

UU Journey Toward Wholeness
EDRS 8460 Fall 2010/Limit 18
Draft Syllabus / April 2010
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Course Description:

The Unitarian Universalist Association has been on the "Journey Toward Wholeness" (JTW) for at least a decade. The journey began when delegates at the 1997 General Assembly passed a resolution creating a committee to monitor and assess the "transformation of the UUA into an authentically anti-racist, anti-oppressive, multicultural association." This noble goal led to one of the most controversial programs in our history.

What are the reasons for the programs successes and failures? Why has our "journey" been full of fits and starts, potholes and pit stops along the way? In this seminar, we'll investigate the Journey Toward Wholeness, paying special attention to the theo/allogical aspects of the program itself and the debates surrounding it. What is the theological point of our journey? What is our Unitarian Universalist vision of "wholeness?" What language best describes our intentions and our ends? How might we better ground the work of countering oppression in our sources and history? How might we inspire our predominantly white, privileged congregations to own the necessity, importance and transformative possibility of this work?

Using both historical and contemporary resources, participants will reflect upon and articulate their own thea/ologies of wholeness.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- articulate a summary of the history of anti-racism and multiculturalism in the UUA.
- articulate a personal thea/ology of ECO/anti-racism/multiculturalism.
- recognize and name acts and habits of oppression/privilege
- point to how their understanding of ECO/anti-racism/multiculturalism has changed, deepened and/or been challenged as a result of the class.

Course Format:

- Week 1. Introductions, Expectations, and Conversation
- Week 2. History and Context
- Week 3. History and Context, continued
- Week 4. History and Context, continued
- Week 5. History and Context, continued
- Week 6. Thea/ology and the JTW—overview
- Week 7. Thea/ology and the JTW—How should we know? (epistemology)
- Week 8. Thea/ology and the JTW
- Week 9. Individual Wholeness—Wounded Healers (ontology)
- Week 10. Individual Wholeness—Systems
- Week 11. Individual Wholeness—Integrity and the Whole Life (soteriology)
- Week 12. Wholeness in Communities/Congregations—A Question of Motives (ecclesiology)
- Week 13. Wholeness in Communities/Congregations—The Struggle and the Power (theodicy)
- Week 14. Wholeness in Communities/Congregations—Where are we going? (eschatology)

Course Texts:

Readings will be drawn from the following sources and supplemented as much as possible with other media and forms of engagement:

Against All Odds: The Struggle for Racial Integration in Religious Organizations by Christerson, Brad; Edwards, Korie; Emerson, Michael

The Arc of the Universe is Long: Unitarian Universalists, Anti Racism and the Journey from Calgary by Roush, James (Chip); Spencer, Leon; Takahashi Morris, Leslie

Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom by hooks, bell

The Wounded Healer by Nouwen, Henri J.

Soulwork: Anti-Racist Theologies in Dialogue by Bowens-Wheatley, Marjorie; Jones, Nancy Palmer

Faith Without Certainty: Liberal Theology in the 21st Century by Rasor, Paul

A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey Toward an Undivided Life by Palmer, Parker

After Empire: the Art and Ethos of Enduring Peace by Welch, Sharon D.

Sample Reflection Topics:

A Personal ECO Self-Assessment

Using Rebecca Parker's chapter in *Soul Work* and the SKSM ECO self-assessment as models, reflect on your own experiences with issues of oppression. This could mean looking at the pain of having been oppressed, the experience of privilege, witnessing oppression, coming to understand one's own identity, or any combination of these things. Are there stories you can tell to illustrate your learning?

Thea/ological Connections

Can you begin to articulate the thea/ological foundation of ECO work? How does this work connect to your own thea/ology and practice? How would you explain the reasons for doing ECO work to a congregation or community?

Personal Wholeness

Is personal wholeness a worthy goal of ECO work? What barriers to personal wholeness exist for you? How might personal wholeness be related to sustainability? To integrity? Does personal wholeness ever get in the way of ECO work?

A Vision of Wholeness in Community

Describe your vision of a whole community or congregation.