

North Park Theological Seminary
MNST 5137 Faith, Health and Community Development
Preliminary Syllabus

Note: The preliminary syllabus is posted as of May 29, 2012. The final syllabus with weekly assignments will be available by June 26.

Faculty

Mary Chase-Ziolek, Ph.D., R.N.
Professor of Health Ministries and Nursing
Nyvall Hall #31

773-244-6201
mchase-ziolek@northpark.edu

Course Description

There is much that churches can do to improve the health of their communities working collaboratively with secular and governmental organizations who are increasingly interested in partnering with faith-based organizations on community health initiatives. This course will explore trends, models and concepts in the contemporary faith and health movement through lecture, discussion, case studies and site visits. Spending time in Chicago communities where the faith community is engaged in issues of community health will be a significant class component. 3 credits

Learning Objectives

By the completion of this course students should be able to:

- Discuss factors contributing to the current faith and health movement
- Describe how faith-based and health care organizations are working together to improve the health of communities
- Discuss local, national and international models of faith, health and community development
- Identify factors that influence community well being
- Critique the role of the church in addressing health disparities from a faith-based perspective
- Analyze the church's involvement in a specific health-related issue and its impact on community wellbeing
- Evaluate the characteristics of successful faith and health partnerships
- Apply basic principles of community development in developing faith and health initiatives
- Utilize the community assessment process to identify issues that could be addressed by a faith and health initiative identifying potential partners

REQUIRED TEXTS

Religion and the Health of the Public by Gary Gunderson and James Cochrane, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012
ISBN: 0230341527

Social Justice Handbook by Mae Cannon, Intervarsity Press. ISBN: 830837159

With Justice for all Strategy for Community Development 3rd edition, by John Perkins, Regal, ISBN: 0830759549

The Abundant Community by John McKnight & Peter Block, Berrett-Koehler, ISBN: 978-1-60509-584-4

RECOMMENDED

Transforming Power: Biblical Strategies for Making a Difference in Your Community by Robert Linthicum, Intervarsity 2003, ISBN: 0830832289

Empowerment by Mary Nelson. iUniverse, 2010 ISBN: 978-1-4401-8532-8

Course Teaching and Learning Methods:

This course is intentionally designed to emphasize experiential learning. In conjunction with in class discussion and learning, all students will be expected to seek out and participate in community activities that engage the course topic of faith, health and community development. Possible activities will be identified or you may seek out such events in their own neighborhoods and nearby contexts.

Student Responsibilities:

Participation

Complete assigned weekly readings from the four required texts as well as interacting with the powerpoints, video and in-class material. Attendance, discussion, participation, and accountability for reading are all part of the grade. **10% of course grade**

Neighborhood Engagement: Volunteering/Participation

Students will engage in a minimum of 20 hours of neighborhood activities related to faith, health and community development in the Chicago area as a volunteer or participant. The majority of this time should be spent in faith-based settings. Some of the time can be participating in secular programs dealing with issues related to community health. The professor will highlight opportunities or students can seek out their own with approval.

Students will submit a log of their completed and anticipated neighborhood activities. **Due: October 2**

Prepare a 1500 word critical reflection paper including the following: brief summary of your volunteer activities, how this connects themes of faith, health and community development, how it might be applied in your own church setting. For faith-based activities discuss the theology lived out in this ministry. If secular, discuss how the church could be connected to this activity.

Due: November 22
20% of course grade

Justice and Health: The Church's Response

Part I: Unnatural Causes: Is Social Inequity Making us Sick?

The following assignment will be completed online based on the PBS series *Unnatural Causes is Social Inequity Making us Sick?*. While this is a secular series, it has implications for the church in the issues of health and justice that it raises. Complete the work on the Unnatural Causes website <http://www.unnaturalcauses.org/> as outlined on Moodle. Prepare a 500 word essay response discussing how social inequity contributes to ill health in communities. How does *Unnatural Causes* illustrate how culture, society and environment influence health? Identify anything surprising or new that you learned from the Unnatural Causes website. Identify how you might use this series in a ministry setting to discuss issues of justice and health. How would you frame it theologically and draw on scripture? How might you work through a congregation to engage a community in issues of health

and justice. The essay should be emailed to the professor and posted on Moodle for your fellow students to read and respond.

Due: October 23
10% of course grade

Part II: Reading Reflection on Justice and Health

Students will write a 1000 - 1500 word essay integrating the course reading 1) briefly discussing key points from the texts related to justice and community health and 2) critically interact with the premise of one of these texts discussing how it might be applied in your current or anticipated area of ministry.

Due: November 13
10% of course grade

Faith-based Community Development

Students will select an organization described in the book from the Christian Community Development Association *A Heart for the Community: New Models for Urban and Suburban Ministry* by John Fuder & Noel Castellanos (2009), which will be on reserve in the library. After reading the chapter and reviewing the organization website, students will conduct a phone or in person interview with their organization to learn more about their current work and how it is impacting the wellbeing of their community. A one page summary will be submitted and presented to the class.

Due: October 9
10% of course grade

Creative Response: Choosing Life or Choosing Death

Based on time spent in the Albany Park neighborhood or one's local Chicago area community looking for signs of health, understood holistically and signs of illness, students will formulate a creative visual response such as a photoessay, collage, or painting, which students will present in class.

Due: October 25
15% of course grade

Group Project: Students will work in teams of 3-4 to explore an issue that affects the health of communities through the lens of justice and stewardship by exploring the issue from multiple facets and identifying possible responses of the church. Considering how to say yes in a world that says no, topics will be chosen from the following:

- The Challenges of HIV/AIDS for the Church
- Health for All: Faith-based Responses to Access to Healthcare
- Nurturing Resilient Youth: Adolescent Health and Youth Ministry
- Faith and Food: The Church's Response
- Violence and Community Health: The Church as Peacemaker
- In the Shadow of Our Steeples: Community Response to Mental Illness

Groups will discuss the issue from more than one perspective, identify relevant biblical themes, discuss exemplars of faith-based responses locally and nationally or internationally, discuss how community development is and could be used to address this issue, provide an annotated list of resources and describe possible ways in which the church might respond that would represent responsible living in the realm of God. Grading of the group project will be based on demonstrated integration (including the articulation of varied perspectives on the same issue), application and analysis. Each individual will visit and interview a local organization involved in work related to the topic, submitting a 300-500 word summary. Group presentations will be made to the class.

Interview Summary Due: November 27
10% of course grade
Group Presentations Due: December 6
20% of course grade

Grading:

The weight of the assignments will be the following:

Participation	10%
Creative Response	15%
Faith-based Community Development Justice & Health	10%
Unnatural Causes Essay	10%
Reading Reflection	10%
Group Project	
Group presentation	20%
Individual interview summary	10%
Neighborhood Engagement	
Volunteer/participation Reflection	15%

Course grade will be computed according to the grading policy found in the NPTS catalog.

Students with disabilities North Park Theological Seminary provides services for students with documented disabilities to ensure equal access to programs, services, facilities, and activities. Students with a disability who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Seminary Academic Services as soon as possible. If desired or necessary, discussion pertaining to documentation and accommodation can take place at another suitable location or by telephone. Further information about the American Disabilities Act Services is found in the Student Academic Handbook.

Class Schedule

Class schedule with weekly assignments and reading will be posted in the final syllabus available June 26th.