



*Every choice we make can be a
celebration of the world we want.*

— Frances Moore Lappé

Economic Justice & the Christian Conscience

HTE 641H • Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary • Summer 2015

May 21 – July 31 • Hybrid Format • 3 Credit Hours

Professor's Contact Information*

Malinda Elizabeth Berry, PhD • Assistant Professor of Theology & Ethics
Waltner Hall 110 • 574.296.6270 • meberry@ambs.edu
office hours • Tuesdays 10:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. (EDT)

Overview

Course Description

In the age of globalization, how can economic relationships more fully reflect God's concern for justice? We will ponder this question from the perspective that "economic faithfulness" is defined as joyful response to God's bounty and goodness, and "economic justice" as practices that facilitate everyone having enough according to God's *shalom*. By exploring and examining various perspectives on the meaning of justice, economic "development" in the global village, economic systems and theories, economics and ecology, business ethics, economics in the church, and economic faithfulness for individual Christians, students will develop ethical frameworks that guide their integration of scriptural teaching about money (Bible), lifestyle choices (ethics), and spirituality (spiritual formation).

During the online portion of the course, students will be responsible for reading and reviewing course content and learning activities on their own. During the face-to-face portion of the course, students will be responsible for attending class sessions and helping to drive the discussion facilitated by excursions, guest speakers, and readings. Finally, students will complete an integrative assignment divided into several steps/ parts— the *Oikonomia* Project.

Hybrid Format

This course is offered in the hybrid format, a newer and less standardized course format than most classes at AMBS. What *is* standard among all hybrid courses is that they combine face-to-face and online interaction so that over 50% of the course takes place on campus. In this

* Please note: I respond to e-mails during the workweek. If you have an urgent communication for me after 5:00 p.m. and/or over the weekend, it is best that you phone me at home. That number is listed in the AMBS Community Directory.

way, hybrids are not online courses, but use online interaction to supplement and support what happens during the intensive week at AMBS.

For this reason, I have designed HTE 641H using units with content that students will work through at their own pace once the material is available, completing all unit Learning Activities by July 24. Learning Activities are readings, videos, podcasts, reading quizzes, *Oikonomia* Project steps/stages, and other tasks contained in a unit designed to help you increase your knowledge base and integrate ideas with everyday living and the practice of Christian faith.

To help you stay engaged with the class, there will be assignments for posting to discussion forums from week to week regardless of where you are in working through each unit. These posting assignments have deadlines, but beyond the July 24 deadline, the Learning Activities associated with the unit content do not.

Course & Educational Goals

To the ends outlined above, this course involves a series of goals which guide assignments, the professor's input, and students' contributions to class discussion:

1. to develop clarity about the relationship between economic (in)justice and Christian living
2. to creatively engage others in facing and reflecting on the challenges of economic justice in being economically faithful given our broader social and personal contexts
3. to articulate in writing and speaking your informed perspective on the themes dealt with in this course shaped by the educational goal(s) being assessed in HTE 641H

In addition to the course goals, HTE 641H is directly related to the educational goals of the AMBS degrees listed below. In other words, these educational goals are a point of connection between HTE 641H and the larger curriculum here at AMBS. Your overall grade will be framed using the appropriate goal.

- MDiv** 6. Lead the church in fulfilling its missional calling [by framing economic issues as ethical priorities for the Christian community].
- MACF** 5. Demonstrate skills for equipping, training, and empowering leaders for specialized ministries [having to do with economic justice].
- MAPS** 5. Use the resources of social science and history to help analyze peace and justice issues [namely those dealing with economic (in)justice].
- MATS** 4. Articulate the significance of [your] discipline ... for the mission of the church in the world [by framing economic issues as ethical priorities for the Christian community], and communicate that significance in some public setting.

Primary Textbooks (Print & eBooks)

I expect all students to have access to the following list of titles. I leave it to you to decide which books you will buy, access through interlibrary loan, borrow from friends, or use in the AMBS Library. I will give you more information about the Sider book when HTE 641H begins.

- Blomberg, Craig. *Neither Poverty nor Riches: A Biblical Theology of Possessions*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000. (ISBN-10: 0830826076)
- Collins, Chuck, et al. *Economic Apartheid in America: A Primer on Economic Inequality & Insecurity*, revised & updated edition. New York: The New Press, 2005. (ISBN-10: 1595580158)

- Foster, Richard J. *Freedom of Simplicity: Finding Harmony in a Complex World*. San Francisco: HarperOne, 2005. (ISBN-10: 0060759712)
- Flynn, Sean Masaki. *Economics For Dummies*, 2nd edition. Hoboken: Wiley Publishing, Inc, 2001. (ISBN-10: 0470879483)
- Jamieson, Janet T. and Philip D. Jamieson. *Ministry and Money: A Practical Guide for Pastors*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009. (ISBN-10: 0664231985)
- Longacre, Doris Janzen. *Living More with Less*, 30th anniversary ed. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2010. (ISBN-10: 9780836195217)
- Schrock-Shenk, Dave, ed. *Basic Trek: Venture Into a World of Enough — The Original 28-Day Journey*. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2002. (ISBN-10: 083619215X)
- Sider, Ronald. *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger: Moving from Affluence to Generosity*, new ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2015. (ISBN-10: 0849945305)

Project Resources

For the Oikonomia Project, you will need access to the work of Peter Menzel and Faith D’Aluisio. These books are not part of the formal assigned reading and they will not be part of the quizzes, but they are requisite for your project work! The assignment handout provides you with more detail about what you need their work for and how you will use it. All titles will be part of Closed Reserve in the AMBS Library. (The titles are listed here in order of publication.)

- Menzel, Peter and Charles Mann. *Material World: A Global Family Portrait*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1994. (ISBN-10: 0871564300)
- D’Aluisio, Faith and Peter Menzel. *Women in the Material World*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1996. (ISBN-10: 0871563983)
- Menzel, Peter and Faith D’Aluisio. *Hungry Planet: What the World Eats*. Napa: Material World Books, Berkeley: Ten Speed Press, 2005. (ISBN-10: 1580086810)
- — —. *What I Eat: Around the World in 80 Diets*. Napa: Material World Books, 2010. (ISBN-10: 0984074406)

E-Books & Library Reserves

Many e-books from EBSCO are limited to one user at a time, making it a good idea to work ahead on e-book assignments. When a user has finished with an EBSCO e-book, they must close both the book and the web browser used to view it; this releases a book for other users to access it. If you are unable to access a book because it is already in use, try again in fifteen minutes. You can download e-books in portable document format (pdf) and save them for later reading. A “how-to” video is available in the Library Orientation guide (<http://libraryguides.ambs.edu>, select “Library Orientation”). Also remember that items on the reserve table in the library are shared by all members of the class. Please follow the policies displayed on the table.

Grading & Assignments

A Few Terms

Below I offer a few definitions of a few terms we often hear in educational settings, but do not always define. My intention is for you to broaden your perspective on learning and grades as you think about your work for this course.

grade — This is the letter that signifies the quality of a student’s performance in a course or on an assignment. In the broadest sense, a grade reflects all the components of a course from attendance and test scores to participation and assignment tallies. A grade is different from the assessment of learning outcomes.

evaluation — This is a process of giving students feedback on learning activities and assignments that the professor has developed to help students demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills. Evaluation may or may not involve a grade.

assessment — This refers to a reform movement in education that is focused on if and how students are achieving the educational goals developed for a course of study or degree program. Assessment is the “big picture” that shows how students are, over time, meeting an institution’s educational goals.

Grading System

To determine your grade for HTE 641H, I will be using AMBS’s standard grading system (see the 2014-15 Academic Catalog for additional details). Your percentage will be calculated using the points you accumulate through assignments and my qualitative evaluation of your work.

| | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| A = 100 – 93% | B+ = 89 – 87% | C+ = 79 – 77% | F = 69 – 0% |
| A- = 92 – 90% | B = 86 – 83% | C = 76 – 73% | NC = 0% |
| | B- = 82 – 80% | C- = 72 – 70% | |

Course Assignments

As noted above, HTE 641H assignments are linked to and informed by the Course & Educational Goals. Some of the assignments will be evaluated using points, some will be evaluated with a simple 1-2-3 rating system, and some will not be evaluated but completing them (or not) will contribute to your grade as part of my qualitative evaluation.

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| 1. Class Participation & Online Presence | qualitative evaluation |
| 2. Trek Journey Reflections (posts) | 1-2-3 rating |
| 3. Forum Discussion (posts) | 1-2-3 rating |
| 4. Reading Quizzes (4 quizzes, 10 points each) | 40 points |
| 5. <i>Oikonomia</i> Project (4 parts, 40 points each) | 160 points |

qualitative evaluation + 1-2-3 ratings + 200 points

Assignment Rubrics

Details for assignments, evaluation criteria, rubrics are posted on Moodle separately from the syllabus.

Expectations for Student Participation & Written Work

HTE 641H requires a willingness on your part to think deeply and thoughtfully about difficult topics. Learning community within this course will be enhanced by your preparation in our course interactions online and in person. Your writing should also demonstrate your engagement with course goals along with appropriate use of Turabian Style (guidelines for document preparation, spelling, punctuation, names, numbers, special terms, titles of works, abbreviations, quotations, footnotes, works cited, and bibliography).

Late Assignments & Equity among Students

In a perfect world, we would all get assigned tasks completed on time. That is not our reality. When students miss assignment deadlines, things start to run amok. To avoid the pitfalls of procrastination and/or time management issues, I ask that you be proactive about talking with me if you will miss an assignment deadline. (“Proactive” means you talk with me prior to a deadline and before I have to talk with you about a late assignment.) I am willing to be flexible and that becomes more difficult the longer you wait to talk with me.

It is also important to me that I work for equity among my students. It is unfair to put on-time work and late work in the same grading category. Thus, students who complete their work on time, proactive students who turn their work in by a new deadline, and students who are incommunicado about late assignments are in different categories — this is a place where God’s reign is incomplete. I will deduct points for lateness, and may waive deductions if there is illness or other personal crisis:

- **new deadline negotiated *before the day something is due* = -1 point per day**
ex: assignment due Friday; Thursday, student asks for extension until Monday = -3 points
ex: assignment due Friday; Friday, student asks for extension until Saturday = see below
- **no new deadline negotiated *before the day something is due* = -5 points per day**
ex: assignment due Friday; student turns it in Monday without conversation = -15 points

Professor’s Commitment to Providing Feedback

I am committed to striking an appropriate balance between the timeliness and amount of written feedback. If you ever feel like the feedback is not sufficient for you to achieve the Course & Educational goals, please take the initiative to make an appointment with me so that I can provide you with additional feedback.

Communication

The AMBS Ethos & Communication Covenant

In our learning community at AMBS, we strive to create an ethos that fosters reconciling relationships so we are prepared for conflict’s inevitable appearance in our community. To this end, we will ground our conversations and discussions in AMBS’s Communication Covenant outlined below.

Frank, confident, and truthful conversation is an essential part of our common learning as we engage in conversations that can be animated and enriching, and at times difficult or disturbing. To these conversations we bring the length and breadth of our assumptions, hopes, opinions, and certainties into the formative power of Christian faith. Rather than avoid the issues around which passion and disagreement reside, we commit ourselves to remain in conversation with one another despite our differences as part of our calling as disciples of Jesus Christ (cf. Acts 15).

The AMBS learning community values contemplative, thoughtful presence as well as insightful comments and probing questions that demonstrate critical thinking. All understanding is partial and incomplete, given our limitations as creatures (Job 28; 1 Corinthians 13:8-9). Thus, we value the open exploration of different ideas and beliefs, knowing that growth and learning require openness toward one’s own presuppositions as well as openness to learn and gain from the richness of others’ perspectives and experiences as we

learn from and teach each other (cf. 1 Corinthians 12). We value respectful conversation as a unique gift of God in and to this class and as something that we create together as faculty and students.

Moodle

As a hybrid course, HTE 641H's primary interface, until we meet in June, is the course Moodle site making Moodle our primary communication conduit. Here are some "best practices" that I expect you to follow regarding Moodle.

1. **Help build (learning) community online** — We will have the chance to get to know each other during Hybrid Week, but in the month before that, it will be important that you take time to show up online and be tuned into the conversations happening there.
2. **Look for a weekly News Forum post/message from me** — Any message I send the class through the News Forum should automatically arrive in your AMBS e-mail inbox. (If that doesn't happen, then be sure you login to Moodle and check the News Forum on a weekly basis.)
3. **Use the "Housekeeping Forum" to ask questions about assignments** — If something on an assignment rubric isn't clear to you, then the chances are others have the same question. Posting your question online allows the community to benefit from your query and my response.
4. **Upload assignments to Moodle** — Do not, do not, do not e-mail me your assignments! Things get lost in e-mail, and they don't get lost in Moodle. The Assignment Upload Center is the place to look for upload links.

E-Mail & Office Hours

E-mail will be a significant communication tool for this course. I routinely read e-mail, although if you message arrives after 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, I will not reply until the following work day. (There will be some deviation from this pattern during the weeks that I am away from campus. See the Course Schedule document for more details.)

Several other options you have for contacting me during the course include:

1. dropping by or phoning me during office hours (Tuesdays 10:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.)
2. chatting during office hours via Moodle (see "Online Office Hours")
3. setting up another time to meet in person or talk by phone of Google Hangout

*Policies**

Auditors

AMBS does not permit students to audit hybrid courses.

Extension Policy

The dean and faculty have agreed to implement the course extension policy and to work hard as a faculty to meet institutional grading deadlines after the end of the term. Deadlines for assignments are listed in the Course Schedule below. If there is a reason why you need an extension beyond the end of the semester, you must secure a "Request for Extension" form,

* The current Academic Catalog and Student Handbook contain a full list of AMBS's academic policies.

available through the AMBS website (the full policy is on the second page of the form). This form must be submitted with signatures from the professor (me), your advisor, and the dean before the end of the business day on the last day of class for the term — July 31, 2015. I do not sign forms after this deadline. (Please note, in my classes, assignments completed with a formal course extension are still subject to deductions.)

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism results when writers, artists, or content developed deliberately present the ideas, language, or original work of another person as if they were their own without properly indicating the name of the original author and the original source of work. For written work the *Rules for Writers: A Brief Handbook* identifies three acts considered to be plagiarism:

1. failing to cite quotations and borrowed ideas
2. failing to enclose borrowed language in quotation marks
3. failing to put summaries and paraphrases in one's own words*

Plagiarism can occur in written work (printed or electronic documents), oral or visual presentations, or other media sources. Plagiarism does not require an intention to deceive, but may be the result of sloppy research or mismanagement of source materials. Whether intentional or unintentional, plagiarism is a serious ethical matter. At AMBS, we expect students to know how to cite their sources appropriately and accurately.†

Occurrences of plagiarism will result in a range of consequences determined by the professor. The first consequence is failure of the assignment. The student may be allowed to rewrite the assignment on a different topic, or the student may fail the course. By policy, course instructors report all occurrences of plagiarism to the academic dean and the student's adviser. For further details, see "Policy on Plagiarism" in the AMBS Academic Policies and Procedures Manual.

AMBS Copyright Policy

It is the policy of AMBS to comply with the provisions of US copyright law. Copyrighted materials are distributed in accordance with that law to members of the AMBS community to promote education and scholarship. If AMBS practices are challenged by a copyright holder, access to the material in question is suspended pending review of the AMBS Pedagogy Committee and the AMBS Administrative Cabinet. Complaints regarding AMBS use of copyrighted materials may be sent to copyrightcomplaint@ambs.edu. AMBS staff will respond promptly.

Course Evaluation

As part of AMBS's commitment to improve the quality of teaching and learning, we take seriously the feedback we receive from students in course evaluations. By seminary policy, students are required to complete an online course evaluation outside of class time in order to

* Diana Hacker, *Rules for Writers: A Brief Handbook*, 4th ed. (Boston: St. Martins/Bedford Press, 2000), 399.

† For more information, see: "How to Recognize Plagiarism" Indiana University Bloomington School of Education, last modified September 7, 2005, accessed July 31, 2014, <https://www.indiana.edu/~istd/definition.html>.

get credit for a class. Evaluations are optional for auditors. The online course evaluation will become available to students the last week of class at <http://evals.ambs.edu> where further instructions are available. Username and password are required. Students must complete the evaluation within one week of the last day of class to be in compliance. Students who wish to convert an NC (due to noncompliance) to a passing grade must pay a \$25 fee to complete the evaluation and to have the grade converted. Students who have technical difficulties with completing the evaluations should contact Brent Graber at (574) 296-6221 or bgraber@ambs.edu.