MC621: Living Systems in the Urban Context

Instructors: Jeffrey Bass, David Wright & Dana Wade
Term: Fall 2015
Location: TBD
Time: Monday Evenings (9/8-12/1/2014), 6:30pm-9:30pm.

Course Description: The Church is the Body of Christ, a living system. Families, neighborhoods, and cities too are complex and interrelated living social systems. Why, then, would we try to do God’s work in a church or social system using tools and methods designed for non-living systems? Living Systems in the Urban Context explores an approach to ministry that recognizes the difference between the world God created and the world we create and attempt to measure and control. The course lays out the basic concepts of systems thinking, then teaches a systemic approach to Christian ministry called Living System Ministry. Students learn through reading, self-reflection, interactive teaching, dynamic discussion and challenging but practical assignments.

Course Objectives:
- Understand the biblical foundation and basic concepts of Living System Ministry; and are able to use appropriate tools for analyzing systems and applying a systemic perspective to ministry. (Cf. M.Div. degree goals: 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9)
- Understand how to analyze a system (ministry, organization, issue) and recommend strategies to accomplish relevant Christian goals within that context; and understand how systems and Living System Ministry concepts and tools are used in practical ministry. (Cf. M.Div. degree goals: 3, 7, 8)
- Understand the five disciplines of systems thinking; understand structure and leverage in systems; and see the importance of a systemic perspective and approach in ministry. (Cf. M.Div. degree goals: 3, 7)
- Understand the richness and complexity of the context of urban ministry generally and in urban Boston in particular. (Cf. M.Div. degree goals: 2, 6, 7, 8, 9)

Main Required Readings:


