Theology 60893: Teaching Theology  
Summer 2014 – M.A. Program  
June 16th- July 3rd  
M-F, 3:15-5:55/Pasquerilla Center 102  

Professor Todd Walatka  
twalatka@nd.edu/631-6158/125 Malloy Hall  
Office Hours: by appointment  

*A note to those considering this course. Adjustments may be made to the syllabus on the basis of the needs and interests of the students, and multiple assignment structures will be offered depending upon whether or not one is preparing to teach in the fall, to teach at some further date, or simply trying to receive a better introduction to pedagogical ideas.

Course Description
This course will provide an introduction to pedagogy for theological educators. The primary focus of the course will be on a) the vocation of teaching theology and b) basic pedagogical principles for the theology classroom. Students will engage educational and sociological research relevant to teaching high school and learn pedagogical techniques which build upon this research. Much of the class will be spent working through how to teach key doctrinal moments in the U.S. Catholic Bishops’ High School Curriculum Framework in a pedagogically effective manner.

Course Goals
By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1) Articulate a vision of theological education in terms of:
   a. The nature of theology as a discipline
   b. The vocation of a theological educator
   c. Sociological research into high school students today.

2) Describe and employ basic principles of course design, including the ability to:
   a. Articulate a clear vision for a high school theology course
   b. Develop a basic plan for assessing student learning
   c. Develop well-structured and sensible unit and lesson plans

3) Engage and apply key findings from research into student learning

4) Thoughtfully reflect upon the dynamics of the classroom

Course Requirements
Class Participation (30%)
Much of this course will be run on the mode of discussion and thus regular participation is required. Students are expected to come to class a) on time, b) having read and engaged the course material, and c) ready to thoughtfully discuss the material in class. Short written reflections (before and during class) and multiple in-class teaching opportunities are included under participation.

Written Assignments (70%)
“Paper” 1: At the end of the first week, students will turn in a basic plan for teaching a particular high school theology course. This will include the overall course goals, an outline of one of the units, one detailed lesson plan, and a one page, single spaced narrative of the course in terms of the overall goals. Part of class on Thursday, June 19 will be devoted to developing this “paper.” (20%)
“Paper” 2: At the end of the second week, students will turn in a paper on pedagogical principles and a set of lesson plans. Students will focus most of their time on one or the other, depending upon their needs and interests. (20%)

“Paper” 3: The final assignment is due on July 3rd, the last day of class. As with the second week, the specifics of this assignment will depend upon the needs of the student. Two main options are envisioned: a) those who have focused on developing lesson plans will turn in a final “portfolio” for a particular high school theology course, including overall course goals, one detailed unit of the course (with unit goals, lesson plans, and assessments), and a brief reflection on pedagogical principles; b) those who have not focused on developing a particular course will write a synthesis essay offering a vision for theological education that integrates the work of Christian Smith, James Heft, and Kenda Creasy Dean and responds to the pedagogical principles discussed in the course. (30%)

Course Policies
Attendance is required. Students may miss one class without penalty. Each additional absence will result in the reduction of the student’s grade by one letter grade.

Laptops and tablets are permitted, but should only be used for activities related to the class.

The Notre Dame Academic Code of Honor Pledge is observed in this course. “As a member of the Notre Dame community, I will not participate in or tolerate academic dishonesty.” Any plagiarism on written assignments will result in an F for the assignment and possibly an F for the course. A description of plagiarism can be found in the Academic Code of Honor section IV.B.

If you have a documented disability that will require accommodation in this course, please contact the Office of Disability Services (http://disabilityservices.nd.edu/, 574-631-7157) for assistance in developing a plan to address your academic needs. I am eager to accommodate your needs but I will be unable to do so without communication from Disability Services.

Course Texts
Required

Recommended
Jared Dees, 31 Days to Becoming a Better Religious Educator (Ave Maria, 2013; 1594713847)
COURSE SCHEDULE (Subject to Change)

Week 1: Teaching Theology
Class 1: Introduction to the Course M, June 16
Read: Heft, 37-60
Recommended: Heft, 3-36

Class 2: A Vision for Catholic Education T, June 17
Read: Heft, 61-89, 143-192, 209-219
Due: Choose one high school religion/theology course as your touchstone for the class

Class 3: A Vision for Reaching American Teens W, June 18
Read: Dean, 1-106

Class 4: Course Planning 101 TH, June 19
Read: Wiggins and McTighe, Understanding by Design, 1-37 (selections) (Sakai)
Read: Susa, How the Brain Learns, 249-257 (Sakai)
Skim: Materials related to the course you have chosen to (partially) develop in the class

Class 5: Lesson Planning 101 F, June 20
Recommended: Dees, The Religion Teacher’s Guide to Lesson Planning, 4-16 (Sakai)
Recommended: Dees, 31 Days to Becoming a Better Religious Educator, 103-114
Due: Paper 1

Week 2: Research on How Students Learn and Integrating It into Our Teaching
Class 6: Student Learning and Thinking M, June 23
Read: Willingham, 1-86
Recommended: Susa, 88-95, 121-124 (Sakai)
Recommended: Nilson, 117 (Sakai)

Class 7: Student Learning and Practice T, June 24
Read: Willingham, 107-126
Recommended: Susa, 86-88, 118-120, 125-126 (Sakai)

Class 8: Student Learning as Novices W, June 25
Read: Willingham, 87-106, 127-145
Read: Made to Stick, 242-246 (Sakai)

Class 9: Student Learning and Student Intelligence TH, June 26
Read: Willingham, 146-188

Class 10: Wrap up on Research into Student Learning F, June 27
Due: Paper 2
Week 3: Further Matters in Teaching

Class 11: Grading, Feedback, and Managing One’s Time
   Read: Marzano, *Classroom Instruction that Works*, 60-66, 96-102 (Sakai)  M, June 30

Class 12: Developing One’s Teaching “Persona”
   Read: Stronge, “The Teacher as a Person,” 22-35 (Sakai)  T, July 1

Class 13: Classroom Management (W, July 2)
   Read: Marzano, “Classroom Management,” in *What Works in Schools*, 88-105 (Sakai)

Class 14: Returning to the Vision of the Whole
   Due: Paper 3  TH, July 3