

Foundations for Effective Ministry (MS 1B03b)
Worldview, Mission, and Leadership
Winter 2018

Instructor

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Term: Winter 2018

Time: Tuesdays 1:30–3:20 p.m.

Schedule

First class: January 8
Reading week: February 20
Final class: April 10

Course Description

This course is designed to help students explore what it means to engage the world in a distinctly Christian way and orient their lives, talents, callings and abilities around God's perspective on the world and how we are invited to participate in his transformational purposes for it. The course will help students consider how a theological vision for life in this world and a personal encounter with God influences every aspect of life regardless of what their own specific calling may be. Students will consider the key elements of a Christian worldview, a foundational philosophy of Christian leadership and an introduction to the mission of the church.

Course Objectives

Knowing

1. To help students understand the concept of worldview and how it is formed; and in particular to help discernment in the role of leadership for the kingdom in this world.
2. 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. In particular, to explore the Christian call to leadership as an obligation to serve and nurture.
3. To understand key features of contemporary Canadian culture as they relate to issues of spiritual need, and the proclamation of the Christian message.

4. To help students understand foundational scriptural and theological principles for leadership in the church in contemporary Canadian culture, and how we can, through a ministry of leadership, call those in secular leadership to embrace these same principles.

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.
3. To develop a clear connection between one's inner life as a Christian leader and one's effectiveness as a Christian leader.
4. To help students develop confidence in their own unique, God given style of leadership.

Doing

1. To help students develop and/or hone their own worldview, and through this to influence their environment through Spirit-led leadership.
2. To help students develop their own philosophy of mission and evangelism for their lives and the church.
3. To equip students with relevant strategies for leadership development and practice that will inform their engagement and influence in all their communities of service.

Class Ethos

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.

It is the professors' responsibility to empower each class member as a learner by treating each student with respect and dignity. We come to position ourselves as fellow learners in the community and to offer information, reflection, experience and questions for us to reflect on together. Further, it is our responsibility to give good evaluation and feedback to your thinking, both as you offer it to the class 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 students will be expected to commit themselves to the class throughout the semester. This means that all class interactions will be an endeavor to treat all members of the class with respect and dignity. Attendance is required as student presence is necessary for the community (that is the class) to function at an optimal level.

Assignments should be handed in on time and in good order. All late assignments will be docked at the rate of 2% for each day (including weekends) late. Assignments can be submitted in hard copy on standardized paper or electronically in a word document.

The professor is available and would welcome making connections with each student outside class time. Please feel free to make an appointment if there is any way that he can assist your learning experience in this course.

Course Topics for Winter Term

Articulating a Biblical Theological *Weltanschauung*
Earth and Humanity in the *Primeval History*
Earth and Humanity in the Psalms
Missio Dei in Old Testament Theology
Missio Dei in New Testament Theology
Biblical foundations of leadership
Leadership in times of conflict
Leadership of mission in contemporary context
Profiles of Leadership

Required Texts

The following texts are in addition to the texts already assigned in MS 1A03 in the Fall semester; those texts will be required for this section of the course as well.

Levenson, Jon D. *Creation and the Persistence of Evil*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988.

Smith, James K. A. *Who's Afraid of Post Modernism?* Baker Academic, 2006.

Jacobsen, Eric O., ed. *The Three Tasks of Leadership: Worldly Wisdom for Pastoral Leaders*. Grand Rapids / Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2009.

De Bono, Edward. *Six Thinking Hats*, Revised and Updated, UK: Penguin, 2000.

Course Requirements

1. Church mission in a post modern world (Due Feb. 6; 3000 words; 35%)

Consider the insights of Levenson, Smith, and Beach into how Christian faith is the only rational response to the relativist amorality of a post modern world (Conrad Black, *National Post*, March 21, 2015; class handout). The mission of the church is to provide an articulation of this faith intelligible to a post modern world, both to the elites and to popular culture.

Explain the Biblical perspective of the necessity of faith in a violent world as shown by Levenson; show how post-modernism offers opportunities for the articulation and life of

Christian faith as explained by Smith; and show how the church in exile may be a place of hope as analyzed by Beach.

The paper should address practical aspects. How can the church be heard against the disdain of mass media and much of social media? How can the church be a place of refuge and strength for the faithful and the “poor in spirit”?

This is a thought paper, not a research paper. The student is welcome to use all resources useful for the above assignment, the paper must be done according to proper research style. This paper must show the critical importance of Christian faith in a world of *hubris*, in which the faith of most people is in the non-existence of anything greater than themselves. The purpose of the paper is to show how the church gives expression to this faith as a light to the nations (Isaiah 42:5–6).

2. A Biblical theology of leadership and practice (Due March 6; 2000 words; 20%)

This paper should establish a biblical foundation for Christian leadership and an analysis of contemporary approaches to leadership in church ministry. The paper should demonstrate comprehension of course materials and the texts of De Bono and Jacobson.

3. Profile in leadership

3.1 Paper: Profile in leadership (Due April 10; ca. 2000 words; 20%)

Choose one person/leader from history or contemporary times and spend time studying that individual’s life, personal development, leadership development, and approach to leadership. This person could be a “famous” leader or someone who has had particular influence on you, however this must be someone who has had the responsibility of leading an organization, a church, or a specific group of people (this person *cannot* be a relative or family member). Study the chosen leader and develop a leadership profile. The paper should address questions like: what shaped them? What were their personal habits? How did they develop as a leader? What were their accomplishments as a leader? What practices made them effective? What practices did they engage in that were not effective? How did they bring a Christian worldview to bear on their leadership? How did their lives contribute to the mission of God in the world? This profile does not have to be exhaustive but it should provide a clear, accurate and insightful look at a particular leader and how they conducted themselves as a leader. If the person is someone who is personally known to you, and there are no written sources to refer to, a personal interview should be conducted with the person and that interview, with its date and place should be included in the bibliography.

Due date is April 10 for all papers. Those that present before the final class date may integrate class discussion into their paper.

3.2 Presentation: Profile in leadership

The profile of your chosen leader will be presented to the class (in an individual presentation) toward the end of the semester. The presentation should describe the leader and his/her general biography and should address some of the questions presented in the assignment description given above. The presentation should also include some kind of visual element(s) that enhances the presentation. During and/or following the presentation opportunity for questions and discussion should be given in order to facilitate class interaction. The presentation should be approximately 20 minutes in length. If in doubt about how to prepare for this presentation ask the course instructors for direction on a suitable course to pursue.

The class presentation will constitute 15% of the second semester grade. The exact due date will be determined early in the winter semester.

4. Class participation: 10%.

This course is intended to be a dialogue-rich class, participation is critical.

Bibliography

Updated bibliography will be distributed in class.

Course Policies

Textbook Purchase – All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore, 5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, Ontario M9W 6H3 : phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

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 <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>

Style – All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/mdcstyleguide.pdf>
Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

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.