

Christian Education and Dismantling Racism

JTerm 2019 | EL3539 | Residential Intensive | Final version

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Pronouns: She, her, hers

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Christian education and dismantling racism

This course analyzes institutionalized racism and engages students in a series of frameworks from within Christian Education for critiquing and dismantling racism, and for supporting transformative forms of congregational learning. Students are required to participate in an intensive three day workshop (January 4-6, 2019) on dismantling racism as part of the course. *Full course (1.0)*

Learning Objectives:

- understand the impact of racism in particular institutions and begin to explore dismantling racism strategies
- access the literature and scholarship associated with dismantling racism, connecting it to challenges within religious community
- develop and nurture respect for the diverse ways in which adults learn
- reflect critically upon educational leadership, and their own role in facilitating such
- reflect upon their own teaching and learning practices
- begin to develop the theological and interpersonal skills necessary to help faith communities reflect on and respond to pressing learning challenges in ministry

Program Objectives:

- (MDIV/MA) Graduates will form and lead within Christian community gathered around Word and Sacrament for bold participation in God's mission.

- (MDIV/MA) Graduates, within a diversity of contexts, will confess the character, identity, and work of the Triune God in the world God loves

Reading (required):

- J. Cone, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* (Orbis, 2011). [978-1626980051]
 D. Stone, B. Patton, S. Heen. *Difficult Conversations* (Penguin, 2000). [978-0143118442]
 M. Le Tran, *Reset the Heart: Unlearning Violence, Relearning Hope* (Abingdon Press, 2017).[978-1501832468]
 D. Thompson, "Calling a thing what it is: A Lutheran approach to whiteness," (available at moodle)
 M. Hess, "White religious educators resisting white fragility: Lessons from mystics" (available at moodle)

In addition, you will choose one book from the list available here:

http://meh.religioused.org/web/EL3539_Resources.html, to use for your final book review assignment.

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

This course uses a combination of experiential engagement, cognitive study, and writing assignments to support students in meeting the learning goals. We will engage together online prior to our gathering in January, and then during those three days we will work together both on campus and joining with a local congregation off campus in St. Paul. Following the intensive three days we will return to the online environment to sort through and reflect upon our shared experiences, as well as to support each other in constructing useful resources.

REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS

Pre-gathering assignments

Our expectation is that you will do all of the reading prior to joining in the three-day intensive gathering in early January. There will also be a series of online prompts to respond to, and we encourage you to complete as many of those as you can prior to the gathering. These prompts are included at the end of this syllabus, and will be submitted via moodle.

Gathering work

During the three days that we gather together, we will be spending most of our time in collaborative, experiential exercises. You must be present for the entire time to receive full credit for the course. Our time together begins on Friday, January 4th at 8:00 am.

Each day there will be a lunch break and we will end at 5:00 pm. We will conclude the in-person gathering on Sunday, January 6th at 5:00 pm. During the two days that we meet off campus (Saturday and Sunday), lunch and snacks will be provided.

Post-gathering assignments

Following our time together in person, you will offer a brief book review (instructions at the end of this syllabus) of one book you choose from a list we will make available. You will also write a short worship contribution (a litany, an intercessory prayer, a song) or a short religious education resource (a retreat outline, a learning resource, a handout) that communicates something you've learned through our weekend gathering.

GRADING

Grades will be determined by the following percentages:

In person gathering participation	40%
Online forum responses	30%
Book review and worship/learning piece	30%

We will use the following general rubric for assessing specific work in the course (eg. you will see these numbers appear as grades on specific assignments).

Marginal/Passing -- Level 4 – C-

A good general understanding of the required knowledge, attitudes, and skills, plus the ability to apply them effectively in normal situations. There is some evidence of the skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The student fulfills all of the requirements of the lesson.

Passing -- Level 5 – C+

A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge, attitudes and skills, and the ability to apply them in a variety of situations. The student generally shows evidence of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation where appropriate and occasionally demonstrates originality and insight. The student produces work of consistent quality and works independently.

High Passing -- Level 6 -- B

A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge, attitudes and skills, and the ability to apply them in a wide variety of situations. There is consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation where appropriate. The student generally demonstrates insight, produces work of quality, meets the expectations of the lesson at a high level, and shows some evidence of originality.

Superior work -- Level 7 – A

A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them almost faultlessly in a wide variety of situations. There is consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation where appropriate. The student consistently demonstrates originality and insight and always produces work of high quality. The student is able to teach necessary skills to another student. The student works beyond the expectations of the lesson, and uses original ideas and concepts.

SHORT ASSIGNMENTS

Flipgrid introduction

Create a brief introduction to yourself using our course space at Flipgrid: <https://flipgrid.com/cwszn1b> (you will need to authentic yourself using the google button and your luthersem.edu email, and you will need this passkey: 416ab3fc)

Autobiographical statement concerning race

Using the template (available at moodle), respond to the questions found there and then upload your responses as a single, attached file to moodle. Once you've done that, offer a brief reflection (no more than 250 words) in the discussion forum for that assignment. If you're the first person to do so, you get to start the conversation. If you're not, participate in the conversation with at least one thoughtful response to someone else's statement. Feel free to respond to more than one statement, but for at least one you need to do more than "toss a verbal bouquet" – you need to respond substantially.

History exercise

Visit this timeline that was created by the Women of the ELCA:
<https://www.womenoftheelca.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Timeline.pdf>

Find at least one event that you are unfamiliar with, and do some additional research on it. Make sure you are careful about where you are doing your research – there is a lot of fraudulent information available online. Once you have learned something about the event, write a brief description of the event, along with your reflection on why you think this event was unfamiliar to you. (That is, what about your own context, experience, family history, prior education, etc. might not have introduced you to, or emphasized, that history.)

If you cannot find an unfamiliar event on this timeline, then contribute to the history forum a brief description (including relevant dates) of an event or person that you

believe is relevant to our learning, and explain why you think it should be included in this timeline.

This is the piece you will submit to the assignment space at moodle. Once you have submitted it as an assignment, please also post it (you can abbreviate your post if you wish) as an entry in the history forum at moodle.

Do NOT repeat events that are already noted in the forum -- so, again, the sooner you complete this exercise, the more choices you will have!

Book sentence exercise

Pick out one sentence (or so) from each of the readings that you were deeply engaged by (this could mean that you disagreed with these sentences, you found them profoundly true, or you were puzzled by one or more of them). Offer the quote (with appropriate citation/location numbers) -- and a description of why you were engaged by it. Your final submission to moodle should have at least five quotations on it (one from each reading).

After you upload your assignment to moodle, pick out one of the quotations (with your reflection) and post it to the book sentence forum. Please also comment on at least one other person's posted sentence/reflection.

Do NOT repeat quotations other people have already posted. Obviously, the sooner you complete this exercise, the more choice of quotation you will have.

Theology framing statement draft

Throughout our weekend together we will be engaging a variety of resources on dismantling racism and living into beloved community. Some of these resources are biblical, some theological, some sociological, some pedagogical, and others do not easily fit into a particular category. Towards the end of our time together we are going to ask you to develop a theological statement to frame your own understanding of what it means to dismantle racism and live into beloved community.

We ask that you draft a brief statement (no more than 250 words) which expresses your current understanding of what your faith contributes to the challenge of dismantling racism and living into beloved community. Please note that this is an initial draft, and that we want you to bring it with you to our in person gathering. You will post the final version of this statement at moodle by the end of the course, but you are welcome to post it sooner than that.

Following the workshop we ask you to complete all of the previously mentioned short exercises, as well as to complete a book review and a worship or educational aid by February 1st.

Book review

Write a short review (no more than three pages) of a book you choose from the list found here: http://meh.religioused.org/web/EL3539_Resources.html). If there is another book you would prefer to review, please seek permission from the instructors first.

Please engage at least the following questions: (1) In what ways does this book support, and in what ways contest, the ideas and practices we engaged in the weekend workshop? (2) What would you identify as the author(s) primary theological stance? (3) How would you imagine this book serving as a resource within a religious education context?

This review must be submitted to moodle by February 1st.

Worship or learning contribution

Write a short worship contribution (a litany, an intercessory prayer, a song) or a short religious education resource (a retreat outline, a learning resource, a handout) that engages something you've learned this weekend.

You are welcome to create this resource in some format other than print (a hymn, an audio poem, a digital story, an infographic, and so on).

This piece must be submitted to moodle by February 1st.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Introductions	Preferably due by January 3rd
	Create a brief introduction to yourself at flipgrid (https://flipgrid.com/cwszn1b). Note that when you go to this site you will first need to authenticate yourself by clicking on the google button and using your luthersem email address. You will also need this code: 416ab3fc
Autobiography of race	Preferably due by January 3rd
	Using the template (available at moodle), respond to the questions found there and then upload your responses as a single, attached file to moodle. Once you've done that,

	<p>offer a brief reflection (no more than 250 words) in the discussion forum for that assignment. If you're the first person to do so, you get to start the conversation. If you're not, participate in the conversation with at least one thoughtful response to someone else's statement. Feel free to respond to more than one statement, but for at least one you need to do more than "toss a verbal bouquet" – you need to respond substantially.</p>
History exercise	Preferably due by January 3rd
	<p>Visit this timeline that was created by the Women of the ELCA: https://www.womenoftheelca.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Timeline.pdf</p> <p>Find at least one event that you are unfamiliar with, and do some additional research on it. Make sure you are careful about where you are doing your research – there is a lot of fraudulent information available online. Once you have learned something about the event, write a brief description of the event, along with your reflection on why you think this event was unfamiliar to you. (That is, what about your own context, experience, family history, prior education, etc. might not have introduced you to, or emphasized, that history.)</p> <p>If you cannot find an unfamiliar event on this timeline, then write up a brief description (including relevant dates) of an event or person that you believe is relevant to our learning, and explain why you think it should be included in this timeline.</p> <p>This is the piece you will submit to the assignment space at moodle. Once you have submitted it as an assignment, please also post it (you can abbreviate your post if you wish) as an entry in the history forum at moodle.</p> <p>Do NOT repeat events that are already noted in the forum -- so, again, the sooner you complete this exercise, the more choices you will have!</p>

Book sentence exercise	<p>Preferably due by January 3rd</p> <p>Pick out one sentence (or so) from each of the readings that you were deeply engaged by (this could mean that you disagreed with these sentences, you found them profoundly true, or you were puzzled by one or more of them). Offer the quote (with appropriate citation/location numbers) and a description of why you were engaged by it. Your final submission to moodle should have at least five quotations on it (one from each reading).</p> <p>After you upload your assignment to moodle, pick out one of the quotations (with your reflection) and post it to the book sentence forum. Please also comment on at least one other person's posted sentence/reflection.</p> <p>Do NOT repeat quotations other people have already posted. Obviously, the sooner you complete this exercise, the more choice of quotation you will have.</p>
Theology framing statement	<p>Draft due by January 3rd</p> <p>Throughout our weekend together we will be engaging a variety of resources on dismantling racism and living into beloved community. Some of these resources are biblical, some theological, some sociological, some pedagogical, and others do not easily fit into a particular category. Towards the end of our time together we are going to ask you to develop a theological statement to frame your own understanding of what it means to dismantle racism and live into beloved community.</p> <p>We ask that you draft a brief statement (no more than 250 words) which expresses your current understanding of what your faith contributes to the challenge of dismantling racism and living into beloved community. Please note that this is an initial draft, and that we want you to bring it with you to our in person gathering. You will post the final version of this statement at moodle by February 1st, but you are welcome to post it sooner than that.</p>

Friday, January 4th	In-person gathering
	During this day we will be engaged in multiple collaborative exercises at Luther Seminary.
Saturday, January 5th	In-person gathering
	During this day we will be engaged in multiple collaborative exercises at First Lutheran Church in St. Paul.
Sunday, January 7th	In-person gathering
	During this day we will be engaged in multiple collaborative exercises at First Lutheran Church in St. Paul.
Book review assignment	Due February 1st
	<p>Write a short review (no more than three pages) of a book you choose from the list found here: http://meh.religioused.org/web/EL3539_Resources.html). If there is another book you would prefer to review, please seek permission from the instructors first.</p> <p>Please engage at least the following questions: (1) In what ways does this book support, and in what ways contest, the ideas and practices we engaged in the weekend workshop? (2) What would you identify as the author(s) primary theological stance? (3) How would you imagine this book serving as a resource within a religious education context?</p> <p>This review must be submitted to moodle by February 1st.</p>
Worship/learning piece	Due February 1st
	<p>Write a short worship contribution (a litany, an intercessory prayer, a song) or a short religious education resource (a retreat outline, a learning resource, a handout) that engages something you've learned this weekend. You are welcome to create this resource in some format other than print (a hymn, an audio poem, a digital story, an infographic, and so on).</p> <p>This piece must be submitted to moodle by February 1st.</p>

Course Workload

Throughout this course students will be expected to engage in a total of 140 Student Learning Hours, which breaks down to roughly 40 hours of guided learning (workshop and online discussion) and 100 hours of self-directed learning (reading, writing and other course work)

Guided Learning (lectures and online precepts):

24 hours in person gathering (weekend workshop)

16 hours in pre-workshop guided discussion online

Reading:

60 hours of assigned reading

Summative writing development:

40 hours of writing (book review paper and worship or learning resource)

POLICIES OF LUTHER SEMINARY

Basic Course Understanding

Any course that invites us to examine issues of human pain and perplexity has the potential to be unsettling. Our ability to learn in such a course depends on several things: our ability to tolerate ambiguity; our willingness to dialogue honestly and respectfully with each other; our willingness to consider alternative interpretations; our acceptance of truth, no matter where it is found; our ability to take responsibility for both our beliefs and our anxiety about different beliefs; our comfort with “political and religious incorrectness”; and our ongoing struggle to integrate new information with present beliefs. We expect that in this course we will all work to create a spirit of respect, curiosity, and dialogue. If you find that you are having personal difficulty in this course, please feel free to check in with us, or with Rev. Justin Lind Ayres (Seminary Pastor) or Sarah Luedke Jones (Dean of Students) regarding a referral for consultation or counseling.

We believe that this course requires full engagement with one's peers and with the process. We assume that you will be with parishioners in much the same way that you are with peers in class. We will depend on your wise judgment as to the ways in which you engage various digital devices, but if we observe your use of them distracting your colleagues or detracting from your own learning we will ask that you put them away.

ADA Compliance Statement

Reasonable accommodation will be provided to any student with a disability who is registered with the Office of Student Affairs and requests needed accommodation. If you are a student with a disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) and think that you might need special assistance or accommodation in this class or any other class, please contact the Office of Student Affairs or contact your instructor directly.

Academic Honesty

Members of the Luther Seminary community are expected to conduct themselves responsibly and honestly in academic matters. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses against this expectation and are subject to disciplinary action.

If instances of cheating or plagiarism are detected, one of the disciplinary actions shall follow: either the instructor records a failure for the assignment or examination, or the instructor records a failure for the course. In either case, the instructor shall bring the matter to the Office of the Academic Dean and the Office of the Dean of Students, and the question whether further disciplinary action should be considered will be determined in consultation with the instructor, the Office of the Academic Dean, and the Office of the Dean of Students. See the current Student Handbook for more details on this matter.

Plagiarism

"Plagiarism is the dishonest act of presenting the words or thoughts of another writer as if they were your own.... If you quote from anything at all...you must put quotation marks around it, or set it off from your text. If you summarize or paraphrase an author's words, you must clearly indicate where the summary or paraphrase begins and ends.... In every instance you must formally acknowledge the written source from which you took the material." [Quoted from James A. W. Heffernan and John E. Lincoln, *Writing: A College Handbook* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1982), p.457.]

Some examples of plagiarism could include:

- Copying from a source text (whether online or offline) without proper acknowledgment.
- Turning in another student's work with or without that student's knowledge.
- Copying materials word-for-word from a source text, supplying proper documentation, but leaving out quotation marks.
- Paraphrasing materials from a source text without appropriate documentation.
- Turning in a paper copied from a website.
- Recycling your own work from a previous assignment, without permission of the instructor or proper citation

If instances of cheating or plagiarism are detected, one of the disciplinary actions shall follow: either the instructor records a failure for the assignment or examination, or the instructor records a failure for the course. In either case, the instructor shall bring the matter to the Office of the Academic Dean and the Office of the Dean of Students, and the question whether further disciplinary action should be considered will be determined in consultation with the instructor, the Office of the Academic Dean, and the Office of the Dean of Students. See the current Student Handbook for more details on this matter.

Title IX Statement

Luther Seminary is committed to fostering a safe, productive learning environment. Title IX and Luther policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. Sexual misconduct — including harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking — is also prohibited at Luther.

Luther Seminary encourages anyone experiencing sexual misconduct to talk to someone about what happened, so they can get the support they need and we can respond appropriately. If you wish to speak confidentially about an incident of sexual misconduct, want more information about filing a report, or have questions about school policies and procedures, please contact our Title IX Coordinator, Peter Susag, who can be found on our school's website.

Luther Seminary is legally obligated to investigate reports of sexual misconduct, and therefore it cannot guarantee the confidentiality of a report, but it will consider a request for confidentiality and respect it to the extent possible.

As a teacher, I am also required by Luther Seminary to report incidents of sexual misconduct and thus cannot guarantee confidentiality. I must provide our Title IX coordinator with relevant details such as the names of those involved in the incident.