

School of Theology and Ministry
Seattle University
Spring Quarter, 2009

STMM 560- Ministry in a Multicultural Context

Pigott Building, Room 307

Credits: 3

Dates: March 28-29, 2009; May 1-3, 2009

Instructor:

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206-296-5324

Office Hours: By advance appt.

TEXTS

Required Reading:

De Young, Emerson, Yancey and Kim. *United by Faith: the Multiracial Congregation as an Answer to the Problem of Race*. Oxford: Oxford Press, 2003.

Deymaz, Mark. *Building a Healthy Multi-ethnic Church*. San Francisco: John Wiley, 2007.

Loewen, James W. *Lies My Teacher Told Me*. New York: Touchstone, 1996.

Jeanette Rodriguez and Ted Fortier. *Cultural Memory. Resistance, Faith, and Identity*. Austin: University of Austin, 2007.

Coursepak available through Seattle University Reprographics.

Course Description

The course explores the dimensions of culture and the relationship between culture and ministry. Participants will identify their own cultural and co-cultural lenses, gain an understanding of power differences as they are expressed culturally, begin to explore communication differences, and enter a mini-cultural immersion. They will reflect on how culture impacts theology and spiritual expression. They will begin to develop a ministerial identity and practice that embraces cultural diversity within a ministerial context.

Prerequisite: STMM 553.

Course Objectives

- 1) Familiarize students with how cultural identity, including religious identity, is constituted;
- 2) Challenge students to identify their own social location, which may include deconstructing personal and cultural biases and assumptions (including religious and theological ones) with the hope of increasing empathy toward communities different than their own.
- 3) Develop the competencies of critical theological reflection.
- 4) Develop ability to incorporate power and social analysis in ministerial settings.

Course Requirements

Attendance and Class Participation- 30%of Grade.

The nature of the course makes it particularly important for students to attend each class session. Please note students reveal their progress through participation in mutual discussion and interaction. Students are required to demonstrate effective group skills by actively contributing to group discussions and using constructive peer feedback that includes honesty, challenge, deep listening, and mutual respect. Excellent participation also includes timely reading of the assigned texts and verbal contributions that reflect *critical* theological and cultural assessment as well as understanding of power dynamics. Students will be invited to share personal stories, listen to others with Pastoral Care Skills, and negotiate conflict within the context of the classroom. Students, will be invited to share symbols, art, music, etc. in an introduction exercise preceding each class session.

Written work- 70% of Grade.

- 1) Sign- on to the Angel server by **Mar 26, 2009**, before the first weekend. Instructions:
 - a. Log onto <http://angel.seattleu.edu>
 - b. Use your Seattle University log-on name (the part before your SU email account)
 - c. Use your Seattle University password. (If you have not accessed your SU email in a while, you may have difficulty and it can only be handled by the IT Help Desk. You can either email them or call them. You can find this information in your student advising handbook.)
 - d. Once you are logged in, you should see the homepage for Ministry in a Multicultural context. Click on the name of the course, you will find a “map” that allows you to click on “lessons”.
 - e. Click on “lessons” and look for “sign-in”. Click on “sign-in”.
 - f. The window allows you to Post a new message. Click that, and type in the slots provided that you have found it and are on board. Please try to get this done by **the deadline**, so that if you have problems you can contact the help desk for assistance prior to the start of class. Some help may be available during the lunch break on the first day of class, but it will be limited.
- 2) Due **no later than midnight, Mar 28**. Using the Angel server, post your statement on your social location. (no more than 300 words posted on the folder “social location”). (5%)
- 3) Due **by 4am April 6**: Post on Angel a 2 page paper reflecting on your ecclesial community’s creedal, principles, or mission statement. Include the statement as an attachment. Your task is to write about how that statement impacts you and your understanding of church, how it shapes your worldview, view of self, God view and view of “other”. (10%)

- 4) Due **no later than 4am, April 20**: Using the Angel server, post a formal analysis of *Lies My Teacher Told Me*. To frame your comments use the rubric and handout regarding “Practicing the Art of engaging a Written Voice.” The rubric and the handout are included in the “lessons” section in the “assignment tools and rubrics” folder on the Angel server. This paper is to be no more than *750 words*. (10%)
- 5) Due **no later than 4am, April 27**: Post at least five, and no more than 8, paragraphs **describing** your parish/ congregational context. Include statistical figures regarding such culturally impactful items as: demographics of geographic location, age, family distribution, renters, homeowners, education, economic status, ethnicities, etc. Using the social analysis tool you find in the assignment tools and rubrics folder in the “lessons” section on Angel, attend to the history, social structures, political realities and demographic content of your parish/ congregation. This is descriptive narrative only. It does not require any analysis on your part, simply stating or describing what you found. Post on Angel in the “social analysis” folder. (15%)
- 6) Due **no later than 4am, May 11**: Post at least five, and no more than 8 paragraphs **analyzing** your parish/ congregational context. Reflect on the meaning and impact of the statistical figures you included in your description. Using the social analysis tool you find in the assignment tools and rubrics folder in the “lessons” section on Angel, draw out meanings for your congregation/ parish from the demographic, historical, cultural, social and political descriptions you posted earlier. This process will necessarily lead you to reflect critically on your previous description, to make some connections with the readings and your experience, to step back from your position as a member and view the situation with a “critical and analytical eye”. Post in the “social analysis” folder in Angel. (15%)
- 7) Due **no later 4pm, May 26**. Reflection paper (2-4 pages) on the task of inclusion your congregation/ parish faces (given the analysis you have already completed), its impact on you as a member of the community (given your belief submitted as reflection on creed, mission, and/or guiding principles), and your next steps as a follower of God within a specific ecclesial context. Refer to conversations held in class, the readings, insights you gained from student postings on Angel, and your own reflection on the material. (15%)

Closing social distance-extra credit.

Closing social distance is an intentional commitment. The more you attempt to connect with at least one other person or group, the more success you will have in breaking barriers and overcoming internal resistances. You may choose a number of strategies to begin this lifelong practice of closing social distance.

The readings, the lectures, some of the class exercises may create resistance in you. We urge you to record or journal those resistances, and to search for ways to reduce the resistance toward engaging people in a new way. You may choose to attend a variety of liturgical experiences, go to a museum, see a movie you wouldn't ordinarily see, talk to someone you might otherwise pass by, read a novel from a different perspective, or any number of “intentional” actions that help you break assumptions and move toward empathy. If you write about the impact these activities have on your opening to new contexts, you will receive extra credit points toward your final grade while you are intentionally pursuing the discipline of multicultural competence.

Grading Criteria:

Class participation/Group skills. Students are graded on:

- 1) Use of effective communication skills in class
- 2) Punctual and complete attendance;
- 3) Active participation in the healthy development of the class includes talking in class about the course material; deep and empathic listening to others; displaying attitudes of mutual respect and openness to transformation.

Scholastic Performance. Students are graded on:

- 1) Demonstrated ability to think in a rigorously critical and theological manner about the course material (rubrics provided for written work):
- 2) Demonstrated ability to write (assigned papers- each paper will be returned with a rubric that assesses writing competence. Copies of the rubrics are found on the Angel course site);
- 3) Demonstrated ability to speak (class discussions) in a way that shows they have increased multicultural awareness and sensitivity. (Use of “I” statements, demonstrated openness to others’ points of view and experience; demonstrated empathy as people name their realities; demonstrated ability to move beyond personal assumptions and feelings as well as demonstrated capacity to enter conflict toward negotiating new understandings, other pastoral care skills as needed.)
- 4) Demonstrated ability to assess demographic data in light of power assessment and faith statements.
- 5) Demonstrated ability to theologically reflect on data, ecclesial tradition, and current social context.

Social Distance Performance. Students will be assessed on:

- 1.) Evidence of intentional work in the subject matter;
- 2.) Quality of demographic work and assessment of embodiment of creedal statements;
- 3.) Demonstrated capacity to enter empathically into a different cultural context;

Academic Honesty:

The School of Theology and Ministry strictly adheres to the Academic Policy concerning Academic Honesty as published in the Seattle University Student Handbook. (see the Seattle University website).

Students with disabilities:

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an “invisible disability” such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to discuss your needs and arrange support services and/ or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff in the Learning Center, Loyola 100, (206) 296-5740.

Course Schedule

Mar 28: Session One: Culture and Perception: What is Your Culture?

Review of Syllabus: Questions, suggestions, assignment of small group exercises

Personal Introductions

Demonstration of Angel course system.

Read before this weekend:

Coursepak: article by Edree Allen Agbro concerning co-cultures.

All: DeYmaz, *Building a Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church*

All: De Young, Emerson, Yancey and Kim. *United by Faith: the Multiracial Congregation as an Answer to the Problem of Race*. Oxford: Oxford Press, 2003.

March 28: Session Two: Understanding culture and power

POST your social location essay(250-300 words) on Angel by midnight and bring a hard copy to class for instructor.

Mar 29: Session Three: Ethnocentrism to Ethnorelativism and White Privilege

Read in their entirety:

For this session you will have read:

Coursepak: James Cone article, Spirituality Justice Reprint, and Melzek article from Origins

Mar 29: Session Four: Toward your own social location and engaging texts

Engage “Building Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church” Process.

Engage other social location

May 1: Session Five: Latino/a culture/ demographics

Mexican-American Culture: Our Lady of Guadalupe

Read Coursepak: “Hispanics and the Sacred” by Dr. Rodriguez

All of *Cultural Memory* text

May 2: Session Six: theological reflection and social analysis

Coursepak: All readings complete; bring copies of demographics for your congregation and denomination and geographic location.

Theological Reflection/ Social Analysis – Process posted on Angel

Guest: Dr. Flora-Wilson Bridges, *African American Religious Experience*

May 2: Session 7: Social Analysis -

Bring to class: Creedal statements; demographics; preliminary drafts of social analysis

Coursepak: All

May 3: Session 8: Social Analysis/ Spirituality of Nonviolence

Cultural Memory: Power of Narrative; Power of Syncretism/ Inculturation: Chiapas/ Celtic

May 3: Session 9: Final class/ evaluation with Dr. Ted Fortier