

DRAFT v.2
Subject to change. Full
syllabus available in Canvas
the week of May 19th.

Loyola Institute for Ministry
Loyola University New Orleans

Catechetical Leadership

LIM-G846-Y1G0E

Summer 2025

Instructor: Israel Díaz, D.Min.

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Office Hours: By appointment;

email me to schedule appointment

Important! You will be notified by email when your course is available (normally the week before class begins). Please check your *Loyola email* account for instructions. ***Please reply*** to the instructor's email when you receive it.

Course Description

What is catechesis? This course begins with the theological and doctrinal foundations of the catechetical ministry, as rooted in evangelization, and as a particular ministry to foster conversion to Jesus Christ. From this foundation, the course moves on to explore a variety of pastoral issues that shape our ministries of catechesis: working with children, youth, and adults; the role of the community in the task of catechesis; the relationship between liturgy and catechesis; and the formation of the resources available for catechetical leaders. Students will explore these themes from the Vatican's new [*Directory for Catechesis*](#) and its inspiration to curate and implement a catechetical process of faith formation grounded in accompaniment and encounter.

Key Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will have developed:

- a theological understanding of catechesis as a form of evangelization.
- a working facility with key ecclesial documents that address catechesis.
- an appreciation of key pastoral issues surrounding the practice of catechesis.
- increased digital media literacy for retrieving and evaluating online catechetical tools and resources.

Required Readings

Please order the required texts as soon as possible from [Loyola](#) or the bookstore of your choice.

LaVecchia, Catherine, et al. *Guided by the Directory for Catechesis: Transforming the Vision and Practice of Parish Catechesis*. Twenty-Third Publications, 2024. ISBN-13: 978-1627858137 / \$19.95

Lewis Stephen, Dori Baker, and Matthew Wesley Williams. *Another Way: Living and Leading Change on Purpose*. Chalice Press 2020. ISBN-13: 978-0827200838 / \$19.99

Ospino, Hosffman. *Interculturalism and Catechesis: A Catechist's Guide to Responding to Cultural Diversity*. Twenty-Third Publications, 2017. ISBN-13: 978-1627852609 / \$9.95

Ospino, Hosffman and Theresa O’Keefe. *Together Along the Way: Conversations Inspired by the Directory for Catechesis*, Crossroad Publishing, 2021. ISBN-13: 978- 0824579005 / \$27.95

Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization. *Directory for Catechesis*. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. 2020. ISBN-13: 978-1601376695 / \$26.99 **Note:** An enhanced version in print or ebook is also available as Dicastery for Evangelization. *Directory for Catechesis*. Ascension Press, 2023 ISBN: 9781954882423

Additional required readings, audios, and videos are available in Canvas in the weekly modules.

Evaluation and Course Requirements

Sequence of Topics/Calendar of Assignments

Sessions	Topics	Assignments
WEEK 1 May 27-June 2	Welcome and Personal Introductions	Introduce self, complete readings
WEEK 2 June 3-9	Introduction to Catechetical Leadership	Complete readings, videos, discussion question
WEEK 3 June 10-16	Catechesis and Evangelization	Complete readings, video, discussion questions; attend synchronous Zoom meeting (optional)
WEEK 4 June 17-23	The Process of Catechesis: Pedagogical Considerations (Thursday, June 19, Juneteenth Holiday)	Complete readings, video, discussion questions; attend virtual small-group meeting (required)
WEEK 5 June 24-30	Catechesis in Diverse Contexts	Complete readings, videos, discussion questions; Evaluating Catechetical Resources Assignment due
WEEK 6 July 1-7	Catechesis of Adults and Families (Friday, July 4, Independence Day)	Complete readings, videos, discussion questions; attend

	Holiday)	synchronous Zoom meeting (optional)
WEEK 7 July 8-14	Catechesis for Children and Young People	Complete readings, video, audio, discussion questions
WEEK 8 July 15-21	Community as Context for Catechesis	Complete readings, video, discussion questions
WEEK 9 July 22-28	Forming Catechetical Leaders	Complete readings, audio, videos, discussion questions attend virtual small-group meeting (required)
WEEK 10 July 29-31	Final Assignment and Course Evaluation	Final assignment due 7/28

Due date for posting final grades: Wednesday, August 6, 11:59 pm CT

Assessment

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

		Percentage of Grade	
		Graduate	CEU
1	Substantive participation in weekly discussion via online postings	35%	95%
2	Evaluating Catechetical Resources Assignment, 3-5 page paper	20%	—
3	Catechetical Plan, 7-10 page paper	40%	—
4	Spiritual Formation	5%	5%

1) Substantive participation in weekly discussion via online postings (35%)

Please note that credit for the course for certificate (CEU) level students is based in large part on participation in each session's discussion board. If you are a CEU student, this 35% grade is 95% of your grade for credit. (The additional 5% comes from the spiritual formation component of the course.)

For each weekly discussion, your participation includes your original post in response to the assigned question(s), as well as the comments you are asked to make on your colleagues' posts. There are specific directions posted about these requirements each week in Canvas. Postings should address the question(s) for the session, respect the word limit posted for each week's question(s), and demonstrate critical engagement with course materials for that session.

In addition to addressing the question(s) for each week, you are also asked each week to comment on the postings of your colleagues in this course. This comment should also be substantive: "I agree" or "I like what you posted" is not a substantive comment. Please articulate what about their posting is compelling to you and why you consider their comment relevant, challenging, important, etc. There is a 150-200 word limit requirement

for comment posts.

Asking Questions: One of the most effective tools of a good online discussion is the question. Communication in the online medium can be easily misinterpreted; conversely, it can be challenging to effectively convey tone and nuance in an online discussion. This can lead to misunderstanding, conflict, and frustration in the learning group.

When in doubt about the meaning of a post, a good strategy is to pose a question about it, and to avoid making assumptions or jumping to conclusions. Even if the meaning seems straight-forward, it is good practice to ask follow-up questions and/or questions for clarification. My hope for our discussions is that we will rely on the question as a standard tool for effective communication.

Discussion Leaders: Each week there will be one or two Discussion Leaders to help initiate the flow of our conversation. The task of the Discussion Leader is simply to post first. He or she will essentially begin the conversation around the given question(s) for the week by posting their response to the session question by Thursday at 8pm Central of each week. Others will then be able to respond to this initial posting and engage in a thread. Each week's session will follow this general format.

Be sure to check the Discussion Leader's link on the course homepage to see when your name will come up. If you are unable to lead the week you are scheduled, please let your instructor know as soon as possible.

Directions for Weekly Posting in Discussions

Please note: All times are Central Time.

For each discussion assignment, students are required to make three (3) posts: a major post of 200-400 words in which they respond to the question posted, and two (2) minor posts of no more than 150-200 words each in which they respond to two (2) of the major posts made by their fellow students. In weeks where there are two discussion board questions, students are required to make one major post and two minor posts for each question (totaling 2 major, 4 minor posts). Our weekly sessions will run from Tuesday to Monday.

Beginning Each Tuesday

- Read the overview for the week's instructional activities and assignments and begin individual work for the week. Questions that arise about the material may be addressed to the professor in the Question Board or via email.
- Contributions to discussions should reflect critical engagement with both the required readings as well as any other assigned material and should demonstrate itself as such.

By Thursday, 11:59pm CT.

- When there is an assigned group leader, beginning several weeks into the semester, the first major post to the weekly discussion question is due by Thursday night for group leaders and by Saturday night for everyone else. Some weeks require students to answer more than one question as a major post.
- Groups will be created and assigned several weeks into the semester. When this occurs, the group discussion leader posts a response to the discussion question by Thursday night. This initial post by the group discussion leader should also raise a question for the group to consider and be between 200- 400 words (Major post).

By Saturday, 11:59pm CT.

- Other members of the group respond to the discussion question by the end of Saturday night with a major post between 200-400 words. Either this initial post or a subsequent minor post should also address the group leader's question.

By Monday, 11:59pm CT.

- All students respond to two other member's posts in 150-200 words by Monday night (Minor posts).
- All members should have a total of three discussion posts by Monday night (one Major, two Minor) for each discussion board question.

Contents of Discussion Post

To earn full credit, you should do the following things:

- post and respond by the deadline;
- adhere to word length requirements;
- refrain from inappropriate posts (words/tones that diminish the character and community of the course) Practice using "I-statements," avoid generalizations by qualifying your words;
- provide content of substance based on the course material—that is, not comments such as “I agree wholeheartedly,” but rather content that offers a critical, original and informed contribution to the discussion, and references course material;
- integrate (reference/cite) what you have read, how you understand the material, your experience, the remarks of your colleagues, and the course material;
- posting fully addresses the weekly questions and stimulates substantial follow-up postings;
- write in accessible prose—that is, not necessarily formal academic prose, but prose that is as clear and correct as you can make it, citing material not your own, and avoiding “text-speak” (using complete sentences rather than abbreviations and emoji to make your point, for example).

For a detailed explanation of the grading policy, please see the Rubric for Discussion Posts in Canvas in the Week 2 module. I look forward to seeing your comments and insights in the discussions.

Small Group Meetings (required):

During our class you will be organized into smaller groups to host your own virtual learning sessions in weeks four and nine. This is a wonderful way to help build community and contextualize our discussions. You will meet within the same small group two different times during the semester. Full directions are in Canvas.

You should plan to meet for at least one hour with other members of your group to discuss the week's assigned material in light of the discussion questions on Canvas. Once you have met, you should complete the Small Virtual Group Assignment and submit it by Monday night of the weekly session.

Synchronous Virtual Classes (optional):

There will be **two** optional opportunities to meet synchronously as a whole class through Zoom, available through Canvas during the semester. In the Week 1 module you will find an "Availability Survey." You are invited to complete the availability survey so that we can find times that work for most of the class. After the surveys are completed, I will send an announcement to share the exact dates and times for these sessions.

If you attend the synchronous virtual class, you do not have to write your weekly major/minor posts on discussion board. Attendance and active participation in the virtual class will count for your weekly participation grade.

2) Evaluating Catechetical Resources Assignment (20%)

This is an evaluation paper of 3-5 pages in length based upon your assessment of a catechetical resource of your choosing. Complete directions in final syllabus.

3) Catechetical Plan (40%)

The final assignment will be a catechetical plan of 7-10 pages that you will develop over the course of several weeks. Details are in the Week 3 module of Canvas.

4) Spiritual Formation (5%)

This course's spiritual formation includes a brief synthesis of your experience in the form of a 250-500 word posting.

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 ask 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 on LORA and in Canvas) for university policies on plagiarism, accessible education, and more.