

PRELIMINARY SYLLABUS

MNST 6280

MOBILIZING FOR JUSTICE: METHODS AND PRACTICES OF JUSTICE NORTH PARK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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SPRING 2012 (3 Credit Course)

Tuesday and Thursday: 4:00 – 5:15pm

DESCRIPTION: The course will explore a variety of approaches and methodologies to Justice Ministry. We will explore the relationship of ethics and theology to community building and transformation. In part, we want to critically interrogate the relationship between the struggle for justice through the ministry of the church, and the place of hope in such a struggle. We will emphasize practical ministry skills with particular attention to “social analysis” as a tool of understanding the nature and context of ministry, and faith based community development and community organizing as approaches to social transformation towards justice. We will study how leading and teaching on justice ministry can be part of the pastoral office. The course will be committed to concrete projects of justice (visiting a number of places where work of this nature is being carried out). We will also utilize a variety of media forms to convey practical approaches to justice ministry.

OBJECTIVES:

At the end of class the student should be able to:

- Identify and discuss a variety of methods and approaches to Justice Ministries
- Understand the theory and practice of Community Development and Organizing
- Have familiarity with methods and practices of social analysis in conjunction with theological reflection
- Have a Biblical/Theological Framework for Justice Ministries
- Have an ethical framework for making assessments about the role of the church in issues in the public sphere

SEMINARY LEARNING GOALS:

In addition, we will be working towards the seminary learning goals of:

- Developing a mature theological and ethical perspective to reflect and act
- Understanding of cultures in order to live and present the Gospel effectively
- Developing a clear pastoral identity
- The ability to identify, recruit, and equip laity for the ministries of the church

METHODS

- Readings and Class discussions
- Assigned papers
- Media
- Lectures
- Site visits

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Linthicum, Robert. *Building a People of Power: Equipping Churches to Transform Their Communities* (Federal Way, WA: World Vision Press, 2005).

Rothenberg, Paula. *White Privilege*. (New York: Worth Publishers, 2002).

Villafane, Eldin. *Seek the Peace of the City: Reflections on Urban Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995).

Additional readings assigned in class (available on Blackboard)

REQUIREMENTS:

1. Attendance and class participation: includes leading a discussion on one of the required text books or articles and leading an opening devotion for one of the class sessions. You will also be expected to pay attention to media reports of justice issues that we will discuss from time to time. (10% of grade)
2. Reading reflections on two (student's choice) of the assigned books for this class (30% of grade)
3. Create a thirty minute workshop/seminar that can be presented in a local church (30% of grade)
4. A 5-6 page paper that may be one of the following: a sermon, a Bible study outline or a Liturgy highlighting working for justice in the issue dealt with above (30% of grade)
5. **An Alternative for 3-4 above is negotiable** e.g., a longer (10-12 pages), more focused paper with a concrete proposal for implementation in the student's church or faith community (60% of grade).

NOTES

The instructors reserve the right to modify the course syllabus to best accommodate the particular needs of the class.

Updated October 15, 2011