

The Spiritual Lives of Children and Youth THL 6000_002 Spring 2019

Course Details:

Days: Tuesdays and Thursdays

Times: **TBA**

Location: **TBA**

Instructor Information

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Course Description

This course will explore the spiritual and religious lives of children and young people, with a focus on Christian/Catholic contexts. In the history of the Christian traditions, children and youth have been stereotyped as angels to be idealized, vulnerable victims to be protected, uncontrollable monsters who need discipline, or not-yet-human beings who require formation. Recently theologians have begun to describe children as whole persons with special status in the human community. In this view, children are simultaneously the most vulnerable (and therefore merit protection and advocacy), models of faith (and therefore deserve adult respect), and persons on a journey (and therefore need adult companions). Drawing on biblical, historical, theological, and social science sources, this course focuses on the way children and youth have been understood, as well as their own lived experience of spirituality. The course is designed to help students reflect on their own spiritual experience while helping them understand, learn from, advocate for, and support children and young people.

This course has five units:

- (I) Introducing the spirituality of children and youth
- (II) Children and youth in historical, theological, and biblical perspectives
- (III) Listening to children and youth
- (IV) Advocating for children and youth
- (V) Cultivating the spirituality of children and youth

Student Learning Outcomes

Through taking this course, students will develop capacities in three core areas:

1. *The Field of Spirituality*
 - Identify and evaluate multiple definitions of spirituality
 - Describe and assess various approaches to studying spirituality
 - Articulate limitations and obstacles to studying spirituality
 - Identify marks of Christian/Catholic approaches to spirituality

2. *Children and Youth as Spiritual Persons*

- Describe how children and youth have been understood in the Judeo-Christian traditions over time, with attention to historical, theological, and biblical perspectives
- Become adept at listening to and interpreting the voices of children and youth
- Articulate core dimensions of the spirituality of children and youth
- Develop and express respect for the distinctive ways in which children and youth experience and demonstrate spirituality
- Notice and celebrate the gifts, abilities, and agency of children and youth
- Appreciate or create practices and resources to help children or youth grow spiritually

3. *Advocacy for Children and Youth in an Unjust World*

- Critically assess the way children and youth are depicted today in cultural expressions, social and political discourse, and religious settings
- Articulate and apply principles related to children's rights and protections, especially as they relate to spirituality
- Identify, critically examine, and develop responses to cultural forces and social issues that impact the spiritual lives of children and youth, especially issues that deny children their rights or harm their holistic well being

Required Texts

In addition to the following, required readings for this course will be posted on Blackboard.

Carson, Rachel. *The Sense of Wonder*. Harper Perennial, Reprint, 2017. (Any illustrated edition is fine).

Hay, David and Rebecca Nye. *The Spirit of the Child*. Revised Edition. Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2006. *** (Free e-book available through Falvey)***

Hyde, Brendan. *Children and Spirituality: Searching for Meaning and Connectedness*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2008. *** (Free e-book available through Falvey)***

Moore, Mary Elizabeth and Almeda Wright, eds. *Children, Youth, and Spirituality in a Troubling World*. Chalice Press, 2008. ISBN-13: 978-0827205130

Assignments

The following assignments are described in greater detail below and will be discussed in class.

Assignments (105/100 points possible)	
Participation	10 points
Show-and-Tell Day (Jan 24)	5 points
Bring a Book Day (Feb 21)	5 points
Discussion Board on Readings	20 points
Short Essay 1 (Feb 19)	15 points
Short Essay 2 (March 21)	15 points
Final Project (May 7)	30 points
Extra Credit (Due by May 1)	5 points

I. In-Class Participation (10 points)

This course involves large-group discussion, small-group discussion, partner conversation, solo reflection, and practical experimentation. Not everyone learns or participates in the same way, but all are expected to contribute to the building of a learning community. As such, your grade will reflect both the quantity and quality of your contributions to and involvement in our class time.

Points	Contribution
18-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Seeks to form and enhance a learning community by getting to know others, building relationships, and being open to new people, experiences, and ideas. -Demonstrates excellent understanding of the readings, summarizing, analyzing, and referring to them in class. -Regularly makes significant, creative contributions to class discussions, whether in small groups or the whole group, by referring to course readings, other courses, personal expertise, and personal experience. -Through attentiveness and body language, listens well to others and shows respect for their persons and ideas. -Regularly builds on others' comments to enhance the conversation. -Asks questions of the professor and fellow students, seeking clarification or elaboration, or challenging others to explore a topic more deeply. -Respectfully takes stances on topics, arguing for a position, respectfully disagreeing with others, or giving good reasons for their convictions.

14-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Seeks to form and enhance a learning community by getting to know others, building friendships, and being open to new people, experiences, and ideas. -Demonstrates adequate understanding of the readings, referring to them in class. -Occasionally makes substantive contributions to class discussions, whether in small groups or the whole group, by referring to course readings, other courses, personal expertise, and personal experience. -Through attentiveness and body language, listens to others and shows respect for their persons and ideas.
10-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Shows basic respect for others. -Demonstrates basic understanding of the readings. -Occasionally or very briefly contributes to class discussions, whether in small groups or the whole group. -Shows some attentiveness to others.
9 or fewer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Struggles to show respect for or listen to others. -Demonstrates little to no understanding of the readings. -Offers little to no participation in class discussions.

II. Show-and-Tell Day (5 points)

On Show-and-Tell Day (Thursday, January 24), students are asked to bring an item that represents their own spiritual or religious formation as a child or adolescent, or that had deep personal meaning for them as a child or adolescent. It could be an actual item from your childhood, or it could be an object that symbolizes your own experience of spirituality, religion, connectedness, or meaningful existence. We will share about these objects with one another. If you have an excused absence that day, we will schedule a make-up day for you to bring an object.

III. Bring-a-Book Day (5 points)

On Bring-a-Book Day (Thursday, February 21), students are asked to bring a children's book to share with the class. The book can either be one of your childhood favorites, or a book you've since discovered. You will be asked to read it aloud to a small group and say how you think this book relates to spirituality as we've been exploring it. You can bring a book from home, get one through Interlibrary Loan at Falvey (leave yourself time!), borrow one from a friend, or, if you wish, purchase one. If you have an excused absence that day, we will schedule a make-up day for you to bring a book.

IV. Discussion Board on Readings (20 points)

In order to reflect on the readings and to prepare for class discussion, you are asked to post a comment about once per week on a Blackboard Discussion board about the reading we will discuss in the upcoming class session. Posts on 10 different readings, at two points each, are required for full credit. Posts must be made before class begins to receive credit. You may post before both Tuesday and Thursday classes if you wish, or once per week.

In your post, do the following: 1) Name the reading you're commenting on; 2) Write out one quotation that struck you; 3) EITHER pose a question this quotation raised for you OR describe a situation or story from your life or the real world that it reminded you of.

V. Essay 1: Views of the Child or Adolescent (15 points)

3-4 pages. Due on Blackboard before class begins on Tuesday, February 19.

Children and youth are depicted in a wide variety of ways, and these depictions both reflect certain assumptions and help create policies and practices that affect children and youth. For this short essay, reflect critically and theologically on the way children or youth are depicted by doing the following:

- 1) Provide a compelling introduction that draws in the reader. (Don't begin with, "for this paper I decided to describe..." Be more interesting than that.)
- 2) Briefly describe a contemporary situation or depiction you recently witnessed that involved a child or adolescent. It could be a real-life interaction you saw between an adult and a child, an interaction you yourself had with a child or youth, a movie, commercial, or advertisement that depicted a child or young person, a news story that involved children or youth, a piece of art or sculpture that depicted a child or young person, a song about or intended for a child or youth, a podcast about a child or childhood, a children's book in which a child is featured, and so on.
- 3) Explain what views of children, youth, and/or spirituality you believe are reflected in that situation or depiction. Note both explicit and implicit or embedded views of children or youth. Consider some of the following: In this situation or depiction, what does it mean to be a child or youth? What are supposed to be the leading characteristics of childhood? Who is this child/youth in relation to adults? What power, agency, or will does this situation/depiction suggest the young person has? Is the child viewed as innocent? Bad or out of control? What strengths and capabilities does it assume of the young person? What aspects of spiritual life or experience are being highlighted? What is being

suggested about who a child is supposed to become? How is the child being formed? (You do not need to respond to all of these questions; they're just to get you thinking.)

- 4) Bring the views of children or youth that are expressed in this situation/depiction into *substantive* conversation with one of the writers or documents we have read so far on children's spirituality. Clearly describe how the writer or document you chose depicts children or youth. Then bring this writer's or document's depiction of children or youth into conversation with the situation or depiction you've already described. You may compare or contrast the two views. You may use the writer/document you choose to critique the contemporary situation/depiction, or perhaps the contemporary situation or depiction reveals inadequacies in the writing you choose. Or perhaps they complement and mutually support each other. (Yes, you should cite all sources according to either MLA or Chicago Style, and yes, your professor cares about correct citation style).
- 5) End by naming ways in which the conversation between the writing you examined and the contemporary situation or depiction you chose has expanded your sense of what childhood or young spirituality is.

VI. Essay 2: Mini-Research Project on a Social Issue Affecting Children/ Youth (15 points)

3-4 pages. Due on Blackboard before class begins on Thursday, March 21. You are encouraged but not required to complete this project with a partner. You and your partner will receive the same grade unless you offer a compelling reason otherwise.

Every major social issue affects children and youth, often more deeply than it affects other populations. In addition, social issues often have an impact on the spiritual capacities and experiences of children and youth. Thus, to care about the spiritual lives of children and youth leads us to act as their advocate in larger social, religious, public, and political arenas. In this mini research project, which you may complete with a partner if you so choose, do the following:

1. (1 paragraph) Provide an engaging introduction that draws in the reader. (Don't begin with, "For this paper I decided to examine..." Be more interesting than that.)
2. Select a specific social issue that affects children and/or youth.

Examples of a social issue: poverty in America or elsewhere; hunger and food insecurity; clean water; environmental degradation; war; school shootings; child refugees; child immigrants; DACA/"Dreamers"; child soldiers; toxins in children's toys, furniture, and clothes; childhood obesity;

children's screen time; school funding; depictions of violence in media to which children are exposed; violence against children; juvenile incarceration and sentencing; literacy; child pornography; children's time outdoors; depression, anxiety, and mental illness in children and youth; racial discrimination in the treatment of children and youth; eating disorders; child labor; child prostitution; child slavery.

3. (2-2.5 pages) Research and report basic data on this issue, drawing on reliable, current sources for your information, comparing multiple sources, and citing all sources. Help your reader understand the scope and depth of the problem, as well as what other social issues it intersects with.
4. (1 page) Consider and explain clearly how this issue might or does affect the spiritual lives of children and/or youth, using course materials to define what you mean by "spiritual" or "spirituality." (For some issues, you will easily find research on how this issue relates to spirituality, and you're encouraged to cite sources. For other topics, you'll need to propose the ideas yourself because no one has delved into the spiritual aspects of this topic. Either way is fine, though you may find it easier to report someone else's intelligent insights!)
5. (1/2 to 1 page) End by naming three concrete, specific ways in which caring adults can get involved as advocates of children and youth in this issue.

VII. Final Project (30 points)

Due by 3:00pm on Tuesday, May 7. Written essays may be uploaded to Blackboard. Other media may be dropped by the Office of Theology and Religious Studies in SAC, on the second floor.

For your final project, you may choose one of the following options. If you work with a partner, you and your partner will receive the same grade, unless you present a compelling reason to be graded separately.

OPTION A) Create Three Sessions of Curriculum

5-6 pages; Can be done with a partner.

Imagine you will be working at a summer camp with children or youth, and that you will be in charge of leading three one-hour sessions. The theme you have been given is "Fully Alive," and you get to decide what will be taught and how.

- 1) Choose a topic for each of the three sessions that is designed to support some aspect of children's/youth spirituality (possibilities: connection, wonder, courage, awareness, kindness, joy, creativity, responsibility, self-esteem, etc.)
- 2) Name the age you're working with and the setting you imagine.
- 3) Citing specific course materials, talk about the ideas or insights that will undergird your curriculum or that help you craft appropriate lessons, citing appropriately.
- 4) Craft basic curricula for each of the three sessions, at 1.5-2 pages each. Each session should include the following: a) a lesson objective; b) an opening activity or question that will connect the theme of the day to the children's ordinary/prior experience; c) a specific children's book, short film, or sacred story (from the Bible or elsewhere) that will be used to explore the topic; d) some questions the adult leader can ask to get children/youth thinking, e) two activities that the children or youth could do that would foster the learning objective, and f) a brief closing ritual that is used in each session.
- 5) On the last day of class, you'll be invited to describe your work-in-progress to fellow students.

OPTION B) Write a Book or Song, or Make a Short Film

Can be done with a partner.

- 1) Write and illustrate a children's book or a comic book for adolescents, OR compose a children's song or a song for youth, OR make a 6-minute film for children or youth. A book should include illustrations, which you can make yourself or ask a child to draw. A song should either be something you will perform or play a recording of.
- 2) Accompany your book, song or movie with a two-page explanation of how your creation does at least one of the following: increases *understanding of* children and youth; lifts up the *voices* of children and youth; seeks to *advocate for* children and youth in a specific issue; *supports the spirituality of* children and youth. In this two-page paper, explain which readings, lectures, or discussions helped you imagine the book or song, citing all sources.
- 3) On the last day of class, you'll be invited to describe your work-in-progress to fellow students.

OPTION C) Create a Rite of Passage or Significant Ceremony or Ritual

5-6 pages. Can be done with a partner.

Part 1: (1 page) Articulate the need for a rite of passage, ceremony, or ritual for children or youth that either does not currently exist or that exists in some form but needs revision. (For example, one reading we will do this term articulates the need for rituals of lament for people who have suffered abuse, while another talks about the need for rituals that connect mentors to mentees in impoverished neighborhoods).

Part 2: (1 page) Draw on specific course materials that help you think about this need, the role of ritual, and the sort or aspect of spirituality you're hoping to support.

Part 3: (3-4 pages) Design and write about a significant ceremony or ritual that a) could be performed in either a family, church, neighborhood, school, or community, b) would support some specific aspect of spirituality with c) a particular child, young person, or group of children/youth who d) have a specific need or set of concerns.

Describe where the ritual would take place, what exactly would happen, what materials you would use, who would lead, and what you wish the overall tone to be.

VII. Extra Credit (5 points)

Attend an event at Villanova or in the larger Philadelphia community that relates to the well-being, development, or rights of children or youth, and write a one-page paper about what you learned at this event.

Grading Rubric for Written Assignments	
A-/A	Excellent work. Begins with a compelling introduction; covers all the requirements of the assignment; shows especially thoughtful reflection; makes new connections or offers fresh insights; draws substantively on course materials and concepts; written in a creative, clear style; entirely or mostly free from spelling and style errors.
B-/B/B+	Good work. Begins with a clear introduction; covers all the requirements of the assignment; makes clear connections between ideas; draws on some course materials and concepts; mostly free from spelling and style errors.
C/C+	Fair work. Covers some of the requirements of the assignment; observations or connections to course materials are mostly superficial; significant spelling and style errors.

Grading Rubric for Written Assignments	
D+/C-	Needs work. Misses many of the requirements of the assignment or does so superficially; does not make adequate connections between the experience and readings or shows insufficient understanding of the material; many spelling and style errors.
D-/D/F	Inadequate work. Misses most of the requirements of the assignment or does not make adequate connections to the course topic or material.

Course Schedule

Note: Each reading should be done before class on the date on which it is listed.

Unit		Date	Reading/Assignment	Topic
Unit I: Introducing the Spirituality of Children & Youth	Week 1	Tuesday, January 15	Listen to “Prologue” and “Baby Scientists with Faulty Data,” Prologue and Act I of “Kid Logic,” episode of <i>This American Life</i> , https://www.thisamericanlife.org/188/kid-logic	Syllabus and intro to course
		Thursday, January 17	<p>(Remember: You can start posting on the weekly discussion page! See syllabus for details.)</p> <p>Birthdays Jan-June: David Hay, “What is Spirituality and Why Is It Important,” Ch. 1 of <i>The Spirit of the Child</i> (e-book available through Falvey Library)</p> <p>Birthdays July-Dec: Sandra M. Schneiders, “Approaches to the Study of Christian Spirituality,” Ch. 1 of <i>The Blackwell Companion to Christian Spirituality</i>, pp. 15-33 (Blackboard)</p> <p>ALL: Eugene Roehlkepartain, “Exploring Scientific and Theological Perspectives on Children’s Spirituality,” read only pp. 120-125 of Ch. 8 in <i>Children’s Spirituality</i> (Blackboard)</p>	<p>What is spirituality?</p> <p>What are three main approaches to studying it?</p> <p>What are some main characteristics of spirituality?</p>

Note: Each reading should be done before class on the date on which it is listed.

	Week 2	Tuesday, January 22	<p>(Remember to start posting on the weekly discussion page! See syllabus for details.)</p> <p>Boyatzis & Newman, “How Shall We Study Children’s Spirituality?” in <i>Children’s Spirituality</i>, pp. 166-181 (Blackboard)</p>	How might we define and study children's spirituality?
		Thursday, January 24	<p>Hay and Nye, Chapters 4, 6, 7 in <i>The Spirit of the Child</i></p> <p>SHOW-AND-TELL DAY</p>	What is at the core of young spirituality?
Unit II: Children & Youth in Biblical and Theological Perspectives	Week 3	Tuesday, January 29	<p>Bunge, Marcia. “Introduction,” <i>The Child in the Bible</i>, pp. xiv-xxvi (Blackboard)</p> <p>Fretheim, Terence. “‘God Was with the Boy’ (Genesis 21:20): Children in the Book of Genesis,” Ch. 1 in <i>The Child in the Bible</i>, pp. 3-23. (Blackboard)</p>	How are children & youth depicted in the Hebrew scriptures/Old Testament?
		Thursday, January 31	<p>Judith M. Gundry-Volf, “The Least and the Greatest: Children in the New Testament,” Ch. 1 in <i>The Child in Christian Thought</i> (Blackboard)</p>	How are children & youth depicted in the New Testament?
	Week 4	Tuesday, February 5	<p>Birthdays Jan-June: Martha Ellen Stortz, “Where are When Was Your Servant Innocent?;” Augustine on Childhood,” Ch. 3 in <i>The Child in Christian Thought</i> (Blackboard)</p> <p>Birthdays July-Dec: Cristina L.H. Traina, “A Person in the Making: Thomas Aquinas on Children and Childhood,” Ch. 4 in <i>The Child in Christian Thought</i> (Blackboard)</p>	How have children and youth been understood in church history?

Note: Each reading should be done before class on the date on which it is listed.

Unit III: Listening to Children & Youth	Week 5	Thursday, February 7	<p><i>Rerum Novarum</i>, point 11 (Blackboard)</p> <p><i>Gaudium et Spes</i>, points 48, 50 (Blackboard)</p> <p><i>Familiaris Consortio</i>, point 26 (Blackboard)</p> <p>Mary Ann Hinsdale, "Infinite Openness to the Infinite: Karl Rahner's Contribution to Modern Catholic Thought on the Child," Ch. 16 in <i>The Child in Christian Thought</i> (Blackboard)</p>	How has modern Catholic social teaching and theology described children and youth?
		Tuesday, February 12	Marcia J. Bunge, "Historical Perspectives on Children in the Church: Resources for Spiritual Formation and a Theology of Childhood Today," Ch. 3 in <i>Children's Spirituality</i> (on Blackboard)	How are theologians describing children today? (1)
		Thursday, February 14	Jennie S. Knight, "Transformative Listening," Ch. 15 in <i>Children, Youth, and Spirituality in a Troubling World (Required Text)</i>	Why is listening to youth so important? What gets in the way of listening? How might adults listen better?
	Week 6	Tuesday, February 19	<p>Essay 1 due before class on Blackboard (Come to class prepared to discuss your essay)</p> <p>Brendan Hyde, "The Felt Sense," Ch. 5 of <i>Children and Spirituality: Searching for Meaning and Connectedness</i> (e-book available through Falvey)</p>	What does children's spiritual expression feel like to them?
		Thursday, February 21	Brendan Hyde, "Integrating Awareness," Ch. 6 of <i>Children and Spirituality: Searching for Meaning and Connectedness</i> (e-book available through Falvey) <p>BRING A BOOK DAY</p>	What do children and youth become aware of?

Note: Each reading should be done before class on the date on which it is listed.

	Week 7	Tuesday, February 26	Brendan Hyde, “Weaving the Threads of Meaning,” Ch. 7 of <i>Children and Spirituality: Searching for Meaning and Connectedness</i> (e-book available through Falvey)	How do children and youth make spiritual meaning?
		Thursday, February 28	Brendan Hyde, “Spiritual Questing,” Ch. 8 of <i>Children and Spirituality: Searching for Meaning and Connectedness</i> (e-book available through Falvey)	How do children and youth engage in a spiritual quest?
		March 4-8	Semester Recess - No Class	(Over break, watch “Watch French film “Ponette”)
	Week 8	Tuesday, March 12	With a box of tissues, watch Watch French film “Ponette,” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ekHiMIH98vE&list=PL5mROPxdNDZ6yUGnh-5bCY21K3rvNzHEl (On YouTube, it appears in ten installments, one after the other) Listen to: “One Brain Shrinks, Another Brain Grows,” Act IV of Kid Logic, https://www.thisamericanlife.org/188/kid-logic (11 minutes)	How do young children make sense of suffering?
		Thursday, March 14	Mary Elizabeth Mullino Moore, “Yearnings, Hopes, and Visions,” Ch. 7 in <i>Children, Youth, and Spirituality in a Troubling World</i> (Required text)	What are youth dreaming and yearning for?

Note: Each reading should be done before class on the date on which it is listed.

Unit IV: Advocating for Children & Youth	Week 9	Tuesday, March 19	<p>Watch: “What are child rights?” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1BFLitBkco</p> <p><i>Rerum Novarum</i>, point 33 (Blackboard)</p> <p><i>Pacem in Terris</i>, points 8-36, 153 (Blackboard)</p> <p><i>Gaudium et Spes</i>, points 27 and 31 (Blackboard)</p> <p>Unicef, “Fact Sheet: A Summary of the rights under the Convention on the rights of the Child” (Blackboard)</p>	<p>What rights do children and youth have?</p> <p>What responsibilities do they have?</p>
		Thursday, March 21	<p>Luther E. Smith, Jr., “When Celebrating Children is Not Enough,” Ch. 1 in <i>Children and Youth in a Troubling World</i> (Required Text)</p> <p>Essay 2 due before class on Blackboard (Come to class prepared to discuss your issue)</p>	<p>What role should communities and persons of faith play in responding to major social issues that affect children & youth?</p>
		Week 10	Tuesday, March 26	<p>Richard Louv, “Climbing the Tree of Health,” Ch. 4 (Blackboard)</p> <p>Rachel Carson, <i>The Sense of Wonder</i> (required text) [Read and savor the whole essay; it is not long and is one of the most beautiful essays in American literature.]</p>
	Thursday, March 28	<p>“Children and Climate Change,” <i>The Future of Children</i>, Princeton-Brookings, 2016. (Blackboard) ***Read the introduction and then choose <i>one</i> article in the publication to read and explain to fellow students in class.***</p> <p><i>Laudato Si'</i>, point 159-162 (Blackboard)</p>	<p>How are children affected by climate change, how might these effects impact spirituality, and what does this demand from adults?</p>	

Note: Each reading should be done before class on the date on which it is listed.

	Week 11	Tuesday, April 2	Watch “End it Now: Understanding and Preventing Child Abuse,” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H-6elfGAWLY (also linked on Blackboard) (About 28 minutes)	What is child abuse? How does it affect spirituality?
		Thursday, April 4	Ganje-Fling, Marilyn and Patricia McCarthy, “Impact of childhood sexual abuse on client spiritual development: Counseling implications,” <i>Journal of Counseling and Development : JCD</i> ; Alexandria Vol. 74, Iss. 3, (Jan 1996): 253. (Blackboard)	
	Week 12	Tuesday, April 9	Joyce Ann Mercer, “A Problem of Ambivalence: Children as Consumers in America,” in <i>Welcoming Children</i> (Blackboard)	How can adults and faith communities respond to sexual abuse of children & youth?
		Thursday, April 11	Katherine Turpin, “Princess Dreams: Children’s Spiritual Formation in Consumer Culture,” in <i>Children and Youth in a Troubling World</i> (Required Text) Rodger Nishioka, “Violence, Boy Code, and Schools,” Ch. 4 in <i>Children, Youth, and Spirituality in a Troubling World</i> (Required Text)	How does consumer culture target and describe children & youth? How does consumer culture affect girls’ and boys’ imaginations?
	Unit V: Cultivating the Spirituality of Children & Youth	Tuesday, April 16	Elizabeth Caldwell, “A Halo, A Star, and a Bathrobe,” Ch. 1, and “A Faithful Ecology,” Ch. 5 in <i>Making a Home for Faith</i> (Blackboard)	How can adults cultivate vibrant faith in young people?

Note: Each reading should be done before class on the date on which it is listed.

	Week 13	Thursday, April 18	Claire Bischoff, "With New Eyes to See: Helping Youth Develop Religious Imagination to Encounter Holy Ground," Ch. 11 in <i>Children, Youth and Spirituality in a Troubling World</i> (Required Text)	How can adults cultivate young religious imagination?
	Week 14	Tuesday, April 23	Choose one: (About mentorship) Anne Streaty Wimberly, "Give Me Mentors," in <i>How Youth Ministry Can Change Theological Education</i> , Dean and Lang Hearlson (About noticing and naming kids' gifts) Katherine Douglass, "Holy Noticing: The Power of Nomination and Commissioning," in <i>How Youth Ministry Can Change Theological Education</i> , Dean and Lang Hearlson	How can adults name children's gifts and provide them mentors?
		Thursday, April 25	Listen to http://www.radiolab.org/story/how-be-hero/ Birthdays Jan-June: Susanne Johnson, "Subversive Spirituality in Youth Ministry at the Margins," Ch. 10 of <i>Children, Youth, and Spirituality in a Troubling World</i> (Required Text) Birthdays July-Dec: Almeda Wright, "The Power of Testimonies," Ch 12 in <i>Children, Youth, and Spirituality in a Troubling World</i> (required text)	How can adults cultivate young moral courage?
	Week 15	Tuesday, April 30	(Deemed a Friday class, No class)	No class
		Thursday, May 2	Reflect together; Present final projects in process	Last Class

Class Policies and Culture

Attendance Policy: This class will involve discussion and small-group work in which we learn from one another. Since we are one another's teachers, regular attendance is crucial. I will take attendance each class. You may have **one unexcused absence** before your grade is affected. After the first unexcused absence, your points total for the course will be reduced by three points per unexcused absence. Late arrivals of more than 15 minutes will reduce your point total by one point. Consistently late arrival will likewise reduce your grade.

Per University policies, class attendance for first-year students is mandatory. A first-year student will receive a grade of "Y" (failure) whenever the number of unexcused absences in a course exceeds twice the number of weekly class meetings for the course. Since this course meets twice per week, freshmen will receive a failing grade if they have **more than four** unexcused absences.

Excused absences include the following: approved athletic participation or participation in approved academic events; official University business; approved field trips; certified serious illness; death in the immediate family; or approved placement activities. In order to receive an excused absence, the student must provide documentation to the Office of the Dean of the Students' College. This should be done before the absence, if possible, and no later than 4:30pm on the day the student returns to classes.

Exercises and Practices: In this course, we will practice what we're learning. In addition to lecture and discussion, we will engage in a variety of meditative, interpersonal, and experimental practices during class time. Please be prepared to try new things and consider different approaches to learning. It's going to be fun!

Bring Readings to Class: We will actively discuss most of our readings in class together. Often, you will be asked to explain a reading to one another or to re-examine a particular passage. Thus, you must bring your readings with you, either in electronic or paper format, so as to contribute well to class and follow along. Repeated failure to bring readings to class with you will negatively affect your participation grade.

Etiquette: Let's be kind and courteous as we engage the material and one another. When you can, celebrate others' contributions and build on them. Ask each other to say more when you don't understand or agree, and share your own thoughts honestly. If you have a history of conflicted or angry discussions, or if others have told you they experience your communication style as overly harsh or passive, please consider consulting Marshall Rosenberg's book *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*.

Writing Center Incentive: I love good writing, and I think it's important. The ability to write clearly, persuasively, and correctly allows you to participate in society, gain others' respect, communicate your vision, and ignite change. I therefore grade your papers not only on your ideas, but also on the quality of your writing. To incentivize you to become better writers, I reward you for taking your work to the Writing Center. If you take your final paper to the Writing Center, I will increase the grade of the paper by 10% of the total possible points, up to the level of 100%. The Villanova Writing Center is located in Dalton Room, Old Falvey 202 and

can be contacted at 610-519-4604. Time slots there fill up fast, so make your appointment well in advance.

Writing Format and Style: All papers should be double-spaced, in 12-point font, with one-inch margins. Please follow either the Chicago Manual of Style or MLA Style, using your style consistently and correctly. Stylistic errors will affect your grade.

Writing Voice: Your work can and should be interesting! As you write, think about yourself as a journalist or public figure and write for a larger audience than your professor. Open your papers in creative, engaging ways that don't bore the reader. Explain ideas clearly, as though for a friend who hasn't taken this course. If you refer to an author we read for class, introduce that author as though your reader doesn't know who the author is.

Academic Integrity: All students are expected to uphold Villanova's Academic Integrity Policy and Code. Any incident of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for disciplinary action. For the College's statement on Academic Integrity, you should consult the Enchiridion. You may view the University's Academic Integrity Policy and Code, as well as other useful information related to writing papers, at the Academic Integrity Gateway website: <http://library.villanova.edu/Help/AcademicIntegrity>

Submission of Assignments: All assignments must be submitted by the due date, and, unless presented in non-electronic media (such as a children's book in hard copy for the final project), uploaded to Blackboard under Assignments. Extensions for assignments will be granted only well in advance of the due date or when the circumstances are clearly beyond your control. Unexcused delays will forfeit one-half a letter grade for every 24 hours of delay.

Electronics and Distraction: I believe that the attention we give to one another, and to course material, is a holy and precious thing. Please put your phone away in your bag during class. You may use an electronic device to access readings and take course notes. Please close all other applications on your laptop that might distract you. It is obvious and distracting to me, your professor, when you become distracted by your phones and electronics. It is also distracting to your neighbors. If you are tempted to do more than access readings or take notes on your laptop, please only bring a notebook and pen. If you are expecting an important call, notify me before class begins. Repeated use of your phone or of non-essential apps on your laptop in class will negatively affect your participation grade, and I will also call you out in class, which you won't like, and neither will I. Big picture: be fully present in class. It will be worth it.

Academic Accommodations: Students with disabilities who require reasonable academic accommodations must register with the Learning Support Office at 610-519-5176 or at learning.support.services@villanova.edu. For physical access or temporary disabling conditions, contact the Office of Disability Services at 610-519-4095. Once I receive notice that a student requires reasonable academic accommodations, you and I can make a plan to meet your needs.

Grading Scale:

A (4.0; 96-100), A- (3.66; 91-95)

Excellent: The highest academic grade possible; an honor grade which is not automatically given to a student who ranks highest in the course, but is reserved for accomplishment that is truly distinctive, and demonstrably outstanding. It represents a superior mastery of course material and is a grade that demands a very high degree of understanding as well as originality or creativity as appropriate to the nature of the course. The grade indicated that the student works independently with unusual effectiveness and very often takes the initiative in seeking new knowledge outside the formal confines of the course.

B+ (3.33; 88-90), B (3.0; 84-87), B- (2.66; 81-83)

Good: A grade that denotes achievement considerably above acceptable standards. Good mastery of course materials evident and student performance demonstrates a high degree of originality, creativity, or both. The grade indicates that the student works well independently and often demonstrates initiative. Analysis, synthesis, and critical expression, oral or written, are considerably above average. Fulfills expectations at university level.

C+ (2.33; 78-80), C (2.0; 74-77), C- (1.66; 71-73)

Fair: Indicates a satisfactory degree of attainment and is the acceptable standard for graduation from college. It is the grade that may be expected of a student of average ability who gives to the work a reasonable amount of time and effort. This grade implies familiarity with the content of the course and acceptable mastery of course material; it implies that the student displays some evidence of originality and/or creativity, and works independently at an acceptable level and completes all requirements.

D+ (1.33; 68-70), D (1.0; 64-67), D- (0.66; 60-63)

Poor: Denotes a limited understanding of the subject matter, meeting only the minimum requirement for passing the course. It signifies work which in quality and/or quantity falls below the average acceptable standard for passing the course. Performance is deficient in analysis, synthesis, and critical expression; there is little evidence of originality, creativity, or both. Note: D- is the lowest passing grade awarded.

F (0.00; 59 and below)

Unacceptable: Indicates inadequate or unsatisfactory attainment, serious deficiency in understanding of course material, and/or failure to complete requirements of the course.

Appendix: Undergraduate Learning Goals in Theology and Religious Studies

Revised 05/05/2017

Goal 1

Gain an understanding of the purposes, central issues, and methods of inquiry standard in theological and religious studies as applied to faith engaging culture.

Objective A

Analyze fundamental issues that frame theological and religious inquiry using appropriate scholarly methods, with attention to diversity and inclusion within the issues.

Objective B

Use critical methods to read, analyze, and interpret diverse religious and theological texts (e.g., women, minorities, non-western) and related genres or media, art, and artifacts (e.g., prayer, mystical writings, autobiographies, film, music).

Goal 2

Engage Christianity, with attention to Roman Catholicism, as a living tradition of practices and beliefs that continues to be refined, developed, and extended through time in diverse cultural contexts.

Objective A

Demonstrate understanding of the unique vocabulary, foundational sources, theological beliefs, historical developments, and diverse thinkers in the Christian tradition, with attention to those that reflect on the experiences of power, privilege, and marginalization.

Objective B

Articulate how Christian practices and beliefs reciprocally interact with diverse cultural contexts, local and global.

Goal 3

Render theological concepts and religious practices and beliefs intelligible, meaningful, and relevant in contemporary cultural contexts as a basis for transformative action in the world, in dialogue with others.

Objective A

Recognize the complexity and diversity of religious practices and beliefs and seek to understand people whose values and senses of the sacred differ from their own.

Objective B

Evaluate the relevance of theology/religion for personal, communal, societal, and global living.