

Regis College  
Thursday, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.  
Joseph Schner, S.J.

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**RGP 6554 HF**  
**PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS FAITH DEVELOPMENT**

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**Instructor**

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**Description**

An exploration of religious faith development across the life span. Key authors and their theories will be the focus, for example, James Fowler, F.K. Oser, and Anna-Maria Rizzuto.

**Text**

James Gollnick. (2005) *Religion and spirituality in the life cycle*. N.Y.: Peter Lang Publishing.

**Outline and Procedure**

The course will be organized as follows:

- The first two classes will consist of introductory lectures. These lectures will deal with psychological and religious faith development theories:

**September 17** Psychological and religious faith development (Golnick, Introduction)

24 Theoretical perspectives (Golnick, Chapter 1)

Seminar: Fowler, J. W. (1991) Stages of faith consciousness. In Oser, F. K. & Scarlett, W.G. (Eds.) *Religious development in childhood and adolescence. New directions for child development*, No. 52. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, pp. 27-45. [+ class handout]

- The next two classes will deal with childhood development:

**October 1** Children's spirituality

Hay, D., Nye, R. & Murphy, R. (1996) Thinking about childhood spirituality. In L.J. Francis, W.K. Kay & W. S. Campbell (Eds.) *Research in religious education*. Gracewing, pp. 47-71. [class handout]

Seminar: Levine, S. (1999) Children's cognition as the foundation of spirituality. *International Journal of Children's Spirituality*, 4, 121-140.

8 Religion in childhood (Golnick, Chap. 2)

Seminar: Deborah Court (2010). What happens to children's faith in the zone of proximal development? *Religious Education*, 105 (5), 491-503

- The next two class will deal with adolescent and young adult development and spirituality:

15 Religion in Adolescence (Golnick, Chap. 3)

Seminar: Karen Choi, 2012. The relationship between youth ministry participation and faith maturity of adolescents. *Christian Education Journal*, 9 (2), 293-308.

22 Spirituality in Adolescence and Young Adulthood

Seminar: TBA

- Three classes will deal with adult development:

**November 5** Religion in the adult reaches of the life-span (Chap. 4)

Seminar: TBA

**12** Adult spirituality (Chap. 5)

Seminar: S. Daloz Parks (2003) *To venture and to abide*. R.R. Osmer & F. L Schweitzer (Eds.) *Developing a public faith*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, pp. 61-80. + Mary Jo Meadow, 1996. *Through a glass darkly*. Pp. 93-130.+

**19** Religion and aging \* (Chap. 6)

Seminar: Lewis, Mary Miller. (2001) spirituality, counselling, and elderly: An introduction to the spiritual life review. *Journal of Adult Development*, 8, 231-240.

- The remainder of the course will look at special topics in relationship to faith development:

**26** Gender issues in religious development \*

Belenky, M. F. Clinchy, B. Mc. Goldberger, N.R. & Tarule, J. M. (1986) *Women's ways of knowing*. N.Y.: Basic Books, pp 3-20+ Anderson, D. W., Hill, P.G., & Martinson, R.D. (2006) *Coming of age*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, pp. 188-200. +

Seminar: Ray, Ruth E. & McFadden, Susan H. (2001) The web and the quilt: alternatives to the heroic journey toward spiritual development. *Journal of Adult Development*, 8, 201-211.

**December 3** Contemporary Theories (Golnick, Conclusion)

Streib (2003) Faith development research at twenty years. R.R. Osmer & F. L Schweitzer (Eds.) *Developing a public faith*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, pp. 15-42.+

Seminar: discussion of students' essays.

### Requirements and evaluation

- For each seminar one participant will present the assigned article (two or three double-spaced pages) and the other students will come prepared with a one-page critique.
- **December 18** a paper dealing with a topic in religious faith development will be due. The topic should be decided in consultation with the instructor by reading week. This paper should be approximately 15 pages in length, double-spaced and 12 point) and can be emailed.

The final mark for the course will be based on evaluations in two areas:

(1) Weekly seminar– As described above (10 + (5 x 8) = 50%)

(2) Final paper – As described above (50%)

**All course work shall be completed by the end of the academic term in which the course is taken, though in some cases extensions may be granted, but no later than the end of the academic year (i.e. August 31). For students who do not meet the deadline the submitted grade shall be the actual grade earned in the course, calculated with zero assigned to any coursework that is still incomplete.**

## Learning outcomes

| COURSE OUTCOMES  | COURSE ELEMENT   | AD OUTCOMES  |
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| By the end of this course, students will have  | This outcome will be achieved through these course elements:   | At the end of the course:  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>gained increased familiarity with faith development theories and their application across the life span;</li> </ul> | first part of course by discussing the more significant ways of conceptualising human development in psychology and how they have influenced contemporary theories about religious faith and spiritual development.  | 2.4 to make appropriate use of such resources (1) at a level of proficiency in their own area of research, and (2) at a level of competence in classroom and instructional settings; |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased their awareness of the influence of social demographic variables on development;</li> </ul>               | second part of course by reviewing various contextual factors and intra-psychic processes at work across the life span and their implication and influence in faith and spirituality, and by exploring the psychological issues involved in religious faith and spiritual development. | 4.3.1.1 recognize the importance of working with scholarly peers and associates in a collegial manner;   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased their skill in the application of critical tools and methods;</li> </ul>                                  | weekly papers; final paper   | 4.1.1 that they will be able to engage in further ongoing, self-directed research activity, to take their place in various appropriate communities of researchers                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>had an opportunity for detailed exploration of a theory;</li> </ul>   | Final paper  |  |