

Assemblies of God Theological Seminary

At Evangel University

MC 904 Theological Issues, Contextualization, and Area Studies

9-13 July 2018

Alan Johnson, Ph.D.

Summer 2018

2006-2007 J. Philip Hogan Professor of World Missions Associate Professor of Anthropology

alan.johnson@agmd.org

+66-85-221-6483

USA Cell 417-619-1546

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A course to enable students to respond to theological issues encountered in intercultural contexts, such as Trinitarian concerns, bibliology, local theologies, syncretism and Pentecostalism. Students will work with personally relevant area-specific case studies and principles of “doing theology” in another context will be analyzed

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate understanding of the origin, significance and role of ‘contextualization’ in present day missions.
2. Appraise contextualization attempts from various case studies and writings for their success or failure and articulate the reasons for their decision.
3. Design a biblical explanation of why sensitivity to issues of context is legitimated by Scripture.
4. Explain the Scripture basis for non-contextualization and provide an example from your ministry.
5. Develop a missional strategy in response to a specific ministry situation using the concepts of form and function and the critical contextualization rubric.
6. Determine in various case studies when efforts to contextualize become syncretism and suggest a revised their approach.
7. Critique the practice of radical contextualization/insider movements and propose a methodology more rooted in Scripture.
8. Compare and contrast various models of contextualization.

9. Draw and explain different contextualization trajectories as they have happened in Christian mission.
10. List and explain the various domains of contextualization.
11. Analyze the varying context issues faced in the Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, and Postmodern worldviews.
12. Discuss form and function in contextualization and demonstrate ability to use these concepts in working case studies.
13. Explain why contextualization/context sensitivity is still not widely practiced by cross-cultural workers.
14. Evaluate your own issues of context in your ministry setting and construct a plan for addressing one particular problem using tools from this course.
15. List and explain the four approaches to culture found in the New Testament writings.
16. Explain the weakness of the “kernel and husk” idea for contextual theology and identify reasons why all theology is “contextual”.
17. Define local theology and contextual theology and provide examples for each one.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Cook, Matthew, Rob Haskell, Ruth Julian, and Nathee Tanchanapongs, eds. *Local Theology for the Global Church: Principles for an Evangelical Approach to Contextualization*, Globalization of Mission Series, 2010. (213)

Fleming, Dean. *Contextualization in the New Testament: Patterns for Theology and Mission*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005. (322 pages)

Johnson, Alan R. Digital Reader on Contextualization.

Moreau, A. Scott. *Contextualization in World Missions: Mapping and Assessing Evangelical Models*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic & Professional, 2012. (384 pages)

Ott, Craig & Harold A. Netland (eds). *Globalizing Theology: Belief and Practice in an Era of World Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006. (336 pages)

Schreiter, Robert J. *Constructing Local Theologies*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2006. (178)

For information of textbook pricing, go to <http://www.bkstr.com/evangelstore/home>

BACKGROUND LITERATURE

These books are standard works on missiology that are particularly relevant to this course. Ideally, you should have already read this material before beginning doctoral studies. If there are any books you have not read on this list, review them and write a summary for later reference. Even if you have already read these books, it would be good to review them and write a summary as well. If you will follow this practice throughout your doctoral studies, you should be prepared for the qualifying exam.

- Bevans, Stephen. *Models of Contextual Theology*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992.
- Bevans, Stephen. *An Introduction to Theology in Global Perspective*, Theology in Global Perspective Series, ed. Peter C. Phan. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2011.
- Brownson, James. *Speaking the Truth in Love: New Testament Resources for a Missional Hermeneutic Christian Mission and Modern Culture*, ed. Alan Neely, H. Wayne Pipkin and Wilbert R. Shenk. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1998.
- Conn, Harvie M. *Eternal Word and Changing Worlds: Theology, Anthropology, and Mission in Dialogue*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing, 1984.
- Dowsett, Rose, ed. *Global Mission: Reflections and Case Studies in Contextualization for the Whole Church*, Globalization of Mission Series. Pasadena, California: William Carey Library, 2011.
- Dyrness, William. *Learning About Theology From the Third World*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990.
- Dyrness, William A. *Invitation to Cross-Cultural Theology: Case Studies In Vernacular Theologies*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992.
- Fleming, Bruce . *Contextualization of Theology*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1980.
- Gilliland, Dean, ed. *The Word Among Us: Contextualizing Theology for Mission Today*. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1989.
- Greenman, Jeffrey P., and Gene L. Green, eds. *Global Theology in Evangelical Perspective: Exploring the Contextual Nature of Theology and Mission*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2011.
- Gutierrez, Gustavo. *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation* revised edition. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988.
- Hiebert, Paul G. *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2008. (358 pages)
- Hesselgrave, David & Edward Rommen. *Contextualization: Meanings, Methods, and Models*. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2000.
- Keller, Timothy. *Center Church*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2012.
- Kraft, Charles. *Appropriate Christianity*. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2005. (519pages)
- Lingenfelter, Sherwood. *Leading Cross-Culturally: Covenant Relationships for Effective Christian Leadership*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2008.

Nichols, Bruce J. *Contextualization: A Theology of Gospel and Culture*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979.

Plueddmann, James E. *Leading across Cultures: Effective Ministry and Mission in the Global Church*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2009.

Redford, Shawn Barrett. *Missiological Hermeneutics: Biblical Interpretation for the Global Church*. Vol. 11 American Society of Missiology Monograph Series. Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2012.

Tennent, Timothy C. *Theology in the Context of World Christianity: How the Global Church Is Influencing the Way We Think About and Discuss Theology*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2007.

Van Rheen, Gailyn, ed. *Contextualization and Syncretism: Navigating Cultural Currents*, EMS Series. Pasadena, California: William Carey Library, 2006.

Wu, Jackson. *One Gospel for All Nations: A Practical Approach to Biblical Contextualization*. Pasadena, California: William Carey Library, 2015.

COURSE METHODOLOGY

Pre-session required reading & reflection

Visiting guest lecturers

Student presentations

Classroom learning activities

Post-session writings

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students should read all the required textbooks. Those who have not read the background literature should also read it to prepare for the qualifying exam later in the program. To facilitate your review of this literature throughout your program, write a summary and or reflection of each book or article using any suitable software program.

These notes will prove to be crucial tools for you in reviewing for the qualifying exams, in which you will be required to show your mastery of missiological literature. Although you may write what you please on these cards, we recommend the following format:

Bibliographic information (author, date, and title is enough)

A summary of the book

Significant quote(s) from the book which you might wish to cite in your research or on the qualifying or comprehensive exam.

You should periodically review these and have a good understanding of the content by the time of the qualifying exam.

Pre-Session:

1. Read the required textbooks listed in this syllabus. Develop summaries for each book as you do for all class reading in preparation for your comprehensive exam. You will not turn in your book summaries but indicate to the professor before he issues a grade if you have done the reading and the summaries.

The suggested order for reading is Flemming, Ott and Netland, Cook, the digital reader and Schreiter, Moreau. This order will be the most helpful in giving you background and concepts to tackle the Moreau book. You can read them in any order you like but experience has shown that people who start with Moreau have tended to get bogged down. It is a very difficult book and you will likely have an easier time with it if you have digested the other books first.

2. Based on the reading of the literature and your ministry context, write a 10 page critical reflection paper including responses to the following questions:

- What specific reading(s) most impacted your life? Why?
- What are the most significant missiological issues raised by the readings? Which are most germane to your ministry context? Why?
- How have the readings influenced your missions' thinking or future ministry?
- What missions statement or perspective in the readings did you disagree with most?
- Quote what you consider the most significant or impacting citation(s) and describe why the citation(s) is/are significant.
- In the final portion of the paper include some specific applications of things that you could actually do in your ministry setting. Contextualization literature often has a great deal of theory but offers the reader little in terms of concrete practices. In the final segment seek to articulate some principles gleaned from your readings and how they could be applied in real-life, preferably in your own ministry context.

3. Using the case study template provided below, develop a 10 page full case study and analysis from a real-life situation in your own ministry setting. In the final portion of the case you will explain first what you actually did, then based on your contextual and biblical reading articulate a new missiological application. The narration of the case itself should be approximately 2 pages. Follow the "Case Study Writing Tips" appended below the template for the narration of the case itself.

4. Identify another real-life ministry situation for a case-study that you will write up to be ready for class on Wednesday. You will write up only the case narration itself and we will work on the cultural and scriptural analysis in class. ***Do not write this case up before class, just identify the problem and we will discuss these on the first day of class.***

In-Session:

1. Attend class and participate in discussions and learning activities.
2. On the first day of class come prepared to share briefly a real-life ministry scenario that you will use to write up a case study problem that will be shared with the class on Thursday. You will learn how to write up the scenario in class on Monday.
3. On the first day of class you will be provided with a digital document that is an example of poor contextualization work. Wednesday and Thursday we will discuss these examples in class. You will orally present a brief review of the article and your explanation of why you think it is poor contextualization. This is an oral presentation only, no writing required.
4. Complete class quizzes as assigned.
5. Complete a final exam on the last day of class.

Post-Session:

Research paper: Write a research paper dealing with some topic of contextualization that is relevant to your ministry context and dissertation research. The paper should be about 30 pages in length, excluding the bibliography. Specific instructions for this assignment will be discussed in class.

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

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.

COURSE COMMONS

This course will use Evangel's learning management system, Course Commons, powered by the Canvas Learning Management System. Login directly at: <https://courses.evangel.edu/> or go to the Student Portal/Course Commons

Use your Evangel username and password to login.

To access this course, hover over or click Courses at the top of the page after logging in.

a. Before the class starts: Students will have access to Course Commons and this course seven (7) days before the official beginning of the semester. This does not mean all course content will be ready. Release of course content will be the prerogative of the professor. Students have until seven (7) days after the semester begins to complete financial registration. If financial registration is not completed by the seventh day, course access will be revoked and all submitted work will be lost.

b. Course Content: All course content (syllabus, modules, course materials, assignments, quizzes, exams, discussions, grades, etc.) will be located on the navigation pane on the left hand side of our course. At the end of a semester, students will have limited access to the course through Course Commons. Only access to already submitted work and grades will be available.

c. Personal Settings: After logging into Course Commons, be sure to go to Settings and adjust your personal profile settings. *Add in a profile picture of yourself (Smile!).*

I. Set your notifications: set how you'll be notified (EU email, personal email, text, Twitter, etc.) and how often.

d. Help: Click the Help button in the top right hand corner after you login. By clicking Help, you'll be able to...

- i. Submit a question directly to your instructor
- ii. Access Canvas Help Guides
- iii. Submit a Course Commons Helpdesk Ticket

e. Course Commons Student Orientation: All EU students are automatically enrolled in the Course Commons Student Orientation site. What's available? Getting Started help, what to do During Your Course, Help and FAQ, the Student Quick Start Guide, and much more.

f. Course Commons Troubleshooting: Question about a quiz or course content? *Contact your instructor, first!* Technical question about the Course Commons? Click Help and submit a ticket through Report a Problem. *Can't access Course Commons?* Contact the EU IT Helpdesk: 417-865-2815 x8368 (phone) or helpdesk@evangel.edu (email) or help.evangel.edu (web).

GRADING PROCEDURE

Reading all required textbooks	10%
Attendance and participation	5%
10 page reflection paper	10%
Full case study completed pre-session and narrative of ministry problem for use in-session	10%
Oral presentation critiquing negative examples of contextualization	10%
Final exam	15%
Research paper	40%

All work must be submitted electronically as MSWord document attachments to alan.johnson@agmd.org . Please include your last name as the first word in the file name. Students should retain a copy of all work submitted, until they have received a grade for this work.

The due date for all course work is 90 days from the end of the course.

Students are expected to complete all course work in a timely fashion as specified in this syllabus. A grade of IP (In Process) will be issued if the course ends after the AGTS semester ends. A grade of I (Incomplete) may be granted at the discretion of the professor for extenuating circumstances upon the presentation of the Incomplete Grade Request form: <http://www.agts.edu/academics/forms.html>. The approved Incomplete request will extend the due date for up to ninety days, may include a grade reduction, and will be assessed a grade change fee. Students may not register for courses in a new term if carrying more than two IP or I grades.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRPAHY

Under construction. Please see the posted 170 page pdf from Moreau for a comprehensive annotated bibliography through 2005.

SPECIFIC DATA

Prepared by Alan R. Johnson, 13 February 2018

Appendix: Case Study Template

Missions Case Study Worksheet

Name:

Case Study Title:

Narration of the case (Write a narrative of the details of the situation/issues/events and setting in order to make clear the nature of the problem-approximately 2 pages)

Case Study Writing Tips

http://www.cpcug.org/user/houser/advancedwebdesign/Tips_on_Writing_the_Case_Study.html

1. Keep your audience in mind: Remember that you are writing for students or discussants who may not be familiar with the background, details, and terminology of the situation. Keep jargon to a minimum.
2. Use short-story-writing techniques: A case has flesh-and-blood characters who should be intriguing. Each story element should move the narrative forward.
3. Openings: Grab the reader with a character facing his or her biggest problem: set the scene for the confrontations, the frustrations, and the main conflicts.
4. Present situations and scenes without any attempt at analysis: Scenes must follow a logical order and should illustrate a point, concept, or issue that relates to the problems that the writer wants to have analyzed. Do not give any signals that one solution might be preferred.
5. Provide relevant details: After an opening that sets up the situation, provide relevant details about goals, strategies, dilemmas, issues, conflicts, roadblocks, appropriate research, relevant financial information, people, and relationships. Be stingy with numbers; they must help solve the problems, not confuse readers or send them off on unproductive analytic tangents.
6. Use as much dialogue as possible: Make the characters come alive with dialogue. Straight narrative is boring.
7. Endings: Leave the reader with a clear picture of the major problems--either ask or imply "what is to be done now?"

Phenomenology:

What are the relevant cultural perspectives faced by both insider and outsider on the issues or decisions?

Cultural Values

(e.g., High or Low Context, Large or Small Power Distance, Individualism/Collectivism, Polychronic or Monochronic Time, Gender Roles Separation and so on.)

Insiders

Outsiders (Cross-cultural workers)

Ontology:

What are scriptural perspectives, principles, and case studies?

Describe your original solution to the case

Missiological Application: What you think you should have done in light of your cultural and scriptural analysis-approximately 1 page

What should be done?

How should it be done?