

THE CONTENT OF THIS DESCRIPTION IS NOT A LEARNING CONTRACT AND THE INSTRUCTOR IS NOT BOUND TO IT. IT IS OFFERED IN GOOD FAITH AND INTENDED AS A HELPFUL GUIDE TO THE STUDENT.

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**TITLE:** Pittsburgh Social & Religious Ecology

**TERM:** Spring 2023-2024

**PROFESSOR:** R. Drew Smith

**CREDIT HOURS:** 3

**REGISTRATION:** LIMITED TO: 12  
# AUDITORS:                     

UNLIMITED                       
NO AUDITORS X

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** (Online, synchronous format)

The Pittsburgh Metropolitan region has embodied in important ways America's early settler adventures, difficult race relations, industrial revolution, labor strife, urban decline and redevelopment, and an evolving religious culture. Utilizing historical, sociological, and theological readings as well as lectures from key, local experts and informants, the course explores Pittsburgh's metropolitan ethos and the role of churches in the formation and maintenance of metro-Pittsburgh's social and religious culture. Observational and analytical tools acquired in this course will readily transfer to interpretation and analysis of local social and religious contexts beyond the metro-Pittsburgh context.

**CLASS OBJECTIVES:**

- Systematic examinations of metro-Pittsburgh's socio-historical and religious formation;
- Theological and social analysis of select historical and contemporary events and social problems;
- A review of strategies for effective ministerial and social responses to these social problems;
- Reflection on the role of ministers as social analysts and activists and on boundaries between prophetic and priestly obligations;
- Delineations and critiques of contemporary activist ministry frameworks and of the definitions of community and of Christian calling that underlie these frameworks;
- The relationship between social criticism and practical social engagement; and
- Direct (i.e., in-person) and indirect (i.e., literary) exposures to contemporary embodiments of socially-engaged ministry.

**PREREQUISITES:** None

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS/READING:**

- Samuel P. Hayes, *City at the Point: Essays on the Social History of Pittsburgh*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991, ISBN: 978-0822954477, \$60.00.
- John E. Bodnar, Roger Simon, and Michael P. Weber, *Lives of their Own: Blacks, Italians, and Poles in Pittsburgh, 1900-1960*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982, ISBN: 978-0252010637, \$33.00.
- Trotter, W. & Day, N. *Race and Renaissance: African Americans in Pittsburgh since World War II*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010, ISBN: 978-0822962434, \$33.36.

**ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING:**

Four 5-page discussion papers; class attendance and participation.

**ATTENDANCE:** Required.