

22-504: Church and Community, Fall 2014
Wednesday, June 25, 2014
Dr. Angela Cowser, Professor
Room #211

Draft #3
Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
Teaching Assistant: Cynthia Stewart
Fridays, 9.00am – 12.00pm

Course Description

This course is designed to help students understand and develop their own theological positions about the mission of the local congregation in its neighborhood and community settings and about how this mission can be made effective. It seeks to explore motivations, provide resources, and demonstrate methods for such a mission. We will use Biblical/theological sources, social theory, data gathering tools, and other resources for developing and evaluating effective ministries for social service and social change.

Course Goals

- To understand the biblical imperatives of an authentic Christian life;
- To help students develop their own theological positions vis-à-vis church missions;
- To introduce students to various models of ministry in changing urban, suburban, and/or rural settings and equip them to do a community analysis;
- To learn basic principles of community organizing;
- To strengthen and improve your writing;
- Through reading, writing, reflection, a community analysis and field trips, examine the missional relationships and practices of outstanding urban, suburban, and rural congregations in the greater Chicagoland region.

Reading List

All Students [Please obtain the 6 books listed below].

- Guder, Darrell L., *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*. 978.080.284.3500, \$18.64
- Dudley Carl S. and Nancy Tatom Ammerman. *Congregations in Transition: A Guide for Analyzing, Assessing, and Adapting in Changing Communities*. 978.078.795.4222, \$18.71
- Stassen, Glen. *A Thicker Jesus: Incarnational Discipleship in a Secular Age*. 978.066.423.8179, \$18.72

Rural Life and Small Towns

- Wuthnow, Robert. *Small-Town America: Finding Community, Shaping the Future*. 978.069.115.7207, \$29.08

Suburban Communities

- Erre, Mike. *The Jesus of Suburbia: Have We Tamed the Son of God to Fit our Lifestyle?* 978.084.9900.594, \$12.59

Urban Communities

- Wilson, William Julius. *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor*. 978.067.9724.179, \$24.43
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For SBC21 Students Only Serving Congregations on Chicago's South Side

- Chambers, Edward T., *The Power of Relational Action* (a small booklet; order from ACTA.org). 978.0.87946.392.2, \$5.95
- Chambers, Edward T., *Roots for Radicals: Organizing for Power, Action and Justice [selected chapters]*. 978.0.8264.1499.1, \$15.76
- Gecan, Michael. *Effective Organizing for Congregational Renewal* (a small booklet; order from ACTA.org). 978.0.87946.384.7, \$5.95
- Pierce, Gregory F. Augustine. *Activism That Makes Sense: Congregations and Community Organization*. 978.0.914070.53.5, \$24.88

Recommended Titles

- Barnes, Sandra L., *Black Megachurch Culture: Models for Education and Empowerment*
 - Brueggemann, Walter. *Journey to the Common Good*
 - Carroll, Jackson. *God's Potters: Pastoral Leadership and the Shaping of Congregations*
 - Emerson, Michael O. and Christian Smith, *Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America*
 - Farnsworth, Arthur E. *Rising Expectations: Urban Congregations, Welfare Reform, and Civil Life*
 - Gecan, Michael, *Going Public: An Organizer's Guide to Citizen Action*
 - Gutenson, Charles. *Christians and the Common Good: How Faith Intersects with Public Life*
 - Hendricks, Obery M., Jr., *The Universe Bends Towards Justice: Radical Reflections on the Bible, the Church, and the Body Politic*
 - Lithicum, Robert. *City of God, City of Satan*
 - Mapp, Warren, *A Match on Dry Grass: The community Organizing and School Reform Project*
 - Peters, Ronald Edward and Marsha Haney, eds. *Africentric Approaches to Christian Ministry: Strengthening Urban Congregations in African-American Communities*
 - Sider, Ronald E. *Churches That Make a Difference: Reaching Your Community with Good News and Good Works*
 - Smock, Kristina. *Democracy in Action: Community Organizing and Urban Change*
 - Szakos, Joe and Kristin Szakos, *Lessons from the Field: Organizing in Rural Communities*
 - Walton, Jonathan. *Watch This! The Ethics and Aesthetics of Black Televangelism*
 - Wuthnow, Robert. *Small-Town America: Finding Community, Shaping the Future*
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Class Schedule

Class #1: Friday, September 5, 2014

- Class logistics, course overview, student expectations, teacher expectations on writing assignments
- Read Stassen
- Read Ammerman [exercise]
- Take Cowser theological survey
- SBC21: *Read all Chambers, Roots for Radicals selected chapters [additional 30 minutes]*

Class #2: Friday, September 12, 2014

- Read Stassen
- Read Ammerman [exercise]
- Discuss answers to your theological survey
- Professor produces report on theological survey findings
- SBC21: *Continue discussing Chambers, Roots for Radicals selected chapters [additional 30 minutes]*

Class #3: Friday, September 19, 2014

- Read Guder
- Read Ammerman [exercise]
- In conversation with the Stassen book, write a 4-page paper reflecting upon your understanding of the Biblical imperatives for the Christian life. Your paper must be reviewed by a writing tutor before turning in.
- Begin ecological survey of a neighborhood surrounding your field education site, the neighborhood where you live, or the neighborhood that you're interested in learning more about.

Class #4: Friday, September 26, 2014

- Read Guder
- Read Ammerman [exercise]
- Continue work on your ecological survey
- Discuss Stassen reflection papers

- SBC21: Read *Pierce*, all chapters [additional 30 minutes]

Class #5: Friday, October 3, 2014

- Read Wuthnow
- Turn in your ecological survey [5-8 pages]
- SBC21: Continue discussing *Pierce*

Class #6: Friday, October 10, 2014

- Field visit to a rural congregation [Ask Dr. Kincannon/Jonathan LeMaster Smith for recommendations]
- With another classmate, write a 2-3 page reflection on learnings in conversation with the Brown book]

Class #7: Friday, October 24, 2014

- Mid-Semester Review

Class #8: Friday, October 31, 2014

- Read Erre

Class #9: Friday, November 7, 2014

- Visit a suburban congregation. [Ask K. Kincannon]
- With another classmate, write a 2-3 page reflection on learnings in conversation with Erre book]

Class #10: Friday, November 14, 2014

- Read Wilson

Class #11: Friday, November 21, 2014

- Visit a South Side Chicago urban congregation [SBC21 congregation]
- With another classmate, write a 2-3 page reflection on learnings in conversation with the Wilson book]

Class #12: Friday, December 5, 2014

- Summative Learnings
- Discuss final paper

Class #13: Wednesday, December 10, 2014

- Course Evaluations
- Turn in final paper

Course Information

Grading Chart

A+	97-100 points
A	94-96 points
A-	90-93 points
B+	87-89 points – good quality expected of graduate professional students

B	84-86 points
B-	80-83 points
C+	77-79 points – satisfactory
C	74-76 points
C-	71-73 points
D+	68-70 points
D	65-67 points
D-	61-64 points
F	60 and below

Attendance Policy

- The seminary expects that students will attend all classes. Each faculty member weighs class attendance and participation differently in determining a grade, depending on the particular needs and structures of the course. How attendance and participation is weighed will be specified in the syllabus for each course. Students who miss more than 20% of the class sessions should not expect to pass the class.

Plagiarism

- A documented case of academic dishonesty, especially plagiarism, requires a conference with the student, advisor, and the academic dean. The professor is required to submit any suspected instances of plagiarism. On the basis of the conference, the academic dean writes a letter to the student reporting the content of the conference, including any decisions made. A copy goes to the student's file and is destroyed at the time of graduation. Students may be dismissed on a first case. A second instance of documented academic dishonesty is cause for the student's automatic dismissal from the degree program. Please note that some faculty use plagiarism detection software to assist in checking submitted work.
- Writing assistance is available to assist students at the Writing Center and/or student editors. A course in Theological Research and Writing is also offered every term. For more information about writing assistance, please contact the registrar's or academic affairs offices.

Late Papers/Presentations

- Please hand in hard copies of all written assignments on the day that it is due.
- Your grade will decrease ½ grade for every day that it is late.

Course Conduct

- Please listen carefully and deeply to each other. This classroom is a safe space for learning and the exploration of new ideas and ways of thinking.
- Please do not interrupt others when they're speaking, don't dismiss others' views as unimportant or immoral, and please do not dominate classroom conversation.

Style

- 12-point font, double-spaced, numbered pages, Chicago or MLA style for all papers.

Inclusive Language

- Every effort at inclusive language should be made in writing and speaking in this course.