**SW 828**  
The Black Church and Its Role in Human Development, Economic Empowerment and Community Revitalization  
Winter 2003

Instructor: John M. Wallace, Jr., Ph.D.    Office: 2780 SSWB  
Time: 11:00 pm - 2:00 pm      Location: 1794 SSWB  
Phone: (734) 763-6288      Fax: (313) 936-1961  
E-mail: johnwall@umich.edu      Office Hours: TBA

1. Course Description

This course examines the past, present, and future role of “the” Black Church in human development, economic empowerment and the revitalization of African American communities. The course explores the historical foundation of the Church’s mission; examines current economic and social conditions that motivate the Church's involvement in development; describes a conceptual framework within which to categorize and develop faith-based development endeavors; investigates the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of Church involvement in development; and highlights successful models of Church-initiated development.

2. Course Content

The course analyzes the historical, theological, psychological, and sociological and methodological issues that encourage, discourage, promote, and prevent Black Churches involvement in holistic development. Throughout the course the instructor and students will compare and contrast the human, economic, and community development beliefs, practices, and perspectives of the Black Church with those of the Social Work profession.

3. Course Objectives

As a result of this course it is expected that students will be able: 1) to articulate the historical and contemporary significance of the Black Church in the African American community; 2) to understand the culture, structure and operations of traditional Black churches; 3) to identify a variety of methods and models of faith-based development; and 4) to develop a final project that will address a specific human, economic, or community development issue or problem that faces faith-based development researchers and practitioners.

The instructors’ goal is that students will leave the course with a solid understanding of the Black church, some tools with which to assess the social, political, and economic environments in which Church-based development takes place, and a set of skills and resources to assist them in their future research and practice with community organizations in general, and faith-based organizations in particular.
4. Course Design
The course is a doctoral seminar. Accordingly, the students and the instructor share responsibility for the co-creation and facilitation of the learning experience. In addition to instructor lead classroom activities (e.g., lectures, case studies), each week specific students will lead discussions of the readings. In addition to lectures and discussions, we will also host guest speakers, and use other strategies (e.g., field trips, group inquiry) to facilitate our shared learning.

Performance Evaluation (i.e., grades)

Students choose the grade that they desire to receive based upon their preparation for, and active participation in, classroom activities and discussions and the quantity and quality of the work they decide to submit. The requirements for an ‘A’ are as follows:

1. Attend all class meetings or confirm absence in advance with professor.
2. Read all assigned course materials.
3. Actively participate in all course-related discussions and activities.
4. Co-facilitate the class discussion for 2 or more weeks of the semester
5. Submit 1 discussion question for each of the assigned readings each week
6. Assign 1 peer-reviewed journal article to the class on a topic relevant to your research interests.
7. Attend and provide a written analysis that describes, compares and contrasts two Sunday worship services at 2 African-American churches of your choosing. (6-8 pages)
8. Write and present a paper to the class that summarizes a current social policy issue that is germane to faith-based human, economic or community development (e.g., HR7, the CARE Act), critically analyzes that the pros and cons of the policy from the perspective of an advisor to a local pastor’s alliance, and provide recommendations as to how the alliance should proceed regarding the policy (3-5 pages).
9. Write a research paper on a topic of your choosing that integrates the knowledge you have acquired over the course of the semester and present your findings to the class (15 pages)

Class participation (numbers 1-6) = 30%
Attendance paper = 20%
Policy paper = 20%
Research paper = 30%

Course Readings
The following books are available at Ulrich’s.

- C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya Black Church in the African American Experience (L&M)
- Ronald Nored, Reweaving the Fabric (RWF)
- John M. Perkins, Restoring At-Risk Communities (Perkins).

The assigned journal articles, government documents and other reports can be downloaded via the internet and/or will be available on reserve in the School of Social Work library.
TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

1/7 Course Introduction and Overview

1/14 The Black Church: Structure and Process
- L&M Ch. 1 The Religious Dimension
- L&M Ch. 2 The Black Baptists pp 20-46.
- L&M Ch. 3 The Black Methodists pp 47-75
- L&M Ch. 4 The Black Pentecostals pp 76-91
- Lincoln, C. The View from the Narthex: Mormon, Muslim and Jew in Race, Religion, and the Continuing American Dilemma

1/21 The Black Church: Structure and Process
- L&M Ch. 5 In the Receding Shadow of the Plantation: A Profile of Rural Clergy and the Churches in the Black Belt
- L&M Ch. 6 In the Streets of the Black Metropolis: A Profile of Black Urban Clergy and Churches
- L&M Ch. 12 The Performed Word: Music and the Black Church.

1/28 The Black Church: Structure and Process

CHURCH ATTENDANCE PAPER AND PRESENTATIONS DUE

2/4 Holistic Faith-based Development: Theoretical and Conceptual Issues
- Cnaan Ch. 2 What do we mean by Religious-based Social Services?
- Perkins Ch. 1 What is Christian Community Development?
- Perkins Ch. 2 Toward a Theology of Christian Community Development
- Perkins Ch. 3 Understanding Poverty
- Cnaan Ch. 5 Theological Teaching and Emphasis on Helping the Needy.
- Perkins Ch. 5 Relocation
- Perkins Ch. 6 Reconciliation
- Perkins Ch 7 Redistribution

2/11 Faith Based Human Development
• Cnaan, Ch 7 Religion and the Quality of Life of Individuals.

2/18 Faith Based Human Development
• R. Cnaan, Black Church Outreach CRUCCS Report
• Cnaan, Ch 8 Religion and Social Services Provision at the End of the Twentieth Century
• Cnaan, Ch. 9 Empowerment and Organized Religion

2/25 NO Class Spring Break

3/4 Faith-Based Human Development: Social Services Delivery, Social Work, Social Policy
• Cnaan, Ch. 1 The Challenge of Devolution and the Promise…
• Cnaan, Ch. 3 Religious-based Social Services in the Social Work Literature…
• Cnaan, Ch. 4 Reasons for the Rift…
• Cnaan, Ch. 6 Religious Roots of America’s Social Services System
• Cnaan, Ch. 12 Political and Societal Trends in Social Services Provision
• A. Farnsley, Can Faith-based organizations compete?
• Rock, J. and The Roper Group. Stepping Out on Faith: NYC’s Charitable Choice Demonstration Program

3/11 Faith-Based Economic Empowerment and Community Revitalization
POLICY PAPER AND PRESENTATIONS DUE

3/18 Faith-Based Economic Empowerment and Community Revitalization
• Nored, R. Reweaving the Fabric.
• US Department of Housing and Urban Development: *Faith-Based Organizations in Community Development*

• L&M Ch. 9 The American Dream and the American Dilemma: The Black Church and Economics


• Cohen, E., Mowbray, C., Gillette, V., Thompson, E. Preventing homelessness: religious organizations and housing development. Prevention in Human Services, 1991; 169-185.

4/8 Faith-Based Economic Empowerment and Community Revitalization

• L&M Ch. 9 Now is the Time: The Black Church, Politics, and Civil Rights Militancy.


• Owens, M. Political Action and Black Church Associated Community Development Corporations, 2000.


4/15 Challenges for the Future

• L&M Ch. 13 The Black Church and the Twenty-First Century: Challenges to the Black Church

• L&M Ch. 10 The Pulpit and the Pew: The Black Church and Women

• L&M Ch. 11 In My Mother’s House: The Black Church and Young People

• Cnaan, Ch. 13 Toward a Limited Partnership for A Newer Deal


**FINAL PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS DUE**