



**IS152 – INTEGRATION OF MINISTRY AND LOCAL THEOLOGIES
UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
SPRING 2010
Mondays 1:30-4:45pm
Context Location: Columbia Heights**

Professors:

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COURSE DESCRIPTION, METHODOLOGY, AND GOALS

“Integration of Ministry and Local Theologies” is the second integrative course for all MDIV and MARL students at United. (For United Students, this course bridges IS151 with the required Contextual Studies courses at UTS.) It is also an elective in Urban Ministry for other students within the Theological Consortium. This is a context-focused course. It employs social, narrative, and asset analysis within a particular community context for ministry. It involves students in utilizing tools for theological reflection in order to further discern vocational and spiritual dimensions in ministry.

Methodology:

Unlike other praxis methodologies that begin with an emphasize on analysis of needs/problems, we will use a method that first originates in community **asset and relationship identification/development**. Instead of beginning with “What is the problem here?”, contextual leadership begins with “What are the gifts/assets here?”. Ministry leadership as community asset and relationship development includes five characteristics:

- Its primary resources are assumed to be resident within the local community;
- Its praxis is that of discerning gifts and relationships for addressing issues of ministry within a given context;
- Its intended outcome is releasing the power of local resources and people;
- Its participants are individuals, associations and organizations, and institutions;
- Theological issues are present in every context; our task is to see God rather than bring God to that setting.

Course Goals:

- To encourage a vision of ministry concerned with building just and healthy neighborhoods/communities, addressing both the local and global dimensions of that concern within theological and sociological frameworks;
- To be exposed to a range of neighborhood/community realities and the claims this context makes on theological interpretation and the vocation of religious leadership;
- To reflect on how to enter and relate to a context for ministry;
- To learn theoretical, practical and theological tools for reading a context for ministry and responding to it theologically;
- To learn how to ask theological questions pertinent to a context of ministry;
- To reflect theologically on the nexus of vocational, sociological, and institutional factors resident in the contexts of ministry;;
- To engage in skills for dismantling racism, sexism, xenophobia, and classism.

Course Learning Objectives:

For students to develop broader competence in the following areas of ministry:

- a) Enhancing the reading of contexts in which ministry occurs;
- b) Theologically interpreting and reflecting on these contexts
- c) Integrating this theological reflection with the student's experience of ministry;
- d) Expanding spiritual resources for ministry;
- e) Developing skills for religious leadership

Course Format:

Class time will include worship, lectures, large and small group theological reflection on readings and experiences, as well as learning from people of the neighborhood whom we invite to the class.

II. REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS AND OTHER READINGS

Required Reading

Books:

Audinet, Jacques. *The Human Face of Globalization: From Multicultural to Mestizaje*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999, 2004.

hooks, bell. *Where We Stand: Class Matters*. New York: Routledge, 2000.

Sedmak, Clemens. *Doing Local Theology*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002.

Shearer, Tobin Miller and Jody Miller Shearer. *Enter the River: Healing Steps from White Privilege Toward Racial Reconciliation*. Herald Press, 1994.

Chapters (books on reserve):

Dudley, Carl. *Basic Steps Toward Community Ministry*. The Alban Institute, 1993. Introduction and Part I (pp. xi-42).

Holland, Joe and Peter Henriot, S.J. *Social Analysis: Linking Faith and Justice*. Orbis Books: 1983. Ch. 1 (pp. 7-30) & Afterword (pp. 95-109)

Smith, David I. *Learning from the Stranger*. Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2009. Chs. 5-6.

III. REQUIRED CLASS WORK

- ◆ Respectful, professional work in a ministry setting assigned by the instructors: 5 hours/week in setting, 1 hour/week in neighborhood. (N.B. According to school policy, withdrawals from the course are permitted prior to the eighth class session on a prorated basis. However, because of the contractual relationships in the field setting, anyone withdrawing at anytime should make certain to communicate with all parties involved before discontinuing neighborhood responsibilities.)
- ◆ Class attendance and full participation--including class presentations, respectful listening, and constructive conversation. (Only two (2) class absences allowed for extenuating circumstances.) Worth 25% of the final grade.
- ◆ Lead the class in a 10 minute opening worship. Worship may be designed using scripture and other spiritual readings and poetry, the arts, a particular dynamic and experience in your setting/neighborhood, and/or the assigned reading material. 10% of grade
- ◆ Seven short (2 double-spaced pages maximum, 12 pt font) reflection papers each worth 5% of final grade – total 35%
- ◆ One paper (eight to ten pages long) on theological reflection worth 30% of the final grade
- ◆ Participate in presentation to supervisors at end of the semester

This course is Pass/No Credit for all members of the class. Criteria for passing the course will be based on the following:

- ◆ Attendance and appropriate level of participation in class sessions and discussions. Absences will be considered in the final evaluation. A student cannot pass the course with more than two absences from class, unless the absences are due to extreme circumstances. (Extreme circumstances are extended severe illness of the student or those persons dependent upon the student, or a death among those close to the student. Instructors need to be notified for all absences from class. If you need to be absent from your contextual learning site, you need to notify your supervisor.);
- ◆ Satisfactory completion of reading material, neighborhood involvement, and written assignments;
- ◆ Overall quality of ability to translate course material and site experiences into self-reflective, self-critical written and dialogical communication with others;
- ◆ Ability to reflect theologically on a context of ministry and make appropriate ministerial decisions;
- ◆ Clarity and depth of your papers, based on the “thickness” of analytical description and the insight of theological reflection.
- ◆ Accountability to contextual site, neighborhood, & professional demeanor
- ◆ Ability to learn from mistakes, make ministerial decisions, and engage in spiritual discernment as related to context, vocational commitments, and a vision of ministry and religious leadership for just and healthy communities.

IV. CLASS SCHEDULE

February 8 Introduction

Due: Self-Disclosure Forms

Due: IS152 Integrative Placement Form

Introduction to Course

Presentations by neighborhood providers/sites and selection of contexts

ENTERING A CONTEXT FOR MINISTRY

February 15 Preparing to enter

Reading: Smith, *Learning from the Stranger*, chs. 5 and 6

Due: 1st reflection paper:

February 22 Doing local theology

Reading: Sedmak, Introduction – ch.2

March 1 Doing local theology

Reading: Sedmak, chs. 3-4

March 8 Doing local theology

Reading: Sedmak, chs. 5-end

Due: 2nd reflection paper

March 15 Asset identification and neighborhood analysis

Readings: C. Dudley, *Basic Steps Toward Community Ministry* Introduction and Part I (pp. xi-42).

Due: 3rd reflection paper

March 22 Reading week – no class

March 29 Social analysis

Readings: J. Holland and P. Henriot, *Social Analysis*, Ch. 1 (pp. 7-30) & Afterword (pp. 95-109)

Due: 4th reflection paper

April 5 Easter Monday – No class

SOCIAL ANALYSIS: EXPLORATION IN CONTEXT

April 12 Racism

Reading: Shearer

Due: 5th reflection paper

April 19 Classism

Reading: hooks

Due: 6th reflection paper

April 26 Globalization and Culture

Reading: Audinet, Intro to ch.6

May 3 Globalization and Culture

Reading: Audinet, ch. 7-end

Due: 7th reflection paper

CONCLUDING AND EXITING

May 10 Sharing what we learned with each other

Due: Completed final paper

May 17 Celebration and Conclusion

Program: Student Presentations to Supervisors and Reception for Supervisors

V. POLICIES

The UTS Masters Student Handbook can be found on line:

<http://mercury.unitedseminary.edu/student/Masters%20student%20handbook%202007-2008.pdf>

Because of the participatory, conversational character of the course, timely submissions of assignments are very important. Papers or projects requiring extensions beyond the last day of class will not be graded until JUNE. Requests for extension will have to be filed with the registrar's office with consent of the professor before the last day of the class. See UTS **Policy on Extensions** below or in the Masters Student Handbook (pp. 42-43):

All work in this class is expected to follow the **Copyright Compliance Policy** in the Masters Student Handbook (pp. 97-98).

All work in this class is expected to follow the **Academic Integrity Policy** in the Masters Student Handbook (p. 46).

All work in this class is expected to follow the **Inclusive Language Policy** in the Masters Student Handbook, with opportunities for discussion on differences (pp. 108-9).

All work in this class is expected to follow the **Policy Regarding Confidentiality and Disclosure within Small Group Settings** in the Masters Student Handbook (p. 119).

Regarding Professorial Boundaries, see **Statement on Boundaries** in the Masters Student Handbook (pp. 110-112).

VI. WRITING

All papers are to be typed, double spaced, in 12 point font.

Turabian 7th edition citation format is required (you will find this skill useful later on).

Please put your box number on all papers.

Appendix 1

Reflection papers:

1. Describe your own social location. As you enter a new place of ministry and a different social context, what aspects of your previous experience might be stretched or strained to accommodate your encounter with others. That is, what aspects of your identity based upon your prior experience within your own social context might be at odds with your attempt to understand and to relate to others in your new context of ministry. Conversely, what aspects of your identity based upon your prior experience within your own social context might be a resource for deepening understanding and relating to others in solidarity within your new context of ministry. At an emotional level, what kinds of feelings are you experiencing as you enter this new context of ministry and begin to meet others, e.g. fear, hope, tension, excitement?
2. Of what theological issues do you need to be mindful in your contextual setting, especially local theological issues?
3. Carl Dudley makes reference to the “invisible people” within a given social context. You may not have noticed these people at first. Or, you may have noticed them but without recognizing some or all of their assets. They may still be invisible to you. Look for them. Who are the “invisible people” in the social context of your place of ministry? What do you know or not know about them? What needs can you begin to identify? What assets? Which do you know more about: needs or assets? What more might you want to know in order to be in greater solidarity with them?
4. Using Holland and Henriot’s questions as a guide, identify and analyze power sources: political figures, state economic issues, religious convictions, cultural and ethnic values. What is your relationship to these power sources?
5. Reflect on how your ministry context reflects and/or responds to racism. To what extent, if any, does your context or site express institutional racism and/or cultural racism? If so, give a specific example, and explain. If not, describe what your context is doing that is dismantling racism. What is on your role in this?
6. Describe the class stratification (if any) you see at your context. Do you see any class privilege? If so, describe it, using a concrete example (change names if necessary). How are you as a volunteer and/or minister perceived in the class hierarchy in your context? How does that compare with the class context you live at home and as a student in seminary?
7. Describe the different combinations of cultures that you find exhibited by the people and practices within your context – perhaps exhibited within a single individual in your context.

Final paper: What theological issues have you discovered in Columbia Heights in relationship with its race, class, and cultural patterns -- in other words, what is God saying here? How are your contexts responding to this? How do you see yourself in relationship to this? What issues of vocation have you discovered as a result of the work you have done in this course?