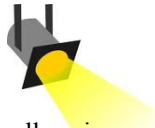




## Instructor Spotlight: Ken Butigan



For many students, college is a powerful journey of discovery and transformation. By the time they graduate, college students are often quite different people from when they first arrived. One of the reasons I like teaching “The Pilgrimage of Peace and Justice” Focal Point Seminar is that “pilgrimage” offers a useful frame for thinking powerfully about the college experience as well as about the larger world.

Pilgrimage, a ritual found in many cultural and religious contexts, is a meaningful journey undertaken for the purpose of transformation. Like traditional pilgrims who leave home with the hope of arriving at a place of power, DePaul University students embark on a voyage of change and achievement. This class invites students to see both their DePaul experience and their larger life as a transformative journey in four ways.

*First, by reclaiming the idea of the “meaningful journey.”* The irony of being part of a highly mobile society is that the transformative aspect of travel is sometimes lost. By studying the power of the intentional journey we begin to re-imagine our own experience of “taking a trip” or “getting away.”

*Second, by reflecting on what motivates pilgrims.* For thousands of years, people have gone on pilgrimage to experience a place of power, to answer an inner call, to hope for a miracle, to achieve pardon, to reclaim lost parts of themselves, to give thanks, or to get outside the normal routine of life so something new can happen.

*Third, by expanding our understanding of pilgrimage.* This course understands pilgrimages broadly. In addition to traditional religious pilgrimage sites—such as Jerusalem, Mecca, Benares, and Lourdes—we explore other meaningful “pilgrimage centers” like Disneyland and the Vietnam Wall, a family member’s gravesite or even Wrigley Field. For their final

assignment, students go on—and critically write on—a personally meaningful, broadly-defined pilgrimage in the Chicagoland area.

*Fourth, by exploring how our world is on a pilgrimage.* Dr. King’s march from Selma to Montgomery, Gandhi’s marches for Indian independence, and the annual trek some students make to the School of the Americas in Georgia are examples of the pilgrimage for social change.

Applying the scholarly theories and models of pilgrimage (drawn from ritual studies, religious studies, and nonviolence studies) to these and many other significant journeys, this course explores how we can be pilgrims for meaning in our lives, for success at DePaul, and for a world that works for everyone.

*Bio: Ken Butigan teaches in the Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies Department. In addition to the pilgrimage course, he co-teaches “Discover Nonviolent Chicago” in the autumn quarter. He is also the director of Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service, a nonprofit that fosters personal and social change through nonviolence education.*

## From the Director

Thank you to the many Focal Point Seminar instructors who are now either grading final projects or clicking “Submit.” We now head into Spring Break, a.k.a. the quick turnaround into Spring Quarter. Winter Quarter instructors: If you had some excellent writers in your class, it’s not too late to encourage them to enter their best work in the First-Year Writing Showcase. Here again is the [link](#), in order to communicate with them.

They can submit online by emailing [wcenter@depaul.edu](mailto:wcenter@depaul.edu), and the submission deadline is April 2.

Last month I attended the annual First-Year Experience national conference in Orlando, again comparing our program against those from around the country and even world. LAS Associate Dean Warren Schultz, Study Abroad Director Nobi Hayashi, and I presented “FY@broad: Combining First-Year Seminar and Study Abroad.” We found that some other schools have bridged first-year seminars and study abroad, but

### Important dates!

- 7th Annual Writing Showcase Deadline: **April 2nd**
- First-Year Writing Showcase: **May 15th**
- Chicago Quarter Best Practices: **May 31st**

most had not done it in the formal way DePaul has. We are now in our fourth year of FY@broad, which is co-managed by the First-Year Program and Study Abroad. Following this quarter’s Focal Point Seminar “Crypts and Castles: “Jordan” in World History,” Warren Schultz will take his students to continue their studies in Jordan. In the Spring, we’ll offer Barbara Schaffer’s “Literature of Place: Dublin, Ireland” and Julia Woesthoff’s “The Many Faces of Berlin,” followed by studying abroad in those locations.

I hope you’re able to take at least some time off for a well-earned Spring Break. If only the cold snap ends, it will even feel like Spring.

– Doug Long