

MISSION AND EVANGELISM (MS 3XM3/6XM3)

***This syllabus is designed for MS 3XM3 students. 6XM3 students will develop a syllabus in consultation with the instructor that is in keeping with their research interests and agenda. Also, DPT students interested in taking this course as an advanced elective should contact the instructor to discuss syllabus development for their course.**

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Course Times: Fall semester 2017; Monday 8:30-10:20, Beginning Sept. 11th.

Course Description: This course is an exploration of the challenges of and approaches to mission and evangelism in a 21st century, Western context. Students will be encouraged to develop and/or hone their own theology of mission and evangelism as well as formulate creative approaches to mission and evangelism within the Western cultural context. Particular attention will be given to evangelistic challenges, possible approaches to evangelism, congregationally based mission and issues of contemporary social concern.

Specializations:
Church and Culture
Christian Worldview
Pastoral Studies

Doctor of Practical Theology students who wish to apply for this course as an Advanced Elective for their degree program must consult with the Program Director of the DPT and the course instructor in order to develop an Advanced Elective approach to the course that fulfills the specific elements required by the DPT program. Once the elements of the Advanced Elective have been agreed upon by the student, the Program Director, and the instructor, a formal application can be made for an Advanced Elective in connection with this course. Once the application is accepted, DPT students can proceed with the course as part of their degree program.

Course Objectives:

Knowing:

1. To help students understand foundational scriptural and theological principles and/or categories for the mission of the Church in contemporary Canadian culture, and in light of the concerns of post- Christendom.
2. To understand key features of contemporary Western/Canadian culture as they relate to issues of spiritual need, and the proclamation of the Christian message.
3. To become conversant with a range of relevant approaches to mission and evangelism in the context of the contemporary church.

Being:

1. To encourage reflection and integration in terms of personal, congregational, and political aspects of Christian identity.
2. To help students develop confidence in their own ability to proclaim the Christian gospel and lead a congregation in evangelistic enterprise.

Doing:

1. To give students the opportunity to develop their own philosophy of mission and evangelism for local church ministry and consider strategies for implementation.
2. To equip students with relevant strategies for personal and congregational mission.

A core value of our class is that it is a “learning community,” designed to be a place where each member of the community can grow through positive affirmation and constructive input. We should all come to the community as people in process, open to be deconstructed and formed through our mutual learning experience.

As professor it is my responsibility to empower each class member as a learner by treating each student with respect and dignity. I come to position myself as a fellow learner in the community and to offer information, reflection, experience and questions for us to reflect on together. Further, it is my responsibility to give good evaluation and feedback to your thinking, both as you offer it to the class in our discussions and through written work so that your growth through this class can be maximized as a result of our collaboration.

As a responsible member of our learning community you will be expected to commit yourself to the class throughout the semester that we are together. This means that in our class interactions you will endeavor to treat all members of our class with respect and dignity. Your attendance is required as your presence is necessary for our community (that is our class) to function at an optimal level. Assignments should be handed in on time and in good order, ideally on or before the due date specified in this syllabus. All assignments handed in after the due date will be subject to a penalty of 2% for each day (including weekends) late. Assignments should be submitted electronically via email preferably in a word format.

I am not only available but also welcome and enjoy connections with each of you outside class

time. If you would like to meet together, please feel free to make an appointment with me for a time that works for both of us.

Required Texts:

Flemming, Dean. *Recovering the Full Mission of God: A Biblical Perspective on Being, Doing and Telling*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 2013.

*See assignment #1 (below) for further reading requirements.

Textbooks are available from READ On Bookstore, Room 218 at MDC. Books may also be ordered from other sources such as READ On Bookstore, —416-622-2934; fax: 416-622-2308; Email: books@readon.ca

Course Schedule:

Section One: Missional Theology

This section of the course will consider the biblical foundations of mission and evangelism as well as some of the historic missional practices of the church and the ongoing challenge of contextualizing the gospel in distinct cultural contexts.

Section Two: Equipping the church for mission and evangelism

This section of the course will reflect on a number approaches that can aid the church in preparing congregations for their mission.

Section Three: Strategies and Approaches for Mission and Evangelism in the current Post-Christian context

This section of the course will include group presentations in the first half of each class followed by some further reflection on the topic presented by the course instructor in the second half of each class.

Course Requirements

i. Book Reviews

Choose **two** books from the list below and write a 4-5 page (double spaced) response to each book that answers the following four questions. What challenges is this book trying to address? What are two or three of the books main ideas? How would you describe the method of mission and evangelism that the book proposes? How would you evaluate this method as a way to reach out to people who are not Christians living in contemporary Western/Canadian culture? The paper(s) should focus on description and analysis so that there is a clear reflection that the content of each book has been comprehended and the merits of the content has been thoughtfully evaluated.

Book Options

- Adeney, Francis S. *Graceful Evangelism: Christian Witness in a Complex World*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010.
- Heath, Elaine. *The Mystic Way of Evangelism*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.
- Muck, Terry and Adeney Francis. *Christians Encountering World Religions: The Practice of Mission in the 21st Century*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009.
- Hunter, George. *The Celtic Way of Evangelism: How Christianity can Reach the West..Again*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2010.
- Fitch, David. *Faithful Presence: Seven Disciplines that Shape the Church for Mission*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 2016.
- Malesic, Jonathan. *Secret Faith in the Public Square: An Argument for the Concealment of Christian Identity*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2009.

Each review is worth 10% (20% in total) of the final course grade. Reviews can be handed in anytime but the final due date for both reviews to be submitted is Nov. 7, 2017.

ii. **Specialization Paper**

This assignment is designed to help you work directly in your area of specialization. Write on the topic that is appropriate to the specialization that you have chosen for your degree. (If you have not chosen a specialization yet you are free to choose any one of the topics).

Church in Culture

What are the major challenges to mission and evangelism in the Canadian/Western context today? What are the key cultural barriers to the church in sharing the gospel and what are the key inhibitors to people receiving the gospel today? This paper should explore at least four of the main cultural realities that the church faces in its mission and articulate the challenges they pose. The paper should conclude with some brief reflection on how the church must address these challenges in order to be effective in its witness.

Pastoral Studies

How can a church leader equip their church for mission and evangelism

today? What are some of the key ideas, perspectives and practices that pastors need to employ in order to equip their people to participate in God's mission? Also, what are some of the challenges that must be overcome within a congregation in order to equip the church for mission? The paper should explore these questions with a view to offering some concrete practices for congregational leadership in mission.

Christian Worldview

What is the prevailing worldview in Western/Canadian culture today and how does it affect the religious perspectives of the majority of the population? How does the Christian gospel correlate with and also challenge the prevailing worldview and how can Christians effectively share the Christian worldview in dialogue with people who do not share it? In your paper identify the connecting points and places where the Christian gospel may offer helpful correctives to cultural ideals. Offer clear strategies for faithful missional engagement in light of these things.

This paper, for all specializations, is a research paper and therefore should demonstrate interaction with the course text book (Flemming), other course texts and a number of other relevant sources.

The paper should be 8-10 pages in length (double spaced) and is due Nov. 28, 2017. It will constitute 30% of the overall course grade.

iii. Group presentation and collaborative paper: Making missional connections in the contemporary context

Students will work together in groups of two to four to prepare a class presentation and a joint paper on one of the topics listed below. These topics represent potential places in contemporary Western/Canadian culture where the church can offer a distinctive Christian voice in an area that is currently of importance to many people within the culture.

The paper should be a truly collaborative project that demonstrates serious research and thoughtful analysis of the topic. The paper should include a foundational theological analysis of the topic, some reflection on the cultural relevance of the topic and some strategies for missional engagement that offer a distinct Christian witness to the culture. The paper will form the foundation for the class presentation.

The presentation should clearly demonstrate research and reflection on the topic. It should offer a brief theological foundation, cultural analysis of the topic and strategies for missional engagement with a vision for offering a distinct Christian witness to the overall understanding of the topic within the culture. The presentation should include some kind of visual presentation, class discussion, time for Q&A

and a handout that includes several resources for further study. The presentation should be 45 minutes in length. Each presentation will be evaluated on its content, comprehension of the topic, quality of reflection, creativity of the presentation, and the quality of the overall material.

Groups and their topics will be determined by the second week of class. The number of groups and exact presentation dates will depend on the number of students registered for the class. However, presentations will all take place in the second half of the semester. Papers are due the same date as the presentation. A foundational assumption of this assignment is that mission and evangelism demand collaboration. We must be able to work with others effectively if we are going to reach out to the world with the good news of the gospel. The collaborative nature of these assignments is designed to help us in the practice of this vision.

topics will include:

Creation Care and environmentalism in an age of climate change
Rest, leisure and Sabbath in a culture of busyness
Christian Spirituality in an age of “Spiritual but not religious”
The Church and Social Justice in an age of... Social Justice
Christianity and inter-faith dialogue in a pluralistic culture
The Church as a community in an age of individualism

Topics and Due dates for the assignment(s) will be determined on the second day of class although all presentations will occur during the second half of the semester (after Oct. 30). The paper should be 10-12 pages in length (double spaced) and will constitute 25% of the final course grade, the presentation will also constitute 25% of the final course grade.

**All papers should be submitted according to the MacDiv Style Guide, which can be found on the web at: <http://www.macdiv.ca/students/documents/MacStyleGuideApr1508.pdf>

Additional notes:

Academic Dishonesty – Academic dishonesty is a serious offence in the academic world that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on the transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the McMaster Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty located at www.macdiv.ca/regs/honesty.php.

Inclusive Language ~ McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical

texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV is a good example of the use of inclusive language. It is expected that all students will use inclusive language in all MDC assignments.

Sexual Harassment ~ Sexual harassment is a violation of the integrity of persons in the form of unsolicited, unwelcome, verbal or physical behavior, which discriminates on the basis of gender about a person's body, attire, gender, marital status or economic status. Among faculty, staff, and students, sexual harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.

Disclaimer ~ This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up until the first day of class.