

MP520: TRANSFORMING CONTEMPORARY CULTURE (4 units).

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DESCRIPTION:

Modern culture has marginalized all religion; mainline church membership has declined. Although the primary focus in the course is on the church in the West, modernity is a universal phenomenon. This course proposes a new paradigm: missionary engagement as basic stance of church toward modern/postmodern culture. This requires that key questions be examined:

- Why has the church largely failed to challenge modern culture?
- How can we step outside our culture in order to see ourselves through "mission" eyes?
- How is a missionary approach different from conventional evangelism?

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will have:

- Demonstrated the ability to "read" modern/postmodern culture using missionary criteria rather than the conventional assumption that this is a Christian culture.
- Discerned those values and characteristics in this culture that can be affirmed and promoted, as well as awareness of cultural forces that bring spiritual death.
- Designed strategies of missional engagement with contemporary culture that are culturally aware, and in which the full resources of the gospel are brought to bear in their ministries and churches.

COURSE FORMAT:

The class will be conducted on the Internet using a 10-week lesson program aligned with Fuller's academic calendar. Each week students and the instructor will interact with the material examining key themes and characteristics of modern/postmodern culture through journaling, threaded discussions, and web-based research.

REQUIRED READING: A minimum of 1,300 pages of reading from the following books.

- Davey, Andrew. *Urban Christianity and Global Order*. Hendrickson, 2002.
- Frost, Michael, and Alan Hirsch. *The Shaping of Things to Come*. Hendrickson, 2003.
- Guder, Darrell L., and Lois Barrett. *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*. Eerdmans, 1998.
- Hunsberger, G. R., and C. Van Gelder. *The Church between Gospel and Culture*. Eerdmans, 1996.
- Johnson, Darrell W. *Experiencing the Trinity*. Regent College Publishing, 2002.
- Linthicum, Robert C. *Transforming Power*. InterVarsity, 2003.
- Newbiggin, Leslie. *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*. Eerdmans, 1989.
- Smith, James K. A. *Who's Afraid of Postmodernism?* Baker Academic, 2006.
- Volf, Miroslav. *The End of Memory: Remembering Rightly in a Violent World*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006.
- Supplemental readings in the course shell include required and recommended readings. The recommended readings are for the students' own self-study, enrichment, and resourcing – particularly to help students prepare for writing the paper, and for greater understanding of the course material.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Weekly Threaded Discussions (20%), Journaling (10%), and Web research (4%)
2. A Course Reading Record (10%)
3. A 2,000-word collaborative Culture Watch assignment (11%)
4. A 1,000-word Film Review comparing and contrasting two movies (to be selected from a list provided in the course shell) with regard to their portrayal of prevailing themes in contemporary culture (10%).
5. A 3,000-word Case Study paper which addresses a cultural theme identified in the course in light of the Christian mission mandate (35%)

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.

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