

Garrett Evangelical Methodist Seminary Course # DM 726

Professor Gerald Taylor

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Zoom office hours: Tuesday 6:30pm-7:30 cst, Thursday 6:30pm-8:00 pm cst

Name of Course: **Financial Implications for Community Organizing**

Class meets: Monday January 11-Friday January 15. 8:30 am-5:30 pm cst (every day)

Course Description: This course addresses the issue biblically as a way of materializing Isaiah 65:17-25, which engages the prophetic imagination, in consideration of power and the rebuilding of rural and inner-city communities. This course will explore the question: can local congregations and denominational infrastructure by reimagining the use of their real property assets, investment instruments, active bank accounts and people through a community organizing framework recreate local churches and rebuild rural and inner-city communities?

Goals of the Course

KNOWING: What is the untapped potential of denominations and local congregations to contribute to addressing the crisis of rural and inner-city communities in light of the pandemic reimagining the meaning of missions and ministry, the use of their assets and the application community organizing principles. We will explore biblical and Christian text, theological writings and historical text to provide an opportunity for students to develop a new praxis for denominational and congregational application of assets to the rebuilding of communities.

DOING: The student will learn and apply concepts, practice and skills related to community organizing and rural and inner-city development in the context of a pandemic and post pandemic landscape for the church and the larger economy including:

1. Exploring theological concepts applied to economic thinking e.g. Sabbath economics, prosperity gospel etc.
2. Learn how to conduct and analyze a denominational and congregational asset audit.
3. How to construct a financial/asset-based strategy to address specific rural/inner city conditions including using historical case studies of church responses to these questions.

The student will:

1. Develop a congregational asset audit format
2. Explore and evaluate different denominational and congregational forays into economic issues.
3. Discuss and practice principles and applications of community organizing.
4. Propose and defend a strategy they develop for the application of congregational assets to a community economic development need in a rural or inner-city community.

BEING: Each student will:

1. Develop a competent and literate application of community organizing skills.

2. Arrive at a greater understanding of the potential for a greater role of the church in the renewal of inner cities and rural communities.
3. Gain a deeper understanding of the role that different theological interpretations of mission, wealth and power play in shaping church responses to financial and economic issues.
4. Apply these understandings to develop their own theological framework for the organizing of congregational assets to community rebuilding.

COURSE POLICY: See Administrative Handbook

REQUIRED READING*

1. **Collective Courage:** A history of African American Cooperative Economic thought and practice, Jessica Norman Nembhard (Pennsylvania University Press,2014) ISBN: 978-0-271-06216-7
2. **Missional Economics,** Michael Barram (Wm.B. Eerdmans Publishing company,2018) ISBN: 978-0-8028-7507-5
3. **Economic Empowerment through the Church,** Gregory J. Reed (Zondervan Press,1993) ISBN: 0-310-48951-2
4. **Toxic Charity,** Robert D. Lupton (Harper Collins Publishers,2011) ISBN: 978-0-06-207621-2
5. **The Coming Revolution in Church Economics:** Why tithes and offerings are no longer enough, Mark Deymaz (Baker Books,2019) ISBN: 97808001094798
6. **Case studies** (provided by the professor)
7. **Articles** (provided by professor)
 - **During the course week book chapters, articles and case studies will be assigned to be read and form the basis for the day's reflection and discussions.**
 - **The articles, case studies and Reference materials to assist in project development will be posted in December 2020.**
 - **Daily reading assignments will be posted separately in December 2020.**

GRADING METRICS

Pre class paper (1-2 pages) Please address the question: Why is the church addressing (or not addressing) adequately the economic crisis in rural and inner-city USA during the pandemic important to your understanding of mission and ministry? **Submit by email by January 5,2021**

In Class

Participation in class exercises, discussions, reading analysis and project development

End of class Project Presentation and Defense

Option# 1: conduct and present a congregational asset audit of a specific congregation.

Option# 2: Develop a congregational or multi congregational economic activity/project you might present to a gathering of church leaders

Post class project Revisions/final submission

Grading distribution

Grades will be determined in the following manner:

1. **Pre-course paper: 5%**
2. **In-class elements: 25%**
3. **Proposed project/audit framework presentation/defense: 30%**
4. **Post class revisions/final submission:40%**

COURSE SCHEDULE

Day One:

8:30 am Introduction/ Rounds

9:30 am Examining theologies of evangelism, Missions and Ministry

1. Definitions
2. Historic applications and practices and impact on Cultures, Nations and peoples
3. Are there contemporary definitions applications and practices of Evangelism, Missions and Ministry that differ from these historic definitions, applications and practices?

11am BREAK

11:15 examining (continued)

12 noon LUNCH

1:30pm Deconstructing the United States Religious Economy

3:15pm BREAK

3:20 pm Deconstructing Denominational Economic traditions

1. Black church traditions
2. Roman Catholic traditions
3. Predominantly White Protestant /Evangelical traditions
4. Non-Denominational traditions

5:20pm Thoughts

5:30 close class

Day Two

Preparatory reading:

8:30 am Reflections

9:15 am The Congregation

1. Congregational power analysis
2. Christian practices
3. Polity/politics

10:45 am BREAK

11 am Constructing an asset audit

12 NOON Lunch

1:30 Constructing an asset audit (continued)

2:30 The pandemic and its impact on congregational/denominational everyday life

1.worship

2. ministries

3.teaching/study

4.Giving

5. membership

6.Staff

3:45pm BREAK

4:00 pm Implications for the future

5:20 pm Thoughts

5:30 close class

Day 3

Preparatory Readings:

8:30am Reflections

9:15 am Case Studies:

1. Key elements
2. Results/production
3. Transformation?
4. Critique/evaluation

10:45 am BREAK

11am Case Studies (continued)

12 NOON Lunch

1:30 pm Case Studies (continued)

3:15 pm BREAK

3:30 pm Lessons

4:15: Class Projects Introduction/evaluative framework

Options:

1) Congregational asset audit

Evaluative framework (option # 1)

- a. The comprehensiveness of the asset categories
- b. The quality and completeness of the asset's valuations
- c. The creativity of how assets may be reorganized to be used to expand the work of the congregation/members and communities.

2) Economic development project

Evaluative framework (option #2)

- a. Creativity
- b. Practicality (is it specific, "immediate" and winnable?)
- c. Organization
- d. Financing
- e. Timeline to implement
- f. Projected economic/community impact

5:15pm thoughts

5:30 pm close class

Day 4

Preparatory Readings:

8:30 am Reflections

9:15 am Project Design Workshop

12 NOON Lunch

1:15pm Project Design Workshop: first drafts

3:00 pm BREAK

3:15 pm Project Design Workshop

4:45 pm Project Design Workshop: Second Drafts

5:20 pm Thoughts

5:30 pm Close class

Day 5

Preparatory Reading:

8:30 am Reflections

9:00am Project Presentations/Defense

12 NOON LUNCH

1:00 Project Presentations/Defense

2:30 pm BREAK

2:45 pm Project Presentations/Defense

4:15 pm Next Steps

4:45 pm Evaluation

5:15 pm Closing thoughts

5:30 pm Close Class