Course syllabus

**Worship in Multicultural Contexts (online/4 credits)**

**Spring 2014**

**INSTRUCTOR:**

Eunjoo Mary Kim: ekim@iliff.edu

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

We are living in a globalized multicultural world, in which individuals and communities struggle to realize their identities, values and meanings of the life, and aspirations of the Christian faith. Christian worship is challenged to guide the community of faith by discerning the will of God through theological reflection on racial and cultural issues emerging from the multicultural context. Upon realizing these significant challenges, this course aims to search for new liturgical models for Christian worship, culturally sensitive and spiritually vital, through the theological understanding of the relationship between liturgy and culture and innovative research on a variety of multicultural approaches to Christian worship.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

This online course is designed to help students research independently and to have clear ideas about the theology and method of worship in multicultural contexts. The approach to worship in this course will be based a great deal on social and cultural factors in liturgical formation and expression. The students’ research projects will be shared with peers as well as the instructor and receive critical and constructive feedback from them. During the course period, students will:

* 1. review thoroughly some selected books on culture and liturgy as to define what multicultural worship means,
  2. analyze local and global contexts for worship through the lens of cultural diversity,
  3. widen and deepen the understanding of Christian worship by increasing knowledge about different racial and ethnic worship,
  4. write a multicultural liturgy in theologically relevant and liturgically creative ways.

**MDIV DEGREE LEARNING GOALS:**

Theology and Religious Practices (PR): engage in analysis of contemporary religious traditions and institutions in order to assess, design, and perform meaningful leadership practices with sensitivity to contextual realities and relationship (*Master’s Student Handbook, 2013-2014, p. 12)*.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

1. Blount, Brian and Leonora Tisdale, *Making Room at the Table: An Invitation to Multicultural Worship.* ISBN: 0664202221. At least two chapters from each Part at your own choice.
2. Costen, Melva, W., *African American Christian Worship* (updated edition). ISBN: 978-0-687-64622-7
3. Francis, Mark K., C.S.V., *Shape A Circle Ever Wider: Liturgical Inculturation in the Untied States*. ISBN: 1-56854-277-1
4. Gonzalez, Justo (ed.), *Alabadle!: Hispanic Christian Worship.* ISBN: 0-687-01032-2
5. Hawn, C. Michael, *One Bread, One Body: Exploring Cultural Diversity in Worship*. ISBN: 978-1-56699-277-0
6. Huh, Paul, “Creating Bilingual Worship Services in Korean and English.” Available in Canvas.
7. Koester, Anne Y. (ed.), *Liturgy and Justice: To Worship God in Spirit and Truth.* At least three chapters at your own choice. ISBN: 0-8146-2791-9
8. Yee, Russell, *Worship on the Way: Exploring Asian North American Christian Experience.* ISBN: 978-0-8170-1707-1

**SUGGESTED TEXTS:**

1. Tanner, Kathryn, *Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology.* ISBN: 0800630971

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

1. **Participation**. The regular attendance of all online classes is required. Students are required to read assigned readings and post their class assignments on time. Students are also required to post **eight One-page Essays** **(single-spaced, 12-point, Times New Roman)** and offer critical and constructive feedback on ALL of their group members’ essays posted on their group discussion site. Essays should include appropriate **footnotes or the list of works cited with page numbers**. The instructor should be informed in advance of any necessary absences or delays of postings.

In this course, we are committed to modeling the values Iliff embraces: diversity, mutual respect, accountability, honest communication, critical self-reflection, curiosity, creativity, and a sense of adventure. In each discussion, we will do our best to respect differences and diversity in human life and spiritual journey. Concerning plagiarism, refer to the section of “Academic Integrity” in the *Master’s Student Handbook.*

1. **A 5-6 page report (double-spaced, 12-point, Times New Roman) on your cross-cultural worship experience.** Attend at least three worship services in different churches. The services you attend should be held either in multiracial and multicultural contexts or in racially and ethnically different congregations from your own. After attending the services, write a report on the three worship services (2-3 pages each), focusing on 1) the racial and ethnic demographic make-up and other social components of the congregation you worshipped with, 2) the history of its worship life, 3) distinctive liturgical and theological features of the services, and 4) your critical reflection on the service with at least two things that you gained from it as you develop multicultural worship for your own congregation. In order to respond to these four categories, you may need to interview some church members or staff. Post your report in Canvas with scanned worship bulletins by **Week 7, Wed. (5/7), 11:59 p.m. (MT)**.
2. **One complete order of the service from a multicultural perspective.** Based on your knowledge and experience gained from Requirement #2 and weekly class assignments, write the order of the service from a multicultural perspective. It must be for a one-hour service either for Sunday worship or any special liturgical occasion. The students need to decide the liturgical theme and particular setting and select liturgical components at their own choice. The order of the service must include full texts of prayers, hymns, the sermon manuscript (if preaching is included), and other liturgical components. (If you are going to have a chance to perform this liturgy before the submission date, you may videotape your worship service and post it in Canvas with the worship bulletin, without the full text of the liturgy).

In addition, the students should provide the instructor with **a brief written rationale** for why the service was ordered as it was, why the various elements within it were selected, and how they were used in creative ways. The rationale can either be written on separate pages (2-3 pages, single-spaced) and be attached to the worship order, or be incorporated as a running commentary within the worship order. The order of the service should demonstrate your creative and concrete ideas to develop a culturally more sensitive and theologically more relevant worship service from your multicultural perspective. You are supposed to refer to the “Criteria for Worship Evaluation” that is posted in Canvas when you prepare for this assignment. Post your work by Week 10, **Sunday (6/01), 11:59 p.m. (MT)** and provide your feedback on other members’ works by **Wednesday (6/04), 11:59 p.m.**

**If necessary, you may consult with the instructor on the theme and the worship style on the phone or via Skype.**

**COURSE EVALUATION:**

Students can take the course using their P/F option. In order to receive the grade of “P,” the students must complete the three requirements listed in the section of Course Requirements. The students who want to contract for a grade of P/F must email a note to the instructor by April 9.

For a letter grade, normal school grading system is used. In order to ensure accountability and fairness, the following grading system will be applied:

Requirement #1 .…..……………………………40% (5% x 8 one-page essays & feedback)

Requirement #2…………………………………25 %

Requirement #3 …..…………….………………35%

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Total 100%

The Iliff grading system is a five-letter system from A through F with pluses and minuses. In computing grade point average (GPAs), grades are assigned the following numerical values (*The 2013-2014 Master’s Student Handbook*, p. 79):

A : 4.00 (100 − 96%)

A-: 3.75 (95 – 91%)

B+: 3.25 (90 – 86%)

B : 3.00 (85 – 81%)

B-: 2.75 (80 − 76%)

C+: 2.25 (75 – 71%)

C : 2.00 (70 – 66%)

\*Late submissions will result in lowering your grade (-2 points for each late submission).

\*The use of inclusive language is strongly urged in all class discussions, writings, etc.

**Incomplete Policy:** Students are responsible for following the procedures outlined in the attached document.

**ADA Policy:** Iliff engages in a collaborative effort with students with disabilities to reasonably accommodate student needs. Students are encouraged to contact their assigned advisor to initiate the process of requesting accommodations. The Advising Center can be contacted at advising@iliff.edu or by phone at 303.765.1146.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Week 1: Changing Context for Christian Worship**

* Getting acquainted one another: Post introductory words about you (e.g., your program at Iliff, denomination, ministerial setting, preaching and worship leadership experience, future plan after graduation, why taking this course, etc.) by Wed. (03/26), 11:59 p.m. (MT). If you like, you can audio- or videotape introduction to yourself and upload it.
* Readings: ClassNotes 1; Francis, Ch.2.
* Assignments: **One-page Esssay 1** (single-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt.) focusing on the following questions:
* In what kind of cultural contexts is your congregation located? Describe your congregation’s racial and ethnic subculture(s) and the larger sociocultural context that your congregation belongs to.
* What is your experience of Sunday worship in your church? What are the cultural challenges for you to rethink Christian worship in a culturally sensitive way?

Post your essay by Wednesday (3/26), 11:59 p.m. (MT). Respond to ALL of your group members’ essays (300-400 words each) by Friday (3/28), 11:59 p.m. (MT).

**Week 2: Culture and Liturgy**

* Readings: ClassNotes2; Francis, Ch. 3.
* Suggested readings: Tanner.
* Assignments: O**ne-page Essay** **2** (single-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt.) focusing on the following question:
* What is the liturgical history of your denomination and your particular congregation? When you summarize it, explore how the three conceptions of culture that is explained in ClassNotes2 associate or intersect in the history of your congregational liturgical culture.

Post your essay by Wednesday (4/2), 11:59 p.m. (MT). Respond to ALL of your group members’ essays (300-400 words each) by Friday (4/4), 11:59 p.m. (MT).

**Week 3: Rethinking Christian Worship from Multicultural Perspectives**

* Readings: ClassNotes3; Francis, Ch. 4; Koester, at least three chapters at your own choice.
* Assignments: **One-page Essay 3** (single-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt.) focusing on the following questions:
* Is it necessary to consider Christian worship from multicultural perspectives? Why or why not?
* What are the pressing issues or problems emerging from your church when you consider its worship from a multicultural perspective?

Post your essay by Wednesday (4/9), 11:59 p.m. (MT). Respond to ALL of your group members’ essays (300-400 words each) by Friday (4/11), 11:59 p.m. (MT).

**Week 4: Theologies of Worship**

* Readings: ClassNotes4; Blount & Tisdale (ed.), at least two chapters from each Part at your own choice.
* Assignments: **One-page Essay** **4** (single-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt.) focusing on the following questions:
* What is worship for you when you consider culture a significant influence on worship?
* In your definition of worship, what is the most significant theological and biblical theme(s)? Deepen your theological understanding of worship in relation to that theme(s) and articulate your theology of worship.

Post your essay by Wednesday (4/16), 11:59 p.m. (MT). Respond to ALL of your group members’ essays (300-400 words each) by Friday (4/18), 11:59 p.m. (MT).

**Week 5: Diversity of Worship (I): African American Worship**

* Readings: Costen.
* Assignments: **One-page Essay 5** (single-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt.) focusing on the following questions:
* What are the distinctive characteristics of African American worship that you learned from Costen’s book?
* How can you relate what you learned about African American worship to your church’s worship experience?

Post your essay by Wednesday (4/23), 11:59 p.m. (MT). Respond to ALL of your group members’ essays (300-400 words each) by Friday (4/25), 11:59 p.m. (MT).

**Week 6: Diversity of Worship (II): Asian American Worship**

* Readings: Yee.
* Assignments: **One-page Essay 6** (single-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt.) focusing on the following questions:
* What are the distinctive characteristics of Asian American worship that you learned from Yee’s book?
* How can you relate what you learned about Asian American worship to your church’s worship experience?

Post your essay by Wednesday (4/30), 11:59 p.m. (MT). Respond to ALL of your group members’ essays (300-400 words each) by Friday (5/2), 11:59 p.m. (MT).

**Week 7:**

Post **Requirement #2** in Canvas by Wednesday (5/7), 11:59 p.m. (MT).

**Week 8: Diversity of Worship (III): Hispanic American Worship**

* Readings: Gonzales (ed.).
* Assignments: **One-page Essay** **7** (single-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt.) focusing on the following questions:
* What are the distinctive characteristics of Hispanic American worship that you learned from Gonzales’ book?
* How can you relate what you learned about Hispanic American worship to your church’s worship experience?

Post your essay by Wednesday (5/14), 11:59 p.m. (MT). Respond to All of your group members’ essays (a maximum of 300 words each) by Friday (5/16), 11:59 p.m. (MT).

**Week 9: Practice of Multicultural Worship (I)**

* Readings: ClassNotes5; ClassNotes6; Huh; Francis, pp. 89-112; Hawn (optional).
* Assignments: **One-page Essay 8** (single-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt.) focusing on the following questions:
* Do you have any creative ideas about designing the worship service from a multicultural perspective? Explore any ideas you have in relation to the four models explained in ClassNotes5, or you may develop your own model. This idea is supposed to be used in your Requirement #3 project.
* Do you have any concrete ideas to develop liturgical components (e.g., prayers, songs, scripture, preaching, Communion, baptism, symbols, space, language, etc.) creatively to help your congregation experience the presence and work of God in our multicultural world? You may focus on one particular liturgical component and develop it from a multicultural perspective to be used in your church or ministerial setting. This idea is supposed to be included in your Requirement #3.

Post your essay by Wednesday (5/21), 11:59 p.m. (MT). Respond to ALL of your group members’ essays (a maximum of 300 words each) by Friday (5/23), 11:59 p.m. (MT).

**Week 10: Practice of Multicultural Worship (II)**

* Assignments:

1. Post **Requirement #3** by Sunday (6/1) (seniors who are going to graduate this June should post their works by Wednesday (5/28), 11:59 p.m. (MT)).
2. Provide your feedback on ALL of your group members’ works by Wednesday (6/04), 11:59 p.m. (MT). (Your feedback is supposed to be critical and constructive in 300-500 words for each student’s work.)