

**MNST 7190 Life Together: Building the Beloved Community**  
**North Park Theological Seminary/School of Restorative Arts**  
**Spring 2023**  
**(3 credit hours)**

**COURSE INSTRUCTORS**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course approaches the challenges of the development of history, culture, and race and their implications within the broader U.S. context. The focus is cross-cultural and cross-racial relationship dynamics through exploring various themes such as: culture, race, racism, community and social justice. Students are enabled to develop methods toward reconciliation within a theological and biblical framework and to become agents of racial reconciliation as part of their ministry and leadership.

**ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION**

Students will learn about the history of systemic racism, institutional bias, and ecclesial practices that prohibit the church from prophetically living life together and embodying Christian solidarity in the face of racial harm. This course will connect the oppression of years past to present day racial suffering and division. Students participate in listening, exploring, learning, and unpacking the cause, effect and impact of racism in the U.S. This course addresses the learning outcome found in all four NPTS degree programs to, “engage diversity and exhibit growth towards intercultural competence for ministry reflective of God’s global redemptive work.” This course fulfills the intercultural diversity course requirement.

**COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

**Students will:**

1. Identify areas for individual healing in race relations.
2. Compare biblical texts that were critical for legitimizing and sustaining racism and texts used by communities of color who have resisted racial oppression.
3. Evaluate the systemic nature of racial injustice in the United States in regard to social systems.
4. Analyze approaches to dialogues on racial righteousness and reconciliation outside the classroom within which students may be agents of restoration.
5. Plan steps to advance one’s individual healing, race relations within the learning community, or restoration within one’s broader context in the area of race relations.

**REQUIRED READING**

1. Denis, Nelson Antonio, *War Against All Puerto Ricans: Revolution and Terror in America's Colony* (Bold Type Book, 2015), 1568585616.
2. Khan-Cullors, Patrisse & Asha Bandele, *When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir* (St. Martins Press, 2019), 1250171083.
3. Kendall, Mikki. *Hood Feminism*. Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2021.
4. Jennings, Willie. *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race* (Yale University Press, 2011), 0300171366.

**Suggested Resources and Additional Reading**

5. Blount, Brian K. & Cain Hope Felder, *True to Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentator* (Fortress Press: 2007), 0800634217.

6. Byron, Gay. *Womanist Interpretations of the Bible: Expanding the Discourse* (SBL Press, 2016), 1628371528.
7. Cone, James. *Martin and Malcolm and America: A Dream or a Nightmare?* (Orbis Books, 2012), 1570759790.
8. Edwards, Dennis. *Might from the Margins: The Gospel's Power to Turn the Tables on Injustice* (APG, 2020), 1513806017.
9. Felder, Cain Hope. *Stony the Road We Trod: African American Biblical Interpretation*, Minneapolis, MN, (Fortress Press; 1991), 0800625013.
10. Isasi-Diaz, Ada Maria. *Mujerista Theology: A Theology for the Twenty-First Century*. (Orbis Books, 1996), 1570750816.
11. Joh, Wonhee Anne. *Heart of the Cross: A Postcolonial Christology* (Westminster/John Knox Press, 2006), 0664230630.

### **ASSESSMENTS AND GRADING SCALE**

**Class Participation:** Students are responsible for completing all readings in a timely manner for each module. Students need to apply readings to small group discussion modules in lieu of in-class participation. Some ungraded writing exercises reflecting on readings will be assigned in preparation for module discussions. (See Schedule below)

### **Small Group Discussion Modules**

Throughout the semester, students will be placed in groups and asked to discuss questions prompted by the reading and the assigned lectures. These group discussions will form the content for the two reflection papers.

### **Two Reflection Papers (1000-1200 words)**

This course is designed for intentional reflection and interaction between assignments and class discussion modules. Students will write TWO reflection papers over the semester.

Paper 1: Who am I? Reflect on your racial and ethnic identity. What are some key moments that were defining for your formation? What are ways you have celebrated your identity? What are areas of pain or in need of healing? Be specific and use examples from your own racial and ethnic journey. Include ways you hope to learn and grow in this course.

**Due: February 3**

Paper 2: Who do I want to become? Reflect on

How have you been challenged by this course? How have some of the readings or class discussions shaped your understanding of who I am and who you want to become? Reflect on one-two ways that you have found healing or would like to find healing. Additionally, was there a time when you facilitated restoration either in a class discussion or a situation outside of class? What tools helped your agency? How might you continue to be a restorative presence in your community? Interact with readings as they have informed your growth.

**Due: March 31**

### **Journaling**

Students will keep a journal over the semester that chronicles moments of celebrating racial and ethnic identity and also reflects on areas of pain. Consider some of these prompts throughout the semester: What are situations where you are confident or at peace regarding your identity? When are you triggered? What emotions accompany your response to readings, class discussions, or events and interactions outside of class? How did you respond? Evaluate your responses over time. Are you

responding and interacting with persons who are different than you in ways you are content with? How would you like to improve? How did you feel harmed? How did you harm another? What are ways you would like to find healing? If a personal journal isn't feasible, use these questions as ways to guide your own inner reflections.

**Due:** Students are expected to journal at least once a week. Journal entries will be checked on an honor system (you will check off whether you have completed your journal entries for that week). Journal entries may be used in your module reflection papers.

### **Final Project**

The final project will be a written paper synthesizing the student's reflections on readings, scriptural and theological foundations, course materials, small and large group discussions, and personal experiences. This project will also include future plans for next steps to follow up on themes and challenges that emerged from the course. Your emphasis should be on the questions asked in the Module 3 and 4 descriptions. **Length: 2000-2500 words.**

**Due: May 5**

### **Grade Weights**

Class Participation: 20%

Reflection Papers: 30% (15% each)

Journaling: 25%

Final Project: 25%

\*Course grades will be computed according to the policy found in the NPTS catalog.

## **COURSE CALENDAR**

Schedule subject to adjustment.

### **Module One: Who am I?**

Reflect on your racial and ethnic identity. What are some key moments that were defining for your formation? What are ways you have celebrated your racial and ethnic identity? What key narratives (internal and external) have shaped your identity? What are areas of pain or in need of healing in regards to your racial and ethnic identity? Be specific and use examples from your own racial and ethnic journey. Include ways you hope to learn and grow in this course.

### **Module Two: Who do I want to become?**

Reflect on how the readings so far have challenged your racial identity and God's plan for your understanding of your racial identity. How have some of the readings or class discussions shaped your understanding of "who am I" and "who do I want to become"? Reflect on one-two ways that you have found healing or would like to find healing in the area of racial and ethnic identity.

### **Module Three: How do I become who I want to become?**

How might you continue to be a restorative presence in your community? Interact with readings as they have informed your growth. What practical steps do you plan to take to engage in a sense of racial and ethnic wholeness for the sake of your community? Additionally, was there a time when you facilitated restoration either in a class discussion or a situation outside of class? What tools were helpful?

### **Module Four: Synthesis and Final Project Reporting on Next Steps**

What are the concrete applications from the course that will shape our relationships inside? Outside? What can we offer in terms of Good News? What are our next steps of discipleship and Christian formation?

## **SCHEDULE**

Readings are listed on the day they are due and should be completed on a schedule that allows adequate time for thoughtful completion of corresponding reading responses/assignments to be submitted on class days

## **COURSE CALENDAR**

Schedule subject to adjustment.

Module One: What is race? How do we define righteousness? What does righteousness have to do with reconciliation? What are the ways Scripture has been used and can be used for shaping race relations? What are key biblical themes to be addressed?

Module Two: How has race divided people? Christians? What does Christian belonging mean in the context of race? Liberation?

Module Three: How does the racial history in the U.S. inform present race relations? How do stories shape the ways we relate?

Module Four: Synthesis and Final Project Reporting on Next Steps – What are the concrete applications from the course that will shape our relationships inside? Outside? What can we offer in terms of Good News? What are our next steps of discipleship and Christian formation?

Week 1: January 20 - Module 1

Reading:

Week 2: January 27 - Module 1

Reading: Kendall – Introduction, Solidarity is Still for White Women, Gun Violence, Hunger, Of #FastTailedGirls and Freedom, It's Raining Patriarchy

To do: Discuss Small Group Rubric, Some Definitions (Mary Trujillo and RA team)

Week 3: February 3 - Module 1

Reading: Kendall – How to Write About Black Women, Pretty for a..., Black Girls Don't Have Eating Disorders, The Fetishization of Fierce, The Hood Doesn't Hate Smart People

Due: Paper 1

Week 4: February 10 - Module 2

Reading: Kendall – Missing and Murdered, Fear and Feminism, Race Poverty and Politics, Education, Housing

Week 5: February 17 - Module 2

Reading: Kendall – Reproductive Justice Eugenics and Maternal Mortality, Parenting While Marginalized, Allies Anger and Acceptance

Denis - Chapters 1-6

Week 6: February 24 - Module 2

Reading: Denis Chapters 7-16

Week 7: March 3 – Module 2

Read: Dennis – Chapters 17-23

Week 8: March 10 - Module 3

Read: Khan-Cullors and Bandele – Part I

Week 9: March 17 - Module 3

Read: Khan-Cullors and Bandele – Part II

Week 10: March 24 - Module 3

Read: Jennings - Intro and Chapter 1

Week 11: March 31 - Module 3

Read: Jennings – Chapter 2

Due: Paper Two

Week 12: April 7 – Module 3

Read: Jennings – Chapter 3

Week 13: April 14 - Module 4

Read: Jennings – Chapter 4

Week 14: April 21 - Module 4

Read: Jennings – Chapter 5

Week 15: April 28 - Module 4

Read: Jennings – Chapter 6

Week 16: May 5 – Catch Up Day

Due: Final Project

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park University is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating will receive a failing grade on the assignment and are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion. Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

1. Plagiarism – the use of another’s work as one’s own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet.
2. Copying another’s answers on an examination.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one’s answers or work.
4. Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present.

For additional information, see the Seminary Catalogue in the Resource Room, pp. 25–27.

## **INCOMPLETE POLICY**

If, due to extenuating circumstances a student anticipates he will be unable to complete course work within the allotted time, that student must submit the request form for a grade of incomplete to the course instructor before the last week of class clearly stating the reason(s) for this request.

Overscheduling and/or lack of self-discipline are not considered extenuating circumstances. If the request is timely and meets the criteria, the grade for that class will be listed as “I” until the last day of the following semester. If coursework is not submitted by the last day of the following semester the listing of “I” will automatically be changed to “F.”

## **ACCOMMODATIONS**

North Park is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment. If you anticipate or experience any barriers to learning in this class related to a disability, contact the Director of the School of Restorative Arts.

## **ADDITIONAL COURSE GUIDELINES**

Students are required to attend class and make up all work for missed classes. Missing more than three weeks disqualifies students from Earned Time Credit. For all assignments and class discussion, please use inclusive language – see the policy in the Writing Handbook in the Resource Room.