DPLS 708 Leadership, Justice & Forgiveness

Fall 2010 3 Credits

Everyone can be great because everyone can serve, it only takes a heart full of grace, a soul full of love. --Martin Luther King, Jr.

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COURSE OVERVIEW

The key learning theme I want students to understand is the idea of emotional discipline based in love that calls a person toward meaningful responses to human suffering. Such responses are grounded in discernment regarding human conflict, oppression, power, and harm, and the opportunities-personal, familial, societal, and global-that rise from the crucible of potential that is our humanity.

I'd like students to gain knowledge in three ways. First, begin to appreciate the depth of heart, thought, and spirit necessary for a person to do long term, hopeful and efficacious work inside any system, be it personal, societal, or global, when that system is initially locked in an oppressive or harmful cycle. The personal character required to live from a meaningful or purposeful approach regarding what it means to be human creates complexities and potentialities that invite the student toward joy, courage, and sacredness, even or perhaps in the words of Victor Frankl especially in the midst of human suffering. Second, students will begin the process of understanding leadership (specifically servant-leadership), justice (conceptions of restorative vs. retributive justice) and forgiveness in the context of systems change toward reconciliation and depth of heart, mind, and spirit. Third, students will work to apply the interior leadership necessary for discernment and action within oppressive systems.

In this course, therefore, each student will engage the following questions:

What are the basic understandings of servant-leadership, restorative justice and forgiveness?

• How can a person choose servant-leadership, restorative justice and forgiveness in the face of grave human atrocities and the furthest reaches of human suffering?
• Who does one forgive, and how does one approach forgiveness?
• What does it mean to be a person of restorative justice and forgiveness?

Similar to other classes offered in the leadership programs at Gonzaga University these questions (both in content and order) approximate Saint Ignatius of Loyola's approach to personal and spiritual transformation in his outline for the Spiritual Exercises. Ignatius is the founder of the Jesuits, and due to the deep contemplative and action-based values of the Jesuits I am grateful to have the gift of teaching at Gonzaga, a Jesuit University. Each of the above questions builds upon the answers to the previous one to lead toward transformation of the person, crucial to being a fully actualized human, whether the particular focus is spiritual, emotional, or intellectual. The purpose of this course is to develop the whole person, and this means the class seeks to attend to the interior of the leader, aspects of the person that are spiritual, emotional, and intellectual. From this perspective we will identify with one another what it means to be human.
and work with other human individuals toward a common purpose of deeply understanding the crucible of human conflict and gaining greater confidence in engaging this crucible with confidence, hope, joy, and grace.

**COURSE COMPETENCIES**

There are four key course competencies:

- to gain initial understandings of what a servant-leadership oriented stance toward restorative justice and forgiveness entails;
- to enter in and begin to deepen the dialogue on what is life giving in the midst of human atrocities and profound human suffering;
- to gain understandings of the nature of freedom and responsibility in the self, and the inherent calling that places on the individual within personal, social, and global systems; and
- to draw on a holistic concept of personhood with regard to course content, specifically an advanced development of heart, mind, and spirit that attends to servant-leadership, restorative justice, and forgiveness.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

The course is designed to be presented in four modules over an eight-week period. Each two-week module will have its own set of materials (e.g., readings, teacher presentations, etc.) Given that a key component of the approach to learning in this course is the dialogue among students, each module will be the focus of an internet-based discussion by students. At least four postings a week (eight over the course of each two-week module) will be made by each student:

- one posting in the form of an annotated question related to the topic
- two postings in response to other students' questions; and
- one additional posting, response, or general comment.

In addition to the on-going dialogue with other students, each student will complete the following work (two dialogues and two papers):

**Healthy Justice and Forgiveness Dialogue**: The student forms a one to two hour dialogue with a good bright mentor (over food if possible) in which the student describes and then gains insight surrounding his or her experience of a poorly-handled justice and forgiveness experience on the personal, organizational, or global level: primary rules of the dialogue: seek the wisdom of the mentor; take self-responsibility for system change; no blaming others for system dysfunction; find creative, vulnerable, transparent, and self-responsible ways to approach the issue. Let your dialogue inform class postings and papers.

- **Life of Justice and Forgiveness Paper (masters students only)**: six to eight, double-spaced pages (cite-based) in which the student describes a problem with his or her organization, interprets the problem from the perspective of self-responsibility and human dignity (valuing the dignity of self and others in the midst of conflict), and offers a life-giving response to the problem.

- **Life of Justice and Forgiveness Paper (doctoral students only)**: eight to twelve, double-spaced pages (cite-based) in which the student describes a problem with his or her organization, interprets the problem from the perspective of self-responsibility and
human dignity (valuing the dignity of self and others in the midst of conflict), and offers a life-giving response to the problem.

- **Freedom and Responsibility Dialogue**: The student forms a one to two hour dialogue (over food if possible) with a good bright mentor in which the student presents a brief conversation defining servant-leadership, then listens, ask questions, and dialogues with the mentor seeking to develop a coherent philosophy of individual and community responsibility in the face of human rights violations. In this work the student can focus on the personal, organizational, or global level.

**Final assignment for masters students/Contemplation and Action Paper (masters students only)**: six to eight, double-spaced pages (cite-based) in which the student

1) reflects on his or her experience of alienation, lack of community, or degraded/deficit-based relationships, be they familial (e.g. family discord/cutoff), organizational (e.g. work environments that drain or degrade rather than give life), or global (e.g. the current relationship between the United States and Iraq);

2) interprets the relationship in the context of the course in a way that is both self-responsible and honoring of the "other"; and

3) develops a plan of personal leadership that is likely in the long run to heal and restore the humanity of those involved. Citations required.

*** be sure to consult the online description of this paper for a more complete understanding of the masters-level assignment.

**Final assignment for doctoral students/Leadership, Justice and Forgiveness Integration paper**: each doctoral student enrolled in the course will complete a 12-15 page cite-based paper (of a level of quality publishable in a peer-reviewed journal) in which he or she will discuss a current personal (familial, organizational, etc.), national, or international issue integrating at least one prominent leadership theory (e.g. servant-leadership, transformational leadership, appreciative inquiry, relational leadership, etc.) as well as scholarly understandings of restorative justice and forgiveness.

***Be sure to consult the online description of this paper for a more complete understanding of the Doctoral assignment.

**COURSE MATERIALS**

Books for the course:

- Reflections on Leadership, Larry Spears
- No Future Without Forgiveness, Desmond Tutu
- The Sunflower, Simon Weisenthal
- Night, Elie Wiesel
- Man's Ultimate Search for Meaning, Victor Frankl
- My Father's House, Sylvia Fraser
- Fools Crow, James Welch
- My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr., Corretta Scott King

Films for the course:

1) The Count of Monte Cristo (the recent one, with Jim Caviesel)
2) The Diary of Ann Frank (the recent one, with Ben Kingsley)
3) Monsoon Wedding
4) Smoke Signals

COURSE SCHEDULE
The course is divided into four two-week modules:

Module One (week 1 and 2)
READ:
• Reflections on Leadership, Larry Spears
• No Future Without Forgiveness, Desmond Tutu
• Servant-leadership, Restorative Justice, and Forgiveness paper, S. Ferch (posted on Blackboard)
VIEW: The Count of Monte Cristo (the recent one, with Jim Caviesel)
ENGAGE: Mentor Gallery, pick two mentors, hear what they say about conflict
DISCUSS: initial understandings of servant-leadership, restorative justice, and forgiveness
WRITE: Healthy Justice and Forgiveness one-page summary post to discussion board

Module Two (week 3 and 4)
READ:
• The Sunflower, Simon Weisenthal
• Night, Elie Wiesel
• Servant-leadership and the Interior of the Leader, Part 1, S. Ferch (posted on Blackboard)
VIEW: The Diary of Ann Frank (the recent one, with Ben Kingsley)
ENGAGE: Mentor Gallery, pick two more mentors, hear what they say about conflict
DISCUSS: what is life giving in the midst of human atrocities and profound human suffering
WRITE: Life of Justice and Forgiveness Paper

Module Three (week 5 and 6)
READ:
• Man's Ultimate Search for Meaning, Victor Frankl
• My Father's House, Sylvia Fraser
• Servant-leadership and the Interior of the Leader, Part 2, S. Ferch (posted on Blackboard)
VIEW: Monsoon Wedding
ENGAGE: Mentor Gallery, pick two more mentors, hear what they say about conflict
DISCUSS: understandings of the nature of freedom and responsibility in the self, and the inherent calling that places on the individual within personal, social, and global systems
WRITE: Freedom and Responsibility Dialogue one-page summary post to discussion board

Module Four (week 7 and 8)
READ:
• Fools Crow, James Welch
• My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr., Corretta Scott King
• Servant-leadership and the Interior of the Leader, Part 3, S. Ferch (posted on Blackboard)
VIEW: Smoke Signals
ENGAGE: Mentor Gallery, pick two more mentors, hear what they say about conflict
DISCUSS: a holistic concept of personhood with regard to course content, specifically an advanced development of heart, mind, and spirit that attends to servant-leadership, restorative justice, and forgiveness

WRITE:
- **masters students write Contemplation and Action Paper
- **doctoral students write: Leadership, Justice, and Forgiveness Integration Paper