

NORTH PORTLAND BIBLE COLLEGE

US202 – Ministry to Urban Families

Wednesdays, Sept. 28, Oct. 5, 12, 19, 26, Nov. 2, 9, 16, 30, Dec. 7

6:30 PM-9:00 PM

Dr. Sean Benesh

Fall Term 2016

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Strategies for assisting inner-city families to overcome the special needs of urban life and how the local church becomes partners in this plan of hope and recovery.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. To understand historic population migration to gain a better understanding about why and how inner-cities developed.
2. To explore how the development of downtowns and city centers along with exclusionary policies and practices have created communities of need in the urban core.
3. To address how gentrification is uniquely impacting inner-city minority communities.
4. To uncover what is changing about cities (and why) which directly influences life for families in inner-city America.
5. To understand how population inversion is reshuffling the population within cities giving rise to the suburbs as the landing place for minorities and low-income families.
6. To understand the role of the church (and Christians) in seeking the welfare / peace of the city today.
7. To learn about resources for families in need.
8. To explore creative ways to bring health and vitality to struggling neighborhoods and communities.
9. To uncover a Gospel-centered perspective on community development that also includes the economics and built environment of a neighborhood and community.
10. To learn the fundamentals of renewing the city and why it is an outflow of the good news of the Kingdom of God.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Fuder, John, and Noel Castellanos. *A Heart for the Community: New Models for Urban and Suburban Ministry*. Chicago: Moody, 2013.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance: Attendance is important and will be recorded.

Book Review on the Textbook: Complete the assigned reading of *A Heart for the Community* and write a book review using the “Writing a Book Review” format included in this syllabus. The reading report is due by **December 7, 2016**.

Lead Class Discussion: Lead / facilitate class discussion once during the semester using the “Guidelines for Leading Class Discussions” format included in this syllabus.

Weekly Reflection Paper: Write weekly reflection papers (**4 total**) on selected topics. These are to be two pages in length.

Course Grading:

The point system is as follows:

- 30 points - Book Review
- 30 points - Lead Class Discussion
- 40 points - Weekly Reflection Papers (10 points each x4)
- 100 points possible

Grade breakdown:

- 90-100 points - A
- 80-90 points - B
- 70-80 points - C
- 60-70 points - D
- Under 60 points - F

Late assignment policy: Assignments are due on the date specified, although situations may arise requiring an extension. It is the student’s responsibility to request an extension from the instructor when necessary. Any assignment turned in later than 11:59 pm on the date due will incur a 5% grade reduction per day. Please let me know if you are having trouble and need additional help or an extension.

Guidelines for submitting written work: All papers should be typed double space in 12 point Times New Roman font, with 1 inch margins on all sides, and should have a cover page and bibliography. Papers should be in MLA format, with all sources cited in parenthetical notes, with the reference listed in the Bibliography. Papers should reflect research and thought on their topic, include proper source citation, and be written with proper English grammar.

NPBC Writing Standards: All written material submitted must be the original work of the student. Plagiarism is a violation of academic integrity and constitutes a serious breach of scholarship standards at North Portland Bible College. When quoting the work of an author or an author’s ideas are used in your paper, document, document, and document.

WRITING A BOOK REVIEW

First, describe the book including: a) the thesis, main point or main concept of the book, often found in the preface or first chapter, that the author is trying to communicate in simply one or two sentences; and b) a summary of the major themes/concepts/ideas, the thesis and argument of the author (not the chapter outlines). Why did the author write this book and what is its main point?

Second, analyze the text and author's argument. If you've described it well in part one, then you can take a paragraph to delineate (briefly) the strengths and limits of this book, its thesis and argument. (To see how this is done, read *NY Times* book reviews or movie and book reviews in most newspapers.)

Third, application. What did this book mean to you, how can you apply it to your situation, what questions, issues, disagreements were raised for you, what were some transferable principles to your context?

The Book Review is to be 4 pages in length.

GUIDELINES FOR LEADING CLASS DISCUSSIONS

One time during the semester each student will lead and facilitate class discussion based upon the assigned reading from *A Heart for the Community* that is due the day of class. During this you will (a) present a summary of the reading and what you learned personally, (b) share what you liked / didn't like about the reading (and why), (c) what it means to you personally / how it challenged or stimulated your thinking, (d) what it means today for people living in the city, and (e) ask discussion questions to engage the other students in dialogue about these topics.

While you will present material and your thoughts at the beginning, this is meant to foster and encourage discussion. You're a facilitator.

COURSE SCHEDULE

September 28, 2016 - Session #1

Topic: *Population migration and why and how inner-cities developed.*

October 5, 2016 - Session #2

Topic: *Development of downtowns / city centers, exclusionary policies, and racism.*

Readings: "Gentrification: The Good News and the Bad News" (Chapter 1) due

Assignment: Weekly Reflection Paper #1 due

October 12, 2016 - Sessions #3

Topic: *Gentrification.*

Readings: "Working Together to Restore Our Communities: Networking and Collaboration" (Chapter 2) due

October 19, 2016 - Session #4

Topic: *What is changing about cities (and why).*

Readings: "The Border, the Barrio, and the 'Burbs" Ministry Among America's Biggest Minority" (Chapter 4) due

Assignment: Weekly Reflection Paper #2 due

October 26, 2016 - Session #5

Topic: *Urbs and Suburbs.*

Readings: "The Times They Are a-Changing: The Suburbanization of Poverty" (Chapter 18) due

November 2, 2016 - Session #6

Topic: *The role of the church in seeking the welfare / peace of the city today.*

Readings: "Seizing the Moment: Churches in Racially Changing Communities" (Chapter 19) due

Assignment: Weekly Reflection Paper #3 due

November 9, 2016 - Session #7

Topic: *Resources for families in need.*

Readings: "Urban Issues in Suburban Towns? Poverty Among Luxury" (Chapter 21) due

November 16, 2016 - Session #8

Topic: *Bringing health and vitality to struggling neighborhoods and families.*

Readings: "The Great Community: A Pathway from Diversity to Unity" (Chapter 23) due

Assignment: Weekly Reflection Paper #4 due

November 30, 2016 - Session #9

Topic: *Gospel-centered community development.*

Readings: “Unleashing the Family: Safe Families for Vulnerable Children” (Chapter 26) due

December 7, 2016 - Session #10

Topic: *Renewing the city and the Kingdom of God.*

Readings: “In Search of Lost Sheep: How Young Life Reaches North Side Teenagers” (Chapter 27) due

Assignment: Book Review due

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Glaeser, Edward L. *Triumph of the City: How Our Greatest Invention Makes Us Richer, Smarter, Greener, Healthier, and Happier*. New York: Penguin, 2011.
- Linthicum, Robert. *Transforming Power: Biblical Strategies for Making a Difference in Your Community*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2003.
- Lupton, Robert D. *Renewing the City: Reflections on Community Development and Urban Renewal*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2005.
- Lydon, Mike, et al, *Tactical Urbanism 2: Short Term Action, Long-Term Change*. Miami: Street Plans, 2012.
- Morrish, William R., and Catherine R. Brown, *Planning to Stay: Learning to See the Physical Features of Your Neighborhood*. Minneapolis: Milkweed, 2000.
- Roxburgh, Alan. *Missional: Joining God in the Neighborhood*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011.
- Smith, Brad. *City Signals: Principles and Practices for Ministering in Today's Global Communities*. Birmingham: New Hope, 2008.
- Swanson, Eric and Rick Rusaw. *The Externally Focused Quest: Becoming the Best Church for the Community*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010.
- von Hoffman, Alexander. *House by House, Block by Block: The Rebirth of America's Urban Neighborhoods*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.