

**Theo 6334 Theological Foundations of Justice 3 Credits**  
**Fall, 2011 Thursday Time: 1:00 - 3:45**  
**Professor: Dominique Gilliard**

**Course Description:** This course examines the contextual, theological, and ethical foundations of justice ministries. It is designed to have students participate in a theological reflection process consisting 1) awareness, 2) reflection, 3) action, 4) ministerial preparation.

**Course Format:** This is a seminar style course, which means that significant class participation is required. The guiding questions for this class are: what is the presenter/author's theological understanding? How is God understood? How is Justice understood? How do the issues/topics covered relate to/interact with the "ordo" and pastoral praxis circle? How does the view of God and Justice "line-up" with the courses in the seminary? What role do the sacraments play in deepening our understanding of God and of Justice? How does Christian Ethics influence our understanding of orthodoxy and orthopraxy? What is the role of the church as well as the individual believer in enacting/bringing about justice? How are justice & worship connected? How does justice factor into Christians living their lives as an act of worship to God?

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**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** There are no excused absences, and missing more than 1 class will result in a letter reduction in grade. Coming late to three or more classes will also result in a letter grade reduction.

**COMPUTER USE IN CLASSROOM POLICY:** **Computer use must be in service of the class. Checking facebook, and sending emails, and surfing the net is not permitted.**

**RULES OF ENGAGEMENT POLICY:** We will hear a variety of viewpoints in this class; remember to engage one another with interest, respect and attention toward the topic of the day. **All students are required to participate and contribute to the class discussion daily, this will be a significant element of this courses grade composition, so do the assigned reading!**

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**Course Objectives:**

Increase students' capacities for theological and ethical reflection on Justice.

Increase students' engagement of contemporary social concerns affecting the Church and society through the lens of a theology of Justice.

Examine the Church's current responses to suffering within society and legal structures that organize our common life, as well as the interpersonal exchanges of injustice that are implicitly sanctioned by the broader communities in which we live.

To develop practical responses to issues of injustice which students either are currently or will confront in the future within their ministries.

**Course Learning Activities:**

\_\_\_ Class attendance

\_\_\_ Class discussion

\_\_\_ Essays on the ethical & theological elements of justice

\_\_\_ Final Essay on Theological Subject/category in light of justice

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## Required Texts:

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1. Brueggemann, Walter, Using God's Resources Wisely: Isaiah and Urban Possibility, (Westminster/John Knox, 1993), 89-pages ISBN: 10: 9780664254605
2. Brueggemann, Walter, Prophetic Imagination, (Fortress Press, 2001), 140 pages - ISBN 0800632877
3. Cone, James H. God of the Oppressed, (Orbis Books, 1997), 225 pages - ISBN 13: 978-1570751585
4. Groody, Daniel G. Globalization, Spirituality, and Justice: Navigating the Path to Peace, (Orbis Books, 2008), pages 266 - ISBN 9781570756962.
5. González, Justo L. Santa Biblia, (Abingdon Press 1996), 118 pages - ISBN 0687014522
6. Labacqz, Karen, Justice in an Unjust World. (Augsburg Pub. House, 1987), 152 pages - ISBN 0806623004
7. Tamez, Elsa, Bible of the Oppressed, (Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2006), 84 pages ISBN 10: 1597525553

## Required Assignments:

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### 1. *Essays:*

- a. In all your essays & writing reflections you will be expected to examine the justice issue at hand in light of the “*ordo*” and the “*pastoral praxis circle*”.  
Each essay will call for you to reflect on the significance of the identified issue *both socially and ecclesially*.
- b. You will be expected to reflect on your essays in class for discussion as assigned.
- c. You are required to write a total of 6 papers for this course. 3 of which will be on topics assigned by the instructor, the other 3 will be your choice to select from the range of options offered throughout the course.
  - i. 2 of these papers will be film reviews, these two papers will range from **2-3 full** pages in length.
  - ii. 1 of these papers will be a sermon review (from one of the sermon assigned sermon from the class) this paper is to be **3-4 full** pages in length.
  - iii. 2 of these papers will be book reviews, these two papers will range from **4-5 full** pages in length.
  - iv. Each of these papers are to be sure to cover three things in detail:
    1. a) what you have become *aware* of in reflecting on the topic;
    2. b) the *ethical & theological significance/meaning* of the issue; more specifically, the *theological implications* of the issue for the Church & *ethical what this means for believers* in terms of living out their faith’s in the world at large *both communally & individually*.
    3. c) how does this relate back to both the “*ordo*” & “*pastoral praxis circle*”?

- ### 2. **Theological Reflection:** The major assignment for this course is for students to select a justice issue (i.e. domestic violence, disabilities, human trafficking, gentrification, theological exclusion/marginalization) and trace the effects of this issue throughout the lives of populations affected by it here in the U.S. I intend for students to do this through

- a) exploring the metanarrative of populations that have been victimized by the selected injustice,
- b) through engaging with scripture to examine where/how the biblical cannon addresses the injustice at hand (& if it does not directly do so what biblical passages inform our understanding of the issue, what parallels can be drawn from these text),
- c) biblical commentaries
- d) and both primary and secondary sources, written by both people indigenous to whichever group you select (if possible) and from a diversified background both gendered and racially.

Within your paper, you are expected to 1) identify why you chose the particular group you did, 2) tell what makes this groups experience unique, 3) focusing in on a particular aspect of the justice issue at hand within this groups history, 4) you are expected to engage scripture to find a passage(s) which speak to the lived reality of your selected group, 5) tell how it does so, 6) and then explain how this lived reality affects how this group reads and understands this passage in a unique way, which confronts mainstream biblical interpretation of this passage.

You will have the entire semester to work on and turn in this paper. You can turn in this paper in up to three times, each time you will receive feedback from the instructor concerning ways in which your paper can be improved, however at whatever point you are satisfied with you grade for this paper you can alert the professor of this fact and this will be your final grade for this assignment. This assignment will make up 30% of your course grade and your paper is expected to be 2,800 to 3,500 words in length (excluding bibliography but including notes); please include the word count on the cover page of your paper), written in 12 point font size, as well as times new roman font style.

3. ***Participate in Class Discussion:*** Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss assigned readings. Please note that discussion/attendance is worth 20% of your final grade.
4. *We will go as a class, within the first 3 weeks of the course, together, but not during our allotted class time, to go see the film *The Help*, this film will serve as one of the two films that each student is required to write up a theological reflection paper about. The outing will replace our class session on Oct 20<sup>th</sup>. This is not an optional assignment.*

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**Policy concerning late assignments:** For every day an assignment is late, a portion of a letter grade will be deducted. Therefore, an assignment which is one day late, could earn a maximum grade of an A-; an

assignment two days late, no higher than a B+; an assignment three days late, no higher than a B, etc. Any assignment ten days old or more will not be accepted and will be assigned a zero, unless otherwise determined by the instructor.

**Incomplete policy:** Except in cases outlined by the student handbook, the instructor will not grant a student a grade of an “I” (Incomplete). Failure to complete assigned coursework does not constitute a valid reason for a student to receive a grade of an incomplete.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism consists of using someone else’s research or analysis, and presenting that work as if it were your own. In other words, plagiarism constitutes intellectual theft. When using secondary or primary resources in a research paper, a researcher must give credit to the originator through proper citation procedures. Failure to cite properly constitutes plagiarism. Please note that proper citation procedures must be followed when both paraphrasing and directly quoting sources. The penalty for plagiarism on an assignment is a grade of zero for the first offense; a second offense will result in an assignment of an “F” for the course. Regarding cheating and plagiarism, please consult the North Park Theological Seminary student handbook, pp.27-28.

**Students with special needs:**

If you have a physical or learning condition that requires some special accommodation in order for you to attend class, take notes or exams, or successfully complete the course requirements, please let me know immediately. I will gladly make (or arrange to have made) every reasonable effort to see that your needs are attended to.

**Note:** The instructor does have the right to change dates and polices as he deems necessary throughout the semester. Additionally, he has the responsibility to relate these changes to the students as soon as they occur.

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**Grade distribution for the course:**

Sermon review	-50
Midpoint & Final reflection essays	- 50
Film reviews (2) worth 50 each	- 100
Class discussion/Attendance/Reading	- 200
Book reviews (2) worth 150 each	- 300
Theological Reflection	- 300

### Grading Scale:

Points

A	1000 - 924
A-	923 - 895
B+	894 - 865
B	864 - 835
B-	834 - 795
C+	794 - 764
C	763 - 735
C-	734 - 695
D+	694 - 665
D	664 - 595
F	594 and below

### Other suggested texts:

Abraham J Heschel, *The Prophets*

Anne Joh, *Heart of the Cross: A Postcolonial Christology.*

Carol Dempsey, *Justice: A Biblical Perspective*

Charles Marsh, *The Beloved Community: How Faith Shapes Social Justice from the Civil Rights Movement to Today*

Charles Marsh & John Perkins, *Welcoming Justice: God's Movement Toward Beloved Community.*

Cheryl Kirk-Duggan, *Misbegotten Anguish: A Theology and Ethics of Violence*

Cheryl Kirk-Duggan, *Exorcising Evil: A Womanist Perspective on the Spirituals*

Chris Rice & Emmanuel Katongole, *Reconciling All Things: A Christian Vision for Justice, Peace and Healing*

Cornel West, *Race Matters*

Cornel West, *Prophesy Deliverance!*

Daniel G. Groody, *Globalization, Spirituality, & Justice*

Elaine Crawford, *Hope in the Holler*

Eldin Villafane, *Beyond Cheap Grace: A Call to Radical Discipleship, Incarnation, & Justice.*

Eldin Villafane, *Seek the Peace of the City*

Emilie M. Townes, *Womanist Ethics and the Cultural Production of Evil*

Emilie M. Townes, *Womanist Justice, Womanist Hope*

Gustavo Gutierrez, *We Drink from our own Wells: The Spiritual Journey of a People*

Howard Thurman, *Jesus and The Disinherited*

Ivon Gebara and Patrick Ware, *Out of the Depths: Women's Experience of Evil and Salvation*

Jacquelyn Grant, *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus.*

Jim Wallis, *God's Politics: Why the Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It*

John Perkins, *Let Justice Roll Down.*

John Perkins, *A Quite Revolution: Meeting Human Needs Today, a Biblical Challenge to Christians*

Jon Sobrino. *Jesus the Liberator: A Historical-Theological Reading of Jesus of Nazareth.*

Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, *New Monasticism: What it Has to Say to Today's Church*

Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, *God's Economy: Redefining the Health & Wealth Gospel*

Justo Ganzalez, *Manana*

Lon Kurashige And Alice Yang Murray. *Major Problems In Asian American History: Documents And Essays* (Major Problems In American History Series).

Lowell Noble: *From Oppression to Jubilee Justice*

M. Shawn Copeland, *Enfleshing Freedom*

M. Daniel Carroll R, *Christians at the Border: Immigration, the Church, and the Bible.*

Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*

Orlando Crespo. *Being a Latino in Christ*

Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

Phillis Isabella Sheppard, *Self, Culture, and Others in Womanist Practical Theology (Black Religion/Womanist Thought/Social Justice)*

Phyllis Trible, *God and Rhetoric of Sexuality (Overtures to Biblical Theology)*

Phyllis Trible, *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives*

Reinhold Niebuhr and Andrew J. Bacevich, *The Irony of American History.*

Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society: A Study of Ethics and Politics (Library of Theological Ethics)*

Richard Twiss. *One God, Many Tribes*, 2000.

Ronald Sider, *Rich Christians in An Age of Hunger: Moving from Affluence to Generosity*

Ronald J. Sider, John M. Perkins, Wayne L. Gordon, and F. Albert Tizon. *Linking Arms, Linking Lives: How Urban-Suburban Partnerships Can Transform Communities*, (2008). Wayne Gordon, John M. Perkins.

Ronald Pierce & Rebecca Groothuis, *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementary without Hierachy*

Shane Claiborne, *Jesus for President*

Shane Claiborne, *The Irresistible Revolution: Living as an Ordinary Radical*

Soong-Chan Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism: Freeing the Church from Western Cultural Captivity*

Stanley Hauerwas & Jean Vanier, *Living Gently in a Violent World: The Prophetic Witness of Weakness*

Steve Corbett & Brian Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts*

Tom Skinner, *Black and Free.*

Wayne L. Gordon, *Who Is My Neighbor? Lessons Learned From A Man Left For Dead*, (2010).

Willie James Jennings, *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race*