**IST 20801: Practical Theology (4 credits) [DRAFT]**

**Spring 2021 (Online)**

**INSTRUCTOR:**

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

Office hours: By Appointment

**ZOOM CLASSES:** Tuesdays of Weeks 2 (3/30), 5 (4/20), 8 (5/11), 10:30 a.m.-11:45 a.m.

**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)*.

**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 on 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 on Canvas)**.
4. Osmer, Richard, *Practical Theology: An Introduction*. ISBN: 978-0-0828-1765-5.
5. Howard Stone & James Duke, *How To Think Theologically*, Ch. 7, “Vocation.” ISBN: 0-8006-2967-1. **(Available on Canvas)**.

**RECOMMENDED TEXTS:**

1. Choi, Hee An, *A Postcolonial Leadership*, Chapter 2. (Available on Canvas).

**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 participation in online discussion and attendance of three Zoom classes are required. The instructor should be informed in advance of any necessary absences. You cannot pass the course if you miss more than two weeks.

You are expected to read all the assigned readings and post class assignments on Canvas in a timely manner. You are also required to reply to other students’ posts. You may reply in one or two words or sentences. Yet, you must respond to at least three classmates’ posts in no fewer than 100 words.

1. **Two one-page essays (single-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt. or 400-500 words).** See Course Schedule, Week 1 and Week 3.
2. **A one-page paper on your theological issue (single-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point, or 400-500 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 attachment by 4/14(Wed.), 11:59 p.m. and respond to at least three of your classmates’ posts by 4/16 (Fri.), 11:59 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 that 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. Summarize the process and results of your observation, and describe what bothers you most and where you get stuck or have trouble.
3. Post Part I by attachment by 4/28 (Wed.), 11:59 p.m. and respond to at least three of your classmates’ posts by 4/30 (Fri.), 11:59 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 that you wrote in 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 by attachment by 5/05(Wed.), 11:59 p.m. and respond to at least three of your classmates’ posts by 5/07 (Fri.), 11:59 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 by attachment by5/12 (Wed.), 11:59 p.m. and respond to at least three of your classmates’ posts by 5/14 (Fri.), 11:59 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 by attachment by 5/19 (Wed.), 11:59 p.m. and respond to at least three of your classmates’ posts by 5/21 (Fri.), 11:59 p.m.
5. **A 10-15 minute presentation of your research project in a creative form**

Develop Requirement #4 into a presentation material and videotape your presentation:

1. Select your listeners (e.g., your local congregation, the Iliff community, our class, etc.).
2. Choose a form of communication such as a proposal to a committee, a sermon (or the outline of a sermon series), 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 (i.e., why you chose this form, what your purpose is, a draft of the presentation material with annotations, etc.) and post it on Canvas by attachment by 5/26 (Wed.), 11:59 p.m.
4. Videotape your presentation on your scheduled date and post it by 5/26(Wed.), 11:59 p.m. and respond to at least three of your classmates’ posts by 5/28 (Fri.), 11:59 p.m.
5. **An assessment paper (1-2 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, or 250-500 words).** View your videotape and write down 1) 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), 2) how class feedback on your research project and presentation helped you critically reflect on your practical theological approach, and 3) the strengths and weaknesses of your presentation in substance and delivery. Post your paper on Canvas by attachment by 5/28 (Fri.), 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 Course Requirements. Students who want to contract for a grade of P/F must email a note to the instructor by the end of Week 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% (5% x 3)

Requirement #2……………………………………… 20 % (10% x 2)

Requirement #3 …..…………….……………… …… .5%

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

Requirement #5…………………………………..……15%

Requirement #6…………………………………….… .5%

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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 #5) based on class feedback and resubmit it by ?.

**Late submissions** **(unexcused and excused)** will result in lowering the grade (-2 points/each). They may not receive written comments from the instructor.

**The deadline of all the late submissions** is 5/30 (Sun), 11:59 p.m. The instructor may review the late assignments after this deadline since she is scheduled to do other works after the original deadlines.

**If you do not reply to at least three classmates’ posts,** you will lower your grade (-0.5/each)**.**

**Both unexcused and excused absences** from the Zoom classes (except the academic advisor’s approval) 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 urged that the students use inclusive language in speaking and writing, and use terms that do not create barriers to the 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** (3/22 - 3/26): What is Practical Theology?

* Getting acquainted: Post a video that introduces yourself (e.g., your program at Iliff, denomination, ministerial setting, preaching experience, future plan after graduation, expectations from the course, etc.) by Wed. (3/24), 11:59 p.m. (MT).
* Questions about the syllabus: If you have questions about the course syllabus, post them on the Discussions board by Wed. (3/24), 11:59 p.m. (MT).
* Required reading:

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

* Suggested reading:

1. Ward, Ch. 1.

* Assignments: **One-page Essay I** (single-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt. or 400-500 words) about your own understanding of practical theology. Post your essay on Canvas by 3/27 (Fri.), 11:59 p.m. and reply to at least three classmates’ essays (no fewer than 100 words) by 3/30 (Mon.), 11:59 p.m. Prepare to share your understanding of practical theology in Zoom class (3/31).

**Class #2** (3/29 - 4/2): Zoom class (Tues., 10:30 – 11:45 a.m.)

* Meditation: Kim
* Theory and practice of practical theology

1. Discussion on One-page Essay 1
2. Methods of practical theological reflection

**Class #3** (4/5 – 4/9): Exploring Methodology

* Required reading:

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

* Suggested reading:

1. Ward, Ch. 9.

* Assignments: **One-page Essay II** (single-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 point, or 400-500 words). 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 on Canvas by Wed. (4/07), 11:59 p.m. and respond to at least three classmates’ essays by (Fri.), 11:59 p.m.

**Class #4** (4/12 – 4/16): Topic Selection

* Assignments: **Requirement #3** (A one-page paper on your theological issue (double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point, or 400-500 words). In your paper,

1. 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,
2. explain why this issue is important to you, your community, and the larger world,
3. summarize your pre-understanding about the issue,
4. indicate the scope of research you would like to do with your questions and concerns.
5. Post your paper on Canvas by 4/14 (Wed.), 11:59 p.m. and respond to at least three of your classmates’ paper by 4/16 (Fri.), 11:59 p.m.

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

**Class #5** (4/19 – 4/23): Zoom class (Tues., 10:30 – 11:45 a.m.)

* Meditation:
* Discussion on the research project (Requirements #3 and #4)

**Class #6 (**4/26 – 4/30): The Descriptive and Empirical Analysis of the Present Practice (“What is going on?”)

* Required reading:

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”).

* Assignments: **Requirement #4/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 that 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. Summarize the process and results of your observation, and describe what bothers you most and where you get stuck or have trouble.
3. Post Part I on Canvas by attachment by 4/28 (Wed.), 11:59 p.m. and respond to at least three of your classmates’ posts by 4/30 (Fri.), 11:59 p.m.

**Class #7** (5/03 – 5/07): The Scientific Interpretation of the Present Practice (“Why is this going on?”)

* Required reading:

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: **Requirement #4/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 that you wrote 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 on Canvas by attachment by5/5 (Wed.), 11:59 p.m. and reply to at least three of your classmates’ posts by 5/7 (Fri.), 11:59 p.m.

**Class #8** (5/10 – 5/14): Seeking a New Theological Model (“What ought to be going on?”); Zoom class (Tues., 10:30-11:45)

* Meditation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Discussion on Requirement #5
* Required reading:

1. Osmer, Ch. 3.
2. Miller-McLemore (ed.), Ch. 15 (Paul Ballard, “The Use of Scripture”).
3. Kim & Creamer, Ch. 8.

* Assignments: **Requirement #4/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 on Canvas by attachment by 5/12 (Wed.), 11:59 p.m. and reply to at least three of your classmates’ posts by 5/14 (Fri.), 11:59 p.m.

**Class #9** (5/17 – 5/21): Toward a New Practical Paradigm (“How might we respond?”)

* Required reading:

1. Osmer, Ch. 4.
2. Kim and Creamer (eds.), Chapters 4, 5, & 6.

* Recommended reading:

1. Choi.

* Assignments: **Requirement #4/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 to lead Bible study, how to prepare for preaching, how to design worship services, etc.)
4. Post Part IV on Canvas by attachment by 5/19 (Wed.), 11:59 p.m. and respond to at least three of your classmates’ posts by 5/21 (Fri.), 11:59 p.m.

**Class #10** (5/24 – 5/28): Praxis and Assessment

* Assignments:

1. **Requirement #5** (A 10-15 minute presentation of your research project in a creative form).Develop Requirement #4 into a presentation material and videotape your presentation:
2. Select your listeners (e.g., your local congregation, the Iliff community, our class, etc.).
3. Choose a form of communication such as a proposal to a committee, a sermon (or the outline of a sermon series), a liturgy, a Bible study material, a lecture manuscript, a church newsletter column, a skit, a poem, a song, a dance, a painting, etc.
4. Prepare your written material for the presentation (i.e., why you chose this form, what your purpose is, a draft of the presentation material with annotations, etc.) and post it on Canvas by attachment by 5/26 (Wed.), 11:59 p.m.
5. Videotape your presentation on your scheduled date and post it by 5/26 (Wed.), 11:59 p.m. and respond to at least three of your classmates’ posts by 5/28 (Fri.), 11:59 p.m.
6. **Requirement #6: An Assessment (1-2 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, or 250-500 words).** View your videotape and write down 1) 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), 2) how class feedback on your research project and presentation helped you critically reflect on your practical theological approach, and 3) the strengths and weaknesses of your presentation in substance and delivery. Post your paper on Canvas by 5/28 (Fri.), 11:59 p.m.

* Course Evaluation