

MP520: TRANSFORMING CONTEMPORARY CULTURE (4 units)

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DESCRIPTION: Issues of modernity, post-modernity, pluralism and globalization challenge the Church worldwide necessitating thoughtful, culturally relevant yet biblically sound responses. This course will examine the following key questions:

- Why has the church largely failed to challenge the negative effects of the modernist cultural paradigm?
- How do modernism, post-modernism, pluralism and globalization interact to bring new challenges to the contemporary church?
- How can we step outside our culture in order to see ourselves through "missional" eyes?
- How does a missionary approach to culture differ from conventional evangelistic approaches?

This course proposes the paradigm that missionary engagement should be the basic stance of church toward its cultural context.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: Upon successful completion of this course, students will have:

- Demonstrated the ability to "read" or "exegete" modern/postmodern culture using missionary criteria
- Discerned those values and characteristics in their cultural contexts that can be affirmed, promoted, and leveraged for the benefit of the Church as well as the cultural values and forces that bring spiritual lethargy and decline.
- Designed strategies of missional engagement with contemporary culture that show cultural awareness and understanding, and in which the full resources of the Gospel are brought to bear in their ministries and churches.

COURSE FORMAT: Conducted online, the ten weekly lessons align with Fuller's academic calendar. Students and the instructor will interact weekly through lectures, threaded discussions, reading responses, and web-based research.

REQUIRED READING: A minimum of 1,300 pages of reading from the following materials (as scheduled in the course shell):

- Crouch, Andy. *Culture Making: Recovering our Creative Calling*. InterVarsity, 2008.
- Drane, John. *After McDonaldization: Mission, Ministry, & Christian Discipleship in an Age of Uncertainty*. Baker, 2008.
- Frost, Michael, and Alan Hirsch. *The Shaping of Things to Come*. Hendrickson, 2003.
- Linthicum, Robert C. *Transforming Power*. InterVarsity, 2003. (128 pp. assigned)
- Newbiggin, Lesslie. *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*. Eerdmans, 1989.
- Ramachandra, Vinoth. *Subverting Global Myths. Theology and the Public Myths Shaping our World*. InterVarsity, 2008.
- Supplemental required readings which will be included electronically in the course shell. (200 pp. assigned)

ADDITIONAL SPECIAL TOPIC READING: In addition to scheduled reading from the above texts, students will select, read and write a 500-600 word report on ONE of the following books (Student's choice). Reports will be shared with the entire cohort:

- Bauman, Zygmunt. *Consuming Life*. Cambridge, U.K.: Polity Press, 2008.
- Carroll, M. Daniel. *Christians at the Border: Immigration, the Church and the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008.
- Claiborne, Shane. *Irresistible Revolution: Living as an Ordinary Radical*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006.
- Edwards, Joel. *An Agenda for Change: A Global Call for Spiritual and Social Transformation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008.
- Goudzwaard, Bob, et al. *Hope in Troubled Times: A New Vision for Confronting Global Crises*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2007.
- Hanciles, Jehu. *Beyond Christendom: Globalization, African Migration and the Transformation of the West*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2008.
- Hipp, Shane. *The Hidden Power of Electronic Culture. How Media Shapes Faith, the Gospel and the Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006.
- Kalu, Ogbu U. and Elaine Low, eds. *Interpreting Contemporary Christianity: Global Processes and Local Identities*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008.
- Miller, M. Rex. *The Millennial Matrix: Reclaiming the Past, Reframing the Future of the Church*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004.
- Reynolds, John M. and Overton, Roger, eds. *The New Media Frontier: Blogging, Vlogging, and Podcasting for Christ*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008.
- Natchigall, Patrick. *Faith in the Future: Christianity's Interface with Globalization*. Anderson, IN: Warner Press, 2008.
- Raschke, Carl. *GloboChrist: The Great Commission Takes a Postmodern Turn*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.
- Rollins, Peter. *How (Not) to Speak of God*. Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2006.
- Smith, James K. A. *Who's Afraid of Postmodernism?* Baker Academic, 2006.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Weekly threaded discussions, reading responses, web research, peer reviews and Course Reading Record (35%)
2. A 600-word extended reading responses on a special topic book chosen by the student from the list provided above (10%)
3. A 2,000-word collaborative Culture Watch assignment (15%)
4. A 1,250-word Cultural Analysis through Film comparing and contrasting two movies and their post-modern cultural themes. (15%)
5. A 3,000-word Case Study paper addressing a cultural theme and its practical outworking in a student's ministry context. (25%)

PREREQUISITES: This course is only available to those who are accepted into the MA in Global Leadership.

RELATIONSHIP TO CURRICULUM: A required course for the Cohort portion of the MA in Global Leadership. *NO AUDITORS*.

FINAL EXAMINATION: None.

This ECD is a reliable guide to the course design but is subject to modification.