Understanding Community:
Engaging Oxford College Students in Loving God's World

Lyn Pace
Oxford College of Emory University

This article addresses town and gown relationships, those complicated interactions between colleges or universities and the communities in which they are situated. In particular, the focus is on the relationship between Oxford College of Emory University where I am the college chaplain and the city of Oxford, Georgia. Research demonstrated a gap between these communities - in the interactions between them as well as in the potential for creating belonging between Oxford College students in particular and the local community of Oxford, Georgia. My doctoral project addressed that gap through a course taught in the fall of 2016, Understanding Community: Oxford Encountering Oxford. *In the course, students were required to move their bodies into the local community to see a community once invisible to them and to engage in loving God's world primarily through interviews with local residents. Theological themes of incarnation and revelation played a major role in this project, and are addressed here, especially with regard to implications for the church and its ministry in the world.*

Keywords: community, incarnation, revelation, town and gown relationships, contemplative practices, belonging

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between local communities and colleges and universities has a long history referred to as town and gown relations. "Misunderstandings between these parties can be traced to historical developments and a lack of general understanding of the implications that these developments have on each other" (Kemp, 2013, p.1). Oxford College (originally established as Emory College and became Oxford College in the 1900s) and the city of Oxford, Georgia were concurrently planned by Georgia Methodists in 1836 and have since been engaged and disengaged with one another throughout their existence. Today, the city and the college exist in a genial but apathetic relationship. The problem that motivates my project is this decline in the relationship between Oxford College and the local community of Oxford, Georgia. To address this, I designed a course to teach to first-and second- year students at Oxford College that would intentionally involve them in the immediate context of Oxford, Georgia, by creating relationships with local residents.

This project is motivated by a demonstrated need to understand and see our communities more deeply and to comprehend and embrace the transformation that comes when we belong and create structures of belonging in our lives. While, more broadly, this project is meant to be a practical offering for the church and the way the church relates to the world, more specifically in the project itself, my interest is in the relationship between Oxford College and the city of Oxford, Georgia. While this project was developed to

improve the ongoing town and gown relationship between Oxford College and the city of Oxford, Georgia, more significantly, the goal was for the students to be *in* the community and *with* the community, which is why a primary component of the class was interviews the students completed with local residents. This assignment was intended to create space for current students at Oxford College and local residents in the city of Oxford to be present *with* one another in a way that normally does not happen. It required them to listen to each other and learn from one another's stories and experiences in order to deepen their understanding of one another, which is why a unique component of the course involved starting each class with a contemplative practice. These few minutes at the beginning of each class, informed by my own habits of prayer and contemplation, established a regular practice meant to enable them to achieve deeper awareness of themselves and others. My responsibility as their chaplain is to open up the greater possibility for students to understand that their work in life is to not only be engaged with the world but in "loving the world" (Oliver, 2006, p.1).

The space created in the class for intentional interaction is born out of my theological convictions about hospitality. The students in the class and the local residents were strangers living in each other's backyard. Except for a class like this, there would likely be no other time or place where they would choose to meet. As a Christian minister whose vocation is to extend Christ's love and justice in the world, with a particular focus in both my congregational setting at Oxford College and the immediate locale of Oxford, Georgia, my task was clear: to offer hospitality by creating space for new relationships between students and local residents. Not the kind of hospitality that simply warms one's heart or makes life more comfortable, but this was about seeking a hospitality that honors and moves across difference – a hospitality that Letty Russell defines as "the practice of God's welcome by reaching out across difference to participate in God's actions bringing justice and healing in our world of crisis and fear of the ones we call 'other'" (Russell, 2009, p.31). In this kind of hospitality we are drawn out of ourselves to be with others, to put our bodies into places where we do not or even will not go so that we can see what has been invisible to us – so as to resist the obliviousness that, according to Mary McClintock Fulkerson, "characterizes far too much of North American society" (Fulkerson, 2007, p.18). Hospitality such as this guided the process of designing this course, inviting residents to participate, and then teaching it in the fall of 2016.

My immediate audience is shaped by the academic context in which I have been engaged for almost three years, the Doctor of Ministry degree program at Candler School of Theology and my colleagues in it. As leaders in the church – local church pastors, administrative leaders, campus ministers, and chaplains – we have been on this journey together. I write with particular faces and personalities in mind of those with whom I have been in ministry in order to contextualize this project. A summation of my project will also be presented to this group at the end of our program in April 2017. The second audience is my professional context in ministry, Oxford College and its faculty, staff, and students as well as the local community of Oxford, Georgia. This audience was intimately involved in the project and will be addressed throughout much of this paper. In the final portion of the paper, I turn my attention to the church to offer this project and its findings as a model for the ways in which churches as well as college chaplains and colleges engage their immediate communities.

EXPLORING THE PROBLEM

The problem that motivates my project is the decline in the relationship between Oxford College and the local community. Students at Oxford College are able to complete their two-year experience without any engagement in the local community. This problem is informed by the decline in the civic engagement among everyday citizens and residents in the United States. It is also influenced by the ways in which colleges and universities in the United States have changed. Combine this with the fact that churches are often insular communities that neglect their local community and have all too often contributed to the decline in civic and community engagement, and there is an ecclesiological problem. Ultimately, this is a theological problem, because knowing our neighbor(s) has become almost impossible, thus preventing us from being with our neighbor. God came to be with humanity in Jesus, and Jesus taught those who would

listen that love of God *and* love of neighbor were central in his Jewish faith. For Christians, it has become the law by which we are to live.

Though this project focuses on students at Oxford College and local residents in the city of Oxford, Georgia, the results of the project can also be applied to the life of our local churches and the communities in which they are situated. Just as the students at Oxford College and the local residents of Oxford, Georgia lead multi-faceted lives that are busy and sometimes chaotic, so do the people in our local churches and their surrounding community. We all worship a variety of gods. James K. A. Smith refers to this as the rival liturgies in our lives (Smith, 2016). Waking up to the rival liturgies of our lives means that we create a church of "graced community" that has learned to embody "bounded openness," a church "where people experience the glory and pride of being adorned by God and the humility and gratitude of being judged and forgiven by God" (Jones, 2000, p.175). This "bounded openness" is what Serene Jones talks about in *Feminist Theory and Christian Theology* where she writes about her church in a tone that is strikingly familiar to me as I think about a college where Christianity was once central to its existence. "We are a gathering of rather marginal people who belong to a now marginal institution, which because of its history, sits at the center of the city – and the world whirls around and through it" (Jones, 2000, p. 169). The church of bounded openness is one that has boundaries that are continually undone by the word of God that breaks in upon it. It is a church that is deeply vulnerable to the sin of the world, which means it is a church that even more deeply knows it too is so often part of a sinful system of oppression (Jones, 2000, 172). This church where glory and pride, humility and gratitude are part of the lived experience is one that requires its people to pay attention to their own lives, the lives of others and the world, and most especially the life of the local community in which it is situated. The image of bounded openness lets us see, even if briefly, the principal features of Christian community. This kind of church and its clergy will structure places of belonging to ensure its people not only share relationships with one another and are responsible for one another inside the church but even more so beyond the church itself and into the local community. It is a kind of church where power is shared not only among the people inside the church but also with the community members in the church's immediate locale.

I am an ordained clergy member appointed to serve as an extension minister in the United Methodist Church at Oxford College of Emory University, a two-year liberal arts college located on Emory's historic original campus. Students may choose to start their four-year Emory undergraduate experience on the Druid Hills campus of Emory or at Oxford College. The college's demographics look quite a bit different today than they did at its founding or even thirty years ago. Eighteen percent of the student body at Oxford College are international students. Women compose sixty percent of the student body, and the combination of students traditionally identified as racial/ethnic minority students far outnumber the students traditionally identified as racial/ethnic majority students. There are ten religious and spiritual life clubs on campus representing Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism. We have more self-identified Muslim students at Oxford College than Methodist students. Though the student population looks different than it has for any previous college chaplain, ministry remains vitally important. My vocation as a college chaplain involves ministry with faculty, staff, and students, all part of my ministerial appointment, and it also involves ministry with the local community. If serving in a local church, I would understand my ministry in a similar way, as being both to the members of the congregation as well as to those who live in the immediate location in which the church is situated.

The college and the city, both founded by leaders in the church, grew up together. "Emory's founders had heard themselves addressed by a gospel promise that the truth would set them free, and therefore freedom, democracy, education, and religious faith all relied on each other to some extent" (Hauk, 1999, p.xvi). They practiced their own ecclesiology and viewed the church's mission as being in relationship with the world. For them, this relationship was embodied in education. In the words of the University's charter, "Designed to be a profoundly religious institution without being narrowly sectarian," Emory proposed "to encourage freedom of thought as liberal as the limitations of truth" (Hauk, 1999, p.xvi). Education had the potential to transform people, indeed the culture, and Georgia Methodists saw that as part of the church's mission. These early church leaders in Oxford, Georgia, allowed their religious faith to help them engage

and shape society. It is therefore worth acknowledging that the relationship between the college and the city, especially between residents and students, has waned over time.

This diminished relationship is not surprising. Civic engagement among individuals and in local communities in the United States has been trending downward for decades. As he points out in his monumental research on the subject, Robert Putnam suggests that social capital in almost all its forms increased substantially between 1947 and 1965 and decreased substantially between 1965 and 1998 (Putnam, 2000). And while he and Thomas H. Sander suggest in a subsequent 2010 article that Americans are engaging *differently*, they claim there is no convincing evidence that Americans are becoming more civically engaged (Sander and Putnam, 2010, p.14). America, as described by Alexis de Tocqueville in *Democracy in America*, has always relied on its public and voluntary associations to build its civic and communal life. Tocqueville writes in the early 1800s, "In America I have encountered several types of associations of which I confess I had no notion and I have frequently admired the endless skill with which the inhabitants of the United States manage to set a common aim to the efforts of a great number of men and to persuade them to pursue it voluntarily" (Tocqueville, 2003, p. 596). But it is these voluntary associations that are in a state of constant decline as Putnam and other social capital theorists point out. Although Harvard sociologist and political scientist Theda Skocpol suggests that we cannot go back to the civic world we have lost, she (and others) push us forward to new forms of connection and building associations, especially if we want to renew our democracy (Skocpol, 2003). They remind us that civic involvement is becoming more a job in today's America and less a citizen's responsibility.

Social Location

Before delving into my initial research for this project, it is important to identify my own social location. To be able to see ourselves and to wake up to our own power and privilege is critical to any research but especially research that addresses how God shapes our communal lives. As a white, heterosexual, cisgender, Christian, temporarily able-bodied, and middle-class male, historically others like me have shaped the dominant narratives in our communities over time and still do so today. I have enjoyed my own exercise of privilege and power, albeit often unbeknownst to me at the time, but nevertheless revealed to me later. As a United Methodist minister whose ministry context is a chaplain at a college, my appointment to this position is as an extension minister, meaning that I am "appointed to serve in a ministry setting beyond the local United Methodist Church in the witness and service of Christ's love and justice" (Reist, et.al., 2008, p.254). Remembering and honoring my place in the United Methodist Church is important throughout this project, because it is not only the college I am interested in connecting to the world (and specifically our local community) but also the church, of which the United Methodist Church is one denomination.

My research has, in a modest way, drawn from ethnography, which "is a way of immersing yourself in the life of a people in order to learn something about and from them" (Moschella, 2008, p.4) As a pastoral practice, ethnography helps us to open our eyes and ears in order to pay attention to and understand the ways in which people practice their faith (Moschella, 2008). This work has involved both Oxford College students and local residents, and in my project I sought to bring those two groups together. A key component of ethnographic research and the work done with students and local residents is reflexivity. The process of reflexivity is one that requires constant self-study. As Mary Clark Moschella notes, "ethnographers know that in order to study a group of people, they must also study themselves. Such self-study is termed 'reflexivity'" (Moschella, 2008, p.31). To aid in my own practice of reflexivity, I have engaged in individualized ways of reflection through the incorporation of contemplative practices including prayer, music, silence, walking meditations, and poetry. Communal practices such as sharing meals with neighbors and strangers, Christian worship, and a weekly running group have been essential. These practices help me achieve a greater sense of stillness and balance in my life, which in turn allows me to focus more deeply on my congregants, especially students and local residents.

Initial Research

The initial research for this project resulted in at least three key findings. First, it renewed my own personal commitment to understanding, engaging, and transforming community. This revealed a deeper

sense of vocational responsibility and commitment as a college chaplain. More than that, though, it was essential to be a part of finding and creating structures of belonging in communities, places that encourage and strengthen our interdependence as much as and even more than our independence (Block, 2009). Early on, my research allowed me to see the community that surrounds my ministry context, reminding me of how the Anglican priest John Wesley saw the world as his parish and thus inspired a movement with the people called Methodists. I was also informed by the ways in which Jesus paid attention to the communities where he lived and the people with whom he was in ministry as evidenced by those who were often invisible to others but with whom he talked, ate, revealed, and cast out demons. God was already at work in my ministry context and the local community, if only I had the eyes to see and ears to hear God's spirit moving. By opening my eyes and ears and putting my body into the community in ways that encouraged and challenged me along this journey, I learned that there is a gap in ways of belonging for both students and local residents.

Secondly, this research led to the discovery from the college's volunteer programs staff member that Oxford students have spent most of their off-campus volunteer efforts (close to 15,000 hours per year) in activities partnered with non-profits in cities *other* than Oxford (K. Robinson, personal communication, November 10, 2014). For the most part, students' work in off-campus volunteer efforts was built on a service system model that, according to community organizer John McKnight, emphasizes people's deficiencies (McKnight, 1989). Students were "helping" and "serving" others but not analyzing larger systems of injustice, history of the place, and the local residents. They were doing work *for* people but were not necessarily being *with* people. So not only was the narrative of the city of Oxford, its residents, and potential connections being missed because of *where* the students' work was being done, but the kind of work they were so often doing relied on traditional forms of service delivery that maintained a dependency on professionals. For instance, in order to participate in the Theory Practice Service Learning (TPSL) program at the college, a faculty member has to be able to find a non-profit organization with which to partner so that the students' work can be verified. Because the city of Oxford does not have enough non-profits to handle the service hours students are required to earn in this program, faculty tend to partner outside of Oxford. They also tend to collaborate with traditional non-profits that are often doing good work but focus in a "services" only capacity. McKnight argues that the traditional model of delivery of social services to "needy individual clients" tends to allocate most of its money to professionals and more importantly it "displaces the capacity of people's organizations to solve problems" (McKnight, 1989, p.39-40). It focuses more on professional service systems and less on community, leaving the question, "What about relationships and responsibility in those relationships?"

In this same vein, no one was organizing members of the local community in ways that led them to interactions with the campus community, most especially students. As Kathleen J. Greider notes, "the persons, families, and communities practical theologians seek to serve have identities that are religiously multifaceted, and the webs of connection in which they interact are weighted by histories, futures, meanings, commitments, joys, and suffering shaped by religious multiplicity" (Greider, 2014, 452). Many of the residents in the immediate surrounding locale have limited experience with a number of the religious traditions represented in our student body. This was another reason to create a project that would intentionally partner Oxford students and local residents. While there are many benefits from the interaction of students and local residents, one overarching benefit to the college is the possibility of a stronger relationship to its community that could lead to fewer misunderstandings, misconceptions, and assumptions for all parties involved. More than this, though, is the benefit students gain from the intentionality of putting their bodies into relationship with a new place and people they would have never met. This would give them the opportunity to see and feel the ways in which their bodies react to their neighbors. Knowing how we physically react in these experiences with our neighbors can be informative and transformative for future interactions in our communities. This knowledge increases the opportunity for us to engage in the work of loving the world.

Finally, through my research, interviews, and personal engagement in the life of the community of Oxford in the 2014-2015 academic year, I found that the connection between the college and the city had diminished over time. The local residents of Oxford and the students at Oxford College seemed to have a

decreased sense of belonging to one another, especially in terms of how Peter Block describes it: "Our communities are separated into silos; they are a collection of institutions and programs operating near one another but not overlapping or touching" (Block, 2009, p.5) In this research, many of the local residents indicated that they felt a lack of engagement with Oxford College. They also desired a relationship with students.

In the spring of 2015, I selected people to participate in a "mapping team" that consisted of members of the college community and local residents who would have the opportunity to meet with one another four or five times over the course of two to three months. We gathered in a variety of places both on the college campus and in the community, and always had snacks and beverages. Members included faculty, staff, and students from the college and an equal number of local residents from the community representing a diversity of race, age, and gender. At these meetings, members of the mapping team had the opportunity to tell their own life story, share about the gifts they bring to their community, and also talk about their experiences in Oxford. In one case there was a faculty member who also lives in the city of Oxford as a member of the mapping team demonstrating some overlap between the college and the city. One mapping team member, an older resident, talked about how she would like to see new ways in which the students and residents (especially "older and lonelier" residents) could interact. She noted that in previous periods of history the connection felt stronger and that people in the local community really do yearn to know the students today (Anonymous, personal communication, April 7, 2015).

In my research over the course of the 2015-2016 academic year, another motivating factor for this project emerged from the idea that "we are what we love." This notion is heavily influenced by the work of James K. A. Smith who focuses on the habits we engage in our life. He is dedicated to helping us uncover the desires of our heart, the ways in which we engage the world unconsciously and subscribe to rival liturgies in our lives. Smith argues that we are what we love, which means that our habits form and reform us. He says that "we need to recognize that there are rival liturgies *everywhere*. These pedagogies of desire are, in a sense, cultural liturgies, rival modes of worship" (Smith, 2016, p.23). To become aware, conscious of what we are participating in rather than simply operating on auto-pilot is essential. This is true of those of us in the church, business world, as parents, and yes, in college.

It is especially true as we think of our relationship to and participation in our local communities. It helped me focus on the communities where I live, work, and with whom I was engaged in this project, Oxford College and the city of Oxford. When we recognize the power of habit in our lives and wake up to the rival liturgies in which we are participating, then we realize we are more than thinking beings. This was an important realization, especially when considering the work of a chaplain with college students who are asked to be thinking beings but so rarely asked to also be beings who think and feel with their bodies and not just their heads. My goal in this project became clearer, for students to see beyond their classroom experience and put their bodies into the community of Oxford in a way that was not currently happening. Putting bodies into communities to physically interact with neighbors whom we would not otherwise meet allows us to do more than get to know our neighbors. We know our bodies and their reactions better. We become conscious of our power and privilege through our bodies and their interactions with our neighbors. Smith says, "…we need to embrace a more holistic, biblical model of human persons that *situates* our thinking and knowing in relation to other, more fundamental aspects of the human person" (Smith, 2016, p.6). How could students know *this* community of Oxford and its people? What could be done through this project to help them not only know the community but be present *in* and *with* the community? How might this lead to them loving the world in which they live and move and have their own being?

ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM

The design of the course *Understanding Community: Oxford Encountering Oxford* began in the summer of 2015 as a way to institutionalize the kind of relationships I was hoping to enable and embolden between Oxford College students and the local residents. My primary audience at the college has always been students, because they are my congregation, and I see myself as their pastor. Colleges and universities do not exist without the students. Truth be told, the city of Oxford, Georgia, would likely not exist were it

not for its relationship to Oxford College. Also, based on anecdotal evidence, students were always the subject of conversations with local community members when talking about the relationship (or lack thereof) between the college and local community. Stephen M. Gavazzi says that students are the most important part of the relationship between campus and community not only because they are the reason universities exist, but also because they are sent by families and communities that value higher education. They will one day return to their community or to another community and "will be ever more successful in doing so if they have learned how to function as a productive community member" (Gavazzi, 2016, p.221). The conclusion was that a credit-bearing course for students would ensure at least three critical points when thinking about this project: 1) accountability for students in their interactions with local community members, 2) accountability for students in their theoretical learning about and understanding the concept of community and belonging, and 3) a stronger opportunity for developing civically and communally engaged citizens now and for the future. Creating an opportunity where these three goals are achieved would help to ensure the flourishing of students and community alike.

The course was designed to engage students in a variety of disciplines such as history, anthropology, sociology, and religion as those disciplines relate to Oxford College and Oxford, Georgia. The course was also created to engage students in some of America's justice issues as demonstrated in Oxford's history. For example, we spent time talking about and understanding issues such as slavery and racism, community and civic engagement, leadership, and meaning making. With this in mind and for practical reasons, the course was housed in American Studies, located in the college's Humanities Division. At the recommendation of the academic dean and our only professor in American Studies, this initial course was proposed as a one-time "special topics" offering with the understanding that it could be proposed as a "new course" if it seemed appropriate after the course was taught and evaluated.

At this point, it is critical to share both the course overview and student learning outcomes for the course:

Course Overview

Understanding Community will engage students in a critical exploration of the concept of community, so they begin to formulate their own ideas of community, identify various structures of belonging in communities, and develop a more profound understanding of multiple communities to which they have been and are in relationship. These will include but are not limited to communities of origin, the Oxford campus community, virtual communities, communities of self-interest, intentional communities, and the city of Oxford. A major focus in this course will be on the city of Oxford, including interaction with local residents.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will develop their abilities to:
1. Identify communities to which they belong and the impact those communities had/have on their life
2. Think more critically about community development and social justice issues relating to communities
3. Be better informed citizens for the communities to which they do/will belong
4. Be more self-aware through active participation with each other and in the local community
5. Improve their leadership ability as they learn how to work with each other as well as members of the community
6. Increase their knowledge and experiences of diversity through their interactions with each other and in the community
7. Conduct interviews and gather oral histories by learning about ethnography and participatory action research
8. Present research findings in a clear, organized, and engaging way

As stated at the end of the course overview, a major focus in the course was for students to be with local residents. Therefore, a major assignment for students in the course early on would be a one-on-one

interview between a student and a local resident. This kind of interaction was integral to the entire project of establishing relationships and creating room for belonging between students and the local residents. The residents encountered during my research as well as members of my mapping team were interested in having more interaction with the students. If we are to understand someone else's experience then we need to talk to them, to put ourselves in places with those people (B. Tatum, personal communication, Feb. 2, 2017). With regard to students, however, I was under no preconceptions that they applied for admission to Oxford College in order to meet local residents. A survey administered to students illustrated this fact.

The Interview: Student Survey Results

One of the statements on the survey administered three times during the course revealed the attitudes of students. Statement Number Four read, "Participating in the life of the local Oxford community beyond the campus is not important to my Oxford education" with five possible responses: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The surveys were administered by Ellen Campbell, administrative assistant to the dean of campus life on the first day of class, at midterm, and on the last day of class. Students were given a number to keep track of their surveys, but I was not made aware of their numbers until after grades were recorded. In their responses to the fourth statement, two students moved from "disagree" to "neutral" and one student moved from "strongly disagree" to "disagree." One student moved from "disagree" to "neutral" and back to "disagree" again while one student marked "strongly disagree" each time and two students marked "disagree" each time. The most significant movement among students, however, was from "agree" to "disagree" (two) and "neutral" to "disagree" (four). By the end of the semester, the majority of the class either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, signifying that interactions with local residents were an important part of their Oxford education. Students rarely choose a college based on whether or not they will interact with the local residents beyond the usual volunteer service or service learning experience, but that does not suggest that colleges and universities should steer clear of such opportunities.

Working on the interview portion of the class was one of the most time-intensive pieces of the project. However, the time invested in this part of the course was worth it. This was meant to be a central component of learning in the course for students, local residents, and me. The course was open to fifteen students, and each student was paired with a local community member. My original idea was to have students complete a homestay with a local community member, and I was naïve enough to think that my connections in the community would be enough to make this happen. This was one of my failures, however, because not even five of the community members on my original list would consider this, and these were some of my best connections! While disappointed, I understood their reasons. Many of the people asked were older residents and some single, and they were skeptical and unsure about safety, cost, and time. Reflecting back now, this was not set up for success, and also revealed my own privilege and assumptions about my relationship with local residents and assumed power as a white male, former city council member, and minister. Instead, a face-to-face meeting would have been better for residents as opposed to emailing and calling. In the end, however, there was not enough trust established to make this happen, and communities only form "when people have enough trust that they can combine their properties and capacities into gifts" (McKnight and Block, 2010, p.79). This was an out-of-the-box concept that, while once a part of Oxford's history, had not been done in years. Too much was asked too quickly of the residents, reminding me of the realities of projects like mine. Perhaps after this course has been taught consistently for a few years the idea of homestays can be revisited.

In the course of communicating with residents about homestays, I also inquired about interviews and received enthusiastic and positive responses. Moving forward, I relied on established relationships in the community, four years on the Oxford City Council, relationships with church congregations, and other campus connections in my seven-and-a-half years as college chaplain to set up students and community members for success in interviews.

The Interview: Hospitality

A grant was submitted to the Oxford College Alumni Board to fund a catered dinner on campus for the residents and students. Special thought was given to the location and choice of food for this setting. This attention to space and food was not simply about logistics, but as the students learned this semester it was also a matter of hospitality. Food can be sacred and people offer hospitality through food, according to Peter Block (Block, 2009). Hospitality and the practices of hospitality that help us live into community are for me a matter of welcome and inviting the sacred to be revealed in our midst, but they are also a way of responding to the gospel. They often serve a pragmatic function and at the same time are deeply theological. "Hosts make room for those with no place, sharing themselves and their lives rather than only their skills. They offer hospitality in response to the people and needs they have encountered – needs for nourishment, place, safety, justice, friendship, and the knowledge of God's love and grace" (Pohl, 2002, p.125). This was the goal of the meal with students and local residents. These were strangers who lived in each other's backyard, yet this was their first meeting. Students at Oxford College are rarely able to offer hospitality when it comes to food. They are unable to set a table, clean their living space for guests, or cook a meal, because they live in residence halls without access to their own kitchen or the space to host guests. Because they would be hosting the local residents on campus, it was important to be intentional with the set-up of this particular meal and program.

The Interview

On the night of the dinner students were seated next to the community member with whom they had been paired. But they were also seated at tables of six so that they had a chance to interact with two other community members and two other students in the class. The goal of the evening was for them to have casual interactions with members of the Oxford community and to have a first conversation with their specific partner so that they could compare calendars and schedule a second conversation to be recorded by the student with permission of the local resident. Between the night of the dinner on September 28, 2016, and the due date for the paper on October 25, 2016, the students were to interview their partner at a location of their mutual choosing. To help prepare the class for their interviews, I offered them tools from my own doctoral degree, which included ethnography and participatory action research. Following the dinner, there was a discussion in class about the kinds of questions to ask residents that would not only help them in their papers, but would also prepare them to explore the same kinds of questions that had surfaced during the first third of our class together.

This was a significant moment in the classroom as students began to come alive at the thought of engaging the local residents, especially with the learning they had encountered up to that point in the course. It was clear from the students' excitement and proliferation of questions generated for the interviews that this assignment was a generative theme for them. It was something about which they cared enough to act. They were asking questions about the gifts and assets the community members bring to the community as well as gifts and assets of the community itself. They were also asking questions about hopes and dreams, generative themes that residents have for their community, which would pay dividends for them in their final projects in which they had to develop a project to bridge the gap between the college and city. They wanted to know more about the ways in which local residents understood and experienced community. Just as the students had been assessing their own relationship with community and where they found belonging in the first unit of the course, "Understanding Our Bodies in Community," so too they wanted to hear from others' experiences beyond the "bubble" of the college campus. For the interview papers, students were asked to record their interview and then choose a portion of the interview to transcribe. That transcription would compose the entire first page of the paper while the remainder of the paper was their interpretation of the transcript, including why they chose that particular part of the interview and how the interview reflected their learning in the first unit.

The interviews and interview papers were the highlight of the course for many of us. Most of the interviews were completed in early October as we were beginning the second unit of the course, "Understanding the Oxford Community." In this unit, students used a text that helped them learn technical terms related to community, especially the different forms of capital found in communities – human, social,

political, financial, etc. The students visited places such as Oxford City Hall, where they talked to the City Manager and Police Chief and the farmers at the Oxford College Organic Farm. They also learned from local historians. But the direct contact the students had with members of the local community was invaluable.

In his final exam, a narrative of learning for the semester, one student wrote, "The local interview project poignantly illustrates the impact and value of initiating meaningful conversation and understanding the other. What began as simple small talk, eventually led to discussions of race, education, lifestyle, and many other layered topics within Oxford's community. The interview emphasized the power of dialogue in building connections and community" (G. Baskin, personal communication, December 2016). The interviews moved students and their bodies beyond the bounds of the campus to be with local residents. By doing so, the learning we had completed in class together gave students the tools to be aware of themselves and the gifts they bring to their experiences and the interview in particular, while also preparing them to ask questions to help establish a relationship with someone they would have never met otherwise. The interviews also proved to be a solid preparation for the students' final research projects to create a project that *could be* implemented to help bridge the relationship between the college and local community.

The Contemplative Component

Another important aspect of this class was the addition of a contemplative component. This happened to coincide with the more contemplative course in the Doctor of Ministry program with Dr. Ellen Ott Marshall. In that class we read a chapter from *8 Habits of Love: Open Your Heart, Open Your Mind*, authored by J. Edwin Bacon. He writes, "Over the years, I have come to view reaching daily Stillness the way I view my morning shower and tooth brushing. I spend an hour each morning in Stillness – which, for me, is my deepest form of praying – and I don't want to enter my day without this act of spiritual, mental, and emotional hygiene" (Bacon, 2012, p.33) Prior to teaching the class, I decided to start each class with a contemplative moment, a time for students to begin class by putting away all distractions – books, backpacks, food, phones, thoughts (as much as possible) – and to put both feet on the floor for a short time for a contemplative practice. We primarily used silence, anywhere from one to three minutes as a way of centering ourselves and the class collectively. On some occasions we journeyed outside to spend reflective moments in the wooded courtyard beside the classroom and at other times used music, poetry, and walking mediations if we were on a field trip.

This resulted in multiple outcomes. First, it is an alternative to the norms of our everyday lives, especially for this generation of students. Yet they seem to yearn for this as one of our psychology professors at Oxford College notes anecdotally. This gives students and the teacher an opportunity to slow down, mandated by the classroom experience. Second, centering ourselves – or at least giving ourselves the opportunity for centering – was vital for the kind of work we were doing in the course. The course involved self-reflection as well as tough dialogue about race and class and life in community. It was hoped that our reflection, wonder and stillness would promote honest and respectful exchange in the classroom and ground us for being with local residents and listening to their stories and experiences. Finally, the biblical model was a guide, in particular the ways in which Jesus so often retreated for prayer. One could make the argument that this was both good for Jesus as well as the people with whom he was in ministry. Most of the biblical experiences that involved Jesus going up the mountain or crossing a lake, for example, were followed by crowds swarming him for some form of engagement. They involved community, because after Jesus had retreated he spent time with people and ministered with them regardless of prior relationships with them.

This meditative moment for students was designed to slow them down from the chaos of their daily lives, and to help them see and listen with greater depth. "Leaders will always be under pressure to speak, but if building social fabric is important, and sustained transformation is the goal, then listening becomes the greater service" (Block, 2009, p.88) By doing this each time we met, a habit and practice would form that would not only shape them for listening to one another in class but also with the local residents of Oxford. The hope was that it would help them be present in the interviews especially, so that they would pay attention to the reactions of their bodies. Based on the meaningful reflections in their papers about their

interviews, I believe it worked. Also, in the last class session of the semester students commented on the impact of this experience. Most said it was a welcome break from their busy lives that became a regular, helpful practice. They encouraged me to keep the practice for the class going forward.

Reflections on Teaching

This course was not an overtly religious one, and this was by design. The majority of students at Oxford College do not identify a religious tradition on their admission application. While there are courses at the college that engage meaning and purpose, it is not common for a course to be taught from a particular theological perspective. This, in addition to the interdisciplinary nature of the course was the reason I chose to locate the course in American Studies. That said, as is demonstrated in this paper, the course was informed by my theology and thus intentionally designed to help students engage their values and subsequent reflection on those values. In the students' final course evaluations issued by the college, all fifteen students said they made either "substantial progress" or "exceptional progress" in "Developing a clearer understanding of, and commitment to, personal values."

Oxford College is affiliated with the United Methodist Church, but as is the case with other religiously affiliated small liberal arts colleges in the United States, its orientation today is secular. This means a chaplain's work is as complex as it has ever been, and maybe more so. Teaching a course as a chaplain requires creative thinking and a willingness to be vulnerable. For me, it meant putting my body in the local community, in and around students of multiple and no religious identities, and also in the academy. In these places I had to listen carefully to those with whom I was in relationship. While I delicately balanced these worlds in which I minister, I was informed throughout by my own theology. This theology guided my process of designing the course.

In the *Understanding Community* course I assigned books that were not explicitly religious such as Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*, but that nonetheless assisted us in exploring questions of meaning and purpose. In the conversation that ensued from Coates' book, we wrestled with issues of bodies, our own and others. In particular, with regards to Coates, we spent time together addressing his claim that "In America, it is traditional to destroy the black body – *it is heritage*" (Coates, 2015, p. 103). We went beyond the classroom and moved our bodies into the community to deal with this first hand with local residents where we talked about the racial history and present day racial issues in Oxford, Georgia. And I, as their teacher, brought with me theological voices such as Letty Russell and Mary McClintock Fulkerson.

Russell argues that those from both colonized nations and colonizing nations must decolonize our minds to examine our assumptions we carry with us (Russell, 2009). This is an important step in getting to a place of hospitality that Russell defines as "the practice of God's welcome by reaching out across difference to participate in God's actions bringing justice and healing in our world of crisis and fear of the ones we call 'other'" (Russell, 2009, p.53) Similarly in her work on a "theology of place," Fulkerson helps us to understand *place* as more than a location that is here or there. With the help of postmodern geography she redefines place as a structure of lived, corporate, and bodied experience. "The world *takes shape* through our bodies" (Fulkerson, 2007, p.25)

The church also takes shape through the body of Christ. It was formative for my students to spend time with members of the local community where they could be with them instead of only doing for them, and this experience assisted in their development as thoughtful and engaged citizens. It was meant to aid them in knowing that their work is to love the world. It is the local church's responsibility and calling to move its members into their local community in this same way, to be with people just as God has come to be with us in the person of Jesus Christ. Then and only then can local churches be churches of and for the transformation of the lives of its members as well as the lives in local communities.

ECCLESIOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

A project such as this, situated in a doctoral track entitled "Church Leadership and Community Witness," is meant to help the local church be present in and with the community in which it is located, to know that its work is in loving the world. Early in this paper, Serene Jones' model was presented as a guide

for thinking about ecclesiology. She highlights the church as one of "graced community" that has learned to embody "bounded openness," a church "where people experience the glory and pride of being adorned by God and the humility and gratitude of being judged and forgiven by God" (Jones, 2000, p.175). This is a church that also knows it participates in systems of oppression and that it is part of the world and lived experiences of the community, especially the community in which it is situated. My doctoral project was born out of these ecclesiological commitments and in the project students at Oxford College and local residents were brought together intentionally to be in relationship with one another. The hope was that they would begin to see the work of being in this world as being with one another and loving one another and the world.

Incarnation

Bringing students together with local residents to be in relationship with one another is informed by my understanding of the theological doctrine of incarnation. God's being with humanity through the person of Jesus Christ enables humanity to participate in divinity. The ministry of Jesus Christ on which the church is built was forever about being *with* people. Jesus Christ came as Emmanuel, which means "God with us" (Matt. 1:23; CEB). "The Word became flesh and made his home among [with] us" (John 1:14; CEB). As Samuel Wells says:

> God's whole being is shaped to be with. Being with is about presence, about participation, about partnership. It is not about eliding difference, or denying separation, or neglecting otherness. On the contrary, it is about being present in such a way that contrasts and tension are made visible, recognized, named, and embraced, rather than ignored, suppressed, or exploited. (Wells, 2015, p.8)

Jesus's life and ministry was about putting his own body in relationship with others in the communities to which he traveled and took up residence. He reached across difference to be with people who, in the culture in which he lived, were considered vulnerable, unclean, and unwell. This raised concerns among many, including those who held authority and power. Many believed that this was not the way in which the Son of God should spend his time on this earth, but Jesus came to be with others and put his body in relationship with people in the community. His body was what he had in common with the people with whom he was in relationship. Our bodies are a starting place of what we have in common with each other. "Wearing skin," which is one way Barbara Brown Taylor describes incarnation, "is not a solitary practice but one that brings me into communion with all these other embodied souls" (Taylor, 2009, p.42)

Jesus' model of ministry with people in their particular location is the church's model for ministry, and it is incarnational. The church is called to be present in the world by putting its body, its people *in* the community in which it is immediately located. The church cannot help but be about relationships where there is mutual responsibility to one another, to be *with* one another just as God is *with us* through Jesus. This kind of relationship with one another, just as Jesus' ministry to people across the prescribed boundaries of his day, leads the church beyond itself to be with others, *all* others. It leads the church into the world where God is already at work and being revealed just as much as inside the church.

Revelation

Revelation is the way God moves in the world as God reveals God's self. This includes the history of God, which incorporates the church's history. H. Richard Niebuhr refers to this when he writes, "The theology of revelation as it is developing in our time is the consequence of this understanding of theology's religious relativity as well as of its understanding of historical relativity" (Niebuhr, 2006, 19). It begins, though, with creation and continues in the ways in which God is always creating in the world. In the Christian faith we focus on the Incarnation, the way that Jesus came to be with us and live among us, as a guiding principle. But constant incarnations take place in our world(s) and in the world. God's reflection is seen in the world in the ways in which humanity displays it, but just as much in nature and the creatures that inhabit this place. "The whole world is our theological space because, first and foremost, it is God's

space" (Song, 1998, p.88). The world belongs to God and God belongs to the world and because both are ever-evolving, revelation is an ongoing process instead of a one-time event. Constant incarnations reveal God's movement in a world where the church is called out from itself to be present and dynamic.

It was with this revelatory God in mind, a God that is revealed as One of community in the Christian faith, that I approached my doctoral project. The telos for students in this project was not one in which they would complete service projects for the community of Oxford or simply partner with a non-profit like the city government to learn about how it works. As stated at the beginning of this paper the goal for the students was to be *in* the community and *with* the community, which is demonstrated in the students' interviews with local residents in the community. These two groups were strangers to one another. The students in my class had traveled from all over the country to start their college education at Oxford College of Emory University. There was no reason for them to meet the members of the local community, some of whom have lived here most of their lives and others of whom moved here only a few years ago. These two groups had not crossed paths and would have never done so in the two-year life cycle of the students.

My vocation as a minister of the gospel, however, is to uncover the ongoing work of God in the world. My work is to assist in revealing the very nature of God, which is to be present with one another and in relationship with one another despite differences. The gospel draws us into community in and with the world where we must engage difference. This is more than simply taking care of one's own congregation, which often happens, of course. Ministers are expected by those in their congregation or on their campus to take care of them and do things for them, but there is more to ministry than this. As a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ I am responsible for moving students' bodies into the community and across difference to be *with* local residents where they begin to understand that their work is about loving the world.

CONCLUSION

This project began with my own awareness of God's activity in the world and how that activity draws us into engagement with the world around us. This kind of work, the work of loving the world, does not happen overnight. Change is often a slow process that requires a particular kind of vision in the person hoping for its arrival. In *The Moral Imagination*, John Paul Lederach talks about constructive social change and especially turning points that are exactly what they sound like, those moments in which something is happening that will change the course. A way may open or close, hope can be seen or even felt, and ultimately some sort of change takes place. Lederach writes, "Thinking about and understanding the nature of a turning point requires a capacity to locate ourselves in an expansive, not a narrow view of time" (Lederach, 2005, p.22) Here he draws on Elise Boulding claiming we have to see our lives as being lived in a "two-hundred-year present" (Lederach, 2005, p.22). The work we do involving constructive social change must be seen not only in the traditional sense of our own lifespan. It also has to expand so that the reach of our existence and work in the world is from the time when we meet our oldest living relative at our youngest stage of life to the time we meet our youngest living relative at our oldest stage of life (Lederach, 2005). This reframing is not meant to paralyze us, it is meant to encourage our vision of transformation and thus be motivation for engagement in and with the world.

To see the reach of our lives in this way, open to more than just our own lifespan, reflects theologically on the work of God in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Jürgen Moltmann is helpful as he thinks about God's and our work in the world:

> To think God and history together on the ground of the event of promise in the resurrection of Christ, does not mean to prove God from the world or from history, but *vice versa* to show the world to be history that is open to God and to the future. (Moltmann, 1993, p.93)

God's activity that was, is, and will be present in the world is always ongoing and the call of our participation in it is constant. The work we do attending to and engaging change in the world reaches beyond us and our common parochial visions.

This is helpful as I conclude my thoughts about the work I have been doing in this project. Bringing together students and local residents in an effort to bridge the gap in town and gown relationships is not something that will happen overnight, even though I so often want it to. It could take even longer to see substantive changes in how students perceive the communities in which they live and work and how their civic engagement has been affected because of this course. To know that God has already been active in their midst is important so as not to presume to be the first or last person offering them knowledge and/or skills for understanding community. And yet, it is essential to understand, especially as part of a meaning-making liberal arts education, that as a representative of God and the church, I have a responsibility to engage them in "loving the world" (Oliver, 2006, p.1). While there were some tangible results from the course, particularly in the interviews with local residents as well as the research, I fully expect other learning outcomes to be realized over time. I plan to continue teaching the course and learning from the teaching, the students, and community members. The hoped-for change I seek may not be immediately visible. In doing the work of creating the course, teaching the course, evaluating the course, and praying for all of us to be open to the work of God's Spirit in the world, I am changed, and the students' possibilities for understanding and engaging the Oxford community flourish. This is a hopeful sign of God's incarnational love of the world, a sign of our love of God expressed in our communities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

REFERENCES

Ammerman, N.T. (2001). *Congregation and community*. Rutgers University Press.

Anderson, K. (2015). *The digital cathedral: Networked ministry in a wireless world*. Morehouse Publishing.

Auslander, M. (2011). *The accidental slaveowner: Revisiting a myth of race and finding an American family*. The University of Georgia Press.

Bacon, J.E. (2012). *8 habits of love: Open your heart, open your mind*. Grand Central Life & Style.

Block, P. (2009). *Community: The structure of belonging*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Branch, M.P. (2012). Ladder to The Pleiades. In *Wonder and Other Survival Skills: A Selection of Essays from* Orion *Magazine* (pp. 30-32). Orion.

Brookfield, S.D. & Preskill, S. (2009). *Learning as a way of leading: Lessons from the struggle for social justice*. Jossey-Bass.

Brueggemann, W. (1998). *Isaiah 40-66*. In P.D. Miller & D.L. Bartlett (Eds.) Westminster Bible Companion. Westminster John Knox Press.

Buck, P.S. (2001). *The blessed town: Oxford, Georgia at the turn of the century*. Oxford Historical Shrine Society, Inc.

Carlton, W.A. (1962). *In memory of old Emory*. Emory University.

Chaves, M. (2004). *Congregations in America*. Harvard University Press.

Coates, T. (2015) *Between the world and me*. Spiegel & Grau.

Cochrane, J.R. & Gunderson, G.R. (2012). *Religion and the health of the public: Shifting the paradigm*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Dorotheos of Gaza. (1977). *Dorotheos of Gaza: Discourses and sayings* (E.P. Wheeler., Trans.). Cistercian Publications.

Dorward, L.L. (Ed.). (2014). *Deep running roots, far reaching branches: The story of the city of Oxford, Georgia*. The City of Oxford.

Drummond, S.B. (2009). *Holy clarity: The practice of planning and evaluation*. The Alban Institute.

Fiorenza, E.S. (n.d.). *Discipleship of equals: A critical feminist ekklesia-logy of liberation*. Crossroad.

Frykholm, A. (2015, September 16). Belonging or not. *The Christian Century*, 132 (19), 26-29.

Fulkerson, M.M. (2007). *Places of redemption: Theology for a worldly church*. Oxford University Press.

Gavazzi, S.M. (2016). *The optimal town-gown marriage: taking campus-community outreach and engagement to the next level*.

Gilkes, C.T. (2001). *If it wasn't for the women: Black women's experience and womanist culture in church and community*. Orbis Books.

Graham, E., Walton, H., & Ward, F. (2005). *Theological reflection: methods*. SCM Press.

Green, G.P. & Haines, A. (2016) *Asset building & community development*. SAGE.

Greider, K.J. (2014). Religious pluralism and Christian centrism. In B.J. Miller-McLemore (Ed.), *The Wiley Blackwell companion to practical theology* (pp. 452-461). Wiley Blackwell.

Gunderson, G. (2004). *Boundary leaders: Leadership skills for people of faith*. Fortress Press.

Hankins, K., & Walter, A. (2012, May). "Gentrification with Justice": An Urban Ministry Collective and the Practice of Place-making in Atlanta's Inner-city Neighbourhoods. *Urban Studies*, *49*(7), 1507-1526.

Hauerwas, S., & Willimon, W.H. (1989). *Resident aliens*. Abingdon Press.

Hauk, G.S. & King, S.W. (Eds.). (2010). *Where courageous inquiry leads: The emerging life of Emory University*. Emory University.

Hauk, G.S. (1999). *A legacy of heart and mind: Emory since 1836*. Emory University.

Hicks, D.A. (2009). *With God on all sides: Leadership in a devout and diverse America*. Oxford University Press.

Hipps, S. (2005). *The hidden power of electronic culture: How media shapes faith, the gospel, and church*. Zondervan.

Hooks, B. (2009). *Belonging: A culture of place*. Routledge.

Johnson, L.T. (2015). *The revelatory body: Theology as inductive art*. William B. Eerdman's Publishing Company.

Jones, S. (2000). *Feminist theory and Christian theology: Cartographies of grace*. Fortress Press.

Kemp, R.L. (Ed.). (2013). *Town and gown relations: A handbook of best practices*. McFarland & Company, Inc.

Kretzman, J.P. & McKnight, J.L. (1993). *Building communities from the inside out: A path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets*. ACTA Publications.

Küng, H. (1967). *The church* (R. & R. Ockenden, Trans.). Sheed and Ward. (Original work published 1967)

Lederach, J.P. (2005). *The moral imagination: The art and soul of building peace*. Oxford University Press.

McFague, S. (1997). *Super, natural Christians: How we should love nature*. Fortress Press.

McKibben, B. (2007) *Deep economy: The wealth of communities and the durable future*. Times Books Henry Holt and Company, LLC.

McKnight, J. (1989, January/February). Why "Servanthood" Is Bad. *The Other Side*. pp. 38-41.

McKnight, J., & Block, P. (2010). *The abundant community: Awakening the power of families and neghborhoods*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Miller-McLemore, B.J. (Ed.). (2014). *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Moltmann, J. (1993) *Theology of hope: On the ground and the implications of a Christian eschatology* (M. Kohl, Trans.). Fortress Press. (Original work published 1964)

Moltmann, J. (1993). *The trinity and the kingdom: The doctrine of God* (M. Kohl, Trans.) Fortress Press. (Original work published 1980)

Moon, J.C., Jr. (2014) *An uncommon place: Oxford College of Emory University*. Oxford College of
Emory University.

Moschella, M.C. (2008). *Ethnography as a pastoral practice: An introduction*. The Pilgrim Press.

Niebuhr, H. R. (2006). The Meaning of Revelation. In R.W. Lovin, D.F. Ottati, & W. Schweiker, *Library
of Theological Ethics*. Westminster John Knox Press

Oliver, E.B. (n.d.). *Cornerstone and grove: A portrait in architecture and landscape of Emory's
birthplace in Oxford, Georgia*. Oxford College of Emory University.

Oliver, E.B. (n.d.). *Images of America: Oxford*. Arcadia Publishing.

Oliver, M. (2006). *Thirst*. Beacon Press.

Palmer, P. (1981). *The company of strangers: Christians and the renewal of America's public life*.
Crossroad.

Pohl, C. (2002) A community's practice of hospitality: The interdependence of practices and of
communities. In M. Volf & D. Bass (Eds.), *Practicing theology: Beliefs and practices in
Christian life* (pp. 121-136). William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Putnam, R.D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. Simon &
Schuster Paperbacks.

Reist, L.F., Alexander, N.M., Smith, J.E., & Cropsey, M.W. (Eds). (2008). *The book of discipline of the
United Methodist Church 2008*. The United Methodist Publishing House.

Russell, L.M. (2009). *Just hospitality: God's welcome in a world of difference*. In J.S. Clarkson & K. M.
Ott (Eds.). Westminster John Knox Press.

Sander, T. H. & Putnam, R. D. (2010). Still Bowling Alone?: The Post-9/11 Split. *Journal of Democracy,
21*(1) 9-16.

Scharen, C. (2015). *Fieldwork in theology: Exploring the social context of God's work in the world*.
Baker Academic.

Skocpol, T. (2003). *Diminished democracy: From membership to management in American civil life*. The
University of Oklahoma Press.

Smith, J.K.A. (2016). *You are what you love: The spiritual power of habit*. Brazos Press.

Song, C.S. (1998). Context and revelation with one stroke of an Asian brush. In S.B. Thistlethwaite &
M.P. Engel (Eds.), *Lift every voice: Constructing Christian theologies from the underside* (pp.
82-95). Orbis Books.

Taylor, B.B. (2009) *An altar in the world: A geography of faith*. Harper One.

Tocqueville, A.D. (2003). *Democracy in America and two essays on America*. Penguin Books.

Vanier, J. (1989). *Community and growth*. Paulist Press.

Wells, S. (2015). *A Nazareth manifesto: Being with God*. Wiley Blackwell.

APPENDIX 1A

This appendix is the original and complete syllabus for the course I taught as part of my doctor of ministry project in the fall of 2016.

Understanding Community: Oxford Encountering Oxford
American Studies 385R Fall 2016
Tuesday/Thursday 1:40-3:20pm
Murdy Seminar Room

Instructor Contact Information
Lyn Pace, MDiv, College Chaplain
Oxford office: Candler Hall, 202   office hours: by appointment (email)
email: ppace@emory.edu   office phone: 770.784.8392

Required Books
Peter Block, *Community: The Structure of Belonging*, 2008
Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*, 2015
Gary Paul Green & Anna Haines, *Asset Building & Community Development*, 2016
Erik Blackburn Oliver, *Images of America: Oxford*, 2014
(*you will receive this book free in class*)

These books are available in the Oxford College Bookstore. You may want to buy them elsewhere; if so, please get the same editions that we are using in class. It will be helpful for you to locate them in the bookstore first so you will know the edition we are using for class.

Articles & Films
There will be several essays, articles and/or book chapters required of you to read this semester. These are available as PDFs online via our course eReserves in our class Canvass site. Please always bring the day's assigned reading to class – **therefore, please print out the assigned articles or essays, or bring your laptop/iPad with you.** Films are on the Reserve shelf behind the information desk in the library.

Course Overview
Understanding Community will engage students in a critical exploration of the concept of community, so they begin to formulate their own ideas of community, identify various structures of belonging in communities, and develop a more profound understanding of multiple communities to which they have been and are connected. These will include but are not limited to: communities of origin, the Oxford campus community, virtual communities, communities of self-interest, intentional communities, and the city of Oxford. A major focus in this course will be on the city of Oxford, including interaction with local residents.

Student Learning Outcomes
By the end of this course, students will develop their abilities to:
1. Identify communities to which they belong and the impact those communities had/have on their life
2. Think more critically about community development and social justice issues relating to communities
3. Be better informed citizens for the communities to which they do/will belong
4. Be more self-aware through active participation with each other and in the local community
5. Improve their leadership ability as they learn how to work with each other as well as members of the community

6. Increase their knowledge and experiences of diversity through their interactions with each other and in the community
7. Conduct interviews and gather oral histories by learning about ethnography and participatory action research
8. Present research findings orally in a clear, organized, and engaging way

While these are the overall Student Learning Outcomes for the course, students will also set individual learning goals for themselves at the beginning of the semester to help them define what they want to take from the course.

Course Requirements

Attendance and class participation	100 possible points
6 response papers	60 possible points
1 interview/reflection paper	100 possible points
1 research project/presentation	200 possible points
Final narrative of learning	140 possible points
TOTAL	**600 max. points**

Grading

The grading system for this course relies on a point system, meaning that **you start with a 0 in this course**. You'll build points for each assignment working your way to a maximum of 600 points. Each component of the course is worth a certain number of points (see above and details below). Your grade will be determined by dividing the number of points *you earned* by the total number of *possible* points (not including extra credit), which totals **600** for this semester. The grading scale is as follows: A 100-92; A-91-90; B+ 89-88; B 87-82; B- 81-80; C+ 79-78; C 77-72; C- 71-70; D+ 69-68; D 67-60, F 50 and below.

DISCUSSIONS AND ATTENDANCE

- **Class Participation:** This course includes experiential components informed by the readings, discussions, films, and interactions with local members of the community and guests to the class. It is essential for you to be present in order for this class and you to be successful. You are responsible for attending each class session and for participating in the engaging and informed discussions that should result from your having thoroughly and thoughtfully completed the assignments for each day.
  o Some people are more vocal in class and some are less. If you tend to speak more in class I encourage you to think about that and take a step back at times to let others speak up. If you tend to speak less then I encourage you to challenge yourself to speak up more.
  o Participation also involves "active" listening, which means engaging with more than simply your ears. This may include eye contact, nodding, smiling, raising eyebrows, and taking notes.
  o Texting, sleeping, and being generally disruptive during class meetings will **NOT** earn you participation points.
  o If you are disruptive in class (talking while I am talking or someone else is trying to talk, sleeping, or engaging in any other form of distracting behavior), I will ask you to leave, and you will be marked absent for that day.
- **Attendance: You are allowed 2 absences in this course.**
  o For each absence beyond 2, you will lose 1 point from your final grade average. (For example, you have a 90 average at the end of term, but you were absent 5 times total. Because of the 3 excessive absences, you would lose 3 points on that average, leading to an 87 for the course.)
  o **Religious Holidays/Observances:** Please talk with me *at the beginning of the semester* about **accommodations for religious holidays/observances**. Based on the University's

religious holiday calendar and the need you present, I will work with you to do my best to accommodate legitimate holidays.
- o Be on time. Some days we will simply meet in the classroom to take role and then head out on one of our "field" experiences. Or, we will decide we will meet somewhere else to start class and that will be announced at the end of the previous class. If you're late, you will miss the entire class because you may not know where we are. If you come to class 10 minutes late when we're in the classroom, you will also be counted as absent.
- o If you miss class, you are responsible for obtaining notes from a classmate.
- **Technology: ALL <u>CELL PHONES</u> SHOULD BE TURNED <u>OFF</u> DURING CLASS!**
  - o Texting during class automatically negates any participation points earned during class that day.
- **Grading:** At midterm, you will receive a participation grade out of 50 points. At the end of the semester, you will receive an additional participation grade out of 50 points.
  Total Possible Points: 100 points

RESPONSE PAPERS (6)
- See the handout at the end of this syllabus for more information about this assignment as well as due dates.
- You will submit **6 response papers** in this course.
- <u>**Late responses will not be accepted.**</u>
- These responses are to be 350 words each (***but not more than 400 words***). Please include 1-2 discussion questions at the end of the response that you would like to address in our class meetings.
- You will post the responses to our class Canvass site and be prompted to run each assignment through Safe Assign, a tool for preventing plagiarism.
- I recommend typing a response in Word first, checking your word count and spelling, and then cutting and pasting the response into Canvass.
- These responses are intended to help prepare you for class discussion, to practice your writing, and primarily to help you reflect on yourself as you encounter the varied components of this course.
- Another goal with these response papers is for you to be able to use the collection of them and any comments I offer to build your final narrative of learning at the end of the course.
- The responses are also intended to take the places of quizzes. However, if I feel folks aren't reading, I reserve the right to start giving quizzes.
- Each response is worth a maximum of 10 points. **Total possible points: 60 points maximum (6 responses x 10 points max each)**.

LOCAL INTERVIEW AND REFLECTION PAPER
This paper will consist of an actual interview you will do with a local resident in the city of Oxford. You will meet the resident you will interview at a dinner held on **Wednesday, September 28, 2016 at 6pm in the Dean's Dining Room in Lil's.** You will receive some helpful interviewing training and tips during a class session early in the semester but prior to that dinner. For the purposes of this paper, you will be asked to record the interview so that you can include a part of the transcript of the interview in the paper. The remainder of the paper will include your reflections on the interview. We will discuss the logistics of this assignment early on during the fall semester. This paper should be 5-6 pages in length.

RESEARCH PROJECT/PRESENTATION

Topic statement	20 points
Bibliography	30 points
Paper	75 points
Presentation	75 points
Total	**200 points**

For this project, you are to research a topic of your choice related to the themes and main ideas of this course. In particular, this project should relate to a part of the local Oxford community about which you have completed some research. This should also be a practical project, meaning that you will design a project that could be implemented to help bridge the relationship between the college and the local community. You will be asked to turn in a topic statement, an annotated bibliography of approximately 6-8 sources, and a paper in which you present your findings (approx. 8 pages). You will also be asked to present your findings to the class in a presentation (time length TBD, but probably 10-12 minutes).

In terms of topics, this is an open-ended assignment – you will just want to make sure that your topic relates in some way to the themes or ideas of the course and to the local Oxford community. We will talk about this in class. **Total possible points: 200 points.**

FINAL EXAM/NARRATIVE OF LEARNING

The final exam will consist of an essay – a narrative of learning – in which you reflect on what you experienced as significant, important, or essential from this course. You will be asked to incorporate a certain number of course texts into the essay. Your six reading responses that you will have written throughout the semester will help guide the writing of your narrative of learning. You may also find the interview paper and final project helpful to this assignment as well. More details on this assignment will be discussed in class, but you will be expected to write 6-8 pages for this assignment. **Total possible points: 140 points max.**

Email
While I prefer to speak with you in person about your coursework, I will also field your questions over email. When emailing me (or any professor or staff member, for that matter), please keep the following guidelines in mind:
1. Use an appropriate subject line for your message.
2. *Always* begin your message with a respectful greeting, such as "Dear Professor Pace or "Rev. Pace – " (as opposed to "Hey").
3. Use a professional and respectful tone within your message.
4. Proofread your message before sending. (Read it aloud to yourself)

Oxford College Writing Center
The Writing Center is a good resource for you to use in any of your classes, including this one. I strongly encourage you to take your essays to the Writing Center. You may do so at any stage in the writing process, but the Writing Center director and I advise you not to wait until the day before the essay is due. You could go for help to get started, to organize and develop your ideas in a rough draft, or to learn to recognize and correct errors in grammar and punctuation in a revised draft.

Fall 2016 hours will be announced on one of our first days in class. The center is located on the second floor of the library. You may sign up online for an appointment at:
http://oxford.emory.edu/academics/centers-institutes-programs/writing-center/

When you go to your appointment, make sure that, in addition to your draft, you have a copy of your assignment with you, as well as the book(s) you are using in that assignment. **Ask the tutor for assistance on specific issues – the tutor is not there (and is not allowed) to proofread your work but to guide you towards a clearer expression of your ideas.**

HONOR CODE

http://oxford.emory.edu/academics/student-services/student-honor-code/
The Honor Code applies to all assignments, in and out of the classroom. All work in this course must be entirely your own. The bottom line: don't use someone else's ideas or words without proper citation. (This includes websites like Sparks Notes!) I am always happy to discuss with you when something needs to be acknowledged and properly cited, but it is up to you to see me before your written work is due to ask your questions about documenting sources.

OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES (ODS):

http://www.ods.emory.edu/students/index.html
ODS will offer qualifying students academic accommodations such as alternative testing, notetaking, interpretation, etc. Students must register and request those services. To do so, contact the Office of Disability Services at Emory University or Oxford College.

COUNSELING AND CAREER SERVICES (CCS): http://oxford.emory.edu/counseling/

CCS provides many services at no cost to help address students' personal and career development needs, including personal counseling, career counseling, and psychiatric services. To schedule an appointment, call 770.784.8394.

(Tentative*) **READING AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE**
Disclaimer: Should we get behind or need more time on a topic, I reserve the right to alter the reading schedule. I will not, however, alter the assignment due dates except in a case where it may help the class.

Th Aug 25   Introduction and Overview of syllabus
                            Codes distributed for Strengths Quest

UNIT 1 –UNDERSTANDING OUR BODIES IN COMMUNITY

T Aug 30   **Read:** Peter Block, *Community*, Introduction & Chapters 1-3 (1-46)
                            Guest Presenter: Ms. Ami Hernández, Coordinator of Career Services

Th Sept 1   **Read:** Peter Block, *Community*, Chapters 4-5 (47-61)
                            Guest Presenters: Dr. Lisa Ward & Dr. Scott Foster, OCIT

T Sept 6   **Read:** Peter Block, *Community*, Chapters 6-8 (63-92)

Th Sept 8   **Read:** Peter Block, *Community*, Chapters 9-10 (93-112)
                            Watch in class: *Briars in the Cotton Patch: The Story of Koinonia Farm*

RESPONSE PAPER #1 DUE BY 1pm on 9/13

T Sept 13   **Read:** Peter Block, *Community*, Chapters 11-12 (111-143) & Ta-Nehisi Coates,
                            Between the World and Me, Section I (5-72)

Th Sept 15   **Read:** Peter Block, *Community*, Chapters 13-15 (145-175) & Ta-Nehisi Coates,
                            Between the World and Me, Section I (5-72)

T Sept 20   **Read:** Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*, Section II (75-132)

Th Sept 22   **Read:** Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*, Section III (135-152) **Watch in class:** *The Danger of a Single Story* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie TEDTalks

UNIT 2 – UNDERSTANDING THE OXFORD COMMUNITY

RESPONSE PAPER #2 DUE BY 1pm on 9/27

T Sept 27   **Read:** Gary Paul Green & Anna Haines, *Asset Building & Community Development*, Preface (xiii-xvii) & Chapter 1 (1-31) **Watch in class:** *Holding Ground: The Rebirth of Dudley Street*

*W Sept 28   **Dinner with local community members, 6pm, Dean's Dining Room in Lil's**

Th Sept 29   **Read:** Erik Blackburn Oliver, *Oxford: Images of America*
                 Conversation with the author, Mr. Erik Oliver

T Oct 4   **Read:** *Canvass/eReserves:* Mark Auslander, "Prologue" (1-5) and Chapter 5 (128-150) "The Other Side of Paradise: Mythos and Memory in the Cemetery" (in Auslander's *The Accidental Slaveowner: Revisiting a Myth of Race & Finding an American Family*

Th Oct 6   **Read:** Gary Paul Green & Anna Haines, *Asset Building & Community Development*, Chapter 7 (165-189) **Watch in class:** *In Sickness and in Wealth*, California Newsreel

---

RESPONSE PAPER #3 DUE BY 1pm on 10/11

T Oct 11   **FALL BREAK – NO CLASS**

Th Oct 13   **NO CLASS**

T Oct 18   **Read:** *Canvass/eReserves:* Bill McKibben, "The Wealth of Communities" (Ch. 4 in McKibben's *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future*) **Watch in class:** *Faith, Hope, and Capital: Banking on the "Unbankable"*

Th Oct 20   **Read:** Green & Haines, *Asset Building & Community Development*, Chapter 11 (283-304)
                 Visit Oxford City Hall
                 Guest Presenters: Mr. Bob Schwartz, City Manager
                                     Chief Dave Harvey, Police Chief

T Oct 25   **Read:** Green & Haines, *Asset Building & Community Development*, Chapter 13 (321-340) **Watch prior to class:** Jeff Kennel's short video on community gardening: http://vimeo.com/46690152
                 Visit Oxford College Organic Farm
                 Guest presenters: Mr. Daniel Parson & Ms. Ruth Geiger 11OX 13C 15PH

MIDTERM PAPER DUE BY 5PM, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25

*W Oct 26   **Dinner with filmmaker Aviva Kempner, 5:30pm, Dean's Dining Room**
Screening of the film *Rosenwald*, 7:30pm, Williams

Th Oct 27   **Read:** Green & Haines, *Asset Building & Community Development*, Chapter 12 (305-320) **Watch in class:** *Third Ward, TX: Something New Happens When Art, Community Development and Real Estate Collide.* Garrison, Bless, and Walker.

T Nov 1   **Read:** Green & Haines, *Asset Building & Community* Development, Chapter 8 (190-227) and Katherine Hankins and Andy Walter, "'Gentrification with Justice': An Urban Ministry Collective and the Practice of Place-making in Atlanta's Inner-city Neighbourhoods" **(e-Reserves)**
Watch in class: *Homes and Hands: Community Land Trusts in Action*

Th Nov 3   **Read:** Green & Haines, *Asset Building & Community Development,* Chapter 5 (111-135)
Guest Presenter: Ms. Kinsey McMurtry 11OX 13C 15PH, Health Promotion Coordinator, Gwinnett, Newton & Rockdale County Health Departments

UNIT 3 – UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP IN COMMUNITY

RESPONSE PAPER #4 DUE BY 1pm on 11/8

T Nov 8   **Read:** *Canvass/eReserves:* Stephen Preskill & Stephen D. Brookfield, Chapter 1 (1-20) & Chapter 10 (191-211) in *Learning as a Way of Leading: Lessons from the Struggle for Social Justice*

Th Nov 10   "Using Your Strengths to Lead in the Community"
Conversation with Mrs. Sonya Tinsley-Hook 89OX 91C

RESPONSE PAPER #5 DUE BY 1pm on 11/15

T Nov 15   **Read:** *Canvass/eReserves:* Douglas Hicks, Chapters 3 (27-44), 6 (79-97), 10 (159-167) in *With God on All Sides: Leadership in a Devout and Diverse America*
Conversation with the author, Dean Douglas Hicks

Th Nov 17   **Read:** bell hooks, *Belonging*, Chapters 20-21 (215-230)
Watch in class: *Greening the Ghetto* by Marjora Carter TEDTalks

RESPONSE PAPER #6 DUE BY 1pm on 11/22

T Nov 22   **NO CLASS**

Th Nov 24   **THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS**

T Nov 29   Research Presentations

Th Dec 1   Research Presentations

T Dec 6   **Course Wrap up – Lunch at Rev. Pace's home**

RESPONSE PAPERS

Objectives
The responses are meant to accomplish the following:
1) get you writing on a regular basis,*
2) ensure that you are completing the readings *and* also thinking about them critically before coming to class,** and
3) help you critically reflect on yourself and how you are engaging the varied components of this course.***

*Practice makes perfect, right? Well, it at least makes you better, so it's important to practice your writing on a regular basis. Otherwise, you lose the ability and gift to write and it gets weaker. Practicing your writing will help you become a stronger writer and quite possibly allow writing to become easier and less overwhelming.

**Because this course incorporates important discussion and reflection throughout, I want to make sure you are doing the reading in a way that will allow us to have lots to talk about when we meet each time. I also want to make sure that everyone has a chance to participate in the discussions/reflections.

***In class we will talk a lot about what it means to be reflective and reflexive in our work. When we are studying groups of people and conducting actual interviews (the work of ethnography), we want to also study ourselves as part of that work. This self-study is called reflexivity. These papers will assist us in this exercise of reflexivity.

How do I get 10 out of 10 on each response (see the rubric on Canvass, please)?
• These responses are to be <u>at least 350 words</u> in length but not more than 400 words. Type your response in Word; check the word count using "Word Count" under Tools; and then cut and paste into Canvass to be sure you have met the required count.
• The response <u>should reflect upon the prompt (see below) given for that particular response paper.</u> You should incorporate readings and class experiences as appropriate. You should also incorporate life experiences as appropriate as well.
• The response should be <u>grammatically correct.</u>
• You should incorporate <u>textual & experiential evidence</u> to support your point or conclusion when appropriate. This means you should incorporate readings, class experience(s), and life experience(s) as appropriate.
• Submit your response by class time on the day it is due. <u>Late responses will not be accepted.</u>

These responses should be very thoughtful and reflective. They should show that you understand the main points or premises of the prompt, including the readings, class experiences and life experiences that inform your reflection. But they are also meant to provide you with a more relaxed space in which to play with your ideas and to make connections to your personal experiences. You can use humor and colloquial language, but your response should be intelligent and articulate…and of course, grammatically correct.

Prompts for Writing

Response Paper #1 (due by 1pm on Tuesday, Sept. 13)
Please respond to the following prompt:
What is your definition of community? Cite specific examples from the Block reading that helped you formulate this definition. How do you see your five signature themes you learned about yourself in the StrengthsQuest activity with Mrs. Hernández relating to your definition?

Response Paper #2 (due by 1pm on Tuesday, Sept. 27)
Please respond to the following prompt:
What parallels do you see between the readings by Peter Block and Ta-Nehisi Coates? Please be specific by citing examples in your paper.

Response Paper #3 (due by 1pm on Tuesday, Oct. 11
You have an open reflection for this paper, which means you get to choose how you respond to the readings and class sessions most relevant to the timing of this reading response (see prompts below for assistance if you need them).

Response Paper #4 (due by 1pm on Tuesday, Nov. 8)
Please respond to the following prompt:
You are to visit an Oxford City Council meeting **or** Planning Commission meeting **or** Tree Board meeting and then write a response paper detailing your reflection on your experience of that meeting and citing relevant examples that connect what you saw and heard and felt at the meeting with what you have been reading in Unit 2.

Response Paper #5 (due by 1pm on Tuesday, Nov. 15)
You have an open reflection for this paper, which means you get to choose how you respond to the readings and class sessions most relevant to the timing of this reading response (see prompts below for assistance if you need them).

Response Paper #6 (due by 1pm on Tuesday, Nov. 22)
Please respond to the following prompt:
Consider what you have read about leadership in Unit 3 (Preskill & Brookfield, Hicks, and Hooks), your own leadership experiences up to this point in your life, and what you learned about your strengths at the beginning of the course with Mrs. Hernández and recently with Mrs. Tinsley-Hook. Influenced by these factors in Unit 3, in this final response paper reflect on your current leadership style and how you would apply that to a community in which you are currently involved. Please be specific.

Example Prompts for Open Reflections
Some prompts for the weeks when you have an open reflection due (but feel free to come up with your own!):
The most interesting moment in the reading/class/video was: (include reasons)
The biggest surprise in the reading/class/video was: (and what does it change about your thinking?)
The most perplexing moment in the reading/class/video was: (include reasons)
One moment reminded me of something we read previously... (discuss the parallels you see)
The most powerful moment in the reading was: (include reasons)
This reading turned me off because: (include reasons but avoid ranting)
This reading raised a central question for me: (include the question and your thoughts about it)

**I will add comments and a grade within a week of your submission, so be sure
to check back from time to time to view my comments/suggestions.**

APPENDIX 1B
This Appendix is the survey that was administered to students at three different points during the class I taught as part of my doctor of ministry project during the fall of 2016.

Student Number_____
(*Please use this same number each time you take the survey*)

Doctor of Ministry Survey
Understanding Community
August 25, 2016/October 18, 2016/December 6, 2016

This is an anonymous survey. However, you will be assigned a randomized number that will be the same number you use when you take the survey again each time. Only the person who assigns you that number will know it and will be able to match you to it until after all grades have been assigned at the end of the semester. At that time, I will be able to match your name to your survey so that I can use it for the effectiveness of teaching the course in the future as well as for my doctoral research in the Doctor of Ministry degree program at Candler School of Theology, Emory University. You have the option to opt out of this survey at any time.

Please circle your response and then respond with your comments.

1. When I reflect on what I mean by "belonging" to a community or group, I mean

   A. feeling comfortable in a community or group that is similar to me, including shared values, world views, ways to make meaning in life, contexts, and commitments. "Belonging" is demonstrated by relationships of people with like minds.
   B. feeling like my identity (race, class, ethnicity, politics, sexual orientation, gender expression, religious identity, etc.) is honored in a community or group. There will be a place for my contributions. "Belonging" is demonstrated by a culture of respect and welcome with an appreciation for diversity.
   C. feeling that where I live doesn't matter as much to me for belonging as having various communities of belonging (family, close friends, faith community, close colleagues at work, social media groups and connections). I don't necessarily need to belong to my neighborhood or town to feel a sense of belonging. "Belonging" is demonstrated by relationships I have chosen to nurture, even if they are not local or immediate.
   D. feeling that there is a sense of shared power with others in the community. When I feel inferior or superior to others in my community because of a lack of shared power, I feel uncomfortable belonging to that community. "Belonging" is marked by shared and equitable power dynamics.
   E. feeling connected primarily through virtual community (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, chat rooms, websites, gaming sites etc.). "Belonging" is demonstrated by my relationship to others through virtual community as opposed to physical forms of community.

2. The communities I choose to belong to have a direct impact on how I live my life.

   Strongly Agree Agree   Neutral Disagree   Strongly Disagree
Please take a moment to give an example and then describe the results/effect of the impact.

3. I enrolled at Oxford College of Emory University so that I could find a place to belong.

   Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

If you've found that place (or places) of belonging, please name it here and why you feel you belong.

4. I want to understand the community in which I live.

      Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

What does it mean to you to understand your community? Cite examples of how you have done this prior to this course and in this course.

5. Participating in the life of the local Oxford community beyond the campus is not important to my Oxford education.

      Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

Please explain why you answered the way you did. If it's not important then explain why and if it is important explain what makes it important to you.

6. Being self-aware is directly related to my flourishing in college.

      Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

What does it mean to you to be self-aware? What does flourishing in college look like to you?

7. To participate in a diverse community, I must first be aware of myself.

      Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

What is a diverse community? Please explain why or why not (based on your answer) self-awareness is related to your participation in a diverse community?

8. Anyone can be a leader.

      Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

Please explain who and what you think of when you think of a leader.

9. Leadership is an intentional act that creates the conditions for understanding and belonging in communities.

      Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

If you answered agree or strongly agree, please explain how these conditions are created by leaders. If you answered with any other response, please explain your answer.