

Culture and Ministry

CFM 514 Fall, 2009
Mondays 6:40-10:00 PM



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Course web page: www.don.ratcliffs.net/classes/culture.htm

Textbooks and Readings

Donovan, Vincent. (1978). *Christianity Rediscovered*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

Little, Richard. (2009). "Culture and Ministry Readings on Culture." Customized textbook, available at the Wheaton College bookstore.

Osmer, Richard. (2008). *Practical Theology: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Recommended but not required:

Jenkins, P. (2006). *The new faces of Christianity*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Turabian, Kate L. (2007). *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th edition. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Crouch, Andy. (2008). *Culture Making: Recovering Our Creative Calling*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Course Description

Catalog Description: Explores foundational cultural issues from a Christian, socio-cultural perspective. Provides opportunities for students to cultivate theory and practice of ministry in the multicultural American society, as well as the Church around the world. Includes an introduction to the theory and practice of qualitative research methodologies as they relate to Christian formation and ministry.

Elaboration: This class is co-taught, which means that the culture aspect of the course is primarily the responsibility of Dr. Little and the research aspect of the class is primarily the responsibility of Dr. Ratcliff. However, it is expected that these areas will overlap to some extent. While most of the semester will be co-taught, there will be a number of classes where each instructor teaches individually.

Objectives

The competencies described below correspond with the departmental objectives listed on the last page of this syllabus. These competencies are reflected in student activities and products, as assessed by the instructor. Thus students can expect assignments that foster:

- **Exploring theological, sociological, anthropological, and psychological foundations of culture and ministry** [Thus partially fulfilling program objective A3: Can recognize, evaluate, and attend to the diverse cultural, social, psychological, and spiritual contexts of formation and ministry]. This objective is reflected in requirement 5.
- **Reflecting upon one's own gifts, passions, and calling** [Thus partially fulfilling program objective B3: Develop an awareness of their gifts, passions, and calling in ministry]. This objective is reflected in requirements 7 and 9.
- **Engaging a cultural context that differs from one's background while contrasting the group with other selected cultures** [Thus partially fulfilling program objective C3: Communicate well orally and in writing in culturally diverse settings]. This is reflected in requirements 2, 3, 8, and 9.
- **Acquiring an initial level of competence for conducting ethnographic research** [Thus partially fulfilling program objective C5: Research humbly and consistently]. This is reflected in requirements 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Course Requirements

Emailed assignments need to be sent with a return receipt, providing a note that states the email was delivered. Students are encouraged to complete assignments well in advance of deadlines—computer or printer malfunction is not an acceptable excuse for late work.

The use of laptop computers is limited to taking notes in class; they should not be used for internet access, watching movies, or other activities.

Written assignments are to follow Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed. (2007), and should be typed, double spaced, in 12 point Times New Roman font, with one-inch margins, and carefully proofread. Proper spelling and grammar reflect care in writing and self-respect by the student, and will contribute to a positive grade for assignments. Group videos are to be completed on DVD that is playable on a standard player.

Requirements Primarily Related to Research [Don]

1. Readings. Create an outline of your readings in the Osmer and Donovan books, including key themes and personal statement regarding those key themes. These are due each evening the readings are designated—see course schedule. 10% of final grade.

2. Context Analysis. Using one or more reliable sources, download and summarize key demographic information about the area and culture you are studying. Observe your cultural group systematically—with your cohort—for at least 60 minutes (total) in a variety of locations, videotaping and/or photographing at least part of the observation with your peer. Summarize the demographic information and your observations in a group-made video. Also address the issue of the difference this information makes for ministry to these people in this area in the video. Clearly indicate in the credits what each person did, and include each person on the screen. The video is due October 12. 10% of final grade.

3. Interviews and Analysis. Videotape (or photograph with audio recording) several interviews with a variety of people in or near the site studied (30 to 60 minutes). The video should include each person in the cohort asking at least two questions and two follow up prompts. Follow the guidelines for analysis in Osmer and as described in class, and include this in the final video

in the form of a group discussion with your peer cohort. Again, clearly indicate what each person did in the credits, and include each person on the screen. The video is due November 12. 10% of final grade for interviews, 5% points for analysis, total of 15% of grade.

4. Literature Review. This will include five research articles related to a particular cross-cultural group you are studying for the course, as agreed-upon by both instructors. You will *conceptually* review the five sources, avoiding the “string-of-pearls” approach. 10% of final grade.

Requirements Primarily Related to Culture [Rich]

5. Readings. You will create an outline of your readings in the culture readings book, including key themes and personal statement regarding those key themes. 10% of final grade.

6. Peer-Reviewed Culture Article Presentations. You will make class presentations of research-based articles related to two different cultures, with written comments that compare and contrast the two cultures. Distribute a copy of the original article and your comments for each person in the class. 10% of final grade. Due Nov 2 & 16.

7. Intercultural Competency Evaluation. This will be taken online as described in class. Write a self-assessment of your perceived competency in contrast to the findings of the ICE. Additionally, evaluate these findings in view of your personal gifts, passions, and calling. 10% of final grade. Due Sep 28.

8. Cultural Group Presentation. Your cohort will present a cultural biography of the group you studied using the findings identified in your research. This should include a history of the culture group, their relationship with the dominant culture, their identificational and assimilational realities, their spiritual identity and challenges they face operating within the larger cultural context. Your presentation should conclude with specific recommendations for cross-cultural effectiveness to be used in pre-field training for workers in this culture. Special attention should be given to the scope and sequencing of your “curriculum.” You will be expected to use video and images of your culture group in your presentation, ideally as part of a video package designed to present the entire content of this assignment. 10% of final grade. Due Nov 30.

9. Cultural Autobiography. A final project will consist of a narrative describing your involvement with the group studied, including key ideas and input from your reading that informed your understandings. You should also contrast the culture of your chosen group with the culture of another group you have studied this semester, including a personal assessment of your gifts, passions and calling to effectively work cross-culturally with this group. Finally, include recommendations for effective ministry for others who may be preparing to work with this cultural group. 10% of final grade. Due Dec 14 (Finals Week).

Topics and Related Readings

Culture and Ministry Schedule & Readings - Fall 2009. All weeks team-taught except L=Little and R=Ratcliff

Date	Topics & Assignments	Readings
Aug 31 (R&L)	Introduction to the Course, Defining Culture and Research	Syllabus

Sep 14 (R&L)	Overview of Research, Four Tasks of Practical Theology, Theology of Culture	Little 1, Osmer Introduction, Donovan 2,3
19 (R)	Aurora Hispanic Community 8:00 AM, Methods of Observation	Osmer 1, Donovan 4,5
28 (L)	Cultural Categories, Subdominant Cultures, assignment 7	Little 5, ICE.
Oct 10 (R)	Chinatown Community 8:00 AM, Conducting Interviews	Osmer 2, Donovan 6,7, Handouts
12 (R&L)	Epistemology, Initial Analysis assignment 2	Little 3,4,
19	Fall Break	
24 (L)	Devon Ave Indian Community 8:00 AM Cross Cultural Ministry Imperatives and Effectiveness	Little 7,8
26 (R&L)	Worldview & Culture Change	Little 2,6
Oct 31 (R&L)	Roosevelt Apartment Project, presentations (assignment 6a)	Little 9,10
Nov 9 (R)	Program Evaluation, Leadership & Open Systems assignment 3	Osmer 3, Donovan 8,9
16 (L)	Cross Cultural Ministry and Training, presentations (assignment 6b)	Handouts
30 (R&L)	Writing, Quality, Culture Presentations	Osmer 4, Donovan 10
Dec 7 (R&L)	Congregational Culture, Cross-Cultural Churches, assignment 4	Little 11 Handout
Finals Week (R&L)	Personal "Calling" and Ministry, cultural autobiography (assignment 9)	

Grades

Grades will be assigned according to the following point scale, with up to 500 points being assigned by Rich Little and up to 500 points by Don Ratcliff:

940-1000	A	"Outstanding"	800-839	B-	"Acceptable
900-939	A-	"Superior"	770-799	C+	but below
870-899	B+	"Very Good"	740-769	C	average"
840-869	B	"Satisfactory"	< 740	F	Failing

Assignments turned in late will be penalized 5% per day, and after one week will receive a 0 (note that a 0 pulls down the grade far more than merely a failing grade). No papers can be turned in after the last regular class day of the semester. No assignment can be turned in when an

absence is unexcused. Excused absences are only given for emergencies and personal illness. In unusual situations, an absence will be permitted for other reasons, but only with advance permission and if assignments are turned in advance of the missed class. The decision on an excused absence is that of the instructors.

Plagiarism, Cheating, and Dishonesty

Plagiarism is the act of representing the work of others as one's own. This and other forms of academic dishonesty are subject to strict disciplinary action, according to the following policy and procedure.

1. Students must avoid unauthorized collaboration, fabrication of data, unauthorized use of computer data, and excessive revision by someone other than the student.
2. Students are responsible to report to their instructor any dishonest behavior of which they are aware, or any circumstances that tend to encourage dishonesty.
3. If there are mitigating circumstances, lesser sanctions than those listed below may be applied with the concurrence of the instructor's superior (i.e. chair or dean).

Suspicion of Dishonesty

1. Students suspected of dishonesty will be confronted discretely and a response solicited.
2. If the student admits to dishonesty, appropriate disciplinary action (as described below) will be applied and a report made to the Student Development Office. The student will also be informed of his or her right of appeal.
3. If the student denies dishonesty, but not to the satisfaction of the instructor, the matter will be referred to the petitions subcommittee of the Educational Policies and Curriculum Committee, who with the Dean of Students will hear both parties and submit their recommendations to the Vice President for Student Development, who shall make a determination.
4. Any further appeals will follow the College process of appeals.

Conformation of Dishonesty

1. A grade of zero will be assigned to any individual assignment or test on which a student has been dishonest.
2. In the case of inadvertent plagiarism, the instructor may at his discretion require that the assignment or examination be rewritten, and may assign a grade one letter grade lower than it otherwise would have been.
3. In the case of a second instance of dishonesty in a course, a student will be dropped from that course with a grade of F and placed on disciplinary probation.
4. Successive acts of dishonesty may result in expulsion from the College, subject to standard procedures of the Student Development Office.
5. A Student who knowingly assists another student in dishonest behavior is equally guilty and subject to the same degrees of sanctions.

Adapted from the Wheaton College faculty handbook (section 3.1.16)

The information in this syllabus is subject to revision, as announced in regular class periods. Students are responsible for course content and any announcements made when absent, regardless of the reason for missing the class.

M.A. in Christian Formation and Ministry

The Christian Formation and Ministry department seeks to develop academically grounded, spiritually whole, and practically skilled ministers of the Gospel who are prepared to build up the Church in a changing world.

M.A. objectives highlighted in CFM 514 Culture and Ministry are bolded. CFM 514 objectives are bolded and bulleted.

Therefore we diligently seek to develop wise and compassionate servants of Christ who are

Academically grounded in that they..

- A 1. Possess a strong biblical/ theological basis for formation and ministry.
- A 2. Understand and appreciate the historical and philosophical antecedents of Christian formation and ministry.
- A 3. Can recognize, evaluate, and attend to the diverse cultural, social, psychological, and spiritual contexts of formation and ministry.**
 - **Exploring sociological, anthropological, and psychological foundations of culture and ministry.**
- A 4. Develop a critical understanding of the educational and spiritual processes by which people grow in personal and corporate settings.

A Strong Philosophy of Ministry

Spiritually whole in that they are...

- B 1. Committed to an ongoing life of discipleship and spiritual growth as the foundation of effective ministry.
- B 2. Committed both personally and corporately to work for God's global Kingdom purposes though the universal and local Church.
- B 3. Developing an awareness of their gifts, passions, and calling in ministry.**
 - **Reflecting upon one's own gifts, passions, and calling.**

A Deep Love for God and others

Practically skilled in that they...

- C 1. Teach effectively and handle Scripture wisely with an eye to integrate theory into creative practice.
- C 2. Propose compassionate ministry approaches that promote a thoughtful concern for the interior life and help bear burdens with the wounded.
- C 3. Communicate well orally and in writing in culturally diverse settings.**
 - **Engaging a cultural context that differs from one's background while contrasting the group with other selected cultures**
- C 4. Promote strong interpersonal relationships in ministry teams.
- C 5. Research humbly and consistently.**
 - **Acquiring an initial level of competence for conducting ethnographic research.**

A Growing Capacity to Facilitate Spiritual Transformation

Recognizing that every student has been uniquely gifted by God and brings past experience which informs his or her worldview, we as a department seek to further equip them for service in God's Kingdom.