

Unemployment Reflection Guide

Statistics:

As of March 2012, the unemployment rate in the US is 8.3%, meaning that there are 12.7 million people that are unemployed

Are these numbers surprising? Numbing?

12.7 million people is the size of Pennsylvania, the 6th most populous state in the US.

Does this help you think about the number?

How has unemployment touched your life?

Unemployment peaked in August of 2009 at 14.2%, and has since fallen to 9.0% in 2012. This is still .7% higher than the national average

How have you seen unemployment during your time at Calvin? In your service-learning experiences? Does it seem as though the rate has decreased since 2009?

The unemployment rate in Grand Rapids is 7.4%. Why do you think Grand Rapids has a lower rate than both the Michigan and the national average?

The national unemployment rate among African-Americans is 15.6%; nearly double the national average and that of Caucasians (8.7%)

What do you think might account for this difference? Is it significant or not?

As Christians, how should we respond to numbers such as these?

The unemployment rate among Hispanics and Latinos is 12.5%. Again, what might account for these higher rates among minorities?

How might a high unemployment rate within a minority community affect the culture of that community?

These statistics measure the number of jobs as a fraction of the labor force. The labor force is a group defined by people who have actively looked for a job in the last 4 weeks.

How might these numbers above change if those who have become discouraged and stopped looking for work were counted?

Do you see any problems with the way unemployment is measured? What might be a better method?

Resources:

Obama's Dilemma: More Jobs, Same Unemployment Rate- CNN Money

<http://money.cnn.com/2012/03/09/news/economy/unemployment-election/>

How much of a political factor is unemployment? Why do you think this is?

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economy can actually cause the unemployment rate to remain static, or even rise, as more discouragement

reality before? What does it say about our methods for measuring unemployment?
Does a low unemployment rate always mean high employment?

Flat Unemployment Rate Masks the Race Gap- Common Dreams

<http://www.commondreams.org/headline/2010/04/03-1>

How did this article make you feel? Have you considered the role of race in

(there is link on the page) can go a long way. Incorporate some things you have learned through your service-learning experiences in your message. Explore more of the options in the Advocacy section



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