Syllabus: C-757: Faith, Wealth, and Community Leadership
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Spring Semester, 2008, Tuesdays 6 pm – 8:45 pm, room 161

Description: This course is an experimental seminar, not a lecture course. The aim is to engage in theological reflection about the ways in which faith, wealth/resources, and community leadership interact as faithful people go about trying to make creative and effective use of the gifts God has given them for the common good of their communities and the mission of their faith traditions. We will examine "exemplars" in philanthropy and religious leadership, biblical resources, the situation of the mainline Protestant churches compared to other faith traditions, and creative congregations/parishes as the "stuff" for theological reflection. This will be done through readings, videos, and interviews. The outline below is not set in stone: if we find that we are trying to get through too much, we will adjust the schedule. Auditors are very welcome!

Requirements: Being a seminar geared to engagement with a topic, there will be no final exam. Instead, there are four requirements that will count in your final grade:

1. Reading and Participation in Discussion, 33%.

Your presence and participation will weigh substantially in the grade for this class. Each week, you should have completed the assigned readings and be prepared to participate thoughtfully in a discussion of them. Expect your grade to drop if you miss more than two class sessions, are frequently late, or appear not to have read the assignments.

2. Short papers, 33%.

Each week of class, starting with the third week, you should turn in a short paper, which will be about the class discussions: the first page a description of the highlights of the class discussion, and the second your reflections on it - what you found most important or revelatory for you that you want to remember. In other words, page 1 of the weekly paper should describe the main issues and insights from the previous week’s discussion and reading – not in the form of listing topics covered, but of summarizing the most important content. DO NOT use phrases like, “First we talked about, and then we talked about …” Instead, it should be more like, “The most important issue was about money as a form of trust.” You will need to take good notes during class. Page 1 should not include your further opinions or reflections on the issues – that comes on page 2. On page 2, reflect on what you found most important, your growing edges, and your further thinking about key insights. Each paper must be turned in the week after the class session and reading that it covers – no skipping a string of weeks and then doing 3 or 4 papers at once. Note: more than 2 pages at a time will not be accepted. The total number of short papers is 8.
3. **Oral Report, 33%**

Pick *one* of the following two assignments to research:

**Option A:** Congregational and/or community leadership: Pick a religious or community group (e.g., church, parish, synagogue, temple, mosque, not-for-profit of another kind) that you think is doing creative work and interview at least three "exemplars" about what they are doing in the way of utilizing their resources on behalf of the common good. Your report should include your theological reflection about what you find.

**Option B:** Stewardship: Pick a denomination or congregation and find out what they do to foster stewardship. Share with us a description of what they do, including any resources they use (or make available), and your assessment of its quality, including its theological content (or lack thereof). You should interview at least one person about current activities and trends.

The report should be 20-30 minutes.

or 4. **Alternative Proposals:** If you want to do an alternative project to the short papers or the oral report, such as a term paper (15-20 pages), you should negotiate this with the instructor by the third class (Feb. 5).
Schedule: Subject to adjustment to adapt to reality!

Jan. 22  First class: Introductions, Projects, Syllabus
Jan. 29  2. Carnegie; Lynn, Brueggemann, Lowry essays
Feb. 5   3. Wheeler, Johnston, Haughey, Webb essays
Feb. 19  Reading Week: No Class
Mar. 4   6. Haughey, pp. 62-end
Mar. 11  7. Gardner: *Responsibility at Work*: Intro + essays 3, 6, 7, & 8
Mar. 18  Holy Week: No Class
Mar. 25  8. Speller: *Walkin the Talk*
Apr. 1  9. Bader-Saye: *Following Jesus in a Culture of Fear*
Apr. 22 12. Reading to be chosen by class & oral reports
Apr. 29 13. Reading to be chosen by class and oral reports
May 6   Exam Week: Class if needed to finish reports or make up a snow day
Selected Bibliography

Required Reading


Carnegie, Andrew. *The Gospel of Wealth* (Cent. on Philanthropy booklet or can be found at [http://alpha.furman.edu/~benson/docs/carnegie.htm](http://alpha.furman.edu/~benson/docs/carnegie.htm)).


General Bibliography: Faith and Money

Books and Articles


Dalai Lama, et. al. *Imagine All the People: A conversation With the Dalai Lama on Money, Politics, and Life as it Could Be.*

Dodge, Mary. *Sermons to the Clergy* (Boston: Estes and LauRiat, 1877).


Jones, Clifford A., ed. *From Proclamation to Practice: A Unique African-American Approach to Stewardship*.


Miller, Lynn A. *Just in Time: Stories of God's Extravagance*.


**Videos**


"*Irwin Miller: Portrait of a Trustee*" Produced and directed by James Ault NCCJ, 71 Fifth Ave., Suite 1100, New York, NY 10003, 212-206-0006. 29m or James Ault, 75 Dryads Green, Northampton, MA 01066.

"*Soul of the City*" celebrating the life and public witness of San Fernando Cathedral, San Antonio, Texas. Produced and Directed by Adán Medrano. 28m JM Communications,713-524-1382, fax 1383, http://www.jmcommunications.com

"*The Stewardship of All of Life*" Produced by Ted Yaple and distributed by the Presbyterian Publishing House, 1-800-524-2612 and order PREM #710312.