

(AM-659) Prison Ministry: Healing Inside and Liberation Outside

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Course Modality: Summer Intensive Six Week Synchronous:

Class Sessions: May 25th to June 29th: Wednesdays: 6 pm to 8 pm
(Eastern Standard Time)

This course will examine traditional and contemporary approaches to spiritual care for ministry to the incarcerated that are rooted in one's faith or source of meaning-making. This course requires students to be self-reflective, capable of critically and theologically reflecting on scriptural literature and able to articulate one's spiritual care practice. This course engages a critical service-learning pedagogy and navigates contemporary theories for integrated care with traditional religious practices for incarcerated souls. This course is meant to provide a chaplain with arts of ministry that demonstrate understanding and ability to function as a professional care provider with the Board of Chaplaincy Certification's common qualifications and competencies.

Bilal Ansari Faculty Associate of Pastoral Theology and Director of The Islamic Chaplaincy Program at Hartford Seminary. As a practitioner he served as a professional staff chaplain for 14 years at level 5 to level 1 facilities in both men and women federal and state prison institutions. As a scholar he wrote his dissertation as an auto-ethnographic work on case studies in the field of chaplaincy.

Course Objectives:

You will learn to:

--articulate and incorporate the interconnections of personal and social identity as they relate to effective professional boundaries and conduct as a prison chaplain.

-- facilitate and provide religious/spiritual resources for those gripped by addiction, poverty, power, privilege, and systems of oppression in prisons.

--formulate and utilize spiritual assessments, interventions, outcomes, and entrance and exit care plans relevant to federal or state prison institutions and organizational leadership levels.

Course Schedule:

This course will be a synchronous online course May 26th, June 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th. This course will have weekly critical and theological lectures and case studies as prompts (and will be the model criterion for acceptable quality and competency) for weekly written and oral assignments. Several guest lecturers may present a lecture or case study and answer questions involving particular aspects of prison ministry. (Ex. Maureen Baird, A former Warden, FCI Danbury and several formerly incarcerated individuals). Final papers will be developed about your provision of care that articulates the arts of your prison ministry. This will demonstrate understanding and how you will function professionally in light of the BCCI's four common qualifications and competencies. Choosing one from each section.

Required reading:

Johnson, Sylvester. African American Religions, 1500-2000: Colonialism, Democracy, and Freedom. Available on the DTL

Spooner, Lysander. Vices Are Not Crimes. Ebook

Review of books In progress.

Teaching and Learning Strategies:

Students will be required to communicate effectively orally and in writing. There must be evidence of critical and theological engagement with lectures, readings, and case studies. Students' final presentations and papers must clearly articulate and demonstrate understanding and ability to provide care for incarcerated souls as arts of ministry.

Course Assignments:

1. **Attend all of the synchronous sessions**, and actively participate in class discussions (**20% of the grade**). If you know you will be unable to attend a class session, please inform the professor in advance. In the case of an absence the professor will reserve the right to ask the student for an oral and written assignment on the required reading for that session.
2. Provide a **500-word critical and theological reflection post** to weekly prompts on Canvas in response to lectures, readings, and case studies. 100-250 word self-reflective response on the practice of care (**20% of the grade**). The Canvas posts are due Wednesday by 6 pm and Canvas responses are due Thursdays each week of class.
3. **Mid-term oral and written presentations** each student will present material on four particular healing arts of ministry, outlining the prisoners' social and spiritual condition as presented in class Lectures One and Two. Students will also be responsible for presenting questions for discussion during this class period (**30% of the grade**). Students should select the particular arts for their presentation by Friday, 4th, June.
4. **A final praxis paper or verbatim of at least 6,000 words** demonstrating at least four arts of ministry, one from each section of the BCCI standards in the class. Students might select to edit and annotate a verbatim or case presented in class. The choice must be agreed upon by the instructors by Week 3. Dr. Ansari will read and comment on the final papers (**30% of the grade**).
5. **The paper is due the week 15 July. No exceptions, a letter grade will be taken for every week after the due date.**

Course Outline:

Optional Extra Credit: Tuesday, 25 May, 5:00 - 6:30 pm EST

- **Bijlefeld Lecture of Hartford Seminary:** Students who attend the lecture and provide a **500 word critical and theological reflection post** dealing with one aspect of suffering and struggle related to the arts of ministry of prisoners from Professor Siddiqui's lecture will receive **credit for one week's post or half a letter grade increase for any assignment.**

Required:

Week One: Wednesday, 27th of May, 6:00 –8:00 pm EST

- **Integration of Theories and Practices of Care:** Faith and Discernment for Appropriate Arts of Ministry for Prisoners

Week Two: Wednesday, 3rd of June, 6:00 –8:00 pm EST

- **Professional Identity and Conduct:** Theodicy and Liberalism with Self and Others Among Systems of Oppression

Week Three: Wednesday, 10th of June, 6:00-8:00 pm EST

- **Professional Practice Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:** Metaphors and Meaning-Making- Spiritual Assessments, Interventions, Outcomes, and Care Plans

Week Four: Wednesday, 17th of June, 6:00 -8:00 pm EST

- **Organizational Leadership:** Boundaries and Understanding Institutional Culture, Systems, Business Principles and Practices Appropriate for Chaplaincy

Week Five: Wednesday, 24th of June, 6-8:00 EST

- **Integration of Spiritual Care:** Redemption and Restoration Establishing Professional and Interdisciplinary Relationships for Healing and Liberation of Prisoners

Week Six: Wednesday, 30th of June, 6- 8:00 EST

- **Primary Research and Research Literature:** Authenticity and Authority Developing Yourself as a Spiritual Care Provider

References

Farley, Edward. Faith and Beauty: A Theological Aesthetic.

- Good and Evil: Interpreting a Human Condition.

Sprearlt. American Prisons: A Critical Primer on Culture and Conversion to Islam

Jones, William R. Is God A White Racist?

Jackson, Sherman. Islam and the Problem of Black Suffering.