

## INT-850A Syllabus

### Honoring the Body: Practical, Theological, Bioethical, and Biomedical Perspectives on a Spiritual Practice

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#### Course Description

This seminar explores embodied beliefs and practices about the human body among persons in various contexts of healthcare ministry/industry. Using a Womanist Practical Theology methodology, the course will engage in analysis, discourse, and imagining possible practices of ministry while investigating multiple intersections of marginalization of human bodies as well as theological, bioethical, and biomedical underpinnings about human bodies. The Christian practice of *Honoring the Body* – its history and theology – is the starting point of analysis. Topics include healthy eating/exercising, playing, adorning, laughter/joy, gender specific/intimate partner violence, pain/palliative care, health disparities, clinical trials and volunteer patients, female genital mutilation, cultural rituals, and other bioethical/biomedical concerns. The practice of honoring the body leads to examination of the lives, beliefs, and experiences of those who care for human bodies – doctors, nurses, social workers, hospital chaplains, hospital administrators, dietitians, housekeepers, parish nurses, etc. Contexts of healthcare, biomedical research, community agencies/Nonprofits, and congregations provide sites of analysis and exploration of ministry/industry practices that hinder or help human bodies to flourish regardless of their ability and social location.

**Note:** This is an intensive course. Class will convene on the Garrett Campus on September 11 and 18, and December 4 and 11 during the Saturday blocks. Other class sessions will convene synchronously for two hours on Zoom or asynchronously in Moodle, the Learning Management System for this course. The Garrett campus hours and synchronous sessions are indicated on the class schedule below and posted on Moodle for selected Saturdays. All other dates on the class schedule are asynchronous. Please prepare and submit all talking points for asynchronous sessions by the Saturday at noon for the week of the assignment.

You are expected watch all movies and to read all books, selected chapters, and essays prior to meeting class as well as prepare any written assignments before class meets or as designated in the class schedule.

#### Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course you will be able to:

1. Use a Womanist Practical Theology Methodology as an analytical tool for understanding injustices in healthcare ministries/industries.

2. Describe theological underpinnings about the human body among persons in various healthcare ministries or persons working in the healthcare industry.
3. Critique explanations of the spiritual practice of honoring the body with attention to the experiences and practices of women and men born at multiple intersections of marginalization.
4. Evaluate healthcare ministries/industries regarding bioethical, biomedical, and religious/spiritual aspects of the human body with attention to the experiences and practices of women and men born at multiple intersections of marginalization.
5. Design a ministry or ministry component that demonstrates critical reflection on various theological, theoretical, bioethical, and biomedical aspects of healthcare ministry in the context of a community of faith or social agency that results in courageous public witness about care for the human body.

#### Required Books, Essays, and Chapters

Butler, Octavia E., *Parable of the Sower*. New York: Open Road, 2012. ISBN 978-1538732182, Amazon.com \$11.26

Fears, Barbara A. “Race, Disability and COVID-19: A DisCrit Analysis of Theological Education.” *Religions (Basel, Switzerland)* 12, no. 1 (2021): 35–. (Moodle)

Laws, Terri. 2018. “Tuskegee as Sacred Rhetoric: Focal Point for the Emergent Field of African American Religion and Health.” *Journal of Religion and Health* 57 (1): 408–19. doi:10.1007/s10943-017-0505-y. (Moodle)

\_\_\_\_\_, and Janice A Chilton. 2013. “Ethics, Cultural Competence, and the Changing Face of America.” *Pastoral Psychology* 62 (2): 175–88. doi:10.1007/s11089-012-0428-1 (Moodle)

Matemavi, Praise, editor, *Passion and Purpose: Black Female Surgeons*. Deleon Springs, FL: A 2Z Press, LLC, 2020. ISBN 978-1946908353 Amazon.com \$17.15

Parker, Evelyn L., “Honoring the Body,” in Bass, Dorothy C. and Briehl, Susan R. (eds.), *On Our Way: Christian Practices for Living a Whole Life*. Nashville: TN: Upper Room Books, 2010, pp 133 – 147. (Moodle)

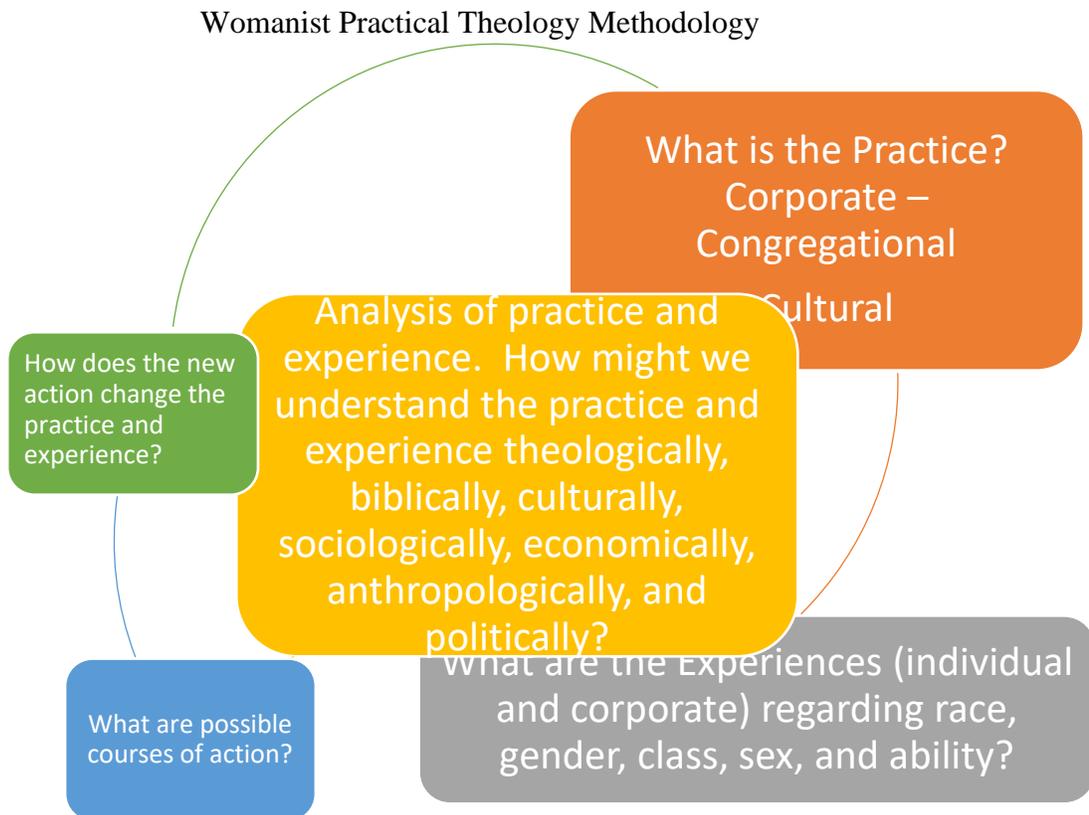
\_\_\_\_\_, “Race, religion, and health among African-descended young women” in Dreyer, Jaco, Dreyer, Yolanda, Foley, Edward, and Nel, Malan (eds.) *Practicing Ubuntu: Practical Theological Perspectives on Injustice, Personhood and Human Dignity*. LIT Verlag Cmbh & Co. KG Wien, Zweigniederlassung Zürich, CH: 2017, pp 217 – 226. (Moodle)

Paulsell, Stephanie, *Honoring the Body: Meditations on a Christian Practice*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publisher, 2003. ISBN 978-1506454894 Amazon.com \$18.99

Tweedy, Damon, *Black Man in a White Coat: A Doctor's Reflections on Race and Medicine*. New York: Picador, 2015. ISBN 978-1250105042 Amazon.com \$15.29

Required Movies

- John Q (2002)
- Wit (2002)
- Miss Evers Boys (1997)
- Dirty Pretty Things (2002)
- The Immortal life of Henrietta Lacks (2017)
- The Constant Gardener (2005)
- Precious (2009)
- Crime after Crime (2014)



A Womanist Practical Theological Methodology (WPTM) is an “engaging process between theology, theory, and practice” (Dale Andrews).

The reflexive quality of this method for effective ministry within the mission of the church or agency is captured in the term praxis.

- First, we ask what is the practice?
- Second, we ask what are the experiences of those who participate in the practice? What are their experiences as racial, ethnic, gendered, sexual beings? How do we/they understand their practice and experience theologically? Where is God? How does God act in the practice? In the experience? Analyze the practice and the experiences theologically, socioeconomically, anthropologically, etc.
- What is a possible course of action for shaping the practice considering our analysis?
- What are the results of the new action? How does it change things? How are the experiences/lives of people improved/enhanced?

**Course Schedule**

**Week One – September 7-11, 2021**

- Building the Teaching/Learning Community
  - It is important to build community virtually prior to our face-to-face time on September 11<sup>th</sup>. The assignment below intends to start the process of building a teaching/learning community virtually.
  - **Introduction:** Browse the internet and identify a religious image that is important for you. The image can be a cross, church steeple, dinner on the church grounds, a lighthouse or anything that symbolizes religion. After finding an image upload it in Moodle and participate in the discussion board post. In this post 1) Briefly introduce yourself to the class by sharing your name, degree program, and year at Garrett. If relevant, briefly indicate your religious affiliation(s). 2) Insert the picture that you have found online. 3) Below the image, write 100 – 150 words about why the image is important to you. After posting your introduction, image, and reason for selecting the image, using no more than 100 words please comment on at least 2 of your peers’ posts. Welcome your classmates, connect with them in some way, and then reflect on the image that they selected.

Date	Topics for Discussion	What to Read/Watch	What to Write
September 11 On Garrett Campus 9a-12p; 1p-5p; 6p-9p	Vision for the course: “Honoring the Body”  A Womanist Practical Theology Methodology	<i>Parable of the Sower</i> Read Octavia Butler’s novel thru the lens of multiple intersections of marginalization for key characters	Use the WPTM above to write a one- page single spaced paper of talking points for class discussion. Focus on Experiences, practices, and

			analysis as indicated in the WPTM
September 18 On Garrett Campus 9a-12p; 3p-5p	Christian Practices and the Human Body	<i>Honoring the Body</i> Read Stephanie Paulsell's book thru the lens of multiple intersections of marginalization for human bodies  Read Evelyn Parker's chapter "Honoring the Body" (Moodle) through the lens of multiple intersections of marginalization for human bodies.	Write a one-page single spaced paper of talking points for each reading assignments. Focus on Experiences, practices and analysis as indicated in the WPTM
September 21-25 September 25 Synchronous Session 9a-11am	Honoring the Bodies of Black female physicians  Biblical Notions about the Human Body	Praise Matemavi's <i>Passion and Purpose</i> Read thru the lens of multiple intersections of marginalization for human bodies  Luke 10:25-37	Write a one-page single spaced paper of talking points. Focus on Experiences, practices and analysis as indicated in the WPTM  A one-page singled spaced talking notes on the parable of the Good Samaritan (EXTRA CREDIT)
September 28 - October 2	The Human Body as Experiment	Miss. Evers's Boys (1997)  Watch thru the lens of multiple intersections of marginalization for human bodies	Use the WPTM above to write a one-page single spaced paper of talking points for class discussion. Focus on Experiences, practices, analysis, and possible course of action as indicated in the WPTM

<p>October 5 – 9</p> <p>Synchronous Session 9a – 11a</p>	<p>The Human Body as Experiment</p>	<p>Read “Tuskegee as Sacred Rhetoric: Focal Point for the Emergent Field of African American Religion and Health.”</p> <p>Watch  The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks</p>	<p>Use the WPTM above to write a one- page single spaced paper of talking points (one for each) for class discussion. Focus on Experiences, practices, analysis, and possible course of action as indicated in the WPTM</p>
<p>October 12-16</p> <p>October 16</p> <p>Synchronous Session 9a-11a</p>	<p>Reading Week</p> <p>Race and Healthcare Workers</p>	<p>Read  <i>Black Man in a White Coat: A Doctor’s Reflections on Race and Medicine</i></p> <p>Watch  Witt  Watch through the lens of healthcare worker and patient relationships</p>	<p>Use the WPTM above to write a one- page single spaced paper of talking points (one each for the book and the movie) for class discussion. Focus on Experiences, practices, analysis, and possible course of action as indicated in the WPTM</p>
<p>October 19-23</p>	<p>Healthcare Disparities</p>	<p>Watch  John Q  Watch thru the lens of multiple intersections of marginalization for human bodies</p>	<p>Use the WPTM above to write a one- page single spaced paper of talking points for class discussion. Focus on Experiences, practices, analysis, and possible course of action as indicated in the WPTM</p>
<p>October 26-30</p>	<p>Economics of Healthcare</p>	<p>Watch  The Constant Gardener</p>	<p>Use the WPTM above to write a one- page single spaced paper of talking points (one for each</p>

		<p>Dirty Pretty Things</p> <p>Watch thru the lens of multiple intersections of marginalization for human bodies</p>	<p>movie) for class discussion. Focus on Experiences, practices, analysis, and possible course of action as indicated in the WPTM</p>
<p>November 2-6</p> <p>Saturday 6</p> <p>Synchronous</p> <p>Session 9a – 11a</p>	<p>Gender Based Violence a Healthcare Crisis</p>	<p>Watch</p> <p>Precious and</p> <p>Crime after Crime</p> <p>Watch thru the lens of multiple intersections of marginalization for human bodies</p>	<p>Use the WPTM above to write a one-page single spaced paper of talking points (one for each movie) for class discussion. Focus on Experiences, practices, analysis, and possible course of action as indicated in the WPTM</p>
<p>November 9-13</p> <p>Saturday 13</p> <p>Synchronous</p> <p>Session 9a – 11a</p>	<p>Gender Based Violence a Healthcare Crisis</p>	<p>Read</p> <p>“Race, religion, and health among African-descended young women”</p>	<p>Use the WPTM above to write a one-page single spaced paper of talking points for class discussion. Focus on Experiences, practices, analysis, and possible course of action as indicated in the WPTM</p>
<p>November 16-20</p>	<p>Cultural Competence</p>	<p>Read</p> <p>“Ethics, Cultural Competence, and the Changing Face of America.”</p>	<p>Use the WPTM above to write a one-page single spaced paper of talking points for class discussion. Focus on Experiences, practices, analysis, and possible course</p>

			of action as indicated in the WPTM
November 23-27	Thanksgiving Week	No Assignments	
December 4 On Garrett Campus 9a-12p; 3p-5p	Disability and Theological Education	Read “Race, Disability and COVID-19: A DisCrit Analysis of Theological Education.”	Use the WPTM above to write a one- page single spaced paper of talking points for class discussion. Focus on Experiences, practices, analysis, and possible course of action as indicated in the WPTM
December 11 On Garrett Campus 9a-12p; 1p-5p; 6p-9p	Ministry Presentations	See Instructions in Moodle	
December 15	End of Semester		

### **Assignments**

#### **I. Attendance and Active Class Participation 10%.**

Much of the learning will be the results of rigorous dialogue with the readings, the teacher, and other members of the course. All class members are expected to make informed contributions to class discussions. This means careful reading of the assignments and thoughtful statements on the topic of discussion.

Grades will be determined by the following criteria:

- ♦ Attendance at all class sessions. Please notify the instructor in advance if you anticipate missing class.
- ♦ Demonstration that you have read the assigned readings and significantly reflected on them.
- ♦ Your contributions to class discussions
- ♦ Your sensitivity to other class participants (i.e. participation in class discussions means you make your contributions and allow other class members to speak; refer to class members by name when reacting to their comments.)

#### **II. Critical Analysis of Movies and Reading Assignments 70%**

You are required to write a one-page single spaced paper of your talking points for each movie and reading assignment using the Womanist Practical Theological Method (WPTM). You should use Times New Roman font that is no less than 10 pt. and no greater than 12 point. You will be

required to submit four assigned movies and three required readings for grading by lottery method. This means you should prepare your best work each week as if your paper may be selected for leading discussion and/or grading. Each paper is worth 10 points for a total of 70 points.

### **III. Honoring the Body Projects 20%**

#### **Observation/Participation Context (Virtually)**

Identifying a setting (congregation, agency, NGO, school) for observation and participation

- Determine the setting that you will observe virtually. Indicate the location and describe it in a paragraph. Be sure to reflect on:
  1. Social Location, Sociohistorical and Sociocultural aspects in North American Culture
  2. Any possible Cultural Notions (including stereotypes) about the Human Body – Race, Class, Gender, Sexuality, Age, Ability
  3. Use the WPTM for analysis of your context

#### **Design a Ministry Component that Honors the Body in the Setting you have Observed/Participated.**

- Using the WPTM determine a new practice that will be the foundation for your ministry component.
- Outline the ministry component based on your analysis.
- Include a theological foundation of the ministry compatible with honoring the body of persons whose bodies experience multiple intersections of marginalization.

#### **Prepare a PowerPoint Presentation of your Ministry (10) minutes**

**Please turn papers in on the date due. One point will be subtracted for each day your assignment is late. A paper sent by email should be in Microsoft Word. A Grading Rubric for talking points papers and the Honoring the Body Ministry Project is provided in Moodle.**

**Garrett Academic Policy is found on Moodle.**

#### **Notes Regarding Written Assignments**

Unless otherwise specified, all written assignments should be typed or computer-printed, double-spaced, no larger than 12pt font, 1” margins, and submitted in hard copy. Email submissions **will not** be accepted unless specified by the instructor. Please see assignment description for method of submission. Please include **your name**, the date, the course title, and the assignment number at the top left of the first page, single spaced, and please number the pages.

## Hospitality and Language

Theological commitments lead the faculty to identify language use as one way we embody and practice hospitality. We invite all members of our learning community to join us in paying attention to how we use language and in exploring new language practices that cultivate hospitality. Each faculty member approaches language in different ways depending on our areas of academic expertise and our individual theological perspectives and commitments. We write and speak with an awareness of the historical, political, and societal contexts out of which theological language emerges and how language can impact readers and listeners. Out of this diversity, faculty conversations about language are lively and vibrant. We invite students to participate in these intentional conversations and to learn to think theologically and creatively about language.

The following suggested practices represent academic expectations for language use in public speech and writing, including scholarly activity (lectures, presentations, discussions, handouts, and publications), communications (official and internal), and worship (sermons, liturgy, and music). The faculty offers these expectations in order to educate leaders who practice hospitality in a range of settings. Each faculty member is committed to discussing these expectations as they relate to course content and assignments and to including guidelines for classroom participation and written work in course syllabi.

## **Suggested Practices**

### **Language about God**

Theologians, ministers, and worship leaders have an opportunity to give voice to the variety and richness of God's presence with God's people. Language used in preaching and worship as well as in academic writing acknowledges and cultivates this richness when it explores diverse ways to write, speak, pray, and sing about and to God.

#### *Examples:*

1. Our language choices can reflect the richness of the divine. Varied metaphors can be used to speak to and about God. We can name God's attributes. Examples: Rock of Salvation, Fountain of Life, the First and the Last, Refuge and Strength, Shelter from the Storm. We can address God out of our experience of God. Examples: Creator, Mother, Giver of All Good Things, Teacher, Father, Guardian, Redeemer, Friend, Healer.
2. Writers and speakers are encouraged to seek balance when using pronouns to refer to God, for example, alternating between gendered pronouns.

### **Language about Creation and Humanity**

Hospitable language acknowledges and affirms the value of all creation and the humanity of all

people. While language about God is a theological choice, language about people needs to reflect standard grammatical practices of inclusivity.

*Examples:*

1. Hospitable language should acknowledge and reflect connections between humans and the non-human context upon which life depends.
2. Words like “people,” “us,” “humanity,” “humankind,” etc., should be used in place of words that identify all human experience with the experience of men.
3. Non-gendered language should be used whenever possible; for example, writers and speakers should use “clergy” or “clergy person” instead of “clergyman.”
4. Writers and speakers should use person-first language such as “persons with disabilities” instead of “the disabled,” or “people who live in poverty” instead of “the poor.”
5. Language should affirm diverse and multiple racial, ethnic, cultural, gender, and sexual identities by acknowledging varied life narratives. Writers and speakers should avoid language that generalizes human experience (e.g., “all” or “we”) and that stereotypes persons or groups. Writers and speakers should use specific examples, rather than generalizations about people or groups, when illustrating a point.