

MB500: CULTURE AND TRANSFORMATION (4 units)

Sherwood Lingenfelter, Professor of Anthropology:

Online Facilitation by Carol Christopher, Adjunct Instructor in Intercultural Studies.

DESCRIPTION:

In a world shrunk by jet air travel, television, education, music, and internet connections, understanding culture (what it is, how it works, and how to study it) is increasingly crucial to church and mission ministries. These forces for globalization are not neutral, nor are the counter forces of tradition. At the same time, the emergence of World Christianity and the explosion of the church in the southern hemisphere have dramatically shifted the focus of mission. The course will explore questions of culture, globalization and partnership for mission in the 21st Century. Students will learn to use some basic tools for exegeting a culture and understanding how to become effective partners with the Majority World church. Through the analysis of case studies, students will explore how Christianity and its social expressions in the church may transform or fail to transform people and their communities.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: By the end of the course students will be able to

- Explain the essential characteristics of incarnational ministry;
- Describe their cultural bias through profiles of basic values and the social games of family and church;
- Evaluate a ministry organization and its cultural context with reference to its effective “practice of power” for spiritual, social or economic transformation;
- Propose action steps on how to partner with Majority World Christians for ministry that transforms people and communities.

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 course material through journaling, threaded discussions, and web-based research.

REQUIRED READING: Reading will be assigned from the required texts. In addition, each student will be required to read selected articles that will be made available through the course syllabus. If you have previously read any of the required texts, please select an alternative text from the recommended reading list or a book approved by the instructor.

- Gupta, Paul R. and Sherwood G. Lingenfelter. *Breaking Tradition to Accomplish Vision: Training Leaders for a Church Planting Movement*. Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books 2006.
- Harrison, Lawrence E. and Samuel P. Huntington. *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*. Basic Books New York, NY: 2000.
- Lingenfelter, Sherwood G. and Marvin K. Mayers. *Ministering Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships*. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI: 2003.
- Lingenfelter, Sherwood G. *Transforming Culture: A Challenge for Christian Mission*. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI: 1998.
- Linthicum, Robert. *Transforming Power: Biblical Strategies for Making a Difference in Your Community*, Intervarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL: 2003.

RECOMMENDED READING:

- Peter Berger and Samuel P. Huntington. *Many Globalizations: Cultural Diversity in the Contemporary World*. Oxford University Press, New York, NY: 2002.
- Sanneh, Lamin. *Whose Religion is Christianity? The Gospel Beyond the West*. Wm.B.Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI: 2003.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Weekly Threaded Discussions, Journaling, and Web research
2. Each student will be required to work in a team with their small group online to write a 6500-8750 word major paper of a “transformational” ministry.
3. Each student will be required to do a Basic Values Questionnaire and a questionnaire on the social game of one’s family and church life. These questionnaires will be part of course resource materials, which will be used to prepare a 1500-2000 word self-assessment paper.
4. Two 500-750 word reflections on selected assigned reading in Harrison and Huntington and in Linthicum.

PREREQUISITES: None.

RELATION TO CURRICULUM: Required course for the MA Cross-cultural Studies (MA-CCS) program. Meets GBLB requirement. Ministry Focus Elective in MA in Global Leadership degree.

FINAL EXAM: None.

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

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