay Christian leaders. This course will explore the challenges of educating and mentoring adolescent faith and spirituality. The course will include theoretical and theological foundations as well as practical means to address these educational and spiritual challenges. This class will provide opportunities to discuss the field observation sessions that class participants will do in religion classes (Catholic High Schools) and/or youth ministry of various kinds.

Learning Objectives:

1) To discuss the work of educating and mentoring adolescents as a vocation.
2) To explore Ecclesiology as related to working with adolescents in religious education and youth ministry.
3) To study the Ignatian contribution in working with adolescents, specifically in secondary education.
4) To explore one's own spiritual and theological journey with an understanding of its importance in the educational and mentoring relationship.
5) To develop, through study and interaction, an appreciation of the developmental challenges facing young people.
6) To juxtapose the "religious education and mentoring of adolescent spirituality" with the cultural antagonisms.
7) To understand Catholic expectations for those who are involved in secondary religious education and youth ministry.
8) To understand the daily "mechanics" of Catholic secondary education.
9) To candidly look at very practical issues and strategies for a positive mentor-adolescent relationship that will enhance spiritual growth for both parties.

Textbooks:

4) Additional Readings are on E-Reserve.
Policies:
It is important that you attend all classes. We want you here not only for your growth and learning but also for what you contribute to the class. One absence (which is a full week of class) may be allowed due to illness, family or other emergencies. Hold on to this until you really need it. All reading assignments and class work missed are your responsibility to make up. Absences do not excuse a student from knowledge about the material discussed or about any announcements and syllabus changes. If you have absences beyond this one I will need to see documentation. Any unexcused absence will result in a drop of (0.3x3) from your final course grade. Every unexcused absence thereafter will cost another 0.3x3 from your final grade. (0.3 per one hour class and our Monday night class represents three class hours)

A student who is late for class is required to notify Mr. Norman after class and request that the attendance record be changed. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that the attendance record is correct for each day.

In a serious emergency, if a student will be absent from a test or on a day when she/he has a presentation or paper due, the student must contact the professor and the other group members prior to the date assigned for the test/presentation/paper or, in grave emergencies, no later than 5:00 PM the following day. Failure to inform the professor will result in an F for that assignment. Absence from a test will be permitted (without detriment to a student's grade) only for a grave reason (e.g. a medical emergency), with documentation, and only at the discretion of the instructor.

Written assignments and papers should be typed double-spaced with 12-point font and stapled together. Assignments are expected on time. Late work will be penalized by one letter grade for each class period late. In the case of “Integration Papers” only paper copies are accepted.

Work submitted for evaluation must be that of the student. The direct and unattributed use of another's efforts is prohibited as is the use of any work untruthfully submitted as one's own. Penalties for violation will be in accord with university policy and include one or more of the following: a zero or F for the assignment, an F for the course, expulsion from the university.

In the interest of promoting a class environment where discussion is encouraged it will be important that all are attentive and distractions are minimized. In light of this I ask that during class cell phones are off. Personal computers in class can be useful, yet can be a detriment to your “class engagement.”
Field Observations with written response due on April 28th. This gives you three months to take care of this, so plan ahead. Students will arrange observation sessions. Students must agree to whatever stipulations a school or parish requests (fingerprinting, background check, etc.) So make your arrangements early to give yourself time to fulfill these requirements. For students seeking a minor/major in Religious Education the expectations will be 15 Hours of observation. For students with no current career plans in Religious Education or Youth Ministry, the expectation will be 3 hours of observations. Hopefully this "practical experience" will not only add to your understanding of "ministry to our youth" but will also enhance our class discussions. All students will address the following in a paper (3-5 pages) about their observations: 1) Describe the nature of the youth ministry observed; 2) Discuss the effective/ineffective aspects of this ministry; 3) Connect your observations to this class, citing works we have studied; and 4) Discuss: the youth, the ministry observed and your personal thoughts and feelings while participating in this ministry, albeit an observer.

Evaluation and Grading:
The grading follows the Theology Department Grading Guidelines. See the Theology web pages.
200 pts. Two Integration papers (100 pts each)
100 pts. Lead class discussion on selected readings.
200 pts Mid-Term Exam
100 pts Informed Class Participation (You have read the material)
100 pts Observation Report/Presentation
300 pts Final Exam

Integration Papers:
Each integration paper is worth 100 Points. The purpose of the integration paper is to connect what has been studied, whether in class, text or field with one's personal philosophy, spirituality and values. This process can also evoke questions, either personal or intellectual, that can lead to further inquiry. The rubric for grading these papers will be the Theology Department's "Critical Reflection on Readings in Theology."

All papers are to be typed and double-spaced.
All integration papers are to be 2-3 pages.
All papers are to have a maximum of one-inch margins.
All papers are to be on time. (Late is one letter off per day late)
All papers are expected to have a “works-cited page” attached. (You are expected to include material from the readings to support your thesis.)
No emails accepted.
***Please be aware that English Usage and Spelling affects your grade.

Class Discussion Leader:
The expectation is that you will lead a discussion, 20-30 minutes, on the readings. In order to facilitate the direction of this discussion you are to prepare a handout for the class. Because there is a lot of information in the readings you are to “isolate” what you consider most important in the readings and lead the class in that direction. Your grade is based on:

1) Knowledge of the readings
2) Preparation for your discussion with a specific focus that is relevant to the class.
3) Facilitation of the discussion

Exams:

The material for the exams will come from the following:
1) Readings
2) Student/Professor led discussions with a specific focus.
3) Lecture by Graduates and Professor.

***Virtually, all of the exam material will be discussed and emphasized in class. There is no intent, on my part, to look for obscure information to put on the exams. If you are attentive to the readings, the classroom focus and take good notes, you should have the material needed to prepare for the exams.

Blackboard:
When necessary I will use BB to communicate with you. Also, I will post under “Course Documents” handouts that I want you to read.

E-Reserve: Password is tmerton.
There are many readings on E-Reserve, some are required. Others are there if you find them interesting.

Course Schedule: (Tentative)

One: January 13:

Topic: Introductions

1) Class Process and Field Observations
2) Discussion of the “mentors” in our lives
3) Soul Searching (documentary)
4) E-Reserve: Folder is called “Groome, Christian Religious Education,” Read Chapter 12.
5) E-Reserve: Folder is called “Handouts”, Read Fr. Arrupe. ”Men and Women for others.” (Only the part titled: The Men and Women the Church Needs; five pages)***The remaining text is optional.
6) E-Reserve: Folder is called “Handouts.” Read Fr. Graham.

January 20: Martin Luther King Jr. No Class

Two: January 27:

Topics: Moralistic Therapeutic Deism and The Kingdom of God (Groome)

1) Dean: Almost Christian, Chapters One-Two and Appendices A, B and C.
2) Undergraduates Lead Discussion on Dean, Chapters One-Two
3) Graduate Presentation on the Kingdom of God (Groome)
4) Soul Searching(movie in class)
5) E-Reserve: Folder is called “Smith Soul Searching.” Read "Moralistic Therapeutic Deism."
6) The Kingdom of God (BB Documents)
Three: February 3:

Topics: Claiming the God-Story and the Three-Fold Nature of Faith (Groome)

1) Dean: Almost Christian, Chapters Three-Five
2) Undergraduates lead discussion on Dean, Chapters Three-Five.
3) Graduate Presentation on “Faith as Believing, Trusting and Acting.” (pp. 56-66, 73-77)
4) E-Reserve: Folder is called “Smith Soul Searching.” Read Therapeutic Individualism and Catholic Teens.

Four: February 10:

Topics: Consequential Faith (Dean) and Human Freedom (Groome)

1) Dean: Almost Christian, Chapters Six-Seven
2) Undergraduates lead discussion on Dean, Chapters Six-Seven.
3) Graduate Presentation on “Human Freedom.”

Five: February 17:

Topic: Adolescent Developmental Issues

1) Dean: Almost Christian, Chapters Eight and Nine
2) Undergraduates lead discussion on Dean, Chapters Eight and Nine.
3) Thomas Merton and the False Self (BB Documents)
4) E-Reserve: Folder is called “Shelton Adolescent Spirituality.” Read the following:
   a) Faith Development (Fowler)
   b) Identity in Adolescence (Erikson)
   c) Moral Development (Kohlberg)
5) E-Reserve: Folder is called “Groome: Christian Religious Education.” Read pp. 243-254

Six: February 24:

1) Mid-Term Exam

Spring Break March 3: No Class
Seven: March 10:

**Topic: High School Student Panel (Tentative)**

2) E-Reserve: "Forming Young Disciples." This is a long document presented by The Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Please take a look at it with a focus on Sections: III, IV and VII.

**First Integration Paper is due:**
In light of all the readings through today and our discussions, what practical wisdom is needed in effectively mentoring adolescents in their spiritual-life journey?

Eight: March 17

**Topic: Teenagers and Catholic Social Teaching.**

2) E-Reserve: Folder is called “Shelton Adolescent Spirituality.” Read Adolescent Social Consciousness.
3) Catholic Social Doctrine (BB Documents)
4) Authentic Human Development (BB Documents)
5) E-Reserve: Very Practical but not required reading. Folder is called “Readings: Practical Methods in Light of Adolescent Development.”

Nine: March 24:

**Topic: Liturgy and Teenagers.**

2) Pope Benedict on Eucharist (BB Documents)
3) Thomas Merton on Eucharist (BB Documents)
4) Solidarity and Eucharist (BB Documents)
5) Investigate the following youth ministry sites:
   a) [http://cincinnatiyortheconference.org/](http://cincinnatiyortheconference.org/)
   b) [http://encountercincinnati.org/](http://encountercincinnati.org/)
   c) [http://ihom.org/youth/HomeHighSchoolYouth.aspx](http://ihom.org/youth/HomeHighSchoolYouth.aspx)

**High School Student Panel on Liturgy, Eucharistic Adoration, etc. (Tentative)**
Ten: March 31


3) Authentic Human Development in a Consumer Culture (BB Documents)
4) The Universal Destination of the Earth’s Goods (BB Documents)

Eleven: April 7:

**Topic: The Teacher Within (Palmer)**

1) Groome and “Critical Consciousness.”

Twelve: April 14:

**Topic: Shared Praxis (Groome) and The Conversation About Things That Matter (Palmer)**

2) Graduate Presentation on Shared Praxis in Groome.
3) E-Reserve: Folder is called “Handouts.” Read Ignatian Pedagogy.
   - The International Center for Jesuit Education. (Only pp. 6-24)
   - The remaining text is optional.

**Second Integration Paper is due:** Christian Smith (Soul Searching) says that “we will get what we are.” By this he means that youth will imitate the faith of the adults even if that faith is a watered down version of the Gospel. So how are the principles and strategies presented and discussed going to foster a faith in youth that is consequential faith (Dean) or authentic spirituality (Muldoon) and not watered down? And what type of resistance to this “consequential faith” might come from the adults in their world?

April 21: Easter Monday: No Class

Thirteen: April 28: Topic: Field Observations and “Social Media and Teenagers.”

2) Field Observation Papers are due. Also each student will discuss their experience with the class.
3) Graduate Presentation on “Social Media and Teenagers.”

Fourteen: May 5: Final Exam and Class Evaluation for the University.