“The philosophers [theologians?] have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to change it.”

Our goal is to investigate the concrete situation of the poor and formulate a personal response that is appropriate for us as followers of the gospel. One aspect of this is to think critically about poverty in our society and its causes, recognizing that the causes lie more often in the economic, political, and other structures of society than in the failings of individuals. Another aspect is to provide opportunities for on-site contact with urban ministries. Reflecting on these experiences, the student will then formulate (both theologically and programmatically) possibilities for ministry among the poor.

There will be two types of class sessions:
(a) Lectures and class discussions on theological, social, and ministry aspects of urban problems.
(b) “Urban experience” classes which take place at the site of some urban ministry, followed by reflection on that experience.
These types of class will generally alternate.

We will divide into working groups for some assignments

There will be papers on theological and social aspects of urban poverty, and there will be an individual written reflection on each experience class.

Course requirements -

1. Your attendance and presence.
   The goal is thoughtful questions and observations.
   (Class participation = 20%)

2. Seven reflection papers on experiences.
   3 pages, each due the week following the urban ministry experience.
   Use the outline for reflection papers below.
   (6% each; lowest grade #1–#6 will be discarded)

3. Proposal for your individual ministry experience.
   One page.
   Describe where, when, what. It must be volunteer hands-on ministry and must be with the
urban poor; must be a minimum of 3 hours. It must be a ministry that you do not normally engage in. Information gathering does not count as part of your experience time. The intent is to engage as much as possible with the target population of the ministry. Your proposal must be approved before you actually do your individual ministry experience. If you wish, several may participate in the same volunteer experience as a group.

(The March 7 class will not be held to compensate for this obligation.)

If you need help finding a location to volunteer, see me.

(4%)  

4. Reflection on One Nation, Underprivileged
5-7 pages.
Summarize Rank’s discussion of individual and structural factors of poverty and individual responsibility vs. shared responsibility.
Have you or a close family member experienced poverty? If so, describe (welfare, food stamps, WIC, etc.)
How does poverty in US in general affect you personally now, directly or indirectly?
Do you find Rank’s discussion of the Judeo-Christian ethic and civic principles relevant? Why or why not? (Chap. 5) Why are they not more widely acted upon? (p. 163)
Do you accept the validity of Rank’s “new paradigm”? (Chap. 7) Explain.
Discuss Rank’s proposals. (Chap. 8) Would they be effective? Are they practical? Which are more important? What would be required to implement them? What barriers prevent them from being implemented?
What could you personally do to alleviate poverty in the US?
(9%)  

5. Reflection on There Are No Children Here.
Class discussion.
Read the book with urban ministry in mind. What are the needs (physical, social, spiritual) of the project residents? What urban ministries might address their immediate needs? What kind of ministries might be more effective over the long-term? Make specific references to the book.
(Grade included in class discussion grade)
   Develop a budget for a “typical” poor family, based on information to be provided. The class may be divided into groups, each of which will work together on this and turn in a single resulting budget.
   (Same grade for everyone in the group - 6%)

7. Exposition on the theological basis of social ministry (based on class discussion and Sider).
   5-7 pages.
   Develop your own theological foundation for urban ministry, in conversation with Sider and class discussions. How do the discussions of structural evil/oppression in Rank, Sider, and class compare, particularly in the context of US urban poverty? Describe your own concept of sin and redemption in a social context. How do you understand poverty, theologically? Describe the role and meaning of Jesus/Christ in social ministry. Discuss the proposals in Sider for individual and social efforts to reduce poverty (chap. 9-11). Explain how your theology can provide motivation for engagement in social ministry and guidance for an ethical basis of social ministry.
   Be sure that the paper is:
   (a) biblical (grounded in biblical principles),
   (b) concrete (applicable to real life situations),
   (c) personal (incorporates your own experience), and
   (d) contemporary (applicable to today's urban situation).
   (10%)

8. Final “thought-experiment” on urban ministry.
   10-15 pages.
   Individual assignment. Develop a model for an urban ministry. Use the following outline.
   Imagine that you are an associate pastor in an inner-city church. In your neighborhood, 33% of the families are living below the poverty level, with the rest not far above. About 70% of the families are headed by a single female. About 50% of the adults have not completed high school. About 85% of the children receive lunch subsidies. The crime rate is not the highest in the city, but is very high. Other typical urban problems abound.
   Part 1. Describe a particular urban issue in this neighborhood, and a rationale for selecting that particular issue to address. Describe the issue from a sociological point of view. What changes would need to be made in our society to ultimately resolve the issue?
   Part 2. Develop a strategy (process) for establishing a ministry relating to people who are affected by your chosen issue. The goal of the ministry is not to solve problems, but to be faithful in the gospel with those affected. This means that the ministry must make a positive difference in their lives. Be creative, but concrete, specific, and personal. Write a vision and mission statement for the ministry. Define goals and objectives, including a timeline. Develop a budget for income and expenses, including in-kind donations. Determine the organizational structure (church board, separate corporation, 501(c)(3), etc.?) How do you measure success? (Use experiences and class discussions. Keep your ministry focused; don’t overreach)
   Part 3. Relate the ministry that you have developed to its underlying theological basis. How is your ministry faithful to the gospel?
   (15%)
Outline for reflection papers (includes individual experience)

Number each section as follows:

Section 1. What happened?
- Describe where we went, and what you experienced there.
- (For paper #7 on your volunteer experience, describe what your volunteer activities were.)
- How did the experience make you feel?
- What is the target population?
- What levels (individual, structural, spiritual) is the ministry operating at?
- Compare the mission statement of the ministry with its practice.
  One half to one page.
  Keep any description of the activities of the ministry brief.

Section 2. How does the experience inform my theology?
- What is the theological basis for the ministry?
  Base it on a scriptural passage that you feel is specific to the ministry
  Explain why you feel this passage is relevant. - Matt. 25:31-46 is out.
- Is the Christian witness of the ministry explicit or implicit?
- Is your own theology of ministry altered or reinforced by this ministry?
  One half to one page.

Section 3. What are the implications for my own ministry?
- What possibilities for ministry do you see for your own personal ministry based on this experience?
- How are those possibilities an outgrowth of the theology in section 2?
  (For paper #7 describe what you learned from your experience that might be applicable to your own ministry.)
  One half to one page.

Late paper policy:
- Papers turned in late - grade lowered one letter (A to B, B+ to C+, etc.) when late.
  (Late is defined as turned in any time after the class period that it is due.)
- Papers will be accepted more than a week late only in exceptional circumstances.
  Exception: the final paper must be turned in on time.

  “Give justice to the weak and the orphan;
  maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute.
  Rescue the weak and the needy;
  deliver them from the hand of the wicked.” Psalm 82:3-4
C-650 The Church and the Urban Poor - Spring 2013

**Required texts**
Alex Kotlowitz, *There Are No Children Here*, Anchor Books
Mark Rank, *One Nation, Underprivileged*, Oxford University Press

**Supplemental reading**

**Theology:**
James Cone, *Black Theology & Black Power*
Stephen Charles Mott, *Biblical Ethics and Social Change*
Walter Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel*
Walter Wink, *Naming the Powers; Unmasking the Powers, Engaging the Powers*
Walter Wink, *The Powers That Be*
John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus*

**Structural:**
Robert Bellah, *The Good Society*
Michael Harrington, *The Other America*
Harris & Curtis, ed., *Locked in the Poorhouse*
Douglas Massey & Nancy Denton, *American Apartheid*
Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*
William Ryan, *Blaming the Victim*
Michael Sherraden, *Assets and the Poor*
David Wagner, *What’s Love Got To Do With It?*
William J. Wilson, *When Work Disappears*
David Shipler, *The Working Poor*

**Individual:**
Kathryn Edin & Laura Lein, *Making Ends Meet*
Johnathan Kozol, *Rachel and Her Children*
Katherine Newman, *No Shame In My Game*

**Organizeing:**
Carl S. Dudley, *Basic Steps Toward Community Ministry*
Gregory Pierce, *Activism That Makes Sense*
Saul Alinsky, *Rules For Radicals*

**Ministry:**
Ray Bakke, *The Urban Christian*
Nile Harper, *Urban Churches, Vital Signs*
Dieter Hessel, *Social Ministry*
John McKnight, *The Careless Society*
Jill Shook, *Making Housing Happen*
Jim Wallis, *Faith Works*
Web sites:

About.com  
www.nonprofit.about.com
Association of Fundraising Professionals  
www.nsfre.org
Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University  
www.philanthropy.iupui.edu
Center for Public Justice - Charitable choice:  
www.Cpjustice.org
Chronicle of Philanthropy  
www.philanthropy.com
The Foundation Center  
www.fdncenter.org
The Grantsmanship Center  
www.tgci.com
GuideStar  
www.guidestar.org
HandsNet  
www.handsnet.org
Independent Sector  
www.indepsec.org
IRS – information on 501(c)(3) designation  
www.irs.ustreas.gov >Charities & Non-Profits>Charitable Orgs
National Center for Nonprofit Boards  
www.boardsource.org
Nonprofit Genie  
www.genie.org
Nonprofit Times  
www.nptimes.com
Urban Institute  
www.urbaninstitute.org
TechMission  
www.urbanministry.org
Indiana Youth Institute  
www.IYI.org
POLIS Center/SAVI  
www.savi.org
SCHEDULE:

Jan. 24 – Introduction to Urban Ministry/Social Systems

Jan. 31 – Urban Experience # 1 (Westminster Neighborhood Min)

Feb. 7 – Urban Poverty
  Reading – One Nation (Chap. 1-3)
  Paper due – Reflection on experience # 1

Feb 14 – Urban Experience # 2 (Damien Center)

Feb 21 – Neighborhoods
  Reading – There Are No Children Here (With discussion)
  Paper due – Reflection on experience # 2

(Feb. 28 – Reading week – no class)

(March 7 – no class: compensation for UE #7)

March 14 – Urban Experience # 3 (Shepherd Community Center)
  Paper due – Proposal for individual experience

March 21 – Urban Ministry
  Reading – One Nation (Chap. 4-9)
  Paper due – Reflection on experience # 3

March 28 – (no class: Happy Easter!)

Apr. 4 – Urban Experience # 4 (Edna Martin Christian Center)
  Paper due – One Nation; Welfare budget; Welfare simulation

Apr. 11 – Urban Experience # 5 (Dayspring)
  Paper due – Reflection on experience # 4

Apr. 18 – Theology of Urban Ministry
  Reading – Rich Christians
  Paper due – Reflection on experience # 5

Apr. 25 – Urban Experience # 6 (North United Methodist Church)
  Paper due – Theology of Urban Ministry

May 2 – Wrap-up/reflections
  Paper due – Reflection on experience # 6; Reflection on your own urban experience (#7)

May 9 – Final paper due
### Class Sessions and Assignments

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<td>Feb. 7</td>
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<td>Rank (Chap. 4-9)</td>
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