

Foundations for Effective Ministry 1a & 1b
(Worldview, Mission and Leadership)
MS 1A03 and MS 1B03
Fall and Winter 2014-15

Instructors

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Term: Fall and Winter 2014-15
Room: 136, Hurlburt Hall

Time: Tuesdays 8:30 a.m. – 10:20 a.m.
First Class: Sept.9 (Fall term), Jan. 6 (Winter Term)

Course Description

This course is designed to help students explore what it means to engage the world in distinctly Christian ways; it is to orient their lives, talents, callings and abilities around God's perspective on the world. It will show how we are invited to participate in God's transformational purposes for his world. The course will help students consider how a theological vision for Christian 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 will be introduced 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 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
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

Class Procedures

A core value of this 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 each class member's thinking, as it is offered 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 each class member will be expected to commit to the class throughout the semester that we are together. This means that in our class interactions each person 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. 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 professors are available and would welcome making connections with each of you outside 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.

Goheen, Michael W. *A Light to the Nations: The Missional Church and the Biblical Story*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011.

Frost, Michael, and 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., ed. *The Three Tasks of Leadership: Worldly Wisdom for Pastoral Leaders*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmanns, 2009.

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 book's 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. 14, 2014.

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 endeavour*. 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

- 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 11, 2013.

3. Assessment Paper: Worldview, Canadian Culture and the Church

This paper should offer an assessment of the realities of Canadian culture today, particularly the prevailing worldview of its citizens. Then it should reflect upon the need for a distinctive Christian worldview and the missional task of the church. The paper should offer a brief but thoughtful analysis of contemporary Canadian culture and describe the worldview (or worldviews) that are predominant. Contrast that with what you understand to be a Christian worldview, pointing out places of intersection and distinction. Conclude with some reflection on the Biblical idea of the church as a missional people and how that impacts the living out of a Christian worldview in Canadian society today. Specific attention should be given to the books *Living at the Crossroads* and *A Light to the Nations* as well as several other sources that you will draw from in order to research this paper effectively. In essence the paper moves from cultural analysis to Christian worldview to consideration of how the church is called to engage with society in a practical way.

This paper should be 10-12 double spaced pages. It is worth 40% of the First semester's grade. Due Date: December 2, 2014.

Winter Semester

1. A Biblical Theology of Mission and its Practice

This paper should provide an introductory biblical theology for mission and evangelism; it should analyze contemporary approaches to mission and evangelism in church ministry. The paper should offer a biblical basis for mission and move to an analysis of contemporary approaches to mission in North American culture. It should conclude with some practical reflection on how the church can truly be missional and how it should do mission in contemporary society, particularly in Canada today. The paper should demonstrate comprehension of course materials, required texts (particularly *A Light to the Nations* and *The Shaping of Things to come*) and pertinent sources 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. 10, 2015.

2. Leadership Self-Analysis

Students 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. This 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. 10, 2015.

3. Paper and Presentation: A Profile in Leadership

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 they have to 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). Once you have chosen the leader, study them and spend time developing a leadership profile of them. 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 included in the bibliography.

The profile of your chosen leader will be presented to the class (in an individual presentation) toward the end of the second 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. Your presentation should be approximately 20 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 date is class time the day of your class presentation.

The class presentation will constitute 20% of the second semester grade. The exact due date will be determined on the second day of class in the winter semester (either Mar. 17, Mar. 24 or Mar 31).

Course Policies

A. 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, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

B. Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence 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 one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College.

Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~

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

C. Gender Inclusive Language

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings 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 and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

D. 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.

Disclaimer

This syllabus is the property of the instructors and is prepared with currently available information. The instructors reserve the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.