

Grace University
Justice and Reconciliation Concentration
Academic Description

A new (18+ hour) concentration option is being made available for Intercultural Studies and Psychology Majors. This concentration will generally be completed in the spring semester of a student's junior or senior year.

Program Description:

The Justice and Reconciliation Concentration is designed to give students a first-hand experience of domestic, Christian community development as conducted in the context of urban realities in partnership with the John M. Perkins Foundation for Reconciliation and Development. Emphasis is placed upon the Biblically-integrated study of topics such as oppression, poverty, race, justice, community development and reconciliation. Students will especially consider how to develop an Evangelical approach to social justice, including evaluation of the extremes of the social gospel on one hand and ecclesiastic social inaction on the other. This unique program provides the opportunity to develop a praxis of social justice and reconciliation which is founded on God's character.

Coursework:

Pre-Experience Coursework (3+ credits):

See your advisor for more information.

Concurrent Coursework (15 credits):

(12 credits from GU, 3 from JSU) PSY XXX (2) Poverty in American Society IS XXX (2) The Church, Racism, and Prejudice in American Society IS XXX (2) Principles of Christian Community Development IS XXX (3) Justice and Oppression in the United States IS XXX (3) Intercultural Field Experience SW 390 (3) The Black Experience

Post-Experience Coursework (3 credits):

IS 407B (1) Intercultural Transition Seminar IS 411 (2) Modern Power Structures and Inequality (optional)

Participating Students include:

IS and PSY students interested in serving from an integrated Christian perspective in social justice oriented environments through counseling, mediation, social work, and community development work with various governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Justice and Reconciliation Concentration Coursework

PSY 3XX (2) Poverty in American Society – starting in Spring 2010

This introductory course presents a framework for understanding poverty and poverty issues within the United States. Students will consider the following: defining poverty; official measures of poverty; absolute vs. relative poverty; situational vs. generational poverty; race/ethnicity and poverty; causes of poverty; wealth distribution; the living wage movement; and the role of socialization in poverty. Students will also be introduced to various local, state, federal, and non-governmental responses to poverty. Accomplished at the Justice and Reconciliation study site. Prerequisite: IS 321. Minimum 2.0 GPA

IS 4XX (3) The Church, Justice, and Oppression in American Society – starting in Spring 2010

Students will learn a model for thinking Biblically about justice and oppression. Using this framework, students will consider the role and appropriate responses of the church concerning both current and historical injustices within American Society. Race / Tribe / Ethnicity, Gender, Religion, and Socio-Economic Status will be especially explored as realms of injustice with this model of justice and oppression. Students will also consider the topics of power and privilege, including exploration into their own experiences with power and privilege. Accomplished at the Justice and Reconciliation study site. Prerequisite: IS 321. Minimum 2.0 GPA

IS 3XX (2) Racism and Prejudice in American Society – starting in Spring 2010

Students will consider sociological and theological theoretical frameworks for understanding racism and prejudice, particularly as expressed in American Society. Special theoretical areas include: The Contact Hypothesis, Stereotyping, Identity Development, and Race vs. Ethnicity. Students will apply these frames to case-study examples of racism and prejudice between various groups in American Society. Accomplished at the Justice and Reconciliation study site. Prerequisite: IS 321. Minimum 2.0 GPA

IS 3XX (2) Principles of Christian Community Development – starting in Spring 2010

This introductory course will explore the history and goals of Christian Community Development, especially as practiced within the United States. Students will consider the methods and theological and theoretical underpinnings for holistic, empowering, reconciliatory, and just ministry among the disenfranchised, oppressed, and poor. Accomplished at the Justice and Reconciliation study site. Prerequisite: IS 321. Minimum 2.0 GPA

IS 3XX (3) Intercultural Field Experience – starting in Spring 2010

A field-based, service-learning-based, integration of theory and practice accomplished at the Justice and Reconciliation study site under the supervision of a local community development organization leader and the Intercultural Studies staff. Prerequisite: IS 321. Minimum 2.0 GPA

SW 390 (3) The Black Experience:

This course covers the historical development and contributions that have provided the foundation to the Black experience in social work. It discusses the unique manner in which African Americans practice “Black experience-based social work.” Based on the spiritual and blues traditions, the course offers social work techniques to work with African American individuals, families, groups, and communities. The roles of African American people in social work are explored. Emphasized are such factors as education, housing, family, employment, and the impact of racism.