

**THE CONTENT OF THIS DESCRIPTION IS NOT A LEARNING CONTRACT AND THE INSTRUCTOR IS NOT BOUND TO IT. IT IS OFFERED IN GOOD FAITH AND INTENDED AS A HELPFUL GUIDE TO THE STUDENT. THE OFFICIAL COURSE SYLLABUS WILL BE PROVIDED AT THE FIRST CLASS.**

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**TITLE: CONVERSION AND EDUCATION**

**TERM: 2009-10**

**PROFESSOR: JEANNE COVER IBVM**

**REGISTRATION:**

**UNLIMITED** √

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course focuses on the part played by conversion both as enhancing the effectiveness of educational process in today's globalised and post-modern world and also as the outcome of this process. In this context, education will be seen as having a three-fold role: to inform, to form, and to transform. Throughout the course distinctions will be made between ways of knowing and types of knowledge. Emphasis will be placed on the importance for educators to understand that the contemporary situation is as much a source of theology as is the tradition. In this context, educators will be encouraged to be aware of their own overlapping worlds and those of their students.

Students will be required to submit four reflection papers [1500-2000 words each] and to conduct one seminar.

**CLASS OBJECTIVES:**

One of the outcomes of education is transformation or conversion. This latter word Bernard Lonergan describes as a “change of horizon.” This course endeavours both to challenge and to assist participants to move beyond their present horizons to glimpse the further worlds of mystery which inspire awe and wonder.

Some specific objectives are:

That participants in the courses will:

- Apply insights from selected readings to the unique educational situations/ministry in which they are engaged and, in turn, draw from their experience to enrich the readings selected.
- Be able to distinguish and assess the roles of different ways of knowing and types of knowledge in the imparting of information, in formation, and in transformation/conversion.
- To come to a practical as well as a theoretical understanding of conversion as a turning away from a life-denying stance and a turning to a life-enhancing stance and hence as integral to self-realisation.
- Obtain a basic understanding of Bernard Lonergan’s description of what constitutes knowing and his delineation of conversion -psychic, intellectual, moral, affective and religious – and its significance to education.
- Be familiar with Lonergan’s “transcendental notions” and Rahner’s theological anthropology.
- Be willing to enter into a new world of concerns, to discard personal biases and engage in dialogue with those who offer different or even opposing viewpoints.
- Appreciate the contribution of the contemplative attitude and subsequent transformation of consciousness as a desirable outcome at all stages of the educational process.
- Assess the respective contributions of liberationist, ecological, feminist, and human rights emphases to an education that is liberating rather than power-seeking.
- Become acquainted with a variety of authors and their insights into the contemporary situation.

**PREREQUISITES:**

Since all are involved in education in its broadest sense as the school of life, and some are also involved in more specific forms of education: working in or studying at formal educational institutions, raising families or working in parishes, there are no specific prerequisites.

## REQUIRED TEXTS:

A package of readings will be made available. The following works will also be useful: The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes); Walter E. Conn ed., Conversion: Perspectives on Personal and Social Transformation. New York: Alba House, 1978; Frederick F. Crowe, Old Things and New: A Strategy for Education. Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1985

## POSSIBLE ASSIGNMENTS/PRESENTATIONS/TESTS:

- Four reflection papers: to be selected from a list of ten [60% of total grade].
- One seminar presentation: from one of the twelve course modules [40% of total grade]

## ABRIDGED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- Boff, Leonardo. Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor. New York: Orbis, 1997.
- Buckley, Michael S.J. "Atheism and Contemplation." Theological Studies 40 (1979).
- Burrules, Nicholas G. and Suzanne Rice, "Dialogue Across Differences: Continuing the Conversation." Harvard Educational Review, 61, 4, (November, 1991).
- Cardman, Francine. "Liberating Compassion: Spirituality for a New Millennium." The Way 32 1 (Jan. 1992)..
- Conn, Walter E. "Affective Conversion: The Transformation of Desire." In Religion and Culture: Essays in Honor of Bernard Lonergan, S.J. Edited by Thomas P. Fallon S.J. and Philip Boo Riley, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987, 261-276.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Moral Development: Is Conversion Necessary?" In Essays in Honor of Bernard Lonergan, S.J. Edited by Matthew L. Lamb. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1981, 307-324.
- Conn, Walter E. Editor. Conversion: Perspectives on Personal and Social Transformation. N. Y: Alba House, 1978 [Articles by Freire, Gutierrez, Haughton]
- Crysdale, Cynthia S.W. "Development, Conversion, and Religious Education." Horizons, 17/1 (1990) 30-46).
- Gallagher, Michael Paul. "The Postmodern Situation - Friend or Foe?" In Clashing Symbols: An Introduction to Faith and Culture. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1997: 87-100.
- Guider, Margaret Eletta. "The Global Dimension." The Way 34 3 (July 1994): 200-208.
- Gula, Richard M. "Freedom and Knowledge." In Reason Informed by Faith N.Y: Paulist, 1989, 79-88.
- Haight, Roger, S.J. "The Theology of Faith and Ultimate Concern for Justice" In An Alternative Vision. New York: Paulist, 1985. (Chapter IV: 65-82).
- Kinast, Robert L. "Sacred space and time in the computer age" The Way 3 (July 2000): 222-231
- Mabry, John. "Homecoming: Helping Xers move from alienation to conversion." The Way Supplement, 2000/98
- Merton, Thomas. "Transformation of Consciousness." In John Higgins, Merton's Theology of Prayer, New York: Image, 1975, (48-70).
- Rahner, Karl. "The Experience of God Today." Theological Investigations: XI: 140-145.
- Rahner, Karl. "Following the Crucified." Theological Investigations XVIII: 157-170
- Schreier, Robert J. "Globalisation and the Contexts of Theology." In The New Catholicity. New York, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1987.
- Sheldrake, Philip F. "The Crisis of Postmodernity." [Summer 1996]: 6-10
- Wiseman, James O.S.B. "Mystical Literature and Modern Unbelief." In Christian Spirituality and the Culture of Modernity. Edited by George Schner, and Peter Casarella. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998.