

**Assemblies of God Theological Seminary  
Evangel University**

**MCSM/MHTM/PTHM 643 ANTHROPOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION  
IN THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE  
COURSE SYLLABUS  
August 23-25, 2017**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will seek to integrate anthropological theory with the missionary call to communicate the gospel in new cultural contexts. Using anthropological theory the students will begin the process of evaluating their own home culture as well as cross-cultural experience in order to gain self-awareness and competencies in living, leading, and communicating outside of their own cultural habitat. Course principles are applied to the communication of the Gospel in missional and ecclesial contexts in order to encourage the transformation of communities in any culture.

**EVANGEL UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT**

Evangel University is a comprehensive Christian university committed to excellence in educating and equipping students to become Spirit-empowered servants of God who impact the church and society globally.

**ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary is to equip servant leaders with knowledge, skill, and passion to revitalize the Church and evangelize the world in the power of the Holy Spirit.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of the class, the student should be able to:

1. Define elements of culture using anthropological terms, such as worldview, social organization, power distance, and collectivism. Describe his/her own cultural identity and biases.
2. Critique the role cultural identity plays in the development of church community, communication methods and mission strategies.
3. Interact with a person from another culture and through the interview process, identify key cultural biases.
4. Identify the factors that can influence the communication or mis-communication of the Gospel across cultures.
5. Develop a culturally appropriate communication strategy, in light of anthropological understanding, for reaching a defined people group with the message of the gospel.
6. Evaluate one's own cross cultural relationships and communication efforts in light of the Gospel and seek to grow in empathy towards people groups of other cultures and grow in the desire to fulfill God's mission by communicating the Gospel effectively.

## **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

For information on textbook pricing: <http://www.bkstr.com/evangelstore/home>.

Elmer, Duane. 2006. *Cross-Cultural Servanthood: Serving the World in Christlike Humility*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP. (ISBN-13: 978-0830833788) 212 pgs.

Hogan, Brian. 2008. *There's a Sheep in My Bathtub: Birth of a Mongolian Church Planting Movement*. Bayside, CA Asteroidea Books. (ISBN-13: 978-0979905605) 274 pgs.

Lingenfelter, Sherwood. 1998. *Transforming Culture: A Challenge for Christian Mission*. 2nd. ed. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books. (ISBN 978-0801021787) 176 pgs.

Rynkiewich, Michael. *Soul, Self, and Society: A Postmodern Anthropology for Mission in a Postcolonial World*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 2011. (ISBN 13:978-1-60608-773-2) 280 pgs.

Rogers, Everett M, and Thomas M Steinfatt. *Intercultural Communication*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1998. (ISBN-13: 978-1577660323) 292 pgs.

Tennent, Timothy C. 2007. *Theology in the Context of World Christianity: How the Global Church is Influencing the Way We Think About and Discuss Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. (ISBN-13: 978-0310275114) (read two chapters).

Bailey, Kenneth E. 2008. *Jesus through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic. (ISBN-13: 978-0830825684) Read the introduction and one episode from each of the 6 Parts of the book. ~ 100 pgs.

\*If you have read any of the above books for a previous class, please consult with Dr. Koeshall in order to replace it with another book.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

The following are policies and requirements for the course in general. Specific content and assignment directions will be given later in the Syllabus.

- All students are expected to be present for the entire duration of the class.
- All assignments are due on the date and time specified in this syllabus and in the various weekly folders.
- All students are expected to communicate with the teacher any concerns, technical difficulties, and/or questions they may have via the General Q&A Discussion Forum, emails, phone calls, or face-to-face appointment.
- Students are expected to follow the structure and layout of the online course.
- Students are expected to have (and use):
  - Daily computer access
  - Daily internet access
  - Evangel Email
- All students will submit homework as directed:
  - To the professor: anita.koeshall@gmail.com
  - Post via CANVAS discussion boards
- Suggested web browsers: Internet Explorer, Firefox (*especially for Mac users*)

## **COURSE STRUCTURE**

This course will be offered as a hybrid learning experience, combining 2 ½ days of face-to-face learning at the beginning of the semester with the remaining course materials being engaged online through the Course Commons (Canvas) learning management system (LMS) until the end of the semester. It will include lectures, bi-weekly discussion forums, field research and interviews, and writing assignments.

All the course materials including assignments, PowerPoint files, and document files will be available through Canvas under the Course Content link. Course grades will be posted using the Canvas Grade Book (see Course Tools, My Grades).

*How to accomplish each week/module:*

1. Complete the discussion forum postings as noted in the course outline within the appropriate time frame.
2. Read the assigned texts in order to complete the reading reports on them by the respective due dates.
3. Complete the writing assignments as indicated in the Course Outline (*specific directions included in the appropriate project activity within CANVAS*)
4. All assignments will be due each date specified in the Canvas module before 11:59 p.m.

### **A. Regular Projects:**

Activities will be assigned in Canvas throughout the course to the end of semester. This will include the reading reports, for which a template will be supplied on Canvas. Point values for each project will be identified at the time of the assignment. Unless specified otherwise, all exercises will be typed and meet professional standards.

### **B. Course Project:**

The purpose of this project is to understand some aspect of a people group that is different than your own home culture by conducting interviews with someone from that group. From your interviews you will, first, demonstrate the ability to identify basic cultural characteristics, then, identify a specific topic or theme from the interviews that would serve as a bridge from that culture to the Kingdom. From the perspective of this understanding, you will then seek to exegete a pericope that demonstrates a biblical truth that speaks to that theme which is pertinent to this people group, and explore a method to adequately communicate the truth. The professor will provide complete explanation and a grading rubric in the F2F class sessions for the content and structure of this work.

**CLASS TOPICS TO BE COVERED**

Component of Culture

- Worldview
- Systems
- Grid/Group and other dimensions
- Identity, Ritual, and Metanarratives

Exegeting Culture

- Who am I, as a member of my culture?
- Cultures as prisons

Communication Theory

- Reading and Interpreting text through cultural lenses
- Message as word and action

Developing Contextually Sensitive Strategies for Communication

**COURSE OUTLINE:**

| Module   | Module Theme                       | Learning Outcomes Met | Module Objectives and Activities   |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| 1. In Class Lecture<br>Aug 23: 1-5pm<br>Aug 24-25: | Discovering Culture—why it matters | 1, 2,                 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Understand world-view and cultural dimensions</b> according to Hofstede, Lingenfelter and Douglas.</li> <li>2. Identify our own cultural biases.</li> <li>3. Identify culture in which Scripture is set—evaluate how our culture causes us to interpret the text differently than the original authors intended.</li> <li>4. Identify the person/people group that you will study this semester.</li> </ol> Attend all lectures |

|                        |  |   |   |
|------------------------|--|---|---|
|                        |  |   | Read Lingenfelter, Rynkiewich: Submit reading reports (see Appendix A)<br>Due Sept. 9 by 11:59pm  |
| 2. Aug 27 –<br>Sept 9  | Learning to Interview<br>Exegeting a culture through an<br>interview | 4 | Life-history interview—Watch <b>short video</b> on how to interview, choose questions that will draw out the life-history of your interviewee.<br>2. Do online search if necessary to round out your information. and apply this information in order to analyze the of social order of the culture.<br>3. Use the questionnaire on pgs 40-50 in Lingenfelter’s <i>Transforming Culture</i> to complete this task for both your native culture and for the culture of the people group that you are exploring.<br>4. Compare and contrast the two and suggest hindrances to communication presented by cultural differences. Include a graph in your work. Write up your analysis and submit by Sept 9, 11:59PM   |
| 3. Sept 10-<br>Sept 23 | Scripture through other’s eyes.                                      | 5 | Read Kenneth Bailey and Tennent texts. Submit reading reports. Due Sept. 23 by 11:59.<br><b>Exploring scriptures through another culture’s eyes:</b><br>1. Find a friend who does not know Jesus from a different culture.      2. Choose one of the pericope from the Bailey text and print it out as a story, leaving out the Bible references.<br>3. Ask him or her if she is willing to read a ‘story’ and answer this question: If this story were true what would it mean for someone from your culture?<br>4. Outline the differences between your understanding of the story and their understanding.<br>5. Reflect on the reasons why the difference exists. In what way would your discoveries enable you to better share the message of this pericope with this people group?<br>Reflect on your experience with your “teacher” in an on-line forum.<br>Submit a report in writing by Sept. 23 11:59pm |
| 4. Sept 24 –<br>Oct. 7 | Cross-cultural Communication   | 5 | <b>Understand the art and challenges of cross-cultural communication</b><br>Watch the video—Where are you from?<br><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWynJkN5HbQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWynJkN5HbQ</a> .  |

|                    |   |         |   |
|--------------------|---|---------|---|
|                    |   |         | <p>What cross-cultural assumptions does Ken make talking to the other jogger? Post your thoughts!</p> <p>Read Steinfatt and Rogers: Submit a reading report by Oct. 7 11:59pm</p>   |
| 5. Oct 8 – Oct 28  | Exegeting Culture                               | 3, 4, 5 | <p><b>Using Interviews to understand a culture:</b> With your “teacher” (a person from another culture) conduct 2 interviews (minimum) See Ethnography interviews sheets posted on Canvas.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Using the lenses that are provided by Rynkiewich, Hofstede, Lingenfelter, Elmer, or Mary Douglas analyze the important cultural traits of this people group.</li> <li>2. Focus on a topic or theme of the culture that you think will be the center of your biblical study and communication project.</li> <li>3. Report your experiences on-line in discussion forum.</li> <li>4. Write a six-page analysis and summary.</li> </ol> <p>Your analysis and summary should have at least one reference per page, and use most of the above-mentioned references (6-10 total references). (double spaced, 12 pt Times New Roman)</p> <p>Submit by Oct 28 by 11:59pm</p> |
| 6. Oct 29 – Nov 11 | Communicating Biblical truth to other cultures  | 3,4,5   | <p><b>Identify</b> a biblical pericope that you think should resonate with this people group according to the discoveries you made during the interviews.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exegete the pericope, using good Bible study methods.</li> <li>2. Critique (briefly) your own cultural bias that may have distorted your understanding,</li> <li>3. Apply the passage to the people group you are studying, referring to the interviews you have conducted with your “teacher”.</li> <li>3. Determine the message in scripture that would like to communicate to this people group (5-8 pages, double spaced, 12 pt Times New Roman, 1 reference per page)</li> </ol> <p>Submit by Nov 11 by 11:59pm</p>  |
| 7. Nov 12 – Nov 25 | Integrating cultural understanding and biblical | 3,4,5   | <p>Understanding communication between cultures. Integrating the 12 signal system into communication.</p>   |

|                     |   |   |   |
|---------------------|---|---|---|
|                     | truth into a culturally appropriate message form  |   | <b>Develop a creative method of communicating</b> that message to the people group you have chosen. This can be a skit, a dialogue, a video, etc. Use your imagination. Discuss your plan in the class forum. Interact with others on their plan.<br>Begin working on final project |
| 8. Nov 25-<br>Dec 8 | 1. Evaluate your own personal reaction to the interview process, the person and the discoveries | 6 | Complete final project out of the preceding three tasks.<br>Read Duane Elmer. Respond to on-line discussion forum concerning your own personal response to the text.  |

### **GRADING PROCEDURE**

|   |      |        |
|---|------|--------|
| 1. Reading Reports  |      | 15 pts |
| a. Elmer  | 2pts |        |
| b. Hogan  | 2pts |        |
| c. Steinfatt and Rogers                                       | 2pts |        |
| d. Lingenfelter   | 2pts |        |
| e. Tennant  | 2pts |        |
| f. Rynkiewich   | 2pts |        |
| g. Bailey   | 3pts |        |
| 2. Theology: Exploring meaning through another culture's eyes |      | 20 pts |
| 3. Discovering cultural bias using Lingenfelter Model         |      | 15 pts |
| 3. Posts to On-Line Forums                                    |      | 10 pts |
| 4. Final Project  |      | 40 pts |

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

It is assumed that students at AGTS will endeavor to be honest and of high integrity in all matters pertaining to Seminary life. A lack of respect and integrity is evidenced by cheating, fabricating, plagiarizing, misusing facilities, removing books and other property not one's own, and disrupting classes.

Cheating is defined as “intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise.” It is assumed that whatever is submitted by a student is the work of that student and is new work for that course. Fabrication is “intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise or form.” Plagiarism is “intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise.” One who facilitates any of the above is equally responsible with the primary violator.

Penalties may include restitution, an “F” on an individual paper, exam, or course; loss of campus employment; disciplinary probation; removal from extracurricular activities; and suspension.—*AGTS Student Handbook*.

### **THE USE OF COMPUTERS IN THE CLASSROOM**

The use of computers for word processing in the classroom represents a privilege given to students to enhance their learning. They may only be used for purposes related to the course. It is therefore a breach of classroom etiquette, an act of rudeness, and a distraction to other students, when computers are also used to surf the web, watch videos, play games, and send messages, etc., during class time. The professor assumes that seminarians will be persons of integrity when using computers in the classroom.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATORY LANGUAGE**

Students should use non-discriminatory language in all written and spoken communication in this class. For specific guidelines, see the Student Handbook

at: [http://www.agts.edu/community/student\\_handbook/2010studenthandbook.pdf](http://www.agts.edu/community/student_handbook/2010studenthandbook.pdf)

### **DISABILITY ACCOMODATION**

As defined in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary at Evangel University is committed to the provision of reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If AGTS students believe they qualify for accommodations, they should contact the AGTS Student Life Office, Room 218, telephone extension 8881.

### **AGTS Grading Scale**

100% - 94% = A  
93% - 90% = A-  
89% - 87% = B+  
86% - 84% = B  
83% - 80% = B-  
79% - 77% = C+  
76% - 74% = C  
73% - 70% = C-  
69% - 67% = D+  
66% - 64% = D  
63% - 60% = D-

#### **SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Bevans, Stephen B. "The Church as Creation of the Spirit: Unpacking a Missionary Image." *Missiology* 35, no. 1 (01 2007): 5-21.

Bosch, David J. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 2004.

Douglas, Mary. *In the Active Voice*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982.

Fee, Gordon D. "The Cultural Context of Ephesians 5:18-6:9: Is There a Divinely Ordained Hierarchy in the Life of the Church and Home That Is Based on Gender Alone?". *Priscilla Papers* Winter 2002: 16, no. 1 (Winter 2002 2002): 3-8.

Gibbs, Eddie, and Ryan K. Bolger. *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Cultures*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2005.

Hiebert, Paul G. 2009. *The Gospel in Human Contexts: Anthropological Explorations for Contemporary Missions*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic. (ISBN: 978-0-8010-3681) 217 pgs. \$22.48.

- Jewett, Paul King, Marguerite Shuster, and Paul K. Jewett. *Who We Are: Our Dignity as Human*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1996.
- Koeshall, Anita. "Power and Covenant: Ethics of Hierarchy and Egalitarianism." 37. Pasadena, California: Fuller Theological Seminary, 2005.
- King, Roberta R. "Negotiating the Gospel Cross-Culturally: The Contributions of Intercultural Communication to Missiology." In *Paradigm Shifts in Christian Witness*. 66-75. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2008.
- Lingenfelter, Sherwood and Marvin Mayers. *Ministering Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2003. **ISBN-10:** 0801026474, (**ISBN-13:** 978-0801026478) Print 122 pgs. \$13.99
- Newbigin, Lesslie. *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1989.
- Plueddemann, James E. *Leading across Cultures: Effective Ministry and Missions in the Global Church*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2009.
- Rogers, Everett M, and Thomas M Steinfatt. *Intercultural Communication*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1998.
- Shaw, R. Daniel. "Beyond Contextualization: Toward a Twenty-First Century Model for Enabling Mission." *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 34, no. 4 (10/01/ 2010 2010): 208-12.
- Shaw, R. Daniel, and Charles Van Engen. *Communicating God's Word in a Complex World: God's Truth or Hocus Pocus?* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003. (ISBN-13: 978-0742514478) 280 pgs. \$28.46.
- Thompson, Michael, Richard Ellis, and Aaron Wildavsky. *Cultural Theory*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1990.
- Tucker, Frank. *Intercultural Communication for Christian Ministry*. Adelaide, South Australia: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013. (ISBN-13: 978-1490311142) 388 pgs. Print \$16.00.
- Rynkiewich, Michael. *Soul, Self, and Society: A Postmodern Anthropology for Mission in a Postcolonial World*. Eugene, Oregon:

Wipf and Stock, 2011. (ISBN 13:978-1-60608-773-2) pgs 280. \$33.00 (also available in Kindle \$9.99).

Stark, Rodney. "Efforts to Christianize Europe, 400-2000." *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 16, no. 1 (01 2001): 105-23.

Voelz, J.W. *What Does This Mean?: Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Post-Modern World*: Concordia Pub. House, 1997.

Van Engen, Charles. *Mission on the Way: Issues in Mission Theology*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 1996.

Wildavsky, Aaron. *The Nursing Father: Moses as a Political Leader*. University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1984.

Wright, Christopher J.H. *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2006.

Zielenziger, Michael. *Shutting out the Sun: How Japan Created Its Own Lost Generation*. New York: Random House, 2006. (ISBN: 978-1-4000-7779-3) 340 pgs. \$11.83. (or an ethnography of another culture of your interest in consultation with Dr. Koeshall)

Prepared by Dr. Anita Koeshall, April 5, 2017. This is a trustworthy guide as to the content and flow of the course. The professor reserves the right to make revisions.

## APPENDIX A

### READING REPORTS

Course: MCS/MHT /PTH 643: Anthropology and Communication in Theological Perspective  
Professor:

Student:

Date:

Book: (author) (Title) and other bibliographic information:

Number of Pages Read:

Major Thesis of this book:

List three significant missiological issues related to cross-cultural ministry presented by the book:

- a.
- b.
- c.

Key Ideas and Quote:

Your Interaction:

QUESTION(S):

**APPENDIX C  
RUBRIC FOR THE EVALUATION  
OF FINAL PROJECT**

|  | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>A. TOPIC SELECTION/RATIONALE FOR STUDY 10%</b>  |   |   |   |   |   |
| 1. The student gives a clear, cogent rationale for the choice of the people group and the choice of the interviewee 2%   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2. The chosen cultural characteristic is important (worthy of study), relevant, and/or serves to contribute to the missiological endeavor on the field 2%                  |   |   |   |   |   |
| 3. The research and/or content goals and the related methodology are clearly stated (what data or information they intend to acquire and how they intend to acquire it) 2% |   |   |   |   |   |
| 4. There's evidence that the student has read widely enough to identify the major issues 2%  |   |   |   |   |   |
| 5. The student understands the issues and is able to critically reflect on their relevance to the chosen topic 2%  |   |   |   |   |   |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>  |   |   |   |   |   |
| <b>B. RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT AND ORGANIZATION OF THE TOPIC 30%</b>   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 1. The student has chosen and described a research methodology that is adequate to the stated goals of the study 10%   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2. The outline and content of the paper reveals that the investigation of the topic is comprehensive and covers the topic adequately 10%                                   |   |   |   |   |   |

|   |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| 3. The outline of the paper is coherent and provides a logical development from concept to concept 10%  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Total</b>  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>C. CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS 50%</b>  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The student has engaged a broad spectrum of sociological/anthropological views in order to adequately assess the interviews and identify cultural issues, in relationship to missiological concerns. 10%   |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. The student demonstrates an ability to evaluate the interviews and discern cultural issues, and on that basis, choose an adequate biblical pericope that speaks to the cultural issue. The student then demonstrates the ability to exegete that pericope in relationship to the cultural issue. 15% |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3. The student shows evidence of integrative thinking that biblically critiques both his/her own culture as well as the culture he/she is ministering to. 15%   |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. The student demonstrates creativity in communicating to the people of the culture he/she has interviewed 10%   |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Total:</b>   |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>D. BASIC WRITING SKILLS 10%</b>  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The paper is mechanically sound in terms of word usage and selection, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, syntax and grammar 2%   |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. The appropriate style format was used (Turabian or APA) 2%   |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3. The writing style is clear, straightforward, and easily understood 2%  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. The development of thought is aided by well-constructed paragraphs, transitional sentences and summations that facilitate the flow of thought 2%   |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 5. The document is accurately named: lastname.assignment.date.docx<br>2% |  |  |  |  |  |
| Total:   |  |  |  |  |  |
| FINAL TOTAL:   |  |  |  |  |  |

The quality of a student's writing will be assessed using the following rubric. Each element will be assessed on a 5-point scale

where 5 represents superior work, adequate for publishing. A score of 1 would signify that the work requires significant re-writing and a score of 3 reflects adequate, passable quality.