

Gospel Across Cultures

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M. Christopher White School of Divinity

DSMS 303 A Fall 2002
TBA 8:00- 10:40 AM Monday
3 credit hours

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Course Description

This course will introduce the student to key practical cultural anthropological concepts. This knowledge will be used to understand how our culture impacts our religious expressions and address how we relate the Gospel to persons from cultural backgrounds other than our own. The student will be challenged to apply this knowledge in practical ways.

Course Objectives

1. To learn some key cultural anthropological concepts.
2. To discover how to apply these concepts in practical ways for cross-cultural ministry.
3. To present a specific ministry plan for a specific cross-cultural ministry opportunity.
4. To help the student learn about their own cultural influences and how those can provide hindrances or opportunities to cross-cultural ministry.
5. To discover how cultures and sub-cultures weave together social, religious, political, economic, and aesthetic qualities to form an interrelated whole.

Required Texts

Kraft, Charles H. *Anthropology for Christian Witness*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996.

Hiebert, Paul G. *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1985.

Course Requirements

1. Readings: Each student will be expected to complete all assigned readings before the topic will be discussed in class. The **Class Schedule** will provide the reading assignments and the topics for each class period.
2. Examinations: Each student will take two examinations, a midterm and final exam. Each examination will be worth one hundred points. The **Class Schedule** provides information on the dates of these two exams.
3. Cross-Cultural Ministry Project: Each student will be required to complete a 10-15 page (double spaced, 12 point font) ministry project. The project will focus on developing a ministry with persons from a different cultural background. The three parts of the project that must be included are: a cultural description, identification of specific barriers and opportunities, a ministry plan.
4. Class Participation: Each student is required to attend every class and to participate in each class as appropriate. Excessive absences can impact the student's final grade. The policy on attendance will be included in the University Class Policies section that follows. Class participation may be a factor when the student's grade is on the border between two grades.

University Class Policies

1. Attendance: Attendance will be taken each day. The student is responsible for being at each class and acknowledging their presence in class. The university policy holds that a student must attend 75% of the classes to receive a passing grade and credit for the course. Four absences for this course will mean a failing grade. A tardy student will be counted absent unless they inform the instructor of their presence. When a student is late three times, then it will become one absence. When a student misses more than twenty minutes of a class, they will be receive one-half of an absence.

2. Academic Honesty: The work done for this course must be done by the student. Using others work and handing it in as your own work is a very serious offense. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. The student handbook is very clear on the punishment for these offenses.

3. Support Services & Special Needs: For information about the Writing Lab and Tutorial Services, please contact the instructor. If you require accommodations for a special need, please contact the instructor.

Grading

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|------------------|------------|
| Mid-term Exam | 100 |
| Ministry Project | 100 |
| Final Exam | <u>100</u> |
| TOTALS | 300 |

Final grades will be calculated based on the following scale:

| | | |
|----------------------|---|---|
| 282-300 total points | = | A |
| 255-281 total points | = | B |
| 210-254 total points | = | C |
| 180-209 total points | = | D |
| 179 or fewer points | = | F |

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Topic</u> | <u>Reading Assignment</u> |
|-------------|---|--|
| 08/19 | Introduction, Cross-Cultural Assignments, Tools for Cultural Analysis | |
| 08/26 | Introduction to Culture | Kraft (chs. 1-3), Hiebert (ch. 1-2) |
| 09/02 | Worldviews and Religion | Kraft (chs. 4-7) |
| 9/09 | Roles, Rites, and Rituals | Kraft (chs. 8-10, 13) |
| 9/16 | Politics, Economics, & the Law | Kraft (chs. 11-12, 14) |
| 9/23 | Social Organization, Classification, Family | Kraft (chs. 18-21) |
| 9/30 | Communication, Education | Kraft (chs. 16-17) |
| 10/07 | MIDTERM EXAMINATION | |
| 10/14 | “The Gods Must Be Crazy” (Movie) | |
| 10/21 | FALL BREAK | |
| 10/28 | Social Change | Kraft (chs. 22-28) |
| 11/04 | Missionary and Cultural Differences | Hiebert (chs. 3-5) |
| 11/11 | Cultural Differences and the Message | Hiebert (chs. 6-8) |
| 11/18 | Cultural Differences and the Bicultural Community | Hiebert (chs. 9-11) |
| 11/25 | NO CLASS | |
| 12/02 | Challenges and Opportunities, Evaluations | Cross-Cultural Ministry Project Due |

FINAL EXAMINATION TO BE ANNOUNCED

Brief Bibliography

- Hesselgrave, David J. Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1978.
- _____. Counseling Cross-Culturally. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1984.
- _____. Planting Churches Cross-Culturally. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1980.
- Hiebert, Paul G. and Hiebert, Frances F. Case Studies in Missions. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987.
- Hiebert, Paul G. Cultural Anthropology. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1976.
- Hodges, Melvin L. The Indigenous Church: A Complete Handbook on How to Grow Young Churches. Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1953.
- Kraft, Charles H. Christianity in Culture: A Study in Dynamic Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1981.
- Lingenfelter, Sherwood G. Agents of Transformation : A Guide for Effective Cross-Cultural Ministry. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1996.
- Loewen, Jacob A. The Bible in Cross-Cultural Perspective. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Press, 2000.
- Luzbetak, Louis J. The Church and Cultures: New Perspectives in Missiological Anthropology. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988.
- Mayers, Marvin K. Christianity Confronts Culture: A Strategy for Cross-Cultural Evangelism. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1974.
- Nida, Eugene A. Customs and Cultures: Anthropology for Christian Missions. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Press, 1954.
- _____. and Reyburn, William D. Meaning Across Cultures. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1981.
- Niebuhr, Richard. Christ and Culture. New York: Harper & Row, 1956.
- Neely, Alan. Christian Mission: A Case Study Approach. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995.