

**MEADVILLE/LOMBARD THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL**  
**Spring Semester 2009**  
**M372 Theater-in-Education: Engaging Conflict through Drama**  
**Monday, February 2, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m., and dates TBA to May 11, 2009**  
**Faculty: Donna Mavros and John Tolley**

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This course is designed to introduce students to the British model of Theater-in-Education as a medium for classroom teaching and a process for conflict engagement. The design grows out of the goals articulated by Meadville Lombard's anti-racism, anti-oppression, and multicultural initiatives. We will be reading texts which examine the history and theory of theater as a form of social critique, plus specifically the nature of mediation. Topics will be researched, scripts built and dramas created for performance in sites throughout the school's neighborhood and the city of Chicago. Through close examination of our sources and texts, including in-class exercises and rehearsals, the faculty intends to address several of Meadville Lombard's Learning Objectives:

- Use historical, literary and liturgical sources for ministry
- Imagine and create new possibilities for the aesthetic, liturgical and communal expressions of the church
- Develop the capacity to think theologically, and to apply theological and ethical visions for public ministry in pluralistic settings
- Understand and utilize pedagogical methods that account for varying learning styles and thinking patterns
- Develop cultural literacies, including an awareness of religious, socio-economic, ethnic-racial and sexual diversity
- Enlarge knowledge of canonical sources for pastoral imagination and practice
- Articulate and test one's own professional ministerial identity and practice
- Appreciate and advance the aesthetic, pedagogical and social justice heritage of liberal theology and ethics

**Required Reading:**

Jackson, Tony. Learning through Theater: New Perspectives on Theater in Education. Routledge Press, New York, 1993. ISBN: 0719007895

Potter, Beverly. From Conflict to Cooperation: How to Mediate a Dispute. Ronin Publishing, Berkeley, 1996. ISBN: 0914171798

Rohd, Michael. Theater for Community, Conflict and Dialogue: The Hope is Vital Training Manual. Heinemann Press, Portsmouth, NH, 1998. ISBN: 0325000026

**Required Attendance:** Since the class is designed to build dramatic performance and pedagogical tools week to week, attendance at every class session is mandatory. Students will be working in teams that depend on each being present.

**Final Project:** Using the educational tools of observation, research and critique, teams of participants will learn about social situations which need to be addressed in our educational systems. Such situations might include, but not be limited to, drug abuse, sex education, teenage pregnancy, gay marriage, racial or ethnic oppression. News media, film, books, first-persons interviews – as well as other modes of research – will be used to learn as much as possible in-depth of the selected topic. From this research, drama performance and interactive-audience exercise will illustrate the cultural conflict and help lead the site participants through steps to mediate and engage the issues of conflict creatively. Final grades will be based upon a student's ability to work creatively in teams, wrestle with difficult subject matter, take personal risks, and on evaluations from the host sites.

Questions regarding the course should be directed to:

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