



McMaster Divinity
College

Welcoming the Other
NT/MS 3XH3
3 Unit Course



McMaster Divinity College
Dr. Cynthia Long Westfall

westfal@mcmaster.ca
Office #242

Fall Semester 2020

2 Hour Introductory WebEx Session: first week of class (TBA)

On-Line Videos

In-Class Sessions: Tuesday, Nov 3, 1:30–5:30 p.m./Wednesday, Nov 4, 9 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

Closing WebEx Session: last week of class (TBA)

Course Description

This course is a place where you can process some of the recent events that broke our hearts, by addressing broken relationships from issues such as social isolation, mental illness/depression, exclusion, victimization and racism. Seek to develop biblical responses in your reading of Scripture, your theology, ministry and your personal transformation. The welcome of the other is foundational in the identity and function of the people of God, and intimately connected with God's presence, promise and blessing. How do we define welcome? Who do we identify as the other (and who are "we"?)? What practices can we cultivate to welcome the other? The framework of this course will draw on concepts connected with the *invitation of radical hospitality* combined with *the movement towards incarnational actions* of becoming the other, crossing boundaries, sojourning and tearing down walls. By sharing our life, experiences and research interests, we will together identify the other, expand and build on the definition and practices of welcome, and populate the category of the other along with input from a select variety of people in the field and on the front lines. During the in-class time, we will concentrate on pooling our resources and building the biblical and theological bases for the praxis of radical hospitality together with incarnational identity and action rooted in the nature of God.

This is a hybrid course in which we combine two in-class sessions with online components: we will use Avenue to Learn as well as other online technologies. We open the semester with an online WebEx session and we will close it with an online WebEx session.

Specializations

Pastoral Studies (PS)

Students taking this as a Pastoral Studies (PS) course are encouraged to explore how a biblical welcome of the other can be understood, practiced and transmitted in your target area(s) such as leadership strategies, ethical decisions, and pastoral care as well as worship, teaching and preaching.

Christian History and Worldview (CW)

Students taking this as a Christian History and Worldview course are encouraged explore how welcoming the other provides a biblical and theological foundation as well as tools, methods and opportunity for the engagement and dialogue with other worldviews that are targeted in your specialization and additional contexts as well.

Church and Culture (CC)

Students taking this as a Church and Culture (CC) course are encouraged to explore the interface of the Church and the contemporary world in the theology and practice of welcoming the other in your targeted context(s) such as missions, development, evangelism, the emerging church, cultural context, preaching, or worship.

Counselling and Spiritual Care (CS)

Students taking this as a Counselling and Spiritual Care course are encouraged to explore the utilization of the biblical, theological and practical aspects of welcoming the other to frame, enrich and equip your approach to spiritual care and pastoral intervention in contexts of diversity (social, cultural, racial, economic, religious, etc.).

Biblical Studies (BS)

Students taking this as a Biblical Studies (BS) course will be encouraged to explore and research biblical content and develop a biblical theology that is exegetically responsible and interacts critically with scholarship that is fundamental in the practice of hospitality and incarnational movement in the welcome of the other, with applications that embrace the complexity of contemporary culture(s).

Course Objectives

Knowing

- Understand the biblical basis for welcoming the other for the individual, the church, society and global contexts
- Extend your understanding of welcome and the other to larger contexts and new possibilities.

Doing

- Research and develop a biblical topic/theme, passage or project that is relevant to your specialization and relates to the Church and/or current personal and communal practice.
- Develop a life map on welcoming the other
- Engage in welcoming the other in a local context and theologically reflect on that experience.

Being

- Awareness of your place, connection and circle of influence
- Cultivated empathy for the other based on who you are & your past experience
- Commitment to hospitality and an incarnational ministry consistent with your calling
- Maturing habits of devotion & self-care that support the demanding nature of the discipline

Reading

Pohl, Christine. *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*. Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2011. 219 pp.

Warren, Michelle Ferrigno. *The Power of Proximity: Moving Beyond Awareness to Action*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2017. 182 pp.

Papers distributed to the class through Avenue to Learn and Dropbox

Recommended

Fraser, Eloise Renich. *Confessions of a Beginning Theologian*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1998.

Oden, Amy. *And You Welcomed Me: A Sourcebook on Early Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2010. 318 pp.

Volf, Miroslav. *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*. Updated ed; Nashville: Abingdon, 2019. 336 pp.

Textbook Purchase

See MDC instructions on the website.

Course Requirements

View Online Videos (attendance)

Students are required to view the scheduled weekly videos online.

Online Participation (15%)

There will be a couple of venues in which you will be expected to participate in weekly activities and contribute to the course—online: (1) you will perform and submit any “exercises” in the weekly videos (2) you will share content or initiate topics of discussion as directed in online presentations and (3) you will respond or interact with the contribution/content/topics of others. Contribute content once a week and interact with a minimum interaction or response to five others each week (on the average).

Reading Report (10%)

Complete the required reading for the course and submit a reading report of the percentage of reading completed by **Dec 11 at 11:59 p.m.**

Written assignments

Theological Reflection on Welcoming the Other (20%)

The student will engage in an encounter/ interaction in which you have an experience in welcoming the other (suggestions distributed on Avenue). The student will write a 5 page theological reflection on the experience based on the MRS model for spiritual reflection. **It is due Dec 11 at 11:59.** Submit to Avenue to Learn

Development of a Life Map Centered on Welcoming the Other (20%)

Goal: Summarize your personal theology concerning welcoming the other, integrating identity, experiences, theology and practice. **It will be due October 30 at 11:59 p.m. .**

Utilizing the tools given in the course, design a map (model) with the following sections:

- Establish your own identity by which you define the other
- Identify your experience of welcoming the other through your life story
- Identify your areas of responsibility, circle of influence and passion
- Summarize your unique calling to welcoming the other
- Clarify the biblical basis for welcoming the other in your area(s) of interest
- Problem-solve any challenges and barriers
- Praxis: Plan to implement necessary changes.
- In summary, write your personal mission statement.

Detailed instructions for the Life Map will be posted in an online presentation on April 29.

The Life Map should be a minimum of 10 pages long and follow the MDC Style Guide <http://www.macdiv.ca/students/documents/MacStyleGuide.pdf>

Choice of Exegetical Paper, Research Paper or Portfolio Project and Presentation (35%)

Each student will either (a) write a research paper, (b) write an exegetical paper or (c) create a portfolio project on welcoming the other, suitable to the student's specialization and present it at the closing WebEx Session. **It will be due December 4 at 11:59 p.m., submitted to Avenue to Learn** (projects may be submitted in hard copy by arrangement). For all matters of style and form, consult the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses:

<http://www.macdiv.ca/students/documents/MacStyleGuide.pdf>

Each student's choice of paper or profile project will be described by the student in detail in a paragraph **submitted to Avenue to Learn due on Friday, November 5 at 11:59 p.m.** Each student will receive feedback on their choice and description.

Exegetical papers will be approximately 15 pages, written according to the Steps to Exegesis (Steps to Exegesis, instructive PowerPoints and a rubric posted on Avenue).

Research papers will be approximately 3000 words (about 15 pages) of text, excluding footnotes and bibliography. There should be a minimum of 15 academic sources used in the footnotes and bibliography. A rubric for research papers will be posted online together with a YouTube video on how to write research papers.

Portfolio projects should largely be determined by your specialization. Creativity is encouraged. You may choose to design an artifact: an art project, poetry or song, but in that case, you must also submit a written detailed description of exactly how your artifact utilizes, interprets and applies Scripture and the principles of biblical interpretation of the course.

Marking will be based on:

- How the message and content utilizes and applies Scripture and the principles of biblical welcome studied in the course as the primary goal.
- The appropriateness of the project for the identified target group,
- The quality and proficient use of the medium
- The estimated effort expended on the project (it should be nearly equal to the effort of a 15 pg. exegetical paper).

If the student fails to submit the paper on time, a late penalty of 2% a day will be applied to the paper's final grade until 7 days, when it will be 5% a day. **No papers will be accepted after December 11.**

Course Assessment Summary

➤ Online Participation	15%
➤ Reading	10%
➤ Theological reflection	15%
➤ Life Map	25%
➤ Paper or Project	35%

Classroom Behavior

Attendance

Students are required to be present for the face to face sessions on May 7 & 8. Students are expected to stay for the entire class sessions, unless arranged in advance.

Participation

Please respect the opinions of others without disrespect or ridicule, even if you do not agree with them. However, feel free to respond logically and critically in an orderly manner. Similarly content in all papers should be irenic while it may critique alternate positions.

Students are not expected to be doing work on any other subject except that which is appropriate in the course outline.

Students are not to carry on off-topic conversations in class in person, the phone or on the internet.

We will eat and drink in class—please help with set up and clean up.

Students who fail to respect these guidelines will be dismissed from the class with consequences.

MDC Policies

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>

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.

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

Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

Appointments & office hours

Contact me if I can assist you in any way via Avenue or e-mail: westfal@mcmaster.ca

There are no set office hours, but I am available by Skype appointment at [cynthia.westfall](https://www.skype.com/join/cynthia.westfall)

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.

Course Schedule

Week 1: September 14–18, Webex online: during the first week

Introduction to the Course: Welcoming the other

Self –Introduction: Establishing our own identities (intersectionality): Who are “we”?

- Faith
- Race
- Nationality
- Location
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Class
- Education

Week 2: September 21–25

Online video and discussion forum

Life maps, theological reflection and practice-led discipline: tools to clarify what is “practice-led”: explore identity, experiences and practice

Week 3: September 28–October 2

Pooling of our resources on the other

A biblical theology of welcome, Part 1

A theology of Welcome: empathy, incarnational presence, invitation, friending, becoming the other

Week 4: October 5–9

Biblical theology, Part 2

- Theologies, Theories and Philosophies
- Social Identity theory
- Spatial theory
- Post-Colonial Interpretation, Liberation Theology
- Identifying and utilizing methodologies

Week 5; October 12–16

Introduction to categories of other

Online video, discussion forum

- Faith
- Race
- Nationality
- Culture
- Gender
- Class
- Education
- Those with limited resources (income, options, genetics)
- Sexuality
- Victims
- Perpetrators
- Those who suffer consequences of their own behavior

Week 6: October 19–24 Hybrid in-class sessions

Week 7: October 26–31 Hybrid in-class sessions
Life Map due Friday, October 30 at 11:59 p.m.

Week 8: November 2–7, Hybrid In-class sessions
Tuesday, November 3, 1:30–5:30 p.m.
Wednesday, November 4, 9 a.m.–5:30

Pooling our resources on the other
Utilizing our Life Map: tools to clarify how this is “practice-led”: explore
Identity, experiences and practice
Planning encounters/interactions
Determining portfolio projects
Project description due Friday, November 6, 11:59 p.m.

Week 9: November 9–13
The Marginalized & Needy
Online video, videos of those on the field and discussion forum
Homeless and poor
The socially isolated
Disabled
Mentally ill
Elderly
Immigrants
Refugees

Week 10: November 16–20 ETS/SBL

Week 11: November 23–27
The Oppressed, Victims & Those “We” have Wronged/Offended
Online video, videos of those on the field and discussion forum
Victims of crime
Women as paradigmatic
Victims of discrimination
Jews, Genocide & Reconciliation
Indigenous people (Canadian and global)

Week 12: November 30–December 4
Online video on troubleshooting
Profile projects due December 4 by 11:59 p.m.

Week 13: December 7–11
Closing WebEx TBA
Reading Report due Dec 11, 11:59 p.m.
Theological Reflection due Dec 11, 11:59 p.m.