

Due to the uncertainty of the extent of the ongoing COVID-19 situation, McMaster Divinity College is transferring all Spring 2020 courses ONLINE. Current syllabi will be modified regarding delivery model and timelines. However, you can consult the syllabi for content. Updated, revised ONLINE syllabi will be posted as soon as possible. We will notify students when the final syllabi have been posted. Your patience is greatly appreciated.

TH 3XA3 - Missional Theology (CC/CT/PS)

McMaster Divinity College
Spring 2020
Hybrid, Two-day Campus session May 4–5
Office: 216

Steven M. Studebaker, Ph.D.
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Hours: By appointment (office, Skype/FaceTime)

I. Description:

What does it mean to be a missional church in an increasingly post-Christian, secular, and religiously plural culture? This course explores that question with a comprehensive overview of missional theology and examples of its practice, particularly in North American culture. Biblical foundations and historical approaches to embodying the Gospel in cultural context are considered with primary focus on the contemporary “missional” movement (e.g., Newbigin, Bosch, Guder, Frost, Hirsch, Fitch).

II. Course Objectives:

A. Knowing:

1. Learn and expand key areas of your understanding of missional theology.
2. Become familiar with the contributions of key figures in missional theology and their relevance for vocational venue and aspirations.
3. Begin to develop expertise in an area of missional theology.

B. Being:

1. Develop skills in critical and constructive practical theology.
2. Appreciate the value of current theological movements for the church and your life.
3. Be a respectable, respectful, and significant practical theologian.
4. Appreciate that theology is a dynamic and contextual effort to discern appropriate ways to embody the redemption revealed in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

C. Doing:

1. Develop the ability to present informative presentations and facilitate student discussions.
2. Research and present research on a substantial topic in missional theology and significant for your current vocational venue and/or aspiration.

3. Hone critical reading skills in primary literature.
4. Develop the ability to analyze secondary scholarship in light of primary texts.

III. Course Text(s):

* Required reading includes *two* books.

* Submit statement of reading completed by June 17.

A. Book One:

Darrell L. Guder, *Called to Witness: Doing Missional Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015). If you have read this book, you can select an alternative.

B. Book Two:

* Select *one book* from this list or propose an alternative for your second required reading textbook.

- Diana Butler Bass, *Christianity After Religion: The End of Church and the Birth of a New Spiritual Awakening* (New York: HarperCollins, 2012).
- Ryan K. Bolger, *The Gospel after Christendom: New Voices, New Cultures, New Expressions* (Grand Rapids: BakerAcademic, 2012).
- Francis Chan, *Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2013) (<http://www.crazylovebook.com/>).
- Mary Sue Dehmlow Dreier, *Created by the Spirit: Planting Missional Congregations* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013).
- Michael Frost & Alan Hirsch, *The Shaping of Things to come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st Century Church* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2003).
- David Fitch, *Faithful Presence: 7 Disciplines That Shape the Church for God's Mission & Prodigal Christianity* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2016) ([Reclaiming the Mission blog](#))
- Craig Van Gelder and Dwight J. Zscheile, *The Missional Church in Perspective: Mapping Trends and Shaping the Conversation* (Grand Rapids: BakerAcademic, 2011).
- Craig Van Gelder and Dwight J. Zscheile, *Participating in God's Mission: A Theological Missiology for the Church in America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018).

- Eddie Gibbs and Ryan K. Bolger, *Emergent Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Cultures* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005).
- Roger Helland and Leonard Hjalmarson, *Missional Spirituality* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2011).
- Michael W. Goheen, *A Light to the Nations: The Missional Church and the Biblical Story* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011).
- Scott McKnight, *Jesus Creed: Loving God, Loving Others, 10th Anniversary Edition* (Paraclete, 2014) ([Jesus Creed blog](#)).
- Lesslie Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986).
- Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989).
- Stefan Paas, *Church Planting in the Secular West: Learning from the European Experience* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016).
- David Platt, *Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah, 2010) (website: <http://radical.net/>)
- C. Christopher Smith and John Pattison, *Slow Church: Cultivating Community in the Patient Way of Jesus* (Downers Grove: 2014). Also see <http://slowchurch.com/>
- Graham Ward, *The Politics of Discipleship: Becoming Postmaterial Citizens*, The Church and Postmodern Culture series, ser. ed. James K. A. Smith (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009).
- Gary Tyra, *A Missional Orthodoxy: Theology and Ministry in a Post-Christian Context* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Academic, 2013).
- Dwight J. Zscheile, *Cultivating Sent Communities: Missional Spiritual Formation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012).
- Tyndale Seminary has a list of readings in Missional Church in their Missional Church Reading Room ([link](#)).

C. Additional Research Resources:

- Robert Wuthnow, *After the Baby Boomers: How Twenty- and Thirty-Somethings are shaping the Future of American Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).
- *International Journal of Practical Theology*
- *Journal of Pastoral Theology*

- *Journal of Practical Theology*
- *Journal of Missional Practice* ([link](#)).
- *Millennial Magazine* ([link](#)).
- *Verge Network* ([link](#)).

IV. Overview of Course Assignments:

<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Due</u>
A. Blog post: Missional Person/Movement	20%	
1. Blog post		May 11
2. Blog interaction		May 15
B. Missional Context Paper	20%	May 25
C. Paper Collaboration	15%	June 5 & 12
D. Constructive Essay (or project)	40%	June 17
E. Reading	5%	June 17
F. Participation:	X	<u>Class sessions</u>
Total: 100%		

V. Lecture Outline (*tentative*):

Part One: Online			
Week	Date	Topic	Due Dates
1	Apr 20	Introduction to the Course	
		History of Missional Theology and Church	
2	Apr 27	Missional Theology: Primary Concepts	
Part Two: Campus Session			
3	9:30- Noon	Introductions	
Day 1		Lecture & Discussion: A Missional Theology of	
May 4		Culture	

	Noon-1:30	Working Lunch (lunch provided). We will take a short break and then re-convene for a working lunch and discussion of Missional Context Paper													
	1:30-4:00	Cont. Lecture & Discussion: A Missional Theology of Culture Workshop discussion of Integrative Paper topics & approaches													
Day 2 May 5	9:30-1:00	Presentation & Discussion: Blog: Missional Person/Movement Lecture: Cultural Context & Missional Theology													
Part Three: Online															
4	May 11	Blog post: Missional Figure/Movement (see syllabus VI.A, pp. 4–5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missional Person/Movement blog due May 11 • Blog Interaction due May 15 												
5	May 18	The Challenge of Missional Theology & Evangelical Identity													
6	May 25	One-on-one Discussion with Studebaker on Integrative Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missional Context Paper due May 25 												
7	Jun 1	Integrative Paper Presentation & Collaboration: <table border="1" style="margin-left: 20px;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2" style="background-color: #cccccc;">Paper Presentations</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">1.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">2.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">3.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">4.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">5.</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Paper Presentations		1.		2.		3.		4.		5.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper presentations due June 1 • Collaborations due June 5
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<p>8</p>	<p>June 8</p>	<p>Integrative Paper Presentation & Collaboration: Week Two</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="440 310 1073 541"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Paper Presentations</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>6.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>7.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>8.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>9.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>10.</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Paper Presentations		6.		7.		8.		9.		10.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper presentations due June 8 • Collaborations due June 12
Paper Presentations															
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<p>9</p>	<p>June 15</p>	<p>Missional Theology and the Future of the Church</p> <p>Conclusion and Assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrative Papers Due June 17 • Reading due June 17 												

VI. Assignment Descriptions:

General Guidelines:

- Please submit all assignments in their Avenue to Learn folders.
- Papers and assignments may be submitted early for feedback from the professor and resubmitted on the due date for grading.
- All assignments marked according to the Grading Criteria Form (see Avenue to Learn Syllabus Folder).
- All papers and assignment should conform to (and will be marked according to) the MDC Style Guide.

A. Blog post: Missional Person/Movement:

1. *Research:*

- Select a figure and/or movement (e.g., New Monasticism and Shane Claiborne).
- Research the figure/movement using articles, books, informative web resources (5 to 7 sources).
- You will have an opportunity to share your person/movement on day 2 of the campus session—brief roundtable sharing with the class on your person/movement. Length approx. 5 minutes.

2. *Write* an opinion piece (blog) on the figure/movement. The audience for the blog is not academic. It should effectively deliver a description, analysis, and contribution of the figure/movement to a popular audience. Length: 500 words. Be concise, clear, and interesting.
3. *Post* your blog to the course Padlet for the evangelical issue blog.
 - Padlet is an online bulletin board and interaction forum (I will illustrate its use in the campus session). It gives you the opportunity to share your work and to interact with your class colleagues.
 - Post due May 11
4. *Interact*: Comment on at least one of the blogs posted by your class colleagues. You can contribute with the text, audio, or audio-video function within Padlet (I will demonstrate these functions in class).
 - Interaction due May 15

B. Missional Context Paper

1. **Purpose:**
This assignment gives you the opportunity to investigate a contextual area of contemporary culture. Understanding and adapting to cultural context is central to missional church/theology. We will have a working lunch during the first day of the campus session in which students will share their topic and discuss them with each other.
2. **Description:**
Write a short paper (5 to 7 pages) that describes and analyzes an area of contemporary culture and suggest ways that it presents opportunities and/or challenges to contemporary Christian thought, life, and/or ministry. I encourage you to address an issue that relates to your current or anticipated ministry/vocational context.
3. **Guidelines for paper:**
 - a. Please consult to 5 to seven sources—academic sources such as books and journal articles, professional magazines, media, statistical resources, and informative web resources.
 - b. **Documentation of reading:**
Please use footnotes and provide a bibliography of resources used in the preparation of the paper.
 - c. The paper should include two sections that detail . . .
 - 1) Area of contemporary cultural analysis,

- 2) Conversation on opportunities and/or challenges to contemporary Christian thought, life, and ministry presented by the cultural topic.
 - c. Length: 5 to 7 pages. Double spaced, Times New Roman Font, formatted according to MDC Style Guide.
 4. In-class (F2F) presentation: first campus session, working lunch. During the in-class part of the course, you will present a *summary* of your Missional Context Paper. The presentation should introduce the two parts of the paper (area of contemporary culture analyzed and the conversation between opportunities/challenges).

Length of presentation is approx. 10 minutes, which includes time for discussion.
 5. After F2F, written submission due May 25.
- C. Constructive Paper/Project:
This assignment constitutes the “major paper” and presentation for the course. The purpose of the paper/project is vocational development. It should advance your vocational trajectory. Selecting whether to prepare a project or a paper is an important step in the process.
- Paper?
If you anticipate further graduate work or writing a thesis as part of your MTS or MDiv, then an academic research-thesis paper is an excellent option. A research-thesis paper provides skill development in conducting the concentrated study on a particular research topic necessary for academic research.
 - Project?
If your vocational track is vocational ministry or an alternative professional field, then a project may be an effective option. Completing a project provides skill development in contextualizing and applying the fruit of theological research and reflection.

If you have an idea for a paper or a creative project that does not neatly fit into the parameters of the specialization descriptions, please discuss your idea with me. I am open to papers/projects that cohere with the essence of the course and are suited to your vocational/research field and interests.

◆ Please consult the assignment focus for your degree specialization ◆

Church and Culture Specialization

Investigating the interface between theology and culture is the purpose of this assignment. The paper/project provides the opportunity to explore the relationship between missional theology/movements and culture. Options are open. Examples: You can look at an historical example of the way cultural context shapes contemporary beliefs and practices of the church (a

Newbigin redux). You can explore how one or more categories of theology can provide a lens for discerning missional engagement with culture, contemporary politics, and social issues.

Christian Thought and History Specialization

Exploring an issue in or related to missional theology and/or history is the purpose of this specialization. It can take a biblical, historical, or contemporary focus. For example, what is the history of missional theology and church movement? Why did it emerge, who were and are the key thought leaders of the movement? How does the missional church movement differ in theology and practice from other forms of the church?

Christian Worldview

This specialization relates to the ways Christians understand the world with an awareness of Christianity's intellectual environment—historical, contemporary, and global. Select an area of missional theology, a figure, and/or movement and analyze its worldview assumptions. The paper/project should be constructive and not only descriptive. The heart of this assignment is your creative proposal on the contribution this person, figure, event offers to a Christian worldview. For example, how did Newbigin's (or other missional figures) worldview differ from other popular views in the church? How did this different worldview enable him to diagnose and proscribe new pathways of Christian ministry and relationship to culture? Or, what are the biblical foundations for a missional theology of church practice?

Pastoral Studies Specialization

Applying and articulating the significance of missional theology for a ministry setting is the purpose of this specialization. For example, prepare a sermon or message appropriate for a given ministry audience or develop a seminar for leadership training in your ministry setting. You can draw on biblical, historical, and/or systematic theology resources. The content of the project draws from theological resources but expresses the yield of that theology in language and terms that are appropriate for a ministry audience. Alternatively, if you have an idea for contextualizing the resources of missional theology for ministry other than in the examples listed above, please talk with me so we can design a project that enables you to maximize your work in the class for your ministry context and meets the goals of the specialization in Pastoral Studies.

1. **Class presentation:**
You will present and facilitate a discussion of your paper/project (I encourage multi-media, audio, audio-visual methods when appropriate). Normally presentations are 15–20 minutes followed by 5–10 minutes of class discussion (for a total time of 20–30 minutes). The presentation provides the opportunity to share your research to this point with the class and receive constructive feedback that you can incorporate into your final paper/project submission. The presentation is of the present state of your research, it is not your final paper/project. The purpose is to share your paper/project with class colleagues and receive constructive feedback from them.
2. **Paper:**
 - a. **Content and argument:**

- Detail a clear thesis (the view that your paper supports).
 - Describe your topic under consideration.
 - Write an essay that coherently demonstrates your view.
 - Detail major alternatives and/or criticisms of the position and interact with them vis-à-vis your view (where appropriate and in so far as space allows).
- b. Presentation:
- Write a stylistically clean and academic paper—e.g., avoid colloquialisms (academic is different than conversational voice), passive voice (use active). Research-thesis papers must have a thesis statement (stated in the introduction), an introduction, content section, and a conclusion to the paper.
 - Use and document a *minimum* of ten scholarly resources (book, journal articles, book essays). Internet resources can be utilized, if they are scholarly and/or professional sources.
 - Accurately document sources according to MDC Style Guide.
 - Paper length: 10–12 pages.
 - Provide a bibliography (list only the books cited in the footnotes of the paper).
3. Projects/Sermons:
- a. Annotated bibliography of research sources: an annotation is a paragraph or two that describes the content of the book, essay, or article and how it relates to your project.
 - b. Sermon: submit a manuscript of your sermon/message that includes footnotes, which detail where and how you applied and adapted your theological research.
 - c. Double-spaced pages, 12 point Times New Roman font.
 - d. Use and document at least 10 scholarly resources (e.g., books, journal articles, and essays). Internet resources can be utilized, if they are scholarly and/or professional sources.

- e. Document sources with footnotes and follow MDC Style Guide.

D. Integrative Paper Collaboration:

1. Purpose:
Provides experience in responding to and contributing to your class colleagues' projects. It provides the opportunity to develop professional skills in academic interaction that takes place at professional and academic conferences.
2. Description:
Each student prepares a critical evaluation of the integrative papers presented by their class colleagues.
 - a. The critique:
 - 1) Remember to be charitable.
 - 2) Critical (includes highlighting and discussing problems *and* strengths):

The critique should explore the following sorts of issues:
 - Does the paper have a thesis?
 - Does the content develop and support the thesis?
 - Does it use appropriate sources?
 - Does it interact with the relevant secondary literature?
 - Does it address a significant topic and develops it?
 - b. Post your critical evaluation for each student in the Integrative Paper Padlet—see A2L outline, Integrative Paper Padlet.
Evaluations can be written, audio, or audio-visual.

E. Participation:

Developing a community of learners through engaging, charitable, and critical dialogue. Constructive discussion facilitates the learning experience. Discussion helps to clarify ideas, highlight and explore unconsidered aspects of our thought, modify, and justify our views. Class discussions should be constructive and critical. Critical does not mean negative, it does not tear down a person. Critical discussion is dialogue in which all persons involved pursue a path of mutual discovery, respect, and nurture, but not necessarily agreement. Examples of constructive interaction include 1) introducing material from your readings that relates to the topic, 2) raising possible objections to a position, and 3) integrating two areas of thought.

VII. 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, 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.

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

<https://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 ([link](#)). Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

E. 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 to and including the first day of class.

VIII. Late-Assignment and Exam Policy:

- A. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date specified in the syllabus.
- B. Students take exams on the date and at the time scheduled in the syllabus.
- C. Late assignments are reduced five percentage points for each day late (e.g., if the grade is 90 and it is one day late, the grade will be reduced to 85).
 - Please note, late papers may not be graded and returned at the same time as the other papers; they will not receive comments from the professor on the grade rubric.

- D. Assignments and exams will be accepted without penalty after the specified date in the syllabus **only** in the case of an excused absence. If a student misses an exam or assignment submission due to a reason that he/she believes is excusable, then he/she must notify the instructor and schedule an exam date and/or late-assignment submission date within twenty-four hours of the beginning of the missed class session.

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Appendix 1: Research Degree Requirements (MA & PhD)

I. Assignment Outline:

Assignment	Percent	Due
A. Major Paper/Project:	55%	One week after presentation
1. Presentation	20%	
2. Paper	35%	
B. Lecture and Syllabus:	40%	Day of lecture
C. Annotated Bibliography: * See lecture assignment	5%	Day of lecture
D. Participation:	X	When class meets
Total: 100%		

II. Major Paper/Project:

- A. Description:
Advanced degree students will write an academic thesis paper or prepare a project that integrates the course topic and their research agenda/s. If you have an idea for a paper or creative project, please come and discuss your idea with me. I am open to papers/projects that cohere with the essence of the course and are suited to your research field and interests.
- B. Purpose:
This assignment gives you experience writing article, essay, and chapter length theological papers and presenting research in an oral form similar to that performed at academic conferences.

C. Guidelines for the Paper:

The paper should include (description categories below correspond to those of the grading rubric) . . .

1. Content and argument:

a. Detail a clear thesis (the view that your paper supports).

- Example of a thesis statement: the Emergent church movement is an authentic Christian way of being the church in a postmodern and post-Christian culture.

b. Describe your topic.

c. Write an essay that coherently demonstrates your view.

d. Detail major alternatives and/or criticisms and interact with them vis-à-vis your view.

2. Presentation:

a. Write a stylistically clean and academic paper—e.g., you should avoid excessive first-person discourse, colloquialisms (academic is different than conversational voice), passive voice (use active).

b. Use and document a *minimum* of fifteen scholarly resources.

c. Accurately document sources according to MDC Style Guide.

d. Paper length: 20–25 pages. Not to exceed 7,000 words.

e. Provide a bibliography (list only the books cited in the footnotes of the paper).

f. Use footnotes.

D. Guidelines for the Paper Presentation:

- Note: depending on class size, PhD/MA may meet separately with the professor to discuss papers.

1. Time:

The paper presentation takes a thirty-minute segment of the class. Each presentation includes two parts:

a. The paper presentation (15–20 minutes)

- b. The response and facilitation, which is led by another student (10 minutes, see below for more details on the response and facilitation).
2. Presentation content:
You should articulate the paper's thesis, topic, and argument. You can use PowerPoint, etc. if you wish. The purpose of this assignment is to give you experience with presenting papers as might at an academic conference. You should prepare and present your paper for that type of venue. I encourage you to consider presenting your paper for this class at a conference and/or the Theological Research Seminar of the Divinity College.

III. Lecture & Syllabus:

- A. Purpose:
This assignment provides experience *preparing* a syllabus and *delivering* a lecture for teaching in an undergraduate setting. The preparation of the syllabus also fulfills one of the requirements of the Mastery Checklist.
- B. Description:
You will prepare a syllabus and lecture on a topic related to the course topic. The lecture should be one of the lectures listed in your syllabus. You may use this assignment to investigate an area that will promote your research program (e.g., prepare for doctoral comprehensive exams and MA thesis/PhD dissertation topics). You should, however, *gear the syllabus and the lecture toward an undergraduate audience*.
- C. Guidelines:
 1. Research:
 - a. Research for the lecture and syllabus development will account for the supplemental reading for research degree students (approximately 5,000-6,000 pages)
 - b. Documentation of reading:
Please provide an annotated bibliography of the reading consulted in the preparation of the lecture (the annotations for the texts should be about one paragraph—identify the key thesis and contributions of the text).
 2. Lecture:
 - a. The lecture should present and discuss the primary content points of the topic (or sub-topic)
 - b. Lecture handouts/outlines and PowerPoint/Prezi are helpful, but not required

c. Length:

The lecture and discussion will take either a thirty or fifty-minute period of the course, depending on final student numbers in the course.

D. Evaluation:

Grading of the lecture and discussion session will be based on the following . . .

1. Please submit to the professor a copy (electronic on Avenue to Learn) of the syllabus, the lecture notes, and annotated bibliography used to develop the lecture.
2. Does the lecture accurately present and discuss the topic?
3. Does the lecture engage in critical evaluation/discussion of the content?
4. Does the lecture highlight the transcendent value of the material—e.g., does it have value for contemporary Christian thought, life, and ministry?
5. Does the lecture facilitate student discussion?