

**MP 520: CONTEMPORARY CULTURE IN MISSIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE (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.
- Wright, N. T. *Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense*. HarperSanFrancisco, 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, Journaling, and Web research
2. A Course Reading Record
3. A 2,000-word collaborative Culture Watch assignment
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.
5. A 3,000-word Case Study paper which addresses a cultural theme identified in the course in light of the Christian mission mandate

**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.