

**NOT FINAL...BUT CLOSE**  
**WM5205 CULTURAL DYNAMICS IN MINISTRY**  
**SYLLABUS**

**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A consideration of the influence of culture on ministry with special attention given to specific skills for exegeting a cultural setting and crafting appropriate ministry strategies.

**II. COURSE OBJECTIVES AND RATIONALE**

**A. Cognitive Objectives**

- Better understand what it means to love people who are different than us in a Christ-like way.
- Develop an analytical model for interpreting and understanding cultures.
- Learn to identify and better interpret folk religious beliefs and practices.
- Better understand “split-level Christianity” and its impact on culture, including the home culture of the student.
- Better understand our own personal culture and assess it based upon the truth and lies that it is based on.
- Gain greater insights into their own personal cultural including its biases, strengths, and weaknesses.
- Learn to better communicate the gospel to themselves and people from other cultures.

**B. Affective Objectives**

- Joy and excitement to participate in God’s mission.
- Joy that comes from serving and loving others in humility.
- Pain of dying to self so that others may experience life.
- Peace and joy in experiencing greater victory in Jesus regarding various struggles in life.
- Joy in celebrating the complexity the complexity and variety of cultures.

**C. Behavioral Objectives**

- Interpret cultures through a lens of Christ-likeness and be able to respond to cultural differences in a humble and loving way.
- Apply an analytical model for interpreting and understanding cultures.
- Identify and better interpret folk religious beliefs and practices.
- Experience quantity time serving with people of different cultures.
- Better communicate the gospel to themselves and people from other cultures.

**D. Rationale**

- Understanding and effectively interacting with another culture is ultimately a function of humility and love. Once the foundation of humility and love is laid, there are many cultural markers that can be learned to help students better interpret and understand other cultures (and their own). In this class we want to begin to lay and build upon this foundation.

### III. COURSE TEXTBOOKS

#### A. Required

Hiebert, Paul, R. Daniel Shaw, Tite Tienou. (1999). *Understanding Folk Religion: A Christian Response to Popular Beliefs and Practices*. Grand Rapids: Baker.

Elmer, Duane. 2006. *Cross-Cultural Servanthood*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Hoffmann, Lynn. 2013. *Steps Into God's Grace: Spiritual Formation Through God's Word and the 12 Steps of Recovery*. Columbia, SC: CreateSpace.

#### B. Suggested

Kraft, Charles. 1996. *Anthropology for Christian Witness*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.

#### C. Supplementary Bibliography

Hiebert, Paul. 2009. *The Gospel in Human Contexts*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker.

Hiebert, Paul. 2008. *Transforming Worldviews*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker.

Hiebert, Paul. 1997. *Cultural Anthropology*. Grand Rapids: Baker.

Hiebert, Paul. 1994. *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues*. Grand Rapids: Baker.

Hiebert, Paul (1985). *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*. Grand Rapids: Baker

Kraft, Charles. 2008. *Worldview for Christian Witness*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey

Lingenfelter, Sherwood G. 1998. *Transforming Culture*. Grand Rapids: Baker.

Lingenfelter, Sherwood G. and Marvin K. Mayers. 2016. *Ministering Cross-Culturally*. Third Edition. Grand Rapids: Baker.

Malina, Bruce. J. 2001. *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*. Third Edition, revised. Louisville: Westminster John Knox.

Naugle, David K. (2002). *Worldview: The History of a Concept*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Tennent, Timothy. 2007. *Theology in the Context of World Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Vanhoozer, Kevin, Charles A. Anderson, and Michael J. Slesman. 2007. *Everyday Theology: How to Read Cultural Texts and Interpret Trends*. Grand Rapids: Baker.

Winter, Ralph D. and Steven C. Hawthorne, ed. *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2009.

### IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

#### A. Reading and Class Participation (20%)

Reading will be assigned for most class sessions including sections of the textbooks and other articles as indicated on the Course Schedule (below). Because class discussion will be based on assigned reading, it is important that students complete this reading prior to class sessions. Reading is due according to schedule below, reading should be recording on the Course Lectures and Assignments Schedule. DUE:

You are required to read the three required books listed above in their entirety. *Understanding Folk Religion* should be read twice.

A note on teaching style: My style of teaching is rooted in my years of theological education in South Sudan. As a result, it is very interactive and dialogue based with the goal of equipping you to better teach and train others what you have learned. For this reason, it is important for the student to come to class with reading and assignments completed so they are prepared to engage in discussion. While I will do plenty of talking, this will not be a purely lecture-based course. I will discuss my teaching style more in the first few days of class. I look forward to it!

### B. Servanthood “Cheat Sheet” (5%)

After reading Elmer, create a summary of the servanthood process (Part II of book). This summary is meant to serve as a reference guide for you in the future. This can be written in narrative or bullet format. Feel free to be creative. Create something you will use in the future to remind you of the lessons of the book.

### C. Cultural Assessment Project (Various due dates throughout semester) (75%)

- 1) *Analytical Model Framework and Principles:* Develop an Analytical Model for interpreting and understanding culture based upon Section One of *Understanding Folk Religion*. The model should have ~7-10 core principles or concepts that are clearly stated, explained, and illustrated. **DUE: 9/10**
- 2) *Personal Folk Religious Beliefs Assessment:* Use your Analytical Model Framework and Principles and your reading of *Understanding Folk Religion* to assess your personal folk religious beliefs. Use the categories (at least 10) in *Understanding Folk Religion* Section Two to help guide you regarding topics to consider for assessment. This is NOT a place for you to write out a polished statement of theology, it is a place for you to challenge your polished statement of theology via the test of how you live your life and make decisions. **DUE: 10/1**
- 3) *Personal Folk Religious Practices Assessment:* Use your Analytical Model Framework and Principles and your reading of *Understanding Folk Religion* to assess your personal folk religious practices. Use the categories (at least 10) in *Understanding Folk Religion* Section Three to help guide you regarding topics to consider for assessment. **DUE: 10/15**
- 4) *Cultural Assessment – Opposing Political View:* Use your Analytical Model Framework and Principles as a guide to help you “assess” someone with a political view that is in opposition to your own. This assessment should be disclosed to the person you are assessing in advance. You should walk away from the assessment with a deeper understanding, appreciation, and celebration of this individual and how they are both similar and different than you. **DUE: 11/5**
- 5) *Cultural Assessment – Different Culture:* Use your Analytical Model Framework and Principles as a guide to help you “assess” someone who is from a different continent and different native language than yourself. This assessment should be disclosed to the person you are assessing in advance. You should walk away from the assessment with a deeper understanding, appreciation, and celebration of this individual and how they are both similar and different than you. **DUE: 12/10**
- 6) *Sharing the gospel with yourself:* Based upon your cultural assessment, how would you share the good news of Jesus with yourself? **DUE: 12/10**
- 7) *Sharing the gospel with someone with an opposing political view:* Based upon your cultural assessment, how would you share the good news of Jesus with someone with an opposing political view (specifically the person’s political view from your assessment)? **DUE: 12/10**
- 8) *Sharing the gospel with someone from a different culture:* Based upon your cultural assessment, how would you share the good news of Jesus with someone from a different culture (specifically the person’s culture from your assessment)? **DUE: 12/10**
- 9) There is an aspect of your Cultural Assessment Project that is a completion grade and not required to turn in, but you are welcome to if you want. The following 5 assessments are part of the *Steps Into God’s Grace* workbook and should be prioritized as it comes to your work on the workbook:
  - (a) King of My Kingdom (Lesson 7) DUE: 9/24
  - (b) Personal Inventory (Lesson 12) DUE: 10/15

- (c) Current Condition (Lesson 14) DUE: 10/29
- (d) Be Transformed (Lesson 17) DUE: 11/12
- (e) Write Your Message (Lesson 27) DUE: 12/10

- 10) Completing the entire *Steps Into God's Grace* workbook is required for this project, but these specific assessments will be highlighted in class discussion and should be completed according to the schedule. **DUE: 12/10**
- 11) Note on length and parameters of this project: This may sound overly simplistic and even idealistic, but I have not set specific parameters in regard to length for this assignment. My goal is to create learning experiences to help you truly grow in your understanding of cultures and your ability to interact between them in a way honoring to Christ. How long and how in-depth your reports are to me should reflect your personal standard and expectation. Does what you turn in reflect the quality work you believe the assignment and your experiences warrant? If so, then great. **Please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns with me as much as is helpful. If not having clear parameter stresses you out (not uncommon) please let me know and we will work it out.**

\*\*\* The Cultural Assessment Project can be developed into an Agape Project for any student who chooses to do so. It will mean an additional investment of contact time (totaling 15 hours) and meeting all additional requirements including the writing of a five-page paper. (See Agape Project documents.)

#### D. Quizzes and/or Exams

1. N/A

**The following statement regarding final exams for graduates is from the 2018-2019 Student Handbook:**

“For those students graduating in a given semester or participating in the commencement ceremony, arrangements must be made with the professor to complete the final examination early. In addition to the final exam, all course work must be completed by graduates and commencement participants by the date specified for the semester of graduation” (1.19.1).

#### V. COURSE POLICIES

##### A. Weight Given to Course Requirements for Grading

- Reading and Class Participation (20%)
- Servanthood “Cheat Sheet” (5%)
- Personal Cultural Assessment (Various due dates throughout semester) (40%)
- Cross-Cultural Service (25%)
- Cross-Cultural Service Gospel Tract (5%)

##### B. Class Participation

The course follows the lecture/discussion method. Therefore, students will regularly attend and participate in class. Reading should be completed before class meetings in order to fully engage in class discussion. “Students should refrain from using cell phones, laptop computers, or other devices in a manner that distracts others in the class. Playing games, browsing the Internet, using email, instant

messaging, or text messaging, etc., are considered unacceptable when class is in session. Unless permitted by the professor, students should turn off all electronic devices during tests and quizzes” (*Student Handbook* 2018-2019 1.14.1).

### C. Late Assignments

Assignments received after the due date will be penalized by subtracting one numerical point from grade for every 1 day late (including weekend days). The professor cannot accept any work after 4:30 p.m. (Last Due Date). Extensions beyond that date require approval by the Registrar’s Credits Committee. Please refer to the DTS 2018-2019 Student Handbook 1.20 for policies related to late assignments and extensions..

### D. Absences

The number of permitted absences equals twice the number of times the course meets each week. Coming late to class three times equals one absence. Each unexcused absence in excess of the prescribed limit given by the professor for the course may result in a reduction of the final grade” (1.14.4). Students who are auditing and want this class listed on their DTS transcripts must attend 75 percent of the lectures (*Student Handbook* 1.3.5).

### E. Plagiarism

The following statement is from the 2018-2019 Student Handbook:  
“Plagiarism occurs in research whenever a writer appropriates material that falls outside the sphere of common knowledge, and is from any source not his own without indicating his or her indebtedness to that source. The theft may have to do with substance (i.e., ideas or information taken from a source without acknowledgment in the form of proper documentation), or it may have to do with verbal expression (i.e., wording or phraseology taken from a source without acknowledgment in the form of proper documentation and quotation marks around the quoted material)... In either of these forms, plagiarism constitutes a serious academic and ethical impropriety. For this reason any work submitted that gives clear evidence of plagiarism, whether committed deliberately or naively, will receive a grade of zero.” (1.17.1).

#### Submission of Assignments

All assignments will be submitted on Canvas. The professor will comment on all submissions and submit a grade also on Canvas. Students are welcome to interact with the professor about their papers or other issues arising from the course, either in, after class or on Canvas.

#### . Letter/Numerical Grade Scale

<b>A+</b>	<b>99-100</b>	<b>B+</b>	<b>91-93</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>83-85</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>75-77</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>0-69</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>96-98</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>88-90</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>80-82</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>72-74</b>		
<b>A-</b>	<b>94-95</b>	<b>B-</b>	<b>86-87</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>78-79</b>	<b>D-</b>	<b>70-71</b>		

### COURSE SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Include supplemental information for the course as needed. The professor may wish to provide information that will help students to achieve the course objectives such as a statement of his or her philosophy of teaching, recommendations for successful course planning, time management, policy on web research, and tips on how to do well on course assignments and/or what mistakes to avoid. Keep as brief as possible.

Students with Disabilities or Medical Incidents:

Dallas Theological Seminary works to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with psychological, medical, physical, and learning disabilities. A student desiring or needing accommodations on the basis of such disabilities or of medical incidents such as hospitalization or severe injury is to contact the Director of Services for Students with Disabilities (<https://students.dts.edu/studentlife/disability-services/>). If the student is aware of a condition that may impact his/her studies, the student should contact the Director of Services for Students with Disabilities at prior to the beginning of the semester or at the onset of a crisis.

**VI. COURSE LECTURES AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE**

This schedule, formatted to the dates of each class session, should include a list of lecture/course topics to be covered, written assignments with due dates, quizzes and /or exams with dates, and notation of days when regularly scheduled class sessions will not meet. The use of a table in this section is recommended. Labeled columns are suggestions only.

No.	Date	Lecture Topic	Due Dates
	<b>Date</b>	<b>Lecture Topics</b>	<b>Assignments Due</b>
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9	Mar 2-6	<b>WEC WEEK – Jon Burns – NO CLASSES</b>	
10	Mar 9-13	<b>SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES</b>	
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18	May 4-8	<b>Final Exam Week</b>	<b><u>No Final Exam</u></b>