Loyola Institute for Ministry
Loyola University New Orleans

Curriculum Development

LIM-G838-Y1G0E

Fall 2025

Important! You will be notified by email to your Loyola email address when your course web site is available (normally the week before class begins). Please reply to the instructor's email when you receive it to confirm that you are ready to begin the course.

Course Description

Curriculum development is a dynamic process. This course explores the what, who, where, when, why, and how of an educational project - the integration of theory and practice, of content and process. The course critically examines the various philosophies, principles, and processes of curriculum formation. We will examine the vocation of a religious educator, explore a bricolage of pedagogies and approaches to teaching and learning in a culturally diverse society. Thus, this course is about who we are as religious educators and how we think about our craft; how we do curriculum development in Religious Education contexts, those that are formal (like teaching in a school, parish or home school context) and informal (such as mentoring, coaching, accompanying) and those that are explicit (where the religious aim and character of the education is named as such) and implicit (where the religious aim and character is not or cannot be named as such).

Course Overview

Throughout the course, we will explore the strengths and limits of the meaning and practice of curriculum as it has been understood and practiced in western society by institutions, educational theorists, and practitioners. From this perspective, we consider curriculum development in a Catholic/Christian Religious Education context, focusing on the historical and current catechetical models that reflect an integration of curriculum theory and our faith tradition and culturally responsive pedagogies. The course seeks to empower religious educators embody the art and practice of teaching and learning as a practice of freedom and transformation and to see the world as curriculum. We will be attentive to language, clarifying similarities and differences between terms such as catechesis, theological education, and religious education. Students will learn to craft their praxis by creating an intercultural, recursive, rich, relational, and responsive curriculum; to discern and make strategic choices about the model of curriculum

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development that is best-suited to achieve their educational goals and purposes; and confidently learn how to weave the wisdom of various models, practices, theories, and traditions into their educational practice.

Key Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will

- be knowledgeable of the various curriculums working in their context, including the conscious and unconscious biases of the teacher, students, resources, texts, school, or other educational form with particular attention to issues of race, sex, class, ability, multi-cultural, multi-religiousness as it relates to your context;;
- critically examine the contributions of contemporary perspectives, meanings, and models of curriculum theory to the practice of Catholic/Christian religious education;
- create a rich, intercultural, recursive, rigorous, relational curriculum as a theological and cosmological text;
- nurture the wisdom of the curriculum – the natural world foundations of religious education, the students, the teacher her/himself, the form or context, and selected resources responsively;
- apply the LIM model and method of reflection in interpreting and practicing curriculum development in your particular context;
- recognize and identify the evolution of the practice of curriculum development in the field of education and Catholic Religious Education;
- present a curriculum informed by the vision and tools you learned in the course for a learning context in a parish or school setting.

Required Readings

The texts included below have been used in the past. Do not purchase texts for this class until you receive a communication about required texts from the professor teaching the class.

Goto, Courtney T. *The Grace of Playing: Pedagogies for Leaning into God's New Creation*, Pickwick Publications, 2016. ISBN 1498233007

*Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization. *Directory for Catechesis*. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2020. ISBN-13: 978-1-60137-669-5

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* *The Universal Catechism*, *General Directory for Catechesis*, USCCB's *Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework* and *National Directory for Catechesis* are included as references and guides for curriculum

Slattery, Patrick. *Curriculum Development in the Postmodern Era: Teaching and Learning in an Age of Accountability*, 3rd edition, Routledge, 2013. ISBN: 978-0-415-80856-9.

Additional readings and media as included in the Canvas course.

One Required Children's Book:

Graduate Students will use a children's book as a part of their final class project. Please select ONE book from this list, or propose a different book by an underrepresented author to your professor for review:

Day, Alexandra. *Carl Goes to Day Care*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1995. ISBN-10-0374311455

Chang, Rosa. *My Indigo World: A True Story of the Color Blue*. Astra Publishing House, 2023. ISBN9781662650659

Lindstrom, Carole. *We Are the Water Protectors*. Roaring Brook Press, 2022. ISBN 978-250-20355-7

Nagara Innosanto. *Oh, The Things We're For!* Triangle Square Books, 2020. ISBN 978-1-64421-014-7

Sanna, Francesca. *My Friend Earth*. Chronicle Books, 2020. ISBN: 9780811879101

Todd, Traci N. *Nina: A Story of Nina Simone.* G.P Putnam's Sons, 2021. ISBN: 978-1524737283

Woodson, Jacqueline. *The Day You Begin.* Nancy Paulsen Books, 2018. ISBN: 978-0399246531

Please select ONE additional text from this list to read based on your needs and interests as a religious educator.

Click on the copyright date to view a summary of each book either through Loyola's Monroe Library or other links (you must be logged into the library site view this information)

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development within Roman Catholic contexts. These resources like the others we read in the Foundations of Religious Education course constitute a professional library and should be consulted as needed, as appropriate. The *National Directory* is the only text that cannot be viewed online.

Situating themselves in their particular contexts of religious education in a home, parish, diocese, or school, students are asked to select ecclesial resources that informs goals and tasks of a religious educator in that setting.

Streaty Wimberly, Anne E. *Soul Stories: African American Christian Education*, revised edition, Abingdon Press, 2005.

Harris, Maria. *Fashion Me a People: Curriculum in the Church*. Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989. ISBN: 0664240526

Manning, Patrick R. *Converting the Imagination: Teaching to Recover Jesus' Vision for Fullness of Life*. Pickwick Publications, 2020 (book website)

hooks, bell. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. Routledge, 1994. (if you are familiar with this book by bell hooks, you may be interested in reading *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope* 2003 instead)

• Palmer, Parker. *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*. Jossey-Bass, 2007; or *To Know as we are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey*. Harper SanFrancisco, 1993.

• Brookfield, S. D. & Associates. *Teaching Race: How to Help Students Unmask and Challenge Racism*. Jossey-Bass, 2019.

Evaluation and Course Requirements

Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Assignments
Week 1 8/18–8/25	Initial Understanding of Curriculum	Complete readings, media, personal introduction
Week 2 8/26–9/1	Key Understandings of Curriculum Development that Inform the Course (Sept. 1 Labor Day Holiday)	
Week 3 9/2–9/8	Historical Developments in Curriculum Theory	Complete readings, media, discussion questions, journal
Week 4 9/9–9/15	Reconceptualizing the Field of Curriculum Theory: A Few Models	Complete readings, media, discussion questions, research; optional whole-class webinar
Week 5 9/16–9/22	Teaching and Learning: The Embodiment of Religious Education	Complete readings, media, discussion questions, journal
Week 6 9/23–9/29	Emergent, Postmodern Curriculum (Wilderness Model) and its Implications	Complete readings, media, discussion questions, journal; small-group virtual meeting

Week 7 9/30–10/6	Playing in the Sandbox	Complete readings, media, discussion questions, journal
Week 8 10/7–10/13	Fall Break	
Week 9 10/14–10/20	The Forms of Curriculum and the Curricula all Forms Teach	Complete readings, media, discussion questions, journal; small-group virtual meeting
Week 10 10/21–10/27	Applications: First Steps Toward Building our Curriculum	Complete readings, media, discussion questions, journal
Week 11 10/28–11/3	Pedagogy, Andragogy and Other Approaches to Teaching and Learning	Complete readings media, discussion questions; optional
Week 12 11/4–11/10	Curriculum Planning – Designing the Experience	Complete readings, audios, videos, discussion questions
Week 13 11/11–11/17	A Curriculum of Closure and Final Paper Directions	Complete readings, media, discussion question
Week 14 11/18–11/24	Working Break	
Week 15 11/25–12/1	Thanksgiving Break	
Week 16 12/2–12/5	Final Assignment and Course Evaluation	Final Paper due 12/2 by 11:59 pm CT

Dec. 15: Due date for posting grades 11:59 pm CT

†Week 1: Aug. 18 – Aug. 25 / Initial Understanding of Curriculum

Required Readings:

- Slattery, *Curriculum Development*, Preface, pp. ix-xxvii
- Gotto, *The Grace of Playing*, Preface and Introduction, pp. xi-13
- If this is your first semester, please make yourself familiar with the LIM *Guide to Written Theological Reflection* (Available on the Home page and under Resources » Writing Resources). Recommended focus on sections 1-3.
- Please review the Focus Area: Religious Education ("The Multiple Meanings and Modes of Religious Education" by Kathleen O'Gorman) and the online learning agreement (in Canvas)

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† Students will be administratively dropped from the course if they fail to "attend class" which means if they do not post a personal introduction by 11:59 pm on Sun., 9/24.

Assessment

Each student's final grade will include the following parts:

		Percentage of Grade	
		Graduate	CEU
1	Substantive participation in weekly discussions	40%	80%
2	One All-Class Webinar Attendance	10%	5%
3	Spiritual Formation	5%	5%
4	Midterm Assignment Project	15%	–
5	Final Project	30%	–
6	Final Reflective Paragraph	–	10%

1) **Participation in Weekly Sessions (40% of Graduate Student evaluation; 80% of CEU evaluation)**

The majority of interaction will take place through threaded discussion, but also small virtual synchronous sessions with classmates, and a number of occasions for live classes for all students with the professor over the course of the semester. The sessions of this course include assignments for reading, audio segments, videos (where applicable) and discussion questions. These are provided in the Assignments section of Canvas. In addition to reading all the materials assigned and listening to assigned audio or video segments, students will also be expected to participate in the class discussions by way of the Discussion Board. Participation in class discussions are determined by weekly participation in the discussions and session assignments. Students are asked to read all posts and respond substantively to at least two of your colleagues' postings (i.e., more than "I agree." or "I like your ideas." We ask that you say why you might agree or disagree and include your own reflections on the discussion questions, readings, course materials, and experience). All major and minor posts must be informed by course material. Personal or ministerial reflections not informed by course material do not constitute substantial responses and will not receive full credit. Ideally, each discussion "thread" of the course will become a conversation. Be sure to check responses to your own postings and respond to any questions that others or the instructor may have posed for you. See directions for posting in the final syllabus posted in Canvas the week of August 15th.

Discussions Via Small Group Online Class Meetings: In this class, I will also organize you all into smaller groups to host your own virtual learning sessions. This is a wonderful way to help build community, contextualize our discussions, and engage more fully in what you are learning. The most effective way to increase learning and comprehension is when you teach someone else. What is more, tone and humor seldom come across as we intend with our writing.

The week prior to meeting, members of each group should have communicated to identify the time of your meetings for their two upcoming synchronous sessions that should last for at least 1 hour. You should have also identified and tested out the free audio-visual platform you will use for the meeting. Possibilities include free software such as Zoom, GoToMeeting, Skype, Google Meet, etc. Once you have gathered this information, each student can respond to the link/survey under on Canvas. When you finish your small group virtual session, I ask that you write up the insights you gained in one written or video response by the close of the week (rather than the discussion board). In these sessions you engage with the additional text you chose by Streaty Wimberly, Harris, Manning, Palmer, hooks, or Brookfield et al. and will discuss the major insights you gained regarding the art and practice of teaching. See full directions on Canvas.

2) **Whole-Class Synchronous (Zoom) Class Session: (10% Graduate; 5% CEU Student Evaluation)**

In the past, my webinars have been optional. However, in this class on curriculum development and pedagogy, I am changing my policy. I ask that you ***attend ONE synchronous (Zoom) class with your instructor this semester.*** You are all welcome to attend each and every one of our webinars, but at a minimum, I ask that you choose one session to join with us. I will send out a survey asking you all what the best days/times might be to meet, and based on your responses, I will post the schedule on Canvas. As always, the active participation in the synchronous class takes the place of the written discussion board posts for the week – that will not change. I just ask that every student attend at least one virtual session.

If you have never attended one with me in the past, please know these sessions are very conversational. The students who attend comment on how this practice enriches their learning experience as they enjoy not only interacting verbally, but they appreciate coming to a deeper understanding of the personalities of their fellow students (tone and personality are often hard to convey well through writing). In each webinar, I begin with some introductory remarks to frame our weekly session, then I open the floor to students to begin discussing their reactions to the course material and weekly discussion questions. For details about using Zoom through Canvas for our virtual synchronous classes, see under "Synchronous Virtual Sessions" on the home page of the course.

3) **Spiritual Formation: (5% of Graduate Student Evaluation; 5% of CEU Evaluation)**

In this class you will be asked to engage in a regular rhythm of prayer and spiritual reflection. See Canvas for full details.

4-5) Graduate Student Reflection Papers, Projects, and Presentations

Graduate students will complete two major assignments in addition to the virtual and written discussion assignments; a midterm project (15%) and their culminating curriculum project (30%) integrating the course material and the student's ministry experience and research. CEU students will complete a 1-2 paragraph reflection on the course in terms of insights and challenges and how aspects of our course can be integrated into your praxis (10%). Details regarding the final project are on Canvas.

In LIM we format our papers according the latest edition of the MLA style. Students should follow the guidelines provided in the LIM Guide to Written Theological Reflection, which is posted in the Resources>General Resources>Writing section of your Canvas course. We update this from time to time, so download the most recent version in this course. It provides examples of the MLA citation style required by the program. You may also consult the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (latest edition) for proper writing and citation style in reflection papers.
Please see the full details for all assignments in Canvas.

6) Final Reflective Paragraph (0% of Graduate Student Evaluation; 5% of CEU Evaluation)

CEU students will complete a final reflective paragraph at the close of the course. Please see the full details in Canvas.

Grading Scale

A	93-100	B-	80-82.9	D+	67-69.9
A-	90-92.9	C+	77-79.9	D	60-66.9
B+	87-89.9	C	73-76.9	F	0-59.9
B	83-86.9	C-	70-72.9		

Overall Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Quality Points	Characteristics of Student Work
A	4.0	Work done with distinction. An outstanding use of all four evaluation criteria as a catalyst for critical reflection.
A-	3.7	Work done with distinction, with a few minor corrections needed.
B+	3.3	Work of very good quality. The assignment is addressed in an exceptional manner with a good balance of personal insight and academic documentation.
B	3.0	The standard for the master's degree. The assignment is adequately addressed in a clear and concise manner with appropriate documentation. If subsequent work meets this standard of quality, the degree will be awarded.

B-	**2.7**	The work is slightly below the standard for master's level work. The assignment is addressed, but a number of corrections is needed to address the assignment in a clear and concise manner. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program.
C+	**2.3**	Substandard graduate work. Evaluation criteria are not adequately met in the assignment. Moderate improvement is needed. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program.
C	**2**	Less than graduate-level work. Evaluation criteria are not met. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program.
C-	**1.7**	Below average, grade does not count towards graduation.
D+	**1.3**	Minimally passing, grade does not count towards graduation.
D	**1**	Minimally passing, grade does not count towards graduation.
F	**0**	Assignment not addressed at all, incomplete assignment, or not submitted on time.

Please note that the LIM grading scale uses B as the standard for graduate-quality work. A and B+ indicate graduate work done with distinction, with B- and below signifying levels below graduate standards.

Course Policies

Incomplete Grade Policy

Students are subject to the university policy regarding incomplete grades with the following additions to university policy. Grades of Incomplete are given at the instructor's discretion. Students must complete LIM's Incomplete Grade Request Form found in the Resources » Policies, Forms, & Services section of their Canvas course. Students should first inquire of their instructor whether or not they are eligible for an incomplete; this must occur with sufficient time to complete the process explained here. To be eligible, students may not have received an Incomplete in the previous semester, must have completed at least 75% of the course work to date, and must have at least a C or above in the course. After the instructor makes an initial assessment of eligibility, including checking with the LIM Office to ensure there was no Incomplete in the previous semester and finds the student eligible, by the due date of the course's final assignment, a student must complete and obtain all signatures for LIM's Incomplete Grade Request Form found in the Resources section of their Canvas course and submit it to their instructor, who will forward a copy to the LIM Director. LIM graduate students may not receive Incompletes in LIM courses in consecutive semesters.

Attendance & Participation

Students are subject to the university policy regarding attendance found online in the *Bulletin*. Students in online courses communicate their presence by active participation in weekly discussions. Each course's instructor sets requirements for how many times students must post on the Discussion Board in Canvas. Failing to post during the first week of class may result in removal from the course. If you foresee that you will be unable to post in a given week, please contact the instructor ahead of time. Extensions for

posting are given at the instructor's discretion and for a valid reason may be granted if arranged ahead of time. In extraordinary circumstances, students may arrange with their instructor to post up to two weeks after a deadline, though this may entail a grade reduction. Posts and other assignments submitted more than two weeks late may be subject to a grade of zero. If students do not post in a given week, they are considered absent. Absence for more than one week without contacting the instructor may result in removal from and failure of the course.

University Policies

Please read Part 2 of the syllabus (located in Canvas) for university policies on plagiarism, accessible education, and more.