

SENIOR SEMINAR ON INTERRELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP – SM 2013

Spring Term 2017

Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Professors: Christine Hong and Cliff Kirkpatrick

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The Senior Seminar at LPTS focuses on an area of theological study related to the practice of ministry, providing M.Div. students in their final year of study an opportunity to integrate the various elements of their theological education in a way that contributes to the ongoing discernment of their vocation. Students will produce a substantial essay or project that brings the methods of theological study to bear on problems and opportunities in ministry and that expresses the student's theological vision. The grading for the senior seminar is done on a pass/fail basis. The topic for the Spring 2017 seminar is Interreligious Leadership.

This seminar will offer students opportunities to gain skills in interreligious engagement as it is practiced in faith communities, in neighborhoods, and in community organizations. The course assumes that interreligious encounter takes place at different levels – personal and interpersonal, in neighborhoods, among members of different religious traditions, and in ministry with intercultural and interreligious life. We will explore the creation, operation, and leadership of interreligious projects in our community and the broader society.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of the seminar students will have grown in the:

1. Ability to describe and articulate important characteristics of the of ecumenical and interreligious movements and of the history, traditions, practices, and perspectives of other Christian traditions and other faith communities; [QEP SLO 1b]
2. Ability to articulate, orally and in writing, their own theological perspective relative to diverse Christian communities and to communities of other faiths, including a theology of ministry, mindful of their distinctive ecclesial tradition and the global, ecumenical, multicultural, multi-religious contexts of contemporary ministry; [QEP SLO 2]
3. Ability to participate constructively in interreligious and intra-Christian dialogue and activity, with appreciation and respect, as evidenced by a demonstrated ability to articulate the views of their dialogue partners and to identify similarities and differences with their own; and [QEP SLO 3]

4. Ability to exercise leadership in interreligious and ecumenical movements and organizations in response to human need, ecological sustainability, and peace with justice. [QEP SLO 3]

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. *Preparation and participation:* Students are expected to attend all seminar meetings, read all assigned material, and enter into thoughtful discussion of the matters the class takes up. The class itself will be an ecumenical and interreligious “laboratory” in which students from different other students of diverse Christian traditions and from partners from other faith communities who will join our class from time to time and invite us into their faith communities and organizations working for interreligious cooperation. Students will shape their own theology, understanding of ministry, and approach to interreligious leadership through this interactive process. Students are partners to one another in their work for this course, and so conscientious preparation and active participation for each seminar meeting is essential.
2. *Senior Seminar project:* The culminating project of the seminar will show the fruits of an in-depth encounter with people of other faiths and with interreligious movements and a substantive reflection on the implications of that encounter for ministry in one’s own community of faith. In this Senior Seminar students will design projects towards ecumenical and interreligious life and learning for a community of their choice. These communities can be their ministerial contexts (congregations, campus ministries, chaplaincies, non-profits, etc.) or part of civic and public life. Students will present their senior seminar projects in class during weeks 11-12. Projects should be implementable. A rubric will be shared in class.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

BOOKS:

[Bud Heckman](#), *Interactive Faith: The Essential Interreligious Community-Building Handbook* (Woodstock, VT: SkyLight Paths, 2010), Paperback: 304 pages, ISBN-10: 1594732736, ISBN-13: 978-1594732737

David R. Brockman and Ruben L.F. Habito, eds., *The Gospel Among World Religions: Christian Ministry, Theology, and Spirituality in a Multifaith World*, (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2010), Paperback: 256 pages, ISBN-10: 1570758999, ISBN-13: 978-1570758997

Kujawa-Holbrook, Sheryl. *God Beyond Borders: Interreligious Learning Among Faith Communities*, Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publishing, 2014. ISBN: 978-71-62564-458-9

Patel, Eboo. *Interfaith Leadership*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 2016), Paperback, ISBN 978-0807033623

CHAPTER FROM BOOK:

Lebaron, Michelle. *Conflict across Cultures: A Unique Experience of Bridging Differences*, pp. 11-22. Nicholas Brealey, 2006 (on CAMS)

SCHEDULE

February 8, 2017

Interfaith Mapping and the Personal Journey of Interreligious Engagement

What is your ecumenical and interfaith context? What is your history with ecumenical and interfaith relations? How has your experience at LPTS changed your understanding of ministry in relation to ecumenical and interfaith relations? What are your course expectations? What is your personal and familial context and social location?

Readings: Patel, Introduction and Conclusion, pp. 1-16 and 165-170; Pluralism Project website on Louisville, <http://pluralism.org/landscape/louisville/>

Assignment: Complete and bring to class session on February 15

- your Interfaith Mapping exercise
- a mini-exegesis of one of the New Testament texts identified by Brockman and Habito, pp. 47-51

February 15, 2017

Theologies of Religions and Principles of Dialogue

How do we develop our personal theologies of religious pluralism? What principles of dialogue should guide our relations with people of other faiths?

Readings: Heckman, Introduction, pp. 1-20 & 231-239; Brockman and Habito, pp. 17-36 & 47-53

Assignments: Bring to class your completed Interfaith Mapping exercise and your mini-exegesis of New Testament texts about relations with people of other faiths.

February 22, 2017

Interreligious and Ecumenical Engagement

We will explore the history of the ecumenical and interreligious movement. Who are the local and national leaders in the interfaith and ecumenical movements? What can we learn from their organizational histories and backgrounds? What are some successful examples of partnerships and institutions? What is the lexicon of the interfaith movement? How have you experienced the larger interfaith movement?

Readings: Heckman pp. 23-154

March 1, 2017

Conflicts, Resolutions, & Leadership

As religious leaders, how do we assess cultural and religious conflict in our communities? How do we cooperate for resolution? What are some of the major approaches to resolving intercultural and interfaith conflict in our time?

Readings: LeBaron, pp. 11-22; Kujawa-Holbrook, chapters four and five; Samuel P. Huntington, "A Clash of Civilizations" in *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1993 (<http://online.sfsu.edu/mroozbeh/CLASS/h-607-pdfs/S.Huntington-Clash.pdf>); *A Common Word between Us and You: Summary and Abridgment* (<http://www.acommonword.com/the-acw-document/>)

March and early April

Histories, narratives, and realities of religious communities

How do different religious practitioners and religious leaders in our communities experience interreligious engagement? What are the salient histories, narratives, and intersections for different religious communities? During these four weeks will engage with different religious communities at their houses of worship and hear from community leaders in the civic, religious, and activist spheres regarding the role of religion in public life, managing community and group conflict and crisis, deepening personal faith traditions and practices, etc.

Readings: Heckman, pp. 157-190. Students are urged to explore the web sites of those groups we will visit. The groups with which we visit and/or engage will also provide reading materials in advance about their communities. .

Visits and Dialogues:

These four sessions will actually take us away from campus to visit and dialogue with other religious communities and with organizations that exhibit the importance of interfaith leadership for social justice and civic wellbeing. On the weeks in which we visit the temple and the mosque, we will need to change our class session schedule to accommodate their worship services on Friday of those weeks instead of our usual class day of Wednesdays. Our proposed dates and groups we plan to visit are as follows:

- March 8, 2017 – Interfaith Paths for Peace
- March 10, 2017 – The Temple of Reformed Judaism
- March 29, 2017 – Americana Community Center
- April 7, 2017 – River Road Mosque

April 12, 2017

Assessing Communities: Power and Privilege

Deepening interreligious commitments requires participants to examine histories, structures, and systems that perpetuate inequities, including racial and religious injustices and dynamics of power and privilege. How do we understand how power, privilege, and other systems that undergird our interactions with different religious peoples in the United States?

Readings and media: We the People, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j9apMRjugSA>; Mosaic or Melting Pot, <https://vimeo.com/28234036>; We are All Muslim, <https://vimeo.com/28234036>; Examples of Christian Privilege, <http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2012/05/list-of-examples-of-christian-privileg/>; The Problem with Religious Privilege, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/walker-bristol/the-problem-with-religiou_b_4892980.html; Kujawa-Holbrook, Introduction

April 19, 2017

Designing Dialogue Cooperatively

How so we design deep dialogue? What are the limitations to a dialogical process? How do we cooperate with community faith and religious leadership and activists? How do we facilitate dialogue in transformative ways? This session will give students the tools to design and facilitate interreligious and intercultural dialogue that will strive to cultivate relationships towards community transformation.

Readings: Case studies to be assigned from Pluralism.org.; Patel, chapters four and six, pp. 89-105 and 135-152.

April 23, 2017

Special Session on April 23 with Dalai Lama

The class will attend the public lecture by the Dalai Lama at the Yum Center on Common Human Values, Non-violence, and Compassion. This will be followed by a class dinner and conversation on interreligious dialogue for the common good and on the role of the global Compassion Project. There may also be other opportunities related to the Festival of Faiths in which we may wish to participate as a class.

April 26, and May 3, 2017

Interfaith Activism and Student Project Presentations

Using case studies from the Harvard Pluralism Project as well as our own projects, we will work in groups to assess and build projects for activism towards mutual transformation.

LPTS COURSE POLICIES

Use of Inclusive Language

In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible's images for God. More discussion about inclusive language can be accessed from the Academic Support Center and from the section of the LPTS web site with information for current students.

Academic Honesty

All work turned in to the instructors is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Use of another's language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy, and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and may result in failure of the course. Two occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues related to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For more information, see the Policy for Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.

Special Accommodations

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center during the first two weeks of a semester (or before the semester begins) and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Citation Policy

Citations in your papers should follow Seminary standards, which are based on these guides:

American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 6th ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2010.

Turabian, Kate L., Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. 8th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

The Chicago Manual of Style. 16th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center.

Attendance Policy

According to the Seminary catalog, students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify the instructor of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. Three or more absences (1/4 of the course) may result in a low or failing grade in the course.