

Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

Course Profile – Fall 2008

E370-Church and Society: A Lutheran Perspective

Professor: Dr. Richard J. Perry, Jr.

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Course Description:

This course will focus on critical examination of the social ethical tradition of the Lutheran church, especially the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Special attention will be given to the inherited tradition and contemporary interpretations of Lutheran social ethics. Students will engage various contemporary problems (e.g., politics, environment, health care, women and youth, gay and lesbian issues). Field visits serve as a practical lens through which student articulate a self-aware framework for engaging problems in the world.

Statement of Outcomes:

- (1) students will become familiar with the social ethical tradition of the ELCA;
- (2) students will become familiar with and practice a method for analyzing a context;
- (3) students will become familiar with various “models” of how the ELCA and other agencies engage contemporary problems in society;
- (4) students will be able to clearly articulate a self-conscious stance toward problems in society, especially from a Lutheran perspective.

Outline and Content of the Course:

- (1) The Nature and Meaning of “social ethics”
- (2) Doing social analysis
- (3) Social ethics as politics
- (4) Some typologies for engaging society
- (5) Some “models” of the church’s engagement of society
- (6) Implications for leadership and congregational ministry

Methodology:

This course follows an adult learner model. The participants in the class are expected to take responsibility for learning by reading, inquiring, writing, working together, and organizing. The professor will provide the framework and resources to assist you.

OVER PLEASE!!!

Requirements:

1. Regular attendance and active participation is expected.
2. There will be one book review.
3. There will be one paper due.
4. Participants are expected to do the required reading.
5. Each participant will join a “problem” group.

Required Reading:

ELCA Social Statement: "The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective"

(Available at www.elca.org/social-statements)

Gamwell, Franklin, Politics as a Christian Vocation

Moe-Lobeda, Cynthia, The Public Church

Prabhu, George, “Gandhi, Empire, and a Culture of Peace”

Stumme, John & Robert Tuttle, Church & State: Lutheran Perspectives

West, Cornel, Democracy Matters

Various Handouts to be posted on the LSTC Intranet for this course.

A course profile is only a snapshot of the course offered and does not take the place of the Course Syllabus which the professor will make available the first meeting of the class.