**IST 20801: Practical Theology (4 credits)**

**Winter 2019**

**Thursday 1:00-4:30**

**INSTRUCTOR:**

Dr. Eunjoo M. Kim (ekim@iliff.edu)

Office hours: By Appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course explores models of practical theological reflection and methods of reflective

professional practice as frameworks for religious leadership in various contexts in which

students will work. Students will be introduced to disciplined modes of embodying the

integration of theory and praxis that allow them to place their coursework across the curriculum

into regular conversation with their practice as religious leaders and ministry professionals in a

variety of institutional and cultural contexts.

Although this course requires integrative thinking across theological disciplines that you may not have yet had coursework in, we are engaging these skills early in your degree program in the hopes that you see the benefit of rigorous work in these particular areas as you move throughout your degree program. This form of reflective practice undergirds all of the work in other courses as an integrative framework for theological education.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

This course aims to help students relate their academic studies to the communities of people, institutions, and contextual situations in which they will engage their vocation. Students participating in the course and engaging in its practices will be able to:

1. Gain knowledge about practical theological approaches.
2. Explore and articulate a practical theological question or concern of a community that matters deeply to them.
3. Cultivate critical and analytical thinking necessary for theological reflection grounded in human experience and practices.
4. Utilize historical, religious, and scientific resources in order to propose a faithful and ethical practice in relationship to specific theological questions or concerns.

In this class, 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 class, we will do our best to respect differences and diversity in human life and learning experience. Concerning plagiarism, refer to the section of “Academic Integrity” in the *Master’s Student Handbook.*

**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, 2014-2015, p. 12)*.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

1. Johnson, Susanne, “Remembering the Poor: Transforming Christian Practice,” in *Redemptive Transformation in Practice Theology,* edited by Dana R. Wright & John D. Kuentzel, Chapter 7. ISBN: 080682689X. **(Available in Canvas)**.
2. Kim, Eunjoo M. & Deborah B. Creamer (eds.), *Women, Church, and Leadership: New Paradigms*. ISBN:1608999017.
3. Miller-McLemore, Bonnie J., *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*, Introduction and Chapters 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 32, 34. ISBN: 9781444330823. **(Available in Canvas)**.
4. Osmer, Richard, *Practical Theology: An Introduction*. ISBN: 978-0-0828-1765-5

**SUGGESTED TEXTS:**

1. Ward, Pete, *Introducing Practical Theology: Mission, Ministry, and the Life of the Church*. ISBN: 9780801098192.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

1. **Attendance and Participation.**  Your regular and punctual attendance of all classes and active and responsible participation in class and group discussions and feedback to your group members’ projects are required. The instructor should be informed in advance of any necessary absences. You cannot pass the course if you miss more than two classes.

You are expected to read all the assigned readings and post class assignments in Canvas in a timely manner.

1. **Two one-page essays (double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt. or 250-300 words).** See Course Schedule, Week 2 and Week 3.
2. **A 2-3 page paper on your theological issue (double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point, or 500-750 words).** In your paper,
3. define an issue (personal, social, or religious) that matters a great deal to you and your community or may have led you to come to the theological school,
4. explain why this issue is important to you, your community, and the larger world,
5. summarize your pre-understanding about the issue and the areas of research you would like to conduct in relation to the issue.
6. Post your paper by **1/30 (Wed.), 1:00 p.m.**

This issue will be used as the research topic for Requirements #4.

1. **A research project:**

* **Part I “What is going on?” (2-3 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point, or 500-750 words):**

1. Observe how members of your congregation or a larger community think about the issue you chose for Requirement #3 and how their understanding of that issue has been practiced implicitly or explicitly in your congregational or other ministerial setting (e.g., in preaching, worship, mission and outreach programs, Bible study, administrative and strategic planning, denominational policy, etc.). As methods of observation, use one (or more than one) of those Osmer suggests in Chapter 1 of his book, such as formal or informal interviews and surveys.
2. Based on the results of your observation, describe what bothers you most and where you get stuck or have trouble.
3. Post Part I in Canvas by **2/06 (Wed.), 1:00 p.m.**

* **Part II “Why is this going on?” (2-3 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point, or 500-750 words):**

1. What is your particular concern or question about the situation you observed and described in Part I? Analyze and interpret it at a deeper level through interdisciplinary studies that Osmer introduces in Chapter 2 (e.g., sociological analyses, historical reviews, psychological studies, etc.).
2. Summarize your research results in a critical way.
3. Post Part II in Canvas by **2/13 (Wed.), 1:00 p.m.**

* **Part III “What ought to be going on?” (2-3 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point, or 500-750 words):**

1. What do you think is the theological and biblical theme that emerges from your research in Parts I and II? Define it (e.g., hospitality, the doctrine of forgiveness, the theology of creation, theodicy, etc.).
2. Explore your theological theme by studying relevant biblical texts and theological resources and explain your own theological position on your issue. In the process of your study, refer to Chapter 3 of Osmer’s book.
3. Post Part III in Canvas by **2/20 (Wed.), 1:00 p.m.**

* **Part IV “How might we respond?” (2-3 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point, or 500-750 words):**

1. Think about your leadership role and how your leadership can make “deep change” in your ministerial setting in relation to the issue you researched.
2. Think about how your theological and biblical understanding about the issue can be effectively communicated in your particular ministerial setting.
3. Based on 1) and 2), explain your long-term and short-term plans to fulfill deep change. Refer to Chapter 4 of Osmer’s book and Kim & Creamer’s book, and provide some creative ideas about making deep change (e.g., how a Bible study material can be prepared on the issue, how a worship service can be designed focusing on the issue, etc.).
4. Post Part IV in Canvas by **2/27** **(Wed.), 1:00 p.m.**
5. **A 10-15 minute presentation of your research project in a creative form**

Develop Part IV of Requirement #3 into a presentation material and present it in class:

1. Select your listeners (e.g., your local congregation, the Iliff community, our class, etc.).
2. Choose a form of communication such as a sermon, a liturgy, a Bible study material, a lecture manuscript, a church newsletter column, a skit, a poem, a song, a dance, a painting, etc.
3. Prepare your written material for the presentation and post it in Canvas by Wednesday, 1:00 p.m. one day before your presentation day.
4. Present your prepared material in class and videotape your presentation on your scheduled date (you need to bring your cell phone, camera, or computer to record your presentation).
5. **A reflection paper (1-2 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, or 250-500 words).** View your videotape and write down what you learned about the issue through your research and presentation (e.g., how your pre-understanding of the issue was changed or deepened through the research, how class feedback challenged you to improve your ministerial practice in relation to the issue, areas of improvement in your presentation, etc.) Post the paper in Canvas by the **following Sunday, 11:59 p.m**.

**COURS EVALUATION:**

Students can take the course using their P/F option. In order to receive the grade of “P,” students must complete the 5 requirements listed in the section of the Course Requirements. Students who want to contract for a grade of P/F must email a note to the instructor by the date of Class #2.

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 .…..………………………………….15%

Requirement #2……………………………………… 10 % (5% x 2)

Requirement #3 …..…………….……………… ……10%

Requirement #4.………………………………............ 40%

Requirement #5…………………………………..……20%

Requirement #6…………………………………….… 5%

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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 Master’s Student Handbook*, p. 80):

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%)

**Extra credits** (a maximum of 5 points) will be granted to the students who revise their presentation materials (Requirement #4) based on class feedback and resubmit it by March 17 (Sun.).

**Late submissions** **(unexcused and excused)** will result in lowering the grade (-2 points/each).

**The deadline of late submissions** is March 17 (Sun.). The late assignments may be reviewed by the instructor after this deadline and may not receive written comments from the instructor.

**Both unexcused and excused absences** will result in lowering the grade (-5 points/each).

**Writing Lab:** Grammar and organization are important for all written assignments. A variety of tutorials and resources are available at the writing lab website on my.iliff.

**Inclusive Language:** It is expected that all course participants will use inclusive language in

speaking and writing, and will use terms that do not create barriers to classroom community.

**Incomplete Policy:** Students are responsible for following the procedures outlined in the *Master’s Student Handbook*.

**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**

**Class #1** (1/10): What is Practical Theology?

* Meditation: Kim
* Getting acquainted
* Introducing the course syllabus
* Defining practical theology

Readings:

1. Miller-McLemore (ed.), “Introduction.”
2. Miller-McLemore, Ch. 34 (Mary Fulkerson, “Systematic Theology”).

Suggested readings:

1. Ward, Ch. 1.

**Class #2** (1/17): Methods of Practical Theology

* Meditation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Discussion on One-page Essay 1
* Methods of practical theological reflection

Readings:

1. Osmer, “Introduction.”
2. Miller-McLemore (ed.), Ch. 32 (Miguel De la Torre, “Ethics”).

Suggested readings:

1. Ward, Ch. 6.

Assignment: **One-page Essay I** (double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt. or 250-300 words) about your own understanding of practical theology. Post your essay in Canvas by 1/16 (Wed.), 1:00 p.m. and share it in class.

**Class #3** (1/24): Exploring Methodology

* Meditation:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Discussion on One-page Essay II
* Theory and practice

Readings:

1. Susanne Johnson, “Remembering the Poor: Transforming Christian Practice.”
2. Kim & Creamer, Ch. 2.

Suggested readings:

1. Ward, Ch. 9.

Assignment: After reading the chapters, write One-page Essay II, focusing on the following question: What kinds of practical theological methods did Johnson and Creamer use in their essays? If possible, draw diagrams of their methodological approaches. Post your essay by Wed. (1/23), 1:00 p.m. and share it in class.

**Class #4** (1/31): The Descriptive and Empirical Analysis of the Present Practice (“What is going

On?”)

* Meditation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Discussion of Requirement #3
* Formation of discussion groups for Requirement #4 (“a research project”)
* “Priestly listening”

Readings:

1. Osmer, Ch. 1.
2. Miller-McLemore (ed.), Ch. 8 (Daniel Schipani, “Case Study Method”).
3. Miller-McLemore (ed.), Ch. 11 (Hans Schilderman, “Qualitative Method”).

Assignment: Post Requirement #3 by 1/30 (Wed.), 1:00 p.m. and share it in class.

**Class #5** (2/07): The Scientific Interpretation of the Present Practice (“Why is this going on?”)

* Meditation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Discussion on Requirement #4/Part I
* “Sagely wisdom”

Readings:

1. Osmer, Ch. 2.
2. Miller-McLemore (ed.), Ch. 9 (Lee Butler, Jr., “Psychological Theory”).
3. Miller-McLemore (ed.), Ch.10 (Sally Brown, “Hermeneutical Theory”).

Assignments: Post Requirement #4/Part I by 2/06 (Wed.), 1:00 p.m. and share it in class.

**Class #6** (2/14): Seeking a New Theological Model (“What ought to be going on?”)

* Meditation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Discussion on Requirement #4/Part II
* “Prophetic discernment”

Readings:

1. Osmer, Ch. 3.
2. Miller-McLemore (ed.), Ch. 15 (Paul Ballard, “The Use of Scripture”).

Assignments: Post Requirement #4/Part II by 2/13 (Wed.), 1:00 p.m. and share it in class.

**Class #7** (2/21): Toward a New Practical Paradigm (“How might we respond?”)

* Meditation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Discussion on Requirement #4/Part III
* Models of leadership
* Brainstorming Requirement #5

Readings:

1. Osmer, Ch. 4.
2. Kim and Creamer (eds.), Chs. 4 & 6.

Assignments:

1. Post Requirement #4/Part III, by 2/20 (Wed.), 1:00 p.m. and share it in class.
2. Think about Requirement #5 and prepare to share your idea in class.

**Class #8** (2/28): Praxis

* Meditation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Discussion on Requirement #4/Part IV
* Praxis and “Imagination”
* Discussion on chapters of Kim & Creamer’s book

Readings: Kim & Creamer (eds.), Chs. 5, 7, 8.

Assignments:

1. Post Requirement #4/Part IV by 2/27 (Wed.), 1:00 p.m. and share it in class.
2. After reading chapters in Kim & Creamer’s book, prepare to share your reflection on them in class. In your reflection, focus on: 1) What is the pressing issue the author describes? 2) What does the author use as the authoritative (re)source(s) to create a new theological model? 3) Where do you find yourself in agreement or disagreement with the author? 4) What is the practical insight or idea you learned for your ministry?

**Class #9** (3/07): Presentations of Requirement #5

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Assignments: For those who are scheduled to present Requirement #5 in Class #9, post your written material with a rationale in Canvas by 3/06 (Wed.), 1:00 p.m. and Requirement #6 by 3/10 (Sun.), 11:59 p.m.

**Class #10** (3/14): Presentations of Requirement #5

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Assignments: For those who are scheduled to present Requirement #5 in Class #10, post your written material with a rationale in Canvas by 3/13 (Wed.), 1:00 p.m. and Requirement #6 by 3/17 (Sun.), 11:59 p.m.

Course Wrap-up