

Eastern University
Campolo College of Graduate and Professional Studies
Mission Year

INST 662
Theology of Poverty

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Course Description

This course is designed to allow the participants of Mission Year to reflect deeply on their experience theologically and practically. Students are expected to do Mission Year well and fulfill all of the requirements ranging from reading the curriculum, to attending a local congregation, being intentional in building community with teammates, serving at a local community service site, nurturing one's relationship with God, and building relationships with neighbors. This course should not be viewed separately from your Mission Year experience, but as a vital part of it. A great deal of your learning this year will take place in the daily grind of life.

By the end of the year, this course will allow you to reflect deeply on what Scripture teaches about poverty and the issues associated with it. You will be able to tell the story of your neighborhood as well as analyze the causes of poverty that surface there. For your final project you will develop a "justice project" that will be a direct response to the needs of your neighborhood.

Course Outline

Due Dates: Assignments:

- 9/10/07 Start the weekly Scriptural Journal**
Monday Write weekly reflections on a number of themes associated with poverty and justice. Your entries will be due at the end of each month.
- 11/05/07 Project One: (The Story of My Neighborhood)**
Monday Write a *five to seven page paper* telling the story of your Mission Year neighborhood.
- 12/17/07 Project Two: (pedagogy of the oppressed)**
Monday Read the book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, by Paulo Freire. You will grapple with the themes of the book, writing short definitions of several key terms, you will then write an additional paper dealing with these themes.
- 3/10/08 Project Three: (Race Matters)**

Monday You will write a *five to seven page paper* answering the question, “What effect does racism have in my neighborhood?”

5/12/08 Project Four: (A Theology of Poverty)

Monday Write a *five to seven page paper* expounding on one of the themes from the Scriptural Journal.

6/16/08 Final Project: (The Justice Project)

Monday Write a *ten- fifteen page* “Justice Project.” You will describe an injustice or marginalized group of people in your neighborhood. You will describe theologically why something should be done about it. Finally you will write a practical Just response.

Expectation of the Year...

- The course will be graded on a “pass/ fail” scale as opposed to letter grades. In order to get a passing grade you will need to complete the requirements of Mission Year as well as the course work. You will be expected to *do your best* and to take an initiative in your learning throughout the year.
- You will be expected to use your time wisely throughout the year. Procrastination will not be tolerated. The due dates for the assignments are the latest possible dates to hand them in. You may hand in projects earlier than the due date. The only requirement is that you must do the projects in the order that they are assigned.
- Though some computer work will need to be done, this is not a “computer heavy” course. A great deal of your learning should take place in the neighborhood. Scriptural journal entries may be handwritten, but all other assignments should be typed and doubled spaced. **Never turn in a first draft (except for Scriptural Journal)! Edit and re-edit first!**
- **All assignments should be your work alone (no cheating ☺).** The only exceptions will be the *first and the last assignment*. Feel free to work with people *on your team* (whether or not they are taking the course) to create the “*Story of Your Neighborhood.*” You may also work with your team doing the “*Justice Project.*” It should be made clear that your team cannot do the project *for* you, but rather *with* you!
- ***** All assignments should be sent to the address above or e-mailed to me by their due dates. For the Scriptural Journal, you may send me a photocopy of your artwork or handwritten entries, feel free to e-mail me if you journal on the computer.**

Required Text:

*** All texts will be read according to the Mission Year Curriculum Calendar, handed out at the beginning of your Mission Year. All readings are subject to change. Each student will be expected to participate fully in the curriculum discussions dealing with these texts.

First Trimester:

- Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*
- John Perkins, *Beyond Charity*
- Henri Nouwen, *Out of Solitude*
- Beverly Tatum, *Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?*
- Brennan Manning, *The Ragamuffin Gospel*
- David Simon and Edward Burns, *The Corner*
- ** Paulo Freire, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*
- (not a part of the MY curriculum; for students only)

Second Trimester

- Howard Thurman, *Jesus and the Disinherited*
- Shane Claiborne, *The Irresistible Revolution*
- Barbara Enrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed*
- Douglas J. Brouwer, *What am I supposed to do with my life?* (article)
- Jean Vanier, Chapter one from *Community and Growth* (article)
- Scott Peck, Selection from *A Different Drum* (article)
- John Alexander, Selections from John Alexander (article)
- Dieter Zander, *Word in Life; Abandoning an Incomplete Gospel* (article)
- Jim Henderson, *Ordinary Attempts* (article)

Third Trimester

- Richard Foster, *Freedom of Simplicity*
- Nikki Toyama and Tracey Gee, *More Than Serving Tea*
- Peter Kreeft, *Christian Discernment* (article)
- *The Gospel of John* (Bible)