Course Syllabus
FC 6351 Catholic Education and Evangelization in the American Context
Fall 2016

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Course Description:
This course will examine Catholic education in the American context and its role in evangelization of our society. The course will present a brief overview of the basic teachings of the church on education, while concentrating on the historical development and understanding of Catholic education in the U.S. and its role in the evangelization of its people and culture. The course seeks to provide an understanding of education as an essential means for fulfilling the mission of the church to evangelize, as these have unfolded in the US. While focused primarily on Catholic schools, the course also engages a discussion on catechesis, religious education, and faith formation programs, as well as related contemporary educational issues and challenges within the American context. Topics such as civic engagement, faithful citizenship, ethics and values in education, and social justice will be discussed. Select papal documents are used as the foundation on which the teachings of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops and other key documents on education are examined. Students will demonstrate leadership skills by researching, discussing, and engaging with assigned topics, and by developing potential action plans for change or greater awareness on related topics. Students examine the role of Catholic education in forming communities of faith, faithful citizenship, cultural dialogue, and educational leadership in the American context.

Required Textbooks:

ISBN# 978-1-4758-1098-1


ISBN# 978-1-61278-590-5

General Topics:
Overview of basic teachings of the Church on Education

Overview of history of Catholic education in the U.S.

Catholic Education and the State: Implications for Catholic schools and public school law
Education, Citizenship and Faith

Education, Social Justice and the Role of the Church

Cultural Pluralism and Dialogue

Challenges for Educators and people of faith

Contemporary Issues related to Catholic Education: An overview

- Meaning and purpose of education
- Catholic School identity
- Curriculum: Who decides, and on what basis?
- School vouchers and private education
- Civic engagement and faithful citizenship
- School funding: Equality or Equity?
- Schools and families: single-parent homes, traditional families, non-traditional families, homelessness, poverty, entitlement

Assignment and Grade Distribution:

In-Class Discussion 20%
Online Assignments/Discussion 30%
In-class Presentation 10%
Research Presentation 10%
Research Paper (Final Exam) 30%

Session 1 – 10/11
Topics
Syllabus and course overview
Introduction - How do we bring the Good News to Modern Man?
Overview: A Theology of Education

Session 2
Topic(s): Who’s Good News: From Christ the Evangelizer to the Evangelizing World

Readings:

Pius X (1905), Acerbo Nimis (On Teaching Christian Doctrine)

Paul VI (1965), Gravisimum Educationis (On Christian Education; Vatican II)

Paul VI (1975), Evangelii Nuntiandi (On Evangelization in the Modern World), (1-5, 6-12)

Assignment: Post a brief introduction online (Blackboard) of yourself and a brief description of one to two issues in education that are important to you and that you consider important as a person of faith, and why is it important.
Session 3 – 10/18

Topics:
- Origins of Catholic Education
- Strangers in the Land

Readings:
Catarro and Russo, Ch 1 Catholic Schools: Purpose, Presence, and Prophecy
1905 Pius X. Acerbo Nimis (Encyclical On Teaching Christian Doctrine)
1965 Paul VI. Gravissimum Educationis (Declaration on Christian Education)
1975 Paul VI. Evangelii Nuntiandi (Apostolic Exhortation on Proclaiming the Gospel)

Session 4

Readings:
Weddell, Introduction and Ch 1 God Has No Grandchildren
Weddell, Ch 2 We Don’t Know What Normal Is

Assignment:
Review Topic Lectures (PPts)
Discussion Board #2

Session 5 – 10/25

Topics:
- A Range of Educational Experiences
- The Campaign for Control
- New Models for Parish Schools

Readings:
1972 NCCB. To Teach as Jesus Did.
1990 Moral Education in the Public Schools. A joint statement of the NCCB Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and the Interreligious Affairs Committee of the Synagogue Council of America.
Catarro and Russo, Ch 2 A Legal History of American Roman Catholic Schools
Catarro and Russo, Ch 3 Church Documents: Vatican and US since Vatican II

Session 6

Readings:
Weddell, Ch 3 The Fruit of Discipleship
Weddell, Ch 4 Grace and the Great Quest

Assignment:
Review Topic Lectures (PPts)
Discussion Board #3
Session 7 – 11/1
Topics:
- The School Controversy
- The Search for Order
- Catholic Education and Modern American Society
Readings:
1990 USCC. In Support of Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools.
Catarro and Russo, Ch 4 Demographic Shifts Impacting Catholic School Education
Catarro and Russo, Ch 5 Declaration on Christian Education Encourages Catholic Schools: Lay Governance Increases to Provide Support and Leadership for Them

Session 8
Readings:
Weddell, Ch 5 Thresholds of Conversion: Can I Trust You?
Weddell, Ch 6 The Second Threshold: Curiosity
Assignment:
Review Topic Lectures (PPTs)
Discussion Board #4

Session 9 – 11/8
Topics:
- The Making of Sister-Teachers
- Church-State-School Question
- A Generation of Crisis
Readings:
1995 USCC. Principles for Educational Reform in the United States. A statement of the USCC Committee on Education Approved by the Administrative Board
1995 USCC. A Letter to College Students.
2005 USCCB. Renewing our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Milenium.
Catarro and Russo, Ch 6 American Catholic Higher Education: A Qualified Success Story
Catarro and Russo, Ch 7 Gravissimum Educationis at the 50-Year Mark: Catholic Schools and the Preferential Option for the Poor
**Session 10**

**Readings:**
Weddell, Ch 7 The Third Threshold: Openness
Weddell, Ch 8 Thresholds of Conversion: Seeking and Intentional Discipleship

**Assignment:**
Video: 2008 Benedict XVI. *How beautiful are the footsteps.* Apostolic Visit to the US and the United Nations; Meeting with Catholic Educators.
Review Topic Lectures (PPTs)
Discussion Board #5

**Session 11 – 11/15**

**Topics:**
- Catholic Schools Observed
- Church-State-School Question Revisited
- Decade of Doubt and Resolve

**Readings:**
Catarro and Russo, Ch 8 Faith-Based Schools: Ecumenical Schools and Their Implications for the Future of American Catholic Education
Catarro and Russo, Ch 9 Catholic Schools and the Common Good

**Session 12**

**Readings:**
Weddell, Ch 9 Break the Silence
Weddell, Ch 10 Do Tell: The Great Story of Jesus

**Assignment:**
Review Topic Lectures (PPTs)
Discussion Board #6
Session 13 – 11/22

Topics:
- Concluding Reflections and Remarks
- Guide to Further Reading and Research

Readings:
Catarro and Russo, Ch 10 Epilogue and Recommendations

Session 14

Readings:
Weddell, Ch 11 Personally Encountering Jesus in His Church
Weddell, Ch 12 Expect Conversion

Assignment:
Review Topic Lectures (PPers)
Incorporate a reflection on Encounter and Conversion into your Research Paper-Final Exam

Final Exam – Due no later than 12 midnight on Tuesday, December 6, 2016