

Fall - MS 1A03/Winter - MS 1B03 (3 units each = 6 units)
Foundations for Effective Ministry 1a and 1b: Worldview, Mission and Leadership
Fall and Winter 2013-14

Instructors:

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Term: Fall and Winter 2013-14
Room: TBA

Time: Tuesdays 8:30 a.m. – 10:20 a.m.
First Class: Sept.10 (Fall term), Jan. 7 (Winter Term)

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. The course will help students consider how a theological vision for life in this world and a personal encounter with God influence 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.
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.
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.

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 ones inner life as a Christian leader and ones 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.
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.

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 professor's 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, 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 endeavour 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. 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.

We are available and would welcome making connections with each of you outside of class time. Please feel free to make an appointment with either of us if there is any way that we can assist your learning experience in this course.

Course Topics for Fall Term

Introduction to Worldview
Biblical and Historical Worldviews
Developing a Christian Worldview
What is Mission?
A Biblical Theology and History of Christian Mission

Course Topics for Winter Term

The Practice of Christian Mission
Christian Mission and Other Religions
What is Leadership?
The Inner Life of the Leader
Servant Leadership

Practices and Models of Christian Leadership
Profiles in Leadership

Required Texts

Goheen, Michael and Bartholomew, Craig. *Living at the Crossroads: An Introduction to Christian Worldview*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.

Frost, Michael. *The Road to Missional: Journey to the Center of the Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011.

Frost, Michael, Hirsch, Alan. *The Shaping of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st Century Church.*, Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, 2003.

Nouwen, Henri. *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership*. New York: Crossroad, 1989.

Jacobson, Eric O (editor). *The Three Tasks of Leadership: Worldly Wisdom for Pastoral Leaders*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmanns, 2009.

All required textbooks for this class and others at McMaster Divinity College are available from R.E.A.D. On Books, and should be purchased as early as possible, and at least by the beginning of the term when R.E.A.D. On Books has its book table here at the College. They can be contacted at: 195 The West Mall, Suite 414, Etobicoke, ON M0C 5K1; phone 416-622-0655 x4; fax 416-622-2308; e-mail books@readon.ca; or www.readon.ca.

Course Requirements:

Fall Semester

1. Book Response

Write a response to the book *Living at the Crossroads: An Introduction to Christian Worldview*. This paper should explore the issue of Christian Worldview by thoroughly engaging Goheen and Bartholomew's work and answering questions like what is worldview? What impact does worldview have on people's daily lives? How does the book help you in the development of your own worldview? What do you appreciate about this book? What weaknesses do you find in this book? What questions do you have and/or what disagreements do you have with this book? The paper should offer a brief description of the books overall thesis and main arguments, however it should focus primarily on personal interaction with the book and not a retelling of the content of the book.

This paper should be 7-8 pages (double spaced) in length and will constitute 30% of the First semester's grade. Due Date: Oct. 15, 2013.

2. Interview project

-Identify two (or more) people who do *NOT* presently attend a Christian church. Explain that you would like to ask them some questions for a course assignment, but make sure that they understand *this is simply to gather their opinion; it is not an evangelistic endeavor*. Using the “Letter of Explanation/Informed Consent,” (to be distributed on the first day of class) provide prospective interviewees with a copy of the following interview questions, explain the process and purpose of the research, respond to any additional questions or concerns about the assignment or the course in general, and ask that they read and sign the affirmation of consent. Once they have agreed to be interviewed, ask the following:

- What do the words “Christian” and “Christianity” mean to you?
- Most people these days don’t attend church. Why do you think this is?
- How do you think the church could be more relevant to society today?
- What do you understand to be the essence of the Christian message/religion?
- I would like to explain to you what I understand to be the essence of the Christian message. Then I would like you to tell me what you have understood me to say, what seems attractive (if anything) about it, and what (if anything) seems offensive or incomprehensible?

Report and comment on their answers, reflecting on these conversations in the light of the course material so far, and required text books for the fall semester. Offer your own reflections on their responses to the questions as it pertains to the place of the church, the gospel message in Canadian culture today, and the world view of the people you interviewed. Evaluate how the opinions your interviewee’s offered connect with trends in our culture and where the message of Christianity may be able to connect with them (your interview subjects).

NOTE: The use of human subjects for a research project entails specific ethical responsibilities for the researcher. In particular, you must scrupulously

- Maintain neutrality
- Avoid influencing the responses
- Guarantee the anonymity of the respondents, and
- Ensure confidentiality with regard to the data.

Students must abide by the terms set out in the “Letter of Explanation/Informed Consent.”

This project should be 8-10 pages (double spaced) in length. It is worth 30% of the first semester's grade. Due date: November 12, 2013.

3. Integration Paper: Worldview and Mission

This paper should offer an interaction between the realities of Canadian culture today, the need for a distinctive Christian worldview and the missional nature of the church. The paper should offer a brief, but thoughtful analysis of contemporary Canadian culture as well as some foundational ideas on how a Christian worldview can be formed and offered as a distinctive way of living in the culture. Specific attention should be given to the books *Living at the Crossroads* and *The Road to Missional* as well as several other sources that you will draw from in order to research this paper effectively. The final section of the paper should provide personal application as to how you see yourself living out a Christian worldview and participating in the mission of the church. In essence the paper moves from cultural analysis to worldview formation to practical application of a Christian worldview in the churches mission and your own life.

This paper should be 10-12 double spaced pages. It is worth 40% of the First semester's grade. Due Date: December 3, 2013.

Winter Semester

1. A Biblical Theology of Mission and its Practice

This paper should offer an introductory biblical foundation for mission and evangelism and an analysis of contemporary approaches to mission and evangelism in church ministry. The paper should critically engage with those approaches that challenge your own understanding of a theology of the church, post-modern culture and mission. Finally the paper should offer ideas on how the church can truly be missional and how it should do mission in the contemporary world by relating it to a specific context (i.e. your home church, field placement site, university campus, etc.). The paper should demonstrate comprehension of course materials, required texts and pertinent research on the issue of evangelism and mission.

This paper should be 10-12 pages (double spaced) in length. It will constitute 30% of the second semester grade. Due Date: Feb. 11, 2014.

2. Optional Assignment

Choose ONE of the following assignments:

Leadership Case Study

A leadership case study will be provided the first week of class (Winter semester). Students who choose to engage in this assignment will write a response to the case study that will identify the leadership issues present in the case and discuss potential strategies for addressing the challenges that are presented by the case. The paper should summarize the leadership challenges presented by the case study and offer an action plan for addressing the scenario. The grade will be based upon the depth of analysis offered, and the potential effectiveness of the action plan presented. This

assignment is designed to give you practice in analyzing leadership challenges, articulating salient points, evaluating advice, and turning advice into an action plan

Leadership Self-Analysis

Students who choose to engage in this assignment will write a self-reflection paper based on the questions, “Who am I as a leader at this point in my life?” and “What are my developmental needs as a leader at this point in my life?”

The paper should be highly self-reflective and include personal anecdotes and/or personal evaluation of past leadership experience. It should offer an honest snapshot of your own struggles with leadership and your strengths as a leader. Use course resources and/or other resources that have proved helpful in your understanding of yourself and leadership as necessary; however this paper is not a research paper; it is autobiography. The purpose of it is to provide you with the chance for self reflection and self assessment. The paper does not need to be exhaustive, but it should offer a good overview of where you see yourself in your own development as a leader. The grade will be based on the depth of reflection and the insights that you provide into your leadership journey up to this point.

This paper should be 8-10 pages (double spaced) in length. It will constitute 25% of the second semester grade. Due Date: Mar. 18, 2014.

3. Paper and Group Presentation: A Profile in Leadership

At the beginning of the winter semester a list of noted Christian leaders will be distributed. Each student will have the opportunity to choose one person/leader from the list and spend time studying that individual’s life, personal development, leadership development, and approach to leadership. Students will prepare and write a paper that addresses the following questions; 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.

The profile will be presented to the class (in either a group or individual presentation) toward the end of the second semester. The presentation should describe the leader and his/her general biography and answer the questions presented in the assignment

description given above. The presentation should also include creative elements (options for this are virtually unlimited) that offer further illustration or insight into the leader's life and should invite class interaction. Your presentation should be approximately 30 minutes in length. If in doubt about how to prepare for this presentation ask the course instructors and you will be given advice on a suitable course to pursue.

The paper should be 8-10 pages (double spaced) in length and will constitute 25% of the second semester grade. Due at class time the date of your class presentation.

The class presentation will constitute 20% of the second semester grade. The due date will be determined on the first day of class in the winter semester.

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

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.

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/MDCStyleGuideMarch0413.pdf>.

Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

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.