

City of God: Leadership in an Urban Context
Summer 2013
July 15-19
M-F, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Rationale/Course Summary

For the first time in history, there are more people residing in urban areas than rural. To that end, aspiring leaders must be equipped and informed in what it means to lead in an urban context. Leadership permeates every industry and impacts areas as diverse as the social services, business, the church, medicine, and the environment. This course provides a learning community

Learning Objectives

Through interactive dialogue, guided reflection, and writing, students will:

1. Assess the components of their respective cities to further refine their ethos of leadership
2. Increase their awareness of the need for effective and transformational leadership in urban areas
3. Explore and utilize strategies to achieve this complex, sometimes daunting goal
4. Understand the intersections of faith, worldview, power and citizenship to identify their impacts on leadership in an urban context
5. Analyze their personal assets and barriers to leadership

Teaching Method

The course will be co-taught by Patricia Talton and Kellie Richardson. Course content will be set up through lecture, and supplemented with movie/video clips, readings, theological reflections and group exercises. As a learning community, students will be required to actively engage in dialogue, offering their perspective and reflection on the subject(s) at hand. These methods and tools will ensure that each student will be exposed to variety of media, tools and foster individual learning styles.

COURSE EVALUATION AND ASSIGNMENTS

Grading

Participation 50%

Students are expected to attend all class sessions and read the assigned readings according to schedule. Students must bring assigned readings and/or materials to class and contribute to the dialogue and deliberations during class. Additionally, students are expected to engage in classroom dialogue after viewing films and documentaries.

Reflective Essays 50%

Students are expected to write a weekly reflective and/or analytical essay about each selected reading that relates to class topics. This essay will be due at the end of each week following the introduction of the assigned reading. The essay should encapsulate

thoughts, feelings, and ideas that surface based on reading the selected article, excerpt, or essay.

Reflection should be written in alignment with the following guides: (1) includes original thoughts, feelings, and reactions evoked from the class discussions related to and assigned readings; (2) considers and incorporates the larger contexts of race, ethnicity and power; (3) defines your particular philosophy and details your applied behaviors associated with your philosophy. It is expected that each student submit weekly a 1-2 page typed essay/reflection (for a total of 4) in hard copy format. **Essays are due each day** at the beginning of class. Essays will be returned corrected the following class session (Tuesdays).

COURSE MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Article: “*Postmodernism and the Future of Evangelical Theology and the Christian Church*” Pastor Gilford T. Monroe, 2012

Film Clip: *Gangs of New York (day one)*

Article: Brooks, David. People Like Us. *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 2003; Volume 292, No. 2; 29-32.

Various excerpts from: “*Can You Imagine...a Better World? 31 Reflections*” Stephan de Beer, Tshwane leadership Foundation, 2010.

Film: *Crash*

Film Clip: *Voices of Civil Rights*

Day 1 - Entering the City

Readings City Psalm
 Affirmation

Intro's, Expectations, and Guiding Assumptions

Warm Up Question: Why would leadership in the city look different than in other places? What does God have to say about the city?

Lecture

1. Urbanization of the World
2. Four Realities of Urbanization
 1. Geography without Community
 2. Activity Rich but Systems Poor
 3. Growing Disparity between Rich and Poor
 4. Denominationalism without Ecumenism

Reflective Exercise: Which of these four realities resonate with in your city?

Lunch

Lecture

- Urban Citizenship
- Rights vs. Privileges
- Importance of Context in Leadership: What Is vs. What Should Be

Urban Citizenship Exercise

Break

Closing Q&A

Reflection prompt: What are the barriers to effective leadership in your city?

Day 2 – Understanding the City

Readings Postmodernism
 Can You Imagine

Warm Up Question: God's movement in a city is best manifested and maintained by a spirituality of imperfections. Agree or Disagree?

Lecture

- Urban Systems and Power
- Scarcity vs. Abundance
- Urban Churches and Faith Responses to the City

Story of Hagar

Lunch

Group Reflection and Exercise – 7 Ways the City is Camouflaged

Report-Out

Closing Q&A

Reflection prompt: Recognizing the abundance around us, where do you see examples of the kind of leadership that bridge the gap between communities of need and communities of resource? Share 1-2 local or international examples.

Day 3 – Re-Imagining the City

Readings People Like Us

Warm Up Question: If you had to pinpoint one cause, what helps or hinders transformation in the city?

“Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear? And don't you remember?”
-Mark 8:18

Group Dialogue unpacking this verse

- Where do city and church leaders fail to see/hear? What are the impacts?
- What do you see that you wish others would? How do we get those with resource to see what we see?

Lunch

Group Reflection: Do you have faith in your city: to be a safe, inclusive and just home for its citizens? Why or Why Not?

Group Report Out

Unpacking Faith and Urban Justice

- Defining justice
- How can faith contribute to justice in our cities?

Reflection prompt: Identify one tangible strategy for increasing unity and justice in your community? What will your role be in implementing this strategy?

Day 4 – Reconstructing the City 1

Purpose: The purpose of the exercise is to foster action learning which is a combination of action and reflection by a team to solve complex, strategic problems in a real-world setting. Team members apply existing skills and knowledge and create new skills, knowledge, and insights through continuously reflecting on and questioning the problem definition, the collaborative behavior, and the ensuing results

Exercise: Divide the class in to small work teams that – develop a strategic response that addresses at least two primary barriers to leadership in an urban context.

- a. Identify all barriers/complexities associated with leadership in an urban context.
- b. Each work team comes to consensus on the two that will be addressed.
- c. The work team strategies on how best to impact these barriers/complexities from the position of leadership.
- d. Develop a set of assumptions and a set of potential contingencies for each strategy. (what have you assumed to be true and what if this doesn't work?)
- e. Each work team develops a PowerPoint which outlines the barriers, the strategy, assumptions and contingencies using an established template

Lunch

Continue the Exercise

Day 5 – Reconstructing the City 2

Report-Out

Closing Q&A