­­­Denver Urban Semester

Cross-Cultural Urban Integration Seminar

Fall 2018

Course credit: 4 credits

Weekly Course Requirements:

**Weekly lecture**: Fridays, 12:45pm - 3pm

**Senior Seminar Mentoring Discussion**: 30-45 minutes weekly

**Cultural Engagement Projects**: 90 minutes weekly

**Location Course Coordinators:**

Denver Urban Semester Jeff Appel, MA, ABD 913 Wyandot St. Greg Fuchs, MA

Denver, Co. 80204

303-928-9526

**Email**

gfuchs@milehighmin.org

jsappel@gmail.com

dsbowman@gmail.com

“Cities are a mirror of our societies, a part of our economy, and an element of our environment. But above all else they are a measure of our ability to live with each other. When we examine our cities, we examine ourselves.”

-J.R.Short, The Urban Order, An Introduction to Cities, Culture and Power

**Seminar Overview:**

In 1900, 20% of the world’s population lived in cities; by 2000, that number had surpassed 50%. Urbanization presents a substantial challenge to leadership in our day, whether in the civic, social, economic and/or spiritual realm. This seminar is designed to weave together three interrelated and overlapping concerns: the nature of our transforming urban environments, the processes of Christian transformation and self-understanding, and the character of our life together with others. This being the case, the seminar will provide students with a framework for understanding the increasingly diverse cross-cultural make up of urban environments and its particular local expression in Denver. It will also equip emerging leaders with the type of critical thinking skills and analytical tools necessary to develop healthy, reflective, and effective responses.

In addition, and with an eye to the frenetic and productive lifestyles that urban cultures engender and prioritize, this course will help students develop a holistic sense of self through reflective practices and exercises. Through these exercises and their orientation around transformative grace, students will be invited bring a new-found self-understanding to bear upon the particular challenges of diverse cross-cultural urbanscapes. Our hope is that through this seminar, DUS will develop young adults who have a deeper sense of self-understanding, a more discerning ear to hear God’s invitation to transformation, and a confident awareness of how to lead across cultural differences and in a persistently changing, globalized world.

**Seminar Objectives**

At the conclusion of this course, each student should be able to:

* Draw from a deeper interpretive skill set in order to read and discern the myriad symbols, structures, and stories that provide meaning and context to urban environments and their various social systems.
* Begin to understand the complex relationship between America’s unique urban environments and the city’s various functions in scripture, the six historical Christian faith traditions, and historical Christian theology.
* Begin to develop community-building principles gleaned from one’s time spent interning in under-served and under-resourced urban neighborhoods.
* Engage in practices of cultural difference (such as “dignifying dialogue”) and broaden one’s worldview through the aid of various course assignments.
* Connect one’s spiritual, emotional, and psychological history—i.e. one’s inner life and the historical development of that life—with the transformational processes of Christian spiritual formation.
* Understand the importance of how honest inner-work directly influences one’s ability to participate in cross-cultural settings in an increasingly globalized world.

**Required Texts** (please purchase)

* Burnett, Bill and Dave Evans. *The Designing Your Life Workbook: A Framework for Building a Life You Can Thrive In*. New York: Clarkson Potter, 2018.

**Suggested Texts** (Senior Seminar students: read these books before arriving in Denver):

* Day, Dorothy. *The Long Loneliness*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981.
* Ellul, Jacques. *Presence in the Modern World: a New Translation*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2016.
* Ladd, George Eldon. *The Gospel of the Kingdom: Scriptural Studies in the Kingdom of God*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1959.

**Web Resources**:

* Enneagram: [www.enneagraminstitute.com](http://www.enneagraminstitute.com)
* Spiritual Gifts test: [www.christianet.com/bible/spiritualgiftstest.htm](http://www.christianet.com/bible/spiritualgiftstest.htm)

**Course Assignments and Description**

***PLEASE NOTE***: all assignments and course dialog will be conducted via the online workflow platform, Slack. Please download Slack to your computer (available at: https://slack.com/). Slack is set-up for multiple computer and mobile based operating systems (iOS, Windows, Android, etc.). Once you download the application, Jeff will send each student an email invite to the Denver Urban Semester channel. As you will see, Slack is a handy way to incorporate discussion board material, weekly assignments, etc. If you have questions about reading assignments or when a particular course assignment is due, you can consult both the syllabus and Slack, as Jeff will communicate due assignments on a weekly basis. Please email Jeff at the email address listed at the top of this syllabus with questions/concerns/you are unable to download.

Class Attendance and Discussion

Due: **Weekly**

Students must attend weekly class sessions and participate in class discussions.

Community Engagement Projects

Due: **Weekly**

Students will engage in weekly cultural engagement projects of their choice. Options are listed below on the last page of this syllabus.

Course Integration Journals

Due: **Weekly**

Students will keep a journal, composing one entry per week (one page maximum, single-spaced, 12 pt. New Times Roman). Entries will reflect critically upon the student’s weekly community engagement activity, their personal experiences of working in their cross-cultural internships, reflections from course readings, and/or their experiences living and working in a diverse city. **14 pages total**.

Interfaith Reflection Paper

Due: **October 26**

First, describe your background with other religious traditions. What sort of preconceived notions do you have in regards to religious others, especially those we encountered (Buddhists, Muslims, Jews, and Orthodox)? How did you come to inhabit those ideas or notions (did they come from your family? your friends? your church?)? Next, describe your visit: what was it like visiting the orthodox church? What sort of things did the priest say that piqued your interest or made you think, "whoa, I didn't know that?" What did you like about this visit? What made you feel uncomfortable? And what 'reset' your preconceived notions about this religious tradition? Describe your experience. Next, what did you learn about this religious tradition? This can come from the readings that were assigned to you, the experience/visit itself, etc. Perhaps it was a question or a point raised by somebody else in the class. Finally, in your future work as a social worker, how will you move forward in light of this experience? What has this experience taught you about how you will think and act as you come into contact with this religious other in the future? Are there ways you want to seek out this religious other in the future? Etc.

I want you to go through these four questions for each of the religious traditions we visited: Eastern Orthodox, Judaism, Buddhism, and Islam. Literally, you can write a header--ORTHODOX VISIT--and then answer the four questions as I've listed them here. When you finish with Orthodox, write a new header--JUDAISM--and then answer the four questions there. If you answer the questions for all four religious traditions, you will have no problem making the page requirement. **7-8 pages total.**

Homeless Engagement Paper and Presentation

Due: **November 16**

Discuss your experience staying overnight and volunteering at the homeless shelter of your choice. **2-3 pages total.**

Dignifying Dialogue Interview and Presentation

Due: **November 30**

Students will set up a meeting with a Denver urban leader in order to discuss an ideological issue with which they hold contrasting opinions. Students should record the conversation through the use of hand-written notes or voice recording on one’s smartphone (if the latter please confirm the use of voice recording with your interviewee!!). Students will present what they learned from their interviewee (i.e. what values the urban leader holds dear, the history that has shaped those convictions, etc.) and how this dialogue broadened the student’s worldview. Remember: you don’t have to be persuaded! But you do have to engage in conversation. **2-3 pages total.**

Senior Life Paper/Spiritual Autobiography (*Senior Seminar students only*)

Due: **December 23**

Details: Students will be taught how to compose their spiritual autobiography, or their “life story”. This is an opportunity to compose a comprehensive essay that describes the student’s personal history and provides a theological interpretation of his/her initiation and participation in the Christian faith. The objective of this assignment is to reflect critically and theologically upon one’s religious experience in order to better discern the various formational events that have led to one’s development, the ways in which one functions in the world and among others, and the possible vocational callings God has placed upon one’s life. Students will be aided through the writing process by Jeff on a weekly basis (i.e. the weekly “Senior Seminar Mentoring Discussions”). **Essay should be 5,000-6,000 words (20-25 pages) upon completion.**

**Grading**

Class attendance, participation and discussion 20 pts.

Course Integration Journals  20 pts.

Interfaith reflection Paper (7-8 pages)20 pts.

Homeless engagement paper (2-3 pages) and presentation10 pts.

Dignifying dialogue paper (2-3 pages) and presentation 10 pts.

Senior Life paper (20-25 Pages) 20 pts.

**Total for 4-credit course 100 pts.**

**2018 Fall Semester Community Engagement Projects**

(Choose 14)

-Big Wonderful (Hipster)

-Slam Nuba (spoken word)

-Botanic Gardens (sacred space in a city)

-Uncle Jed’s Barbershop (performance)

-Low Rider garage

-Art Museum,

-Colorado History Museum

-Starz Art Independent Film Festival

-Jewish Community Center: Theatre

-Greek Festival

-MLK Parade

-Marz’s Graffiti tour

-McFarland (discuss about migrant life)

-Ghost of Mississippi-Selma (discuss with Bill re: racism, segregation & civil rights)

-Hike in Rocky Mountain National Park

-Mercury Café (Slam Poetry)

-Eat a meal with a Kenyan family

-Light of the Nations Church visit and lunch (refugee)

-First Friday Latino Art Festival

-Urban farming/food desert

**Fall 2018 Seminar Dates**

**\*\*KEY\*\*:**

-If you are a **Student Teacher**: please do your best to read the articles that are assigned for each course period. Though they are not required material, they will help you as you attend and process through the course.

-If you are a **Social Work Student**: please do your best to read the articles that are assigned for each course period. Though they are not required material, they will help you as you attend and process through the course. The “Designing Your Life” material is required, however.

-If you are a **Kivu Student**: please do your best to read the articles that are assigned for each course period. Though they are not required material, they will help you as you attend and process through the course. The “Designing Your Life” material is required, however.

-If you are a **Senior Seminar Student**: please read everything listed below, as it is required for course participation.

**August 24 (F)**

Urban Gentrification, Greg Fuchs

Meeting Point: Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, 3549 Navajo Street, Denver

Reading:

--“How Gentrificatioin Works”, Chapter Two of *How to Kill a City: Gentrification, Inequality, and the Fight for the Neighborhood* by Peter Moskowitz. **PDF in Slack**.

--“Redlining Returns to Denver, But With a Neoliberal Twist” via *The Nation* https://www.thenation.com/article/redlining-returns-to-denver-but-with-a-neoliberal-twist/

--“White Privilege and Gentrification in Denver, America’s Favourite City”, from *The Guardian* (link here and also in Slack: https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/jul/14/white-privilege-gentrification-denver-america-favourite-city)

--“’Happily Gentrifying Since 2014’: Denver Coffee Shop Sign Sparks Fury”, via *The Guardian* (link here and also in Slack: https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/nov/23/denver-coffee-shop-sign-gentrification-ink-five-points)

**August 31 (F)**

Turf Tour: Homeless Youth, Reb Duke

Meeting Point: 16th Street Mall and Larimer

Reading:

--“The face of America’s homeless youth” via cnn.com: http://www.cnn.com/2010/LIVING/07/08/denver.homeless.youth/index.html

--“A Hidden Population: Youth Homelessness is on the Rise” via the Pew Foundation: http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2017/07/07/a-hidden-population-youth-homelessness-is-on-the-rise

--Read all four tabs (on the left-hand side of the page) on “Youth Homelessness” via the National Coalition for the Homeless: http://nationalhomeless.org/issues/youth/

**September 3**

Labor Day – No class!!

**September 7 (F)**

Designing Your Life: Deke Bowman

Meeting Point: TBD

Reading:

--*Designing Your Life* workbook.

**September 10 (M)**

Cross Cultural Communication: Darius

Meeting Point: TBD

Reading:

--TBD

**September 14 (F)**

Enneagram: Greg Fuchs

Meeting Point: TBD

Reading:

--*Courage and Calling* by Gordon T. Smith, chapters 1-4. **PDF on Slack**

**September 17 (M)**

Designing Your Life: Deke Bowman

Meeting Point: TBD

Reading:

--*Designing Your Life* workbook.

**September 21 (F)**

Enneagram: Greg Fuchs

Meeting Point: TBD

Reading:

--*Courage and Calling* by Gordon T. Smith, chapters 6-8, 10. **PDF on Slack**

**September 24 (M)**

Oral History Interviews: Deke Bowman

Meeting Point: TBD

Reading:

--TBD

**September 28 (F)**

Street Art in Denver’s Five Points and River North neighborhoods, Marz

Meeting Point: 20th Street and Lawrence Ave, Denver

Reading:

--Watch “Exit Through the Gift Shop”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=evbHCAn4jto

--Watch “Obey Giant” on Hulu (sign up for a free subscription): https://www.hulu.com/watch/1170629

--Read essay on Keith Haring: https://obeygiant.com/essays/keith-haring-journal-for-deitch/

**October 1 (M)**

Street Art, continued: Marz from BOA Design

Meeting Point: TBD

**October 5 (F)**

Street Life: Gang Culture, Jose Aragon, GRID Denver Public Safety

Meeting Point: Issachar Center

Reading:

--“Gang Suppression”, Chapter 8 from *The End of Policing*, Alex Vitale. **PDF in Slack**

**October 8 (M)**

Greek Orthodox: Rev. Fr. Dimitrios Kyritsis

Meeting Point: Assumption of the Theotokos, 4610 E. Alameda Avenue, Denver

Reading:

--“Eastern Christianity”, by Justo Gonzalez in *The Story of Christianity* (pgs. 250-265). **PDF in Slack**

**October 12 (F)**

Islam: Abdur Oman Alii

Meeting Point: NE Islamic Center, 3400 Albion Street,

Reading:

--“God is Greater” by Jennifer Howe Peace and “Encountering the Muslim ‘Other’ at Harvard” by Ali S. Asani via *My Neighbor’s Faith* (pgs. 25-29 and 135-137, respectively). **PDF in Slack**

--"Islam’s Holy Book: What the Quran Says About Jesus” (chapter three) in Carl Medearis*, Christians, Muslims, and Jesus*. **PDF in Slack**

--“Wheaton College could face long-term fallout over professor controversy” via *The Chicago Tribune*. **Article in Slack**

**October 15 (M)**

Hipster Culture: Deke Bowman

Meeting Point: TBD

Reading:

--TBD

**October 19 (F)**

Buddhism: Rev Diana Thompson

Meeting Point: Denver Buddhist Temple, 1947 Lawrence Street, Denver

Reading:

--“Under the Bodhi Tree” by Varun Soni;

--“The Solitude of Contemplative Life: A Buddhist-Benedictine Friendship” by Judith Simmer-Brown via *My Neighbor’s Faith* (pgs. 182-184 and 220-223, respectively). **PDF in Slack**.

**October 22 (M)**

Poverty & Namelessness: Ryan Taylor

Meeting Point: TBD

Reading:

--TBD

**October 26 (F)**

Poverty & Affordable Housing: Deke Bowman

Meeting Point: TBD

Reading:

--TBD

**October 29 (M)**

Chronic Homelessness, Ryan Taylor

Meeting Point: R Network Café, 1402 Pearl Street, Denver

Reading:

--TBD

**November 2 (F)**

Poverty, Homeless Teens

Meeting Point: Sox’s Place, 2017 Lawrence Street, Denver.

Reading:

--TBD

**November 5 (M)**

Systemic Racism: Deke Bowman

Meeting Point: TBD

Reading:

--Watch “13th”, a documentary directed by Ava DuVernay (available on Netflix)

**November 9 (F)**

Systemic Racism: housing, Amy Jackson

Meeting Point: Mile High Ministries, 913 Wyandot Street, Denver

Reading:

--“Racial Zoning” and “Own Your Own Home” (i.e. chapters 3 and 4) from *The Color of Law: The Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* by Richard Rothstein

--"The Case for Reparations” by Ta-Nahesi Coates, via *The Atlantic Magazine*: https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/)

**November 12 (M)**

Social Enterprise: Transitioning and Transforming Through Work: Andy Magel

Meeting Point: Mile High Workshop, 13280 E. Mississippi Ave, Aurora

Reading:

--“You Just Got Out of Prison. Now What?” via the *New York Times*: https://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/19/magazine/you-just-got-out-of-prison-now-what.html

--“Employment Discrimination Based on a Criminal Record”, Chapter 14 of *The Eternal Criminal Record*, by James B. Jacobs. **PDF in Slack**

**November 16 (F)**

Mass Incarceration and Social Enterprise: Bob Ekblad

Meeting Point: TBD

Reading:

--TBD

**November 19 - 23**

THANKSGIVING BREAK -- No Class!!

**November 26 (M)**

Refugee Walking Tour: Deke Bowman

Meeting Point: TBD

Reading:

--TBD

**November 30 (F)**

Refugees: Frank Anello

Meeting Point: Project Worthmore, 1532 Galena Street, Aurora

Reading

--“Immigrant and Refugee Students Find ‘the Epitome of What a Public School Can and Should Be’ in Denver” via *The* *Denver Post*: http://www.denverpost.com/2017/09/18/denver-south-high-school-immigrants-refugees-diversity/

--“America’s Refugee Teens, Marginalized on Tough Streets as Doors Close, Forge Denver Fraternity to Survive” via *The Denver Post*: http://www.denverpost.com/2017/11/20/denver-street-fraternity-refugee-teens/

--WATCH: Yu Meh and Food Security for Denver Refugees via Project Worthmore: https://www.projectworthmore.org/yu-meh/

**December 3 (M)**

Denver Latino History: Cinday and Jude Del Herro

Meeting Point: TBD

Reading:

--TBD

**December 7 (F)**

Immigration law: Legal aspects to citizenship: Tina Garcia

Meeting Point: Mile High Ministries

Reading:

--“How U.S. Immigration Law Enables Modern Slavery”, via *the Atlantic*: https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2017/06/immigration-law-modern-slavery/529446/

--“A Brief History of America’s ‘Love-Hate Relationship’ With Immigration”, via *the Atlantic*: https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/02/donald-trump-immigration/517119/

--“How Immigration Became So Controversial”, via *the Atlantic*: https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/02/why-immigration-divides/552125/

**December 10 (M)**

Immigration

Meeting Point: TBD

Reading:

--TBD

**December 14 (F)**

Immigration: Non-documented panel

Meeting Point: TBD

Reading:

--TBD

**December 17 (M)**

Street Culture: Low Riders

Meeting Point: TBD

Reading:

--TBD