I. Course Objectives:

The purpose of this course is 1) to teach integrative modes of learning about ministry, vocation, pastoral identity, and communal practice and 2) to reinforce the values of collegiality and of peer learning for future work in ministry.

The focus of integrative study this semester will be the interconnectedness of God’s creation. Through readings and discussion we will examine racism/antiracism, including white power and privilege, poverty, classism, war, and multiculturalism. We will examine these issues from historical, biblical, theological-ethical, and socio-political perspectives, considering their implications for congregational life.

But the central objectives are to discover the characteristics of inclusive community and to learn how to create one.

II. Course Policies:

Regular attendance is expected, and you are reminded that CTS has a policy that stipulates missing more than 25% of class time will automatically result in a failing grade. While genuine emergencies and significant illnesses will be treated with compassion, you should make this class a priority throughout the semester. Please contact the instructor as soon as you know that you will be absent in order to make arrangements to make up the work that you miss. Excessive absences will result in a lower, or even failing, grade.

Plagiarism is a serious offense. You are expected to be familiar with and to abide by the seminary’s policy on plagiarism and cheating. If you have any questions about when and how to cite sources, please see the instructor. The front desk of CTS library and your student planner have helpful materials.

Free and open discussion is essential to the educational process. You are expected to treat one another in a respectful manner, especially when you disagree. You are also expected to maintain confidentiality with regard to in-class discussions. If you want to reflect with others who are not members of our class on issues that come up in class, please do so in a way that does not identify specific individuals.

III. Textbooks and Other Resources:


These and other resources are on www.inside.cts.edu.

IV. Process

This class will be primarily a discussion, reflection, and processing experience. We will critically engage materials about how humans interact in and with God’s good creation as the skeleton on which to flesh out the body of a community. You will be expected to bring your reflections on your papers and on the readings as your primary contribution to the conversation.

For most weeks, two students will serve as discussion starters. The task of the discussion starters is (1) to summarize the readings, and (2) to take a lead in asking questions (and doing other things to provoke discussion).

V. Grading

Although ungraded, the 1 page reflection papers are required. They will assist your class discussion. As such, they will count for 25% of the final grade (thus if you have them all as assigned, you earn 25% of an A grade).

Your papers should be one-page, double spaced.

Class discussion and participation will count for 50% of the final grade (balanced between being prepared, being willing to be self-disclosing, open to new ideas, encouraging the conversation of your peers, and supporting a learning environment.

The class presentations on Sessions 8 and 9 will count for 25% of your final grade.

VI. Course Outline (with reading assignments):

Before the first session of class, complete this exercise. Bring these with you on the first day of class.

Cultural Identity Exercise (inside.cts.edu)
Privilege and Disadvantage Inventory(inside.cts.edu)

Session 1 (Jan. 23)

Getting acquainted.

Intro to peer learning and the interconnectedness of all creation.

Discussion of ground rules for conversation and confidentiality

Discussion of R.O.P.E.S. and “When Someone is Offended By Your Comments” (inside.cts.edu)

Discuss Cultural Identity Exercise.

Discuss Privilege and Disadvantage Inventory
Session 2 (Jan. 30)

Assignment for Session 2: Read Peggy McIntosh, “Invisible Knapsack,” “Why Is It So Difficult to Talk about Race?” and “White Privilege” (Anti-Racism Study Pack) (inside.cts.edu)

Small group discussion on white privilege. Where do you see it in our society, in our churches, and in the seminary? Clarify. What theological claims can you identify?

Discussion starter: ___________________

Session 3 (Feb. 6)


Bring one page of reflections on what in particular caught your attention in these articles—what questions and concerns do they raise for you

Share what you wrote about the History of Racism in the US.

Discussion starter: _________________

Session 4 (Feb. 13)


Thinking about sin and evil. Share ideas from your papers. Group conversation about the church – does it seem a mix of good and evil? How so or how not? Consider white privilege in the mix.

Discussion starter: _________________

Session 5 (Feb. 20)

Assignment for Session 5: Read DLT, chapter 2 (22-56) and chapter 3 (57-69)

Group conversation linking ethical ideas and peer learning. What good are peers?

Discussion starter: _________________

Reading Week (Feb 25-Mar 1) No Class

Session 6 (Mar 6)

Assignment for session 6: DLT, chapter 4 (73-83 [intro to global relations]). Bring 1 page noting what new information or thoughts this chapter stimulated
Discussion on interconnectedness of creation, global relations, and our congregations. Share information and thoughts from DLT. What about the hermeneutical circle?

Discussion starter: ___________________

Session 7 (Mar.13)

Assignment for session 7: Read DLT, chapter 5 (84-100 [poverty]) and 6 (101-121 [war]).

Group conversation on interrelatedness of racism, white privilege, poverty, war, and our congregations. Where will you find challenge, support, and companionship in future ministry as you continue to wrestle with these ideas?

Discussion starter: ___________________

Session 8 (Mar. 20)

Assignment for session 8: Read DLT, pages 143-147 and 203-206 (everyone read); chapter 7 (environment pp. 122-141) in DLT.

Discussion starter: ___________________

Easter Recess: March 25-29: No Class

Session 9 (Apr 3)

Assignment for session 9: Read chapter 14 in DLT (pp. 226-244) and write 1 page of reflections.

Discussion starter: ________________

Session 10 (Apr 10)

Assignment for Session 10: Read chapter 11 in DLT (pp. 183-2000) and write one page of reflections on implications for your ministry.

Share your thoughts about the different topics. Group discussion on implications these ideas have for your ministry. How will you continue to think about ethical ideas with peers? Can you recall a time the light of the Gospel was cast on a situation of racism, white privilege, poverty, war, or ecological abuse in your church? How might you facilitate such an event in the future?

Discussion starter: ________________

Session 11 (April 17)

Assignment for session 11: Review “Continuum on Becoming an Anti- Racist, Multicultural Institution” and apply to your congregation. (inside.cts.edu)
Each student: Describe your congregation/denomination. What do we need to know in order to better understand your religious organizational and spiritual life? Discuss and categorize where your congregation is on anti-racism.

Group discussion of the new ideas and thoughts about liturgy and white privilege.

Discussion starter: ___________________

**Session 12 (April 24)**

Assignment for session 12: Read Traci West, *Disruptive Christian Ethics: When Racism and Women’s Live Matter*, chapter 4, “Liturgy: Church Worship and White Superiority.” Bring 1 page of new thoughts or ideas from this chapter. (inside.cts.edu)

Group Discussion of new ideas and thoughts about liturgy and white privilege

Discussion starter: ___________________

**Session 13 (May 1)**


Discussion of future ministries. What concrete ideas have stirred in you, especially in regard to racism in our culture and in the church?

How can you keep connected to your peers for support?

Discussion starter: ___________________

**Exam Week:** no meeting.