

Drew Theological School
Gospel Living and Social Transformation
ETH 501
Seminary Hall Rm 109
Wednesdays, 4:05 pm - 6:35 pm

Professors: Mark Miller (mamiller@drew.edu); Kate Ott (kott@drew.edu);

Technology Maven: Daniella Hobbs (dhobbs@drew.edu)

Class Moodle Page: <https://moodle.drew.edu/course/view.php?id=11441>

Class Flipgrid Page (for uploading videos): <https://flipgrid.com/d6845131>

Class Youtube Page (for course lectures): <https://tinyurl.com/glstclass>

Office Hours: To schedule a meeting or for other questions, send an email to the whole teaching team - mamiller@drew.edu, kott@drew.edu.

Tech Office Hours: Mondays: 1-4 pm, Thursdays: 11 am- 2 pm, Fridays: 10 am- 1 pm
Please email to set up a time.

DREW COVID TIME ** FIRST THREE WEEKS MEET ON ZOOM**

Topic: GLST Zoom Room

<https://drew.zoom.us/j/93525516454>

Meeting ID: 935 2551 6454

Course Description: This course focuses on the mission and ministry of today's Church exploring critical questions about the role of witness, worship, and education. It takes seriously the diversities of the Global Church, the challenges and opportunities of the digital age, and the practices necessary for effective ministry.+

Course Objectives:

- To analyze historical examples of people creating community for personal, familial, and social belonging, renewal, and transformation.
- To preach and/or speak publicly in a biblically-rooted and contextually-responsive way.
- To develop a communal response that fosters healing and confronts the psychological, interpersonal, and social realities that minimize joy and inhibit change.
- To explore forms of biblical interpretation and Christian practices which embody study/contemplation, collective action, and creativity.

Learning Outcomes:

- Articulate the historical impact of community formation on belonging, renewal and transformation.
- Demonstrate biblically-rooted and contextually-responsive public preaching and speaking.

- Plan and deliver a worship and/or ritual response to a community event that calls forth healing and confronts realities that minimize joy and inhibit change.
- Actively participate in and evaluate biblical interpretation and Christian practices, which embody study/contemplation, collective action, and creativity.

Grading Statement:

In this class, *we will be participating in contract grading*. This means that if you meet the requirements outlined below for a particular grade (A, B, etc.), you will receive that grade. Contract grading takes a lot of the guesswork out of your writing, videos, and assignments; gives you space for creativity in your work; and allows us all the chance as co-learners to focus on the topics at hand. You can learn more about varieties of and reasons for contract grading here: (PDF) [Contract Improv – Three Approaches to Contract Grading | Steve Volk](#)

Attendance, Deadlines and Late Assignments:

Most assignments will be completed during course time and/or due during a course session to be utilized for class participation that day. For this reason, late assignments will be reduced by one full letter day for each course day they are late and your participation grade for the module will be immediately affected. Arrangements for final project extensions must be made in advance with the instructor, or you will be at risk of failing the assignment. Your presence and fulsome participation is vital to our collective learning, so while one absence will be excused, additional tardiness or absences will affect your final grade.

(Class begins January 19)

Module 1 - January 19: 5%

Includes: Welcome, Syllabus Annotation, and Say Hello Video @ 5%.

Module 2 - January 19 and 26: 15%

Includes: Primary Assignment (SUS Paper, DUE Jan 28) @ 7.5% + Intertextuality, Song, Prison, and Letter writing tree ritual @ 7.5% = 15%

Module 3 - February 2, 9, 16, 23, March 2: 20%

Includes: Gospel annotation, Restitutio Divina, Thurman, and Harry Potter @10%+ Primary Assignment (“This I Believe”) Video @10%=20%

Module 4 - March 16, 23, 30: 20%

Includes: To Build a World, To Be the Hands of Healing, and All are Welcome @10%+ Primary Assignment (Ritual Outline) @10%=20%

Module 5 - April 6, 20: 20%

Includes: Protest Songs, Public Theology Slides @10% +Primary Assignment (Finding Your Place in the Movement) @10%=20 %

Module 6 - April 27: 20%

Includes: Final Video (Submission@10%+Faculty Assessment@10%)

Course Resources

A variety of resources including pdf copies of chapters and articles and links to websites, podcasts, and news stories are available via the course Moodle site.

Required Texts:

Jesmyn Ward, *Sing, Unburied, Sing*. Scribner, 2017.

Download from Drew Library Online Resources (drew.edu/library):

Kwok, Pui-lan and Stephen Burns, eds. *Postcolonial Practice of Ministry: Leadership, Liturgy, and Interfaith Engagement*, Lexington Books, 2016.

**All other resources are linked on Moodle.

Academic Accommodations Statement

Students who wish to disclose a disability for the first time are instructed to contact Accessibility Resources: disabilityserv@drew.edu. Although disclosure may take place at any time during the semester, students are encouraged to do so early in the semester, because, in general, accommodations are not implemented retroactively. For additional information, visit: <http://www.drew.edu/academic-services/disabilityservices>. Returning Students with Approved Accommodations: Requests for previously approved accommodations for the current semester should be sent to Accessibility Resources ideally within the first two weeks of class. This allows the office sufficient lead time to process the request. Please email disabilityserv@drew.edu, or complete the accommodations request at: <http://www.drew.edu/academic-services/disabilityservices/request-for-accommodations>

Statement regarding academic integrity and collaboration

Learning happens most effectively in community. We encourage active collaboration between class participants. However, all work for this class, especially writing, must conform to Drew University's Academic Integrity Policy. Please note especially the section on plagiarism, "Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the act of appropriating or imitating the language, ideas, or thoughts of another and presenting them as one's own or without proper acknowledgment. This includes submitting as one's own a thesis, a paper, or part of a paper written by another person, whether that material was stolen, purchased, or shared freely. It also includes submitting a paper containing insufficient citation or misuse of source material."

Non-Discriminatory and Inclusive Language Policy

The Drew University Theological School affirms the full equality of all persons in God's all-inclusive love, regardless of gender, race, nation, class, age, ability, religion, or sexual orientation (*Galatians 3:28*). This theological conviction finds social expression in spoken and written language. In order to live out a crucial practical dimension of our equality in Christ and to avoid marginalizing members of our community, the Theological School expects students to

use non-discriminatory and mindfully inclusive language for humanity both in the classroom (that is, in writing assignments, presentations, and classroom discussions) and in the chapel liturgy (that is, in prayers and sermons). Students are also encouraged to use a variety of metaphors when referring to God. While students will not receive grade deductions on specific assignments, they will be evaluated on their overall efforts to engage the theological and social problems of discriminatory and exclusive language. This policy thus encourages students to work to integrate a theology of God's love and justice with the everyday practice of leadership.

Instructional Technology for this Class

In this class, you will engage with a variety of instructional technology. Links to Flipgrid and Google Drive can be found in Moodle.

Moodle: For class content, including readings, videos, and links to submit assignments

Flipgrid: A video recording and uploading website, where you can comment on and view your colleagues' videos. We will use it for most of our video assignments.

Google Drive: This class has a google drive to store content, including some assignment submissions. This is also where you will find texts for class annotation (e.g. the intertextuality assignment)

Seekr: An AI designed to attend to mental health and spirituality from the perspective of people of color, specifically Black experiences. <https://www.theseekrproject.com/>

You will also engage various types of videos, audio recordings, websites, and social media engagement during the course of doing class "readings."

A word about "digital technology" in Gospel Living and Social Transformation . . .

We use a variety of technologies in this class for the purpose of increasing our capacity to engage science and technology in ministry. We are not only using technology so you are "better at it." We want to be critically engaged with technology use and design around issues of inequality and justice. We have readings and resources related to these topics throughout the semester and we invite you to bring the themes of the course—creativity, contemplation, and collective action—to your engagement with technology.

We have also received grant funding for two special components in this course. First, we will have a technology maven (expert) throughout the semester. Daniella (Dani) Hobbs will provide technology assistance for assignments that require video creation and engagement with the Seekr AI (artificial intelligence). That's the second part. We will have a guest on campus March 16. Async students are invited to join these conversations via zoom or on campus. Dr. Philip Butler, creator of the Seekr AI will join us to discuss issues of spirituality, race, transhumanism, mental health and AI.

As part of the grant funding, you are asked to take a pre- and post-course survey. When the survey refers to this semester's course and "science" they mean DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY. So please read the survey questions with that in mind.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Science4SeminariesPreCourse>

Please complete the pre-course survey by Jan 28th.

ESOL/Language Support

Good communication skills are among the most important things we need for responsible ministry and citizenship. For those students whose primary language is not English, you are encouraged to have your written assignments reviewed either by Katherine Brown (kgbrown@drew.edu) or by the Drew University Writing Center:

<https://www.drew.edu/academics/academic-resources/center-for-academic-excellence/writing-center/>.

Class Content

Course Opens January 19

Note: Readings for all classes and more detailed instructions are found on the course Moodle site.

January 19

Module 1: Welcome!

Course Introduction and Welcome

Before Class:

Review the Course Syllabus (Be sure to participate in annotating the syllabus in google drive with any questions or comments!)

Begin (or complete) reading Jesmyn Ward's *Sing, Unburied, Sing* (*get started on this novel now, even if you do not finish reading it before the start of the semester, since your first big assignment is a paper reflection on this book.*)

In class activity: Take the pre-survey for the Science and Technology in Seminary grant. When the survey refers to this semester's course and "science" they mean DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY. So please read the survey questions with that in mind.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Science4SeminariesPreCourse>

Introduce yourself to your classmates and make your first video on Flipgrid

(<https://flipgrid.com/2965e707>) If you do not have a Flipgrid account, select "Join with Google" and use your Drew email account (it is a google account). Once logged in to the course, select "View Topics" and choose "Say Hello on Flipgrid!" Upload there.

NOTE FOR ALL VIDEO ASSIGNMENTS IN THIS COURSE: Some of you may feel strongly that you do not want to show your face or body on camera. If this is the case, we ask that you think creatively about how to engage the viewer in other ways. How will you use the medium of Flipgrid to reflectively engage your audience? So, for instance, if the viewer loses their capacity to *see* you, can you engage the viewer's senses in other ways (e.g., scenes without people, various sounds, or zoomed in actions that show only a portion of an image)?

Module 2: Sing, Unburied, Sing

January 26

Sing Unburied Sing and Letter Writing Ritual

Before Class:

Choose a song that could be sung by one of the novel's characters, what would it be and why? Read the Intertextuality passages which pair an excerpt from *Sing, Unburied, Sing* (SUS) with another text. In class we will look for similarities and differences.

Select one theme or problem related to policing or prisons that arises from your reading, imagine how you, in your current/desired ministry context, could address this problem.

In class activity: Small groups on song, intertextuality, and police and prisons as well as Letter Writing and Final Tree Ritual

SING UNBURIED SING Primary Assignment

Due JAN 28 on Moodle

Read: *Sing, Unburied, Sing*

Write: Write a **single-spaced** 2-3 page, written response to the following prompt:

Reflect on three characters from the novel and compare them to three characters from the Bible. The three characters can be from different biblical passages. One of the characters **must** be non-human - these could be animals, places, or things. Keep in mind how various inequalities resonate with or are different from biblical circumstances related to race, gender, sexuality, ecology, and differences in religious traditions. How do the situations, values, and actions of Ward's characters resonate with the Bible characters you have chosen?

*NOTE: This assignment is an argumentative paper, not a reflective one. A reflective paper does not make a claim that can be agreed or disagreed with and is usually more personal in nature ("chocolate ice cream is my favorite"). An argumentative paper makes a claim that can be supported with evidence and with which others can agree or disagree ("chocolate ice cream is the best ice cream because..."). In this assignment, we are asking you to compare characters in *Sing, Unburied, Sing* and the Bible. This means that we expect to see you clearly stating which characters you're comparing and why you think the comparison works. We're not concerned with whether we agree or disagree with your comparisons (that is, you won't be graded on whether the teaching team thinks your comparisons are right or wrong). But, we ARE concerned with your attention to the resonances between the texts, to the ways characters speak to and diverge from one another, and to the clarity of your analysis.*

Module 3 Contemplation

February 2 - What is the Gospel?:

Before class: Read Mark 1; Matthew 5; Luke 4; John 3, and The Gospel of Thomas. Ask yourself: where do you find similarities in the 4 gospels (bring in a citation or two)? What looks

different? Try reading each text at least three times: once quickly, once out loud, and once slowly and silently, highlighting and taking notes as you read.

In class activity - Read and Annotate

February 9 - Restitutio Divina:

Before Class: Read Bonnie Miller McLemore, "Embodied Knowing, Embodied Theology"

In class activity - Restitutio Divina practice and reflection

February 16 - Jesus and the Disinherited:

Before Class:

Read: "Jesus-An Interpretation" from *Jesus and the Disinherited*.

Listen: Choose one of the sermons that form the inspiration for *Jesus and the Disinherited* and listen.

Bring: Bring an image with you to class that reminds you of or exemplifies an interfaith encounter you have had.

In Class Activity: Watch short documentary clip. Engage Thurman from a scholar's perspective - lecture. Group discussion on shared image.

February 23 - Harry Potter and the Sacred Text:

Before Class:

Read: *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, Chapter 1 and 2

Listen: Listen to Season 1, Episode 1 of the podcast: *Harry Potter and the Sacred Text* to learn about the practice of *Lectio Divina*, or Divine Reading.

In Class Activity: Professors Mark Miller and Julian Wamble discuss Harry Potter from a political and spiritual perspective. *Lectio Divina* writing.

March 2 - This I Believe (Primary Assignment):

Before Class:

Read: "Networked Selves" from *Christian Ethics for a Digital Society* by Dr. Ott

Watch: Watch examples of how this tradition started by Howard Thurman at Boston University's Marsh Chapel continues today:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rCL8_8NePwM

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WKaMZpVShQI>

Choose: Pick a short text or image that is sacred to you-it can come from the Bible or not, that helps you to reflect on the prompt, "This I believe"

In Class Activity: Collective, Contemplative Listening

Create: Make and upload your own "This I Believe Video" (only 3 minutes!) on Flipgrid. Your video must include you reading the text or visual of your image that you have chosen, as well as your response to "This I Believe..." as a response to that text. <https://flipgrid.com/6251187e>

Spring Break (Mar 9)

Module 4: Creativity

March 16 - To Build a World Where Love Can Grow, and Hope Can Enter In:

Before Class:

Read: “Borrowed Clothes Will Never Keep You Warm: Postcolonializing Pastoral Leadership” by Emmanuel Yartekwei Lartey.

Butler, Philip. "Black Transhuman Liberation Theology." *Black Transhuman Liberation Theology: Technology and Spirituality*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020. 103–128.

Listen: *Our Table: Trans Spiritual Conversation, Episode Two* (scroll down to listen to *Episode Two God and Gender* to listen directly on the *enfleshed.com* website)

Read: “A Gathering Prayer for Liberation” from *Enfleshed*.

Guest speaker, Dr. Philip Butler, creator of the Seekr AI, is an expert in issues of spirituality, race, transhumanism, mental health and AI. All students will receive a subscription to use Seekr, test it out, learn from it, bring questions about spirituality, mental health, and technology! He will give a noon time lecture on March 16 as well as join the on campus course 4-6:30pm.

In class activity: Exploring digital ritual through <https://www.theseekrproject.com>, Black liturgies and prayer writing

March 23 - To Be the Hands of Healing and to Plant the Seeds of Peace

Before Class:

Read: Read the following chapters from *Postcolonial Practice of Ministry: Leadership, Liturgy, and Interfaith Engagements*:

- a. Postcolonial Practices on Eucharist, *HyeRan Kim-Cragg*
- b. Table Habits, Liturgical *Pelau*, and Displacing Conversation: A Postcolonial Excursion, *Michael N. Jagessar*

Watch and Worship: Watch a Drew Theological School Chapel in partnership with TERRA (environmental justice student group)

In class activity: Discussion on the relationship between context and communal ritual. Create liturgies.

March 30 - All are Welcome, the Love of God to Share:

Before Class:

Read: Read “Ecclesiology of ‘Do not stop them’”

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wmJHfHaCKYcRPZ6Ur2pDCudzajPd3LHxOL4dsh8WmU/edit?usp=sharing>

In Class Assignment: Watch 2019 Class Children’s video and Order of Worship Outline All of Us Are Welcome in this Place

Module 5 Collective Action

April 6 - Protest Songs and Protest Movements:

Before Class:

Read: Read an excerpt from “Singing For Freedom”

“Postcolonial Practice of Ministry”, chapter- Church music in postcolonial liturgical celebration

Listen: “Get Off the Track” <https://youtu.be/tyoC-JccYcc>

“Senzenina” <https://youtu.be/99bfGyQzdT8>

In Class Activity: Community Protest Song Activity

Assign Final Project Groups and provide group meeting time.

Easter Week Break

April 20 - Social Action and Public Theology

Before Class:

Listen: “A Citizen’s Agenda” Sermon by Dean Melanie Johnson-DeBaufre, Jan 28, 2021

Read: “Vulnerability, Righteous Anger, and Protest: Forming Public Theologies of Activism and Resistance” Jennifer Baldwin (Online text at DREW) *Taking it to the Streets: Public Theologies of Activism and Resistance*

“Ethical Hacking or Hacking Ethics” in *Christian Ethics for a Digital Society* by Kate Ott

In Class Activity: Collective Action Proposal assignment and Collective Wisdom videos

Module 6: Gospel Living and Social Transformation, a Creative Community Response

April 27 - Final Project Watch Party

FINAL GROUP ASSIGNMENT **Due before class on April 27**

Create: We are asking you to create a video resource for the present moment in your community context. Everything you do must incorporate contemplation and collective action in a creative spirit (aka, include all three themes of the course). Examples of projects can include: a worship/liturgy, a school/church/nonprofit board presentation, a children’s education moment, an awareness-raising campaign, or a community resource guide. Be creative!

Your final product should be a 10 minute video that includes the following:

- opening and closing slides,
- music/art,

- scripture (understood expansively especially for an interfaith or non-religious community project)
- a prayer resource (you can re-use the one you created in Module 4 if it is appropriate!)
- each person participating in audio or visual “cited”(with name/identification on screen or in end credits),
- bulletin, order of worship, or written guide (can be an “end credits” in the video).

Remember, citation matters including in video format!

We will watch your group video on April 27th.

NOTE: MDIV students will also upload your video and any additional resources to your eportfolio on your Gospel Living and Social Transformation EPortfolio Digication page. You will submit your GLST EPortfolio Digication page to the Gospel Living ETH 501 course FINAL PROJECT assignment in Digication. In class, we will have reflection time for you to edit your GLST eportfolio digication page with your final assignment and Mentored Portfolio course reflection.

As part of the grant funding, you are asked to take a pre- and post-course survey. When the survey refers to this semester’s course and “science” they mean DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY. So please read the survey questions with that in mind.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Sci4SemPostCourseSurvey>

Please complete the post-course survey by May 7.