EMT 3541/6451HF
MISSION AND RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

DRAFT
(final version to be distributed on the first day of class)

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Meeting times: Thursday 2-4 pm

Mission means serving, healing, and reconciling a divided, wounded humanity.

David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission*

The Church affirms that God is acting to reconcile and make new, to heal and restore, to bend the creation back toward what, according to the ancient story, it was originally created to be. . . . The Church’s responsibility is to align itself with God’s initiatives . . .

UCC, *Mending the World*

**Course Description**

Taking into account recent paradigm shifts in the theology of mission, this course considers the relationship of mission to biblical sources, culture and context, unity and difference in World Christianity, postcolonialism and intercultural engagement, and especially religious pluralism. The goal is to foster critical theological reflection, particularly on how people of faith in a multifaceted and religiously diverse situation today might best discern and participate in God’s creative and healing work in the world.

**Prerequisite:** completion of Theology I is needed for Basic Degree Students to enrol in this course, unless permission is given by the instructor.

**Course Texts** (the books are available at Crux Books, Wycliffe College)

- Catherine Cornille, *The Im-Possibility of Interreligious Dialogue* (New York: Crossroad, 2008)

Other readings shall be available on library reserve or provided online at the class website.
Basic Degree Level Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this class, the successful student should be able to…

1. Articulate biblical perspectives of mission vis-à-vis the church
2. Acknowledge the ways the church has been connected to colonialism, noting the historical effects.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the modern anthropological notion of culture and be able to assess its implications for an understanding of faith as responsive to the needs and challenges of particular contexts.
4. Recognize the complexities of religious identity and unity in different cultural settings and historical periods.
5. Articulate dimensions of mission in an intercultural church
6. Identify the basic features of postcolonial theory and note their application for faith in community.
7. Show familiarity with the contemporary fact and challenge of religious pluralism and be able to critically assess its implications for faith, analyzing various approaches that seek to navigate between absolutism and relativism.
8. Show a basic understanding of ways several religious traditions have attended to religious diversity.
9. Consider theological reflection as a vehicle for promoting right relations and for cultivating shalom between peoples.
10. Demonstrate empathetic and critical thinking, both in reading and in writing.

Graduate Level Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE OUTCOMES</th>
<th>COURSE ELEMENT</th>
<th>PROGRAM OUTCOMES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By the end of this course, students successfully completing, will have acquired the following levels of knowledge:</td>
<td>This outcome will be achieved through these course elements:</td>
<td>This course outcome corresponds to this aspect of the TST outcomes statement for the individual AD programs:</td>
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<tr>
<td>*demonstrate knowledge of biblical and historical perspectives informing various understandings of mission</td>
<td>• lectures (weeks 2-4) • book assessment • course as a whole</td>
<td>• PhD: 1.1; 1.2 • ThM I: 1.2 • ThM II: 1.2 • MA: 1.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>*display competence in articulating the ways Christianity has been linked to colonial endeavors, noting the historical effects</td>
<td>• lectures (weeks 5-8) • book assessment • research paper</td>
<td>• PhD: 1.1; 1.2 • ThM I: 1.3 • ThM II: 1.2 • MA: 1.3</td>
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| *show proficiency in identifying the diversity of viewpoints and practices within their own and others religious traditions in terms of understanding religious pluralism.* | • lectures (weeks 4-7-8)  
• book assessment  
• presentation  
• research paper | • PhD: 1.1, 1.2  
• ThM I: 1.3  
• ThM II: 1.2  
• MA: 1.3 |
|---|---|---|
| *demonstrate knowledge of the contemporary fact and challenge of religious pluralism and show ability to critically assess its implications for faith, analyzing various approaches* | • lectures (weeks 8-12)  
• research paper | • ThD/PhD: 1.1; 1.2  
• ThM I: 1.3  
• ThM II: 1.2  
• MA: 1.3 |

By the end of this course, students successfully completing, will have had an opportunity to demonstrate and enhance their level of ability in the following areas:

This outcome will be achieved through these course elements:

This course outcome corresponds to this aspect of the TST outcomes statement for the individual AD programs:

| Demonstrate scholarly skills in:  
• clear and effective communication in both oral and written forms;  
• the construction of a logical argument;  
• the making of informed judgments on complex issues;  
• the use of standard conventions of style for scholarly writing. | • presentation  
• book assessment  
• research paper | • ThD/PhD: 2.2.5  
• ThM I: 2.2.6  
• ThM II: 2.2.5  
• MA: 2.2.6 |

By the end of this course, students successfully completing, will have had an opportunity to demonstrate and enhance the following areas of vocational preparation:

This outcome will be achieved through these course elements:

This course outcome corresponds to this aspect of the TST outcomes statement for the individual AD programs:
• demonstrate awareness of the contextual character of faith and theological significance of its current ecumenical and interreligious global challenges.

• course as a whole
  • seminars
  • interaction with students from other ecclesiastical and theological traditions

• ThD/PhD: 4.3.1.2

Class-Time Format

The basic arrangement of our time in class will be that of lecture-discussion. The purpose of the lectures will be to introduce, help clarify and expand the context and substance of the readings. The discussions are designed to provide an interactive and open environment to explore relevant materials. The overall strategy behind this course is to generate critical reflection, so questions, comments, and reflections are welcome at all times.

Course Requirements and Assignments

1. Class Attendance and Participation.............................. 10%
2. Reading Reflections Journal / Presentation............... 20%
3. Midterm Assignment: Book Assessment ............... 30%
4. Integrative Paper.............................................. 40%

1. Regular attendance and informed participation in class is an important part of the learning experience. Because discussion is a key part of the class, nurturing an engagement with course materials, your questions and comments are valued and will be a factor in the overall grade. To this end, it is expected that you will have done the readings and be prepared to contribute. Careful and critical reading is fundamental to informed participation. More than three absences may result in loss of course credit.

2. Basic Degree Students: Reading Reflection Journal. Careful and critical reading is fundamental. To help facilitate this process, you are asked to engage the readings with written reflections that ask questions and comment on the material in a more personal way, drawing out concrete applications and theological implications. The reflections are an opportunity to evaluate approaches and claims in the readings, examining some of the major themes vis-à-vis your own theological judgments. The objective is to engage the reading critically, with a view toward appraising its relevance, credibility, and appropriateness.
   • The journals should be typed in single space format and be about a page in length. Hard copies of the assignment will be collected on the day of class each week.
   • A minimum of five (5) reading reflections are required throughout the course of the semester. You may submit over five (in which case the five highest marks will be chosen for averaging), but this is not required.
**Graduate Students: Class Presentation.** At a class session, one Advanced Degree student, by pre-arrangement with the instructor, will initiate discussion by referring to salient points in the week’s reading assignments, mainly from the primary sources, raising two or three questions to generate conversation over important issues/themes. The presentation should be approximately 12-15 minutes.

3. **Book Assessment**, approximately 8 pages in length, is due no later than October 18th in class. Its primary purpose is to foster a critical engagement with a book chosen from the selection provided (see handout) and assess it in terms of course materials and themes, and in light of your own critical perspective.

4. **A Final Integrative Paper** (Basic Degree students: 10 pages / Graduate Students: 20-25 pages), due no later than December 13th. This paper should focus on a topic or issue germane to the course and investigate, analyze, and appraise its implications in contemporary context. The assignment is both integrative and research oriented; it offers the flexibility to research a topic or issue that interests you, while also requiring you to assess the relevance of your research to some of the materials read/discussed during the semester, drawing your own conclusions in the process.

Paper assignments should be clearly organized, well-documented, critical in scope, substantive in analysis and in assessing materials, careful in formulating evaluative claims, and prudent in applications. Excellent papers will not simply ‘state’ but ‘show’ their case. Based upon an informed consideration of what is at stake, excellent papers will provide reasons for claims and back up these reasons with solid evidence. They may be selected and used anonymously for assessment of Emmanuel College’s curriculums (and shall not affect your mark).

Papers should observe Emmanuel College academic regulations and policies, and note the “Other Qualities Expected of Students” in “The T.S.T. Grading Scale Used at Emmanuel College” for criteria for evaluation of assignments (found in 2018-19) edition of *Handbook of Information for Basic Degree Students*). More information about writing papers can be found at the web site “Writing at the University of Toronto” at www.utoronto.ca/writing/.

**Specific Policies**

- **Grading**: Grades will follow the TST grading scheme. See TST web site.
- **Email**: *All email communications from students should be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also they cannot be readily identified as legitimate emails from students.
- **Emailed assignments** will **not** be accepted except in rare cases with the prior permission of the instructor.
- **Accessibility and disability policy**: See the UT web site: [http://www.sa.utoronto.ca/details.php?wscid=4](http://www.sa.utoronto.ca/details.php?wscid=4). It is your responsibility to register with accessibility services. If you need any special accommodation, please let me know before an assignment is due or in the first two weeks of the course.
- **Plagiarism.** Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the
quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and
ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document
borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic,
professional, and religious ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student
plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report
it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST Basic Degree Handbook
and the Graduate Program Handbooks (linked from
http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks and the University of Toronto
Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters
plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of
plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and
Wycliffe Colleges
https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library_archives/theological_resources/theological_guide
s/avoiding_plagiarism.html

--Tentative Course Schedule--

Week One, Sept. 13: Introduction to Basic Themes—no readings.

Week Two, Sept. 20: “Mission” and “Church” in Post-Christendom Context: Hope and Empire
  • Required Reading:
    o Marilyn J. Legge, “Negotiating Mission: A Canadian Stance,” in International
      Review of Mission, Vol. 93 / No. 368 (January 2004), pp. 119-130 (online)
  • Recommended Reading:
    o Douglas John Hall, Living on the Edge of Empire (online)
    o UCC Document (2006)—Living Faithfully in the Midst of Empire (online)

Week Three, Sept. 27: Exploring Missiology through Disability
  • Required Reading:
    o Benjamin T. Conner, Disabling Mission, Enabling Witness (Downers Grove, IL:
      Intervarsity Press, 2018), chs. 1-2 (online)
  • Recommended Reading:
    o Tom Reynolds, “Vulnerably Human within God’s Grace: Protestantism and
      Disability,” in World Religions and Disability, eds., Darla Y Schumm and
Week Four, Oct. 4: Sources and Issues in Mission

- **Required Reading:**

- **Recommended Reading:**
  - WCC, “Together Toward Life,”

Week Five, Oct 11: Historical Legacies of Colonialism and Mission

- **Required Reading:**
  - Gustavo Gutierrez, from *Witness: The Writings of Bartolomé de las Casas*, “The Indian: Person and Poor,” xi-xxii (online)
  - Williams Jr., Robert A., *Savage Anxieties: The Invention of Western Civilization*, Introduction, chs. 8, 10 and 12 (online)

- **Recommended Reading:**
  - John Webster Grant, *The Moon of Wintertime*, 175-189, 238–263.
  - David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, chs. 5–9

Week Six, Oct 18: Mission and Indigenous Peoples

- **Guest Speaker TBA**

- **Required Reading:**
  - *Native and Christian*, ed. James Treat, chs. 3-7 (online)
  - Lori Ransom and Mark MacDonald, “Systematic Evil and the Church: How does a Church Repent?” *Forum Mission* 10/2014 (online)

- **Recommended Reading:**
  - UCC on Indigenous ministries: https://www.united-church.ca/community-faith/being-community/indigenous-ministries
Week Seven, Nov. 1: Reimagining Gospel, Culture and Justice in “World Christianity”
Guest Speaker TBA
- Required Reading:
  - Letty Russell, *Just Hospitality*, 1-51
  - Andrew Kirk, *What Is Mission?*, 75-117 (online)
  - Sara Miller, *Christian Century*, “Global Gospel,” 20-27 (online)
- Recommended Reading:
  - David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, ch. 12

Week Eight, Nov 8: Postcolonialism and Mission as Hospitality
- Required Reading
  - Letty Russell, *Just Hospitality*, 53-100
- Recommended Reading:
  - Marion Grau, *Rethinking Mission*, chs. 4-6

Week Nine, Nov. 15: Religious Pluralism and Mission—New Horizons
- Required Reading:
  - Cornille, *(Im)possibility*, chs. 1-2.
- Recommended Reading:
Week Ten, Nov. 22: Interfaith Relations—Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist Perspectives
   --Guest Speakers: TBA
• Required Reading:
• Recommended Reading:
  o Reynolds, “Toward a Wider Hospitality,” *Irish Theological Quarterly* 75/2, pp. 175-187 (online)

Week Eleven, Nov. 29: Interfaith Relations
• Required Reading:
  o Cornille, *Im*possibility, chs. 3-4
  o Kwok, pui-lan, “Beyond Pluralism: Toward a Postcolonial Theology of Religious Difference,” in *Postcolonial Imagination*, ch. 8 (online)
• Recommended Reading:

Week Twelve, Dec. 6: Mission as Partnership: Nurturing Peace and Reconciliation
• Required Reading:
• Recommended Reading:
  o TBA
Bibliography: Selected Beginning Points


______. The Biblical Basis For Evangelization: Theological Reflections Based on an African


Schreiter, Robert J. *Constructing Local Theologies*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1985


